



A Patriot After All: The Story of a Chicano Vietnam Vet

Juan Ramirez

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Juan Ramirez always believed he would die in Vietnam. As a teenager growing up in the San Francisco area in the early 1960s, "Nam was there, just over the horizon, like the distant thump of artillery." His father and uncles had served in World War II, another uncle in Korea. Numerous cousins had enlisted. At nineteen, Ramirez decided to embrace the war. In 1968, the year of the Tet offensive, Ramirez joined the U.S. marines.

Two bloody tours later, Ramirez survived, but at immense cost. Twice wounded, undesirably discharged, and plagued by survivor's guilt, Ramirez surveys the toll of Vietnam on flesh and spirit in this captivating memoir.

Ramirez tells his story in a voice not often heard from the war, that of a Chicano soldier. By tracing his roots, and exploring the cultural pressures and social demons that weighed on his family and community, Ramirez offers an unflinching look at the fall and redemption of one Mexican American veteran.

Ramirez has given us a rather unique and clear-eyed view inside the life and times and thoughts of a young Chicano who joins the marines and goes to Vietnam to find his destiny. . . . Fascinating reading. . . . Joseph L. Galloway, author of *We Were Soldiers Once. . . And Young*.

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