

A Crushing Love

A film by Sylvia Morales

U.S., 2009, 57 mins, color, DVD

Order No. XXXXXX

A CRUSHING LOVE explores how multiple generations of Chicana activist women grapple with their dual roles of motherhood and commitment to social justice and political change. With sensitivity and warmth, acclaimed director Sylvia Morales (CHICANA) uncovers the complex personal relationships between activist women and their children as a result of their total commitment to the Chicano movement. As a single mother of two just completing her documentary, Morales confronts similar issues and asks how did these women do it all?

Through archival footage, family photos, and intimate conversations with extraordinary Chicano leaders, activists, historians, and writers, such as Delores Huerta, Alicia Escalante, Martha Cotera, Cherrie Moraga, and others, Morales chronicles their personal and political struggles against poverty, injustice, discrimination, and racism—and how they redefined motherhood for themselves, rejecting cultural stereotypes of the self-sacrificing mother. Instead, their self-sacrifice was focused on the community. In frank, moving interviews, the children of activists reflect on how community and global issues trumped personal, individual family issues; their own personal sacrifices; what it means to share your mother with the world; and how they empathize with their mothers.

The story mirrors Morales' own questions as a mother and artist, concluding that her work, like her children, requires care, patience, and attention.