

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910967773203321
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Titolo	First laugh : essays, 2000-2009 / / Margaret Randall
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Lincoln [Neb.] : University of Nebraska Press, c2011
ISBN	9786613051165 9781283051163 1283051168 9780803234994 0803234996
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (233 p.)
Disciplina	306.0973
Soggetti	Poetry - Social aspects Feminist criticism United States Social conditions Latin America Social conditions
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	"Four of these essays are based on talks given in different places and on different subjects. The rest are new and unpublished"-- P.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references.
Nota di contenuto	A few words about these essays -- The American people -- Pumping gas -- Flying backward -- Bigger, better, best -- Race and racism: the 2008 election -- The cell remembers -- Rolling eyes -- Remembering mother -- First laugh -- Piercing the walls -- Onate's right foot -- Can poetry matter? -- Words for El corno emplumado -- The living silence of a place like Kiet Seel -- Betrayal -- Crystal's gift -- The place where color sounds -- My losses.
Sommario/riassunto	Concerns about power, its use and abuse, have been at the center of Margaret Randall's work for more than fifty years. And over time Randall has acquired a power all her own, as her unique ability to observe, consider, and distill experience has drawn readers into new experiences and insights. Tempered by time and reflecting a life fully lived and richly examined, her thoughts on race, gender, poetry, landscape, cellular memory, and personal loss speak with eloquence and urgency. First Laugh invites readers to ponder the role of race and racism in the 2008 presidential election; the nature of repressed

memory in understanding oneself; the place of poetry in social change; the efforts of Pueblo Indians to earn historical recompense for Spanish colonialist atrocity and subsequent abuse; and the bonds of intimacy and shared political conviction that sustain family and friendship. Over the course of her life, Margaret Randall has found herself with the abstract expressionists of the 1950s, the activists of the 1968 Mexican student movement, the Cuban revolutionaries of the 1970s, the North Vietnamese during the last years of the U.S. war, and the Sandinistas. It is our privilege to have her among us now, documenting moments at once personal and universal and showing us new ways to see.
