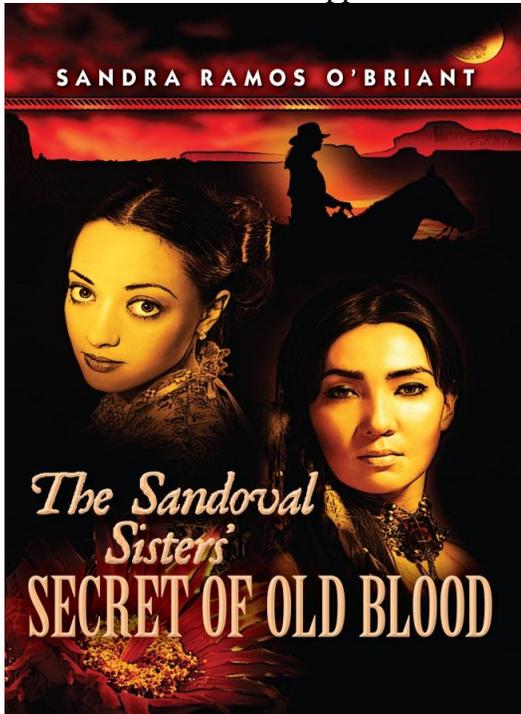


### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

***The Sandoval Sisters' Secret of Old Blood* won First Place on May 30 in NYC at the the 15<sup>th</sup> annual International Latino Book Awards, 2013 in two categories: Best Historical Fiction and Best First Book.**

[Sandra Ramos O'Briant](#) grew up in Santa Fe and spent summers in Texas, but calls Los Angeles her home now. She was an executive recruiter in Beverly Hills before beginning her writing career. Her short stories and creative nonfiction have appeared in numerous journals and anthologies. A complete list is [here](#).



Merchants have always loved the Santa Fe Trail. The Mexican-American War was fought to gain more land, but it was also about controlling trade, and that meant controlling Santa Fe: it was the first foreign capital captured by the U.S. An unbelievable influx of men occurred, but nary a word has been written about how that affected the New Mexican women. Until now.

The war is the backdrop for the Sandoval sisters' individual coming-of-age stories in which they cope with racism, sexism, political intrigue and the power of superstition in that time and place.

When Alma flees with her young lover to Texas to escape an arranged marriage with a much older man, she sets in motion a drama that will put the sisters and their legacy at risk. Pilar, a 14-year-old tomboy, is offered as a replacement bride, and what follows is a sensuous courtship and marriage clouded by the curses of her husband's former lover, Consuelo. She will stop at nothing, even the use of black magic, in her effort to destroy the Sandoval family. The Mexican-American war begins and the Americans invade Santa Fe. The sisters are caught in the crosshairs of war from two important fronts-New Mexico and Texas. Their money and ancient knowledge offer some protection, but their lives are changed forever.

"Woven among the stories of love and life is eroticism, mystery, witchcraft, folktales, superstition, political intrigue, corruption, and violence. Told with a fluid style that grabs you from the first page and leaves you hungry for more at the end." Dr. Michele Shaul\*, Co-Editor of the e-journal [Label Me Latina/o](#)

**[Dr. Shaul's complete review](#)**

"This story of love, mysticism and betrayal tests the ultimate boundaries of sisterhood. I loved this brave, lushly written tale of life in old Santa Fe." Jill Smolinski, author of *Objects of My Affection*

***"An outstanding family saga."* Historical Novel Review and History and Women**

***"The author excellently interweaves much history of the United States and Mexico during that time. The book is written with great skill and talent. One of the top 10 Latino Books, 2012."* The Latino Author**

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