

The first, "The Corporate Integration of the Mexican Economy," examines business issues, including the nature of the Mexican economy, strategic assessment of the market, forming alliances with Mexican organizations, business opportunities in infrastructure, and paternalism and other cultural issues in employer-employee relations. The second part, "Understanding the Mexican Persona," discusses the surrender of economic sovereignty and the clash between European and Indian cultures beginning with the conquest, with subsections on racism, victimization and misogyny, and nationalism and culture. The final part, "Integrating the Mexican Economy into the Age of Free Trade," returns to business issues with a discussion of import and export mechanisms and a comparable chapter on the techniques and regulation of investment. That is followed by a full-length analysis of the problems faced by African American executives in Mexico. The book closes with a sympathetic comparison of Mexican "corruption" and U.S. "wrongdoing."

Unlike many business books, this volume omits the detailed reporting of the activities of specific firms while staying close to general business principles. Truly about Mexico, though from a somewhat personal slant, this book provides essentially a near-complete first course in Mexican history, though with an anthropological flavor, with which it then attempts to shed light on the world of business. The author critiques the social scientific material he presents; he seemingly draws on conventional stereotypes while occasionally labeling them as such. From the perspective of any given discipline, this book has much to criticize; but if used with other materials in the give and take of a seminar setting, it could provoke a stimulating discussion of the complexities of a changing Mexico and that nation's interaction with the societies to the north.

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Cuban Americans: From Trauma to Triumph. By JAMES S. OLSON and JUDITH E. OLSON. New York: Twayne, 1995. Photographs. Table. Notes. Bibliography. Index. xii, 142 pp. Cloth, \$26.95. Paper, \$15.95.

Life on the Hyphen: The Cuban-American Way. By GUSTAVO PÉREZ FIRMAT. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994. Photographs. Notes. Index. xii, 216 pp. Cloth, \$30.00. Paper, \$12.95.

The two volumes under review share the same premise: Cubans are a unique immigrant group in that they have never accepted their separation from the motherland, and the story of the Miami Cubans is as much a part of the history of Latin America as of North America. Both books contend that the first generation of exiles from the Cuban Revolution now faces a painful dilemma. Can they be sure Fidel Castro will fall before the transition to the second generation is complete, when a majority of Cuban Americans will be youngsters who care more about their own personal future than the destiny of Cuba?

Cuban Americans: From Trauma to Triumph devotes more than half its pages to a review of Cuban history from Columbus to Castro. James and Judith Olson unquestioningly repeat numerous facile judgments that greatly distort our perception of contemporary Cuba. We are told of the all-powerful Spanish “theocratic monarchy” that stifled all signs of intellectual life in the colonies, and the incessant peninsular-creole rivalry that paved the way for Cuban independence. The African element in Cuba is mentioned only sporadically; and curiously, Afro-Cuban religion is discussed only after the authors come to the Mariel boatlift of 1980.

The book does best in treating Cuban immigration to the United States. The authors draw a revealing comparison between the nineteenth-century Cuban community in Florida, dedicated to the overthrow of Spanish rule, and the anti-Castro exiles of today. Those earlier refugees also resisted assimilation while dreaming of the liberation of La Patria, but they were much more critical of their U.S. hosts for fear of a U.S. takeover of Cuba. This volume might serve as a useful reminder to Cuban Americans that the relationship between their two homelands has not been without its share of mistrust.

Gustavo Pérez Firmat has his eye fixed on the “1.5 generation,” born in Cuba around the time of the revolution and now reaching middle age in the United States. The book is both a celebration of the way “one-and-a-halfers” have triumphantly navigated down both streams of their heritage, and a lament; the author knows that the second generation, including his own children, is bound to become 100 percent American. Pérez Firmat eulogizes the patriarchs of the community—Desi Arnaz, Pérez Prado—and dissects the contributions of contemporaries—singers Willie Chirino and Gloria Estefan, novelist Oscar Hijuelos, and poet José Kozer—who try to make sense of “life on the hyphen.” I’m not sure if deconstructing “I Love Lucy” episodes and mambo lyrics is the best way to recreate the Cuban American experience, but it makes for entertaining reading.

A more serious drawback to the book is Pérez Firmat’s refusal to acknowledge how the denial of Cuban history has shaped Cuban American identity. Most of the exiles cannot admit that Cuba was a troubled nation—economically, politically, and racially—before 1959, and that prosperous Havana was not representative of Cuba as a whole. Nor are Cuban Americans comfortable recognizing the many advantages they enjoyed as escapees from a Communist revolution, which Olson and Olson outline: Cubans were granted automatic asylum along with refugee status; they received federally funded bilingual education; and they benefited from a retraining program for professionals to allow them to regain their licenses in law, medicine, and other high-paying activities. These privileges created a contradiction that Pérez Firmat never addresses: while they reject full assimilation into Anglo culture, Cuban Americans do not see themselves as Latinos, either.

Olson and Olson pay homage to Cuban Americans as perhaps the most successful immigrant group to come to the United States in the twentieth century. Pérez Firmat lauds them for making a virtue of their marginality from both Cuba and the

United States. What is still lacking in the literature on this question is an honest reappraisal of how the exiles have contributed to the freezing of relations between the two countries by their refusal to see that the Cuba they left behind is gone for good, and that not even the demise of Fidel Castro will bring it back.

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Producing Power: Ethnicity, Gender, and Class in a Caribbean Workplace. By KEVIN A. YELVINGTON. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995. Maps. Tables. Figure. Notes. Bibliography. Index. xv, 286 pp. Cloth, \$49.95. Paper, \$22.95.

The Myth of the Male Breadwinner: Women and Industrialization in the Caribbean. By HELEN I. SAFA. Boulder: Westview Press, 1995. Photographs. Tables. Notes. Bibliography. Index. xvi, 208 pp. Cloth, \$55.00. Paper, \$18.95.

The two books in this review focus on specific groups of workers in the manufacturing sector on four Caribbean islands: Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and Trinidad. The methodology utilized in both cases involved personal observations and interviews with workers on each of these islands. Kevin Yelvington worked alongside his subjects and socialized with them after work, while Helen Safa acknowledges the help of other researchers and groups, including the Federation of Cuban Women.

The two studies also differ in scope and goals. Safa's book is the product of a comparative research project involving three Caribbean societies, aimed at uncovering the impact paid employment has had on family and gender ideology. Yelvington's work, on the other hand, focuses on a single community of workers in a factory in Trinidad. It attempts to uncover the extant relationships between ethnicity, gender, and class, and how these play into the relative exercise of power that has bound the diverse groups in a given historical context.

Although Safa is aware of the importance of race in employment and marital patterns, she laments that such recognition on her part came "too late" to incorporate its analysis into the present work (pp. xiii-xiv). Despite her preoccupation with the missing racial analysis, she provides a systematic comparison of women's experiences in the changing worlds of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic, where the economies are both shaped by and greatly dependent on the external forces dictated by the international market, its division of labor, and its available capital.

Focusing on three areas of women's lives—work, family, and the public sphere—Safa explores the variety of roles women play and the place they occupy in the factory, the household, and the political system. She demonstrates that participation in the paid labor force does not necessarily increase female political consciousness; nor does it lead to greater participation in political parties or other mass organizations in any of the three societies. She also shows that despite the historical differences that separate socialist Cuba, for instance, from the two capitalist societies, women