



Life on the Hyphen: The Cuban-American Way

Gustavo Perez Firmat, Gustavo Perez Firmat

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From Desi Arnaz and "I Love Lucy" to Gloria Estefan and the Miami Sound Machine, Cuban-Americans have conga'd and mambo'd their way into the heart of popular culture in the United States. This engaging book, which mixes the author's own story with his reflections as a trained observer, explores how both famous and ordinary members of the "1.5 Generation" (Cubans who came to United States as children or adolescents) have lived "life on the hyphen," neither fully Cuban nor fully American, but a fertile hybrid of both. Ranging widely from music to movies to television to literature, Gustavo Perez Firmat chronicles what it means to be Cuban in America. He offers an in-depth look at Cuban-Americans who have become icons of popular and literary culture, including Desi Arnaz, Oscar Hijuelos (whose *The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love* won the Pulitzer Prize and became a major motion picture), musician Perez Prado, poet Jose Kozer, and crossover pop stars Gloria Estefan and Jon Secada.

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