



Cuba: What Everyone Needs to Know?, Second Edition

Julia E. Sweig

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Ever since Fidel Castro assumed power in Cuba in 1959, Americans have obsessed about the nation ninety miles south of the Florida Keys. America's fixation on the tropical socialist republic has only grown over the years, fueled in part by successive waves of Cuban immigration and Castro's larger-than-life persona. Cubans are now a major ethnic group in Florida, and the exile community is so powerful that every American president has curried favor with it. But what do most Americans really know about Cuba itself?

In this second edition of the widely hailed *Cuba: What Everyone Needs to Know?*, Julia Sweig updates her concise and remarkably accessible portrait of the small island nation--and now includes material from her 2010 interview with Fidel Castro. The new edition covers the key events of the last few years: Raul Castro's assumption of power from his brother Fidel, economic and political reforms since Raul came to power, and the changes in US-Cuba relations following the election of Barack Obama. Expansive in coverage and authoritative in scope, the book looks back over Cuba's history since the Spanish American War before shifting to recent times. Focusing equally on Cuba's role in world affairs and its own social and political transformations, Sweig divides the book chronologically into the pre-Fidel era, the period between the 1959 revolution and the fall of the Soviet Union, the post-Cold War era, and -- finally -- the post-Fidel era.

Informative, pithy, and lucidly written, it is the best compact reference on Cuba's internal politics, its often fraught relationship with the United States, and its shifting relationship with the global community.

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