

1. Summary

Episode 4 of "*Latino Americans*" is known as "The New Latinos," and it investigates the mass migration from Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, and Cuba within the period of the 1940s to early 1960s. Once World War II ended, many residents from Puerto Rico left their island and relocated to New York City. New York City at that time was the hub of steady jobs and excellent career prospects. This has a thin line of connection with the postwar economy (Locke & Wright, 2019). At this time, the industries of the United States needed more workers and drew migrants from other countries.

The documentary encompasses the mass immigration from Cuba after the completion of Fidel Castro's Revolution in 1959. Many residents from Cuba left their country, scared of the new communist nature of the government. A massive mass of them reached Miami. None of them expected Miami to be their permanent residence, though many of them ended up building new lives there. At the end, the film demonstrates the boost in Dominican migration, once the dictator "Rafael Trujillo" died in 1961. After this massacre, scared of political danger and economic ups and downs, people chose to escape. Most Dominican immigrants also lived in New York. There are different reasons for migrating for all three groups, yet they shared similar challenges as they tried to conform to life in the United States.

2. Critical and Personal Reactions

The documentary is consequential as it highlights the manual side of immigration. Each story is about families trying to survive and find the balance. As I got to see the Puerto Ricans had trouble with low wages, discrimination, and crowded apartments in New York, I discerned how much complexity they ran through. Still, they established strong communities where they could

support one another and celebrate their culture. This is associated with the explanation given in “The American Yawp” that showcases how racial bias impacted many urban neighbourhoods at the time of the mid-20th century (Locke & Wright, 2019).

Also, I am impressed to know the stories of Cuban refugees. Many residents from Cuba who had been banished from their country or had been left their homeland for their professions had to make a fresh start in Miami. Their determination and strength were a portrayal of how immigrant people can establish themselves when they lose almost everything. Mostly, the documentary worked like a mentor that made me comprehend how saliently the Latino immigrants have been in sculpting American society, especially in the megacities.

3. Discussion

The documentary highlights various major ideas from 20th-century Latin American studies that address "involvement and influence of the United States in Caribbean politics", "Cold War pressures that induce immigrants of Cuba", "Economic disparity driving people to leave their homeland", and "the fight the immigrants had to form identity at a new place". These concepts had a strong connection with Cold War tensions and U.S. foreign policy that inspired the Cuban immigrants, since the U.S. embraced refugees escaping communism (Locke & Wright, 2019).

The documentary shows the narrative of the "Capo family", the Cuban migrants. They began "El Dorado Furniture", which started selling furniture outside their home, and afterwards constructed one of the largest furniture companies in South Florida. Their story harmonises immigrant entrepreneurship, where many new immigrants opened small businesses to reinforce their families.

Cuban refugees worked as the staircase of Miami's economic growth. They opened restaurants, banks, shops, and community centres, after which Miami started identifying as a diverse, multicultural city. Their business attracted tourists, boosted the trade relations with Latin America, and inflated the local economy.

References

PBS. (2013). *Latino Americans: Episode 4: The New Latinos*. Retrieved from:

<https://www.pbs.org/video/latino-americans-episode-4-new-latinos/>

Locke, J. L. & Wright, B. (2019). *The American Yawp: A Massively Collaborative Open U.S. History Textbook, Vol. 1: To 1877*. Stanford University Press. Paperback

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