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## The Book of Isaias: A Child of Hispanic Immigrants Seeks His Own America

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This book is a fascinating read and one that has very helpful reference resources. For anyone interested in the Gullah and their cultural development on Sapelo Island, I recommend this book.

There is a number of black and white illustrations helpful to one wanting to see the early Gullah peoples' lifestyles and family homes and schools. Acknowledgement begin on page 215 and the Index continues to page 279. This is a good selection for an academic library or a Southern history collection.

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**Florida Soul: From Ray Charles to KC and the Sunshine Band.** John Capouya. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2017. ISBN 13: 978-0-8130-5452-0. \$24.95 408 p.



I admit to a fascination with soul music, and John Capouya's new book "Florida Soul: From Ray Charles to KC and the Sunshine Band" grabbed my attention. I quickly learned Florida claims many talented musicians in "the world of R&B, soul, funk, and disco".

As I began to scan and enjoy the chapters of Capouya's book, I was captivated by the personal stories of the lives of musicians like Ray Charles, Noble "Thin Man" Watts, Sam Moore, James Purify, Linda Lydell, and Jackie Moore. Each life sketch is written to amaze and delight us. As readers we gain insights into the deep and unique talents of these famous Florida men and women. Along with revealed personality characteristics that are humorous and engaging, Capouya spotlights life stories with the personal photographs and shots of "hang outs", performance places, and recording sessions.

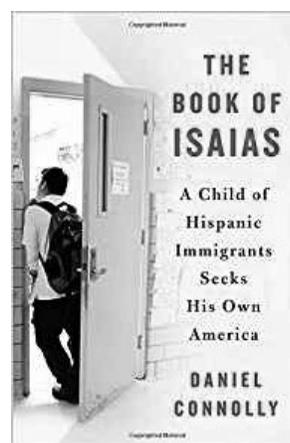
Capouya's story telling style introduces us to 20 Florida musicians and their fellow artists. You will learn the poignant life story of Ray Charles spread over Greenville, Jacksonville, Orlando and Tampa. Another story to enjoy is of Harry Wayne Casey of KC and the Sunshine Band who credits his love of music and the beginnings of his life journey to his mother, a Miami housewife. "She "loved to dance and was such a presence in Overtown clubs that

famous musicians came to their home to talk and visit with her. His father, the owner of a furniture store, had no interest in music of any kind."(p.320).

I recommend this book for academic, public and music libraries. A total of 396 pages contain an Epilogue, Acknowledgments, Notes, a Bibliography and an Index. Very good fact filled and strong references tool for researchers.

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**The Book of Isaias: A Child of Hispanic Immigrants Seeks His Own America.** Daniel Connolly. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2016. ISBN: 9781250083067 (hardback). \$26.99. 258 p.



Isaias Ramos is a dreamer. Eighteen, a senior in high school, he dreams of his future and what lies ahead. A smart student with good grades, determination, and an insatiable curiosity, he's the perfect candidate for college. But Isaias is also a DREAMER, his standing recognized by the failed Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act of 2010. As a child of undocumented Mexican immigrants who came to the United States when he was seven, he has no way to obtain citizenship in the only country he has ever really known.

Daniel Connolly, author of *The Book of Isaias: A Child of Hispanic Immigrants*, gives these children a voice, tracking the life of one undocumented Latino high school senior in Memphis, Tennessee. Connolly begins in the summer of 2012, nine months before graduation, and narrates Isaias' story through the summer of 2015. A journalist by profession and Memphis native, Connolly presents a compelling case for these undocumented youths and is unsparing in describing the harsh choices these students face when confronting their future.

Isaias is a talented teen. Captain of the school trivia team, member of a rock band and gifted student, Isaias' teachers urge him to apply to top tier universities, believing his grades and scholastic scores are high enough to win

admission. But the inadequacy of his educational support at home and at school threaten his achievements. His parents, while anxious for their children to succeed in school, are poorly educated and hesitant to help guide his choices. Kingsbury High School, like many public schools across the country, faces challenges in educating a diverse student population, most of whom are poor, and many of whom are woefully unprepared for scholastic achievement. In a school where the median ACT score is 16, Isaias' score of 29 elevates him to the top quarter percent nationally.

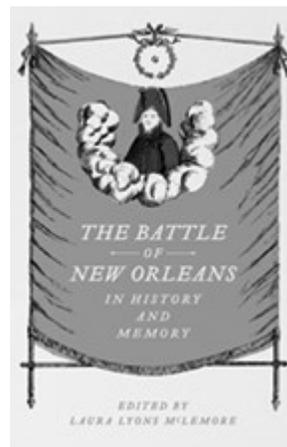
As Isaias and his friends explore their options, the realities of his undocumented status continues to rear its head. While The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy introduced by President Obama in 2012 provides identity documents, work/study permits and security from deportation for unauthorized immigrants who came to the United States as children, this is often not enough for them to gain access to the colleges and universities of their choice. Many state higher education systems deny financial assistance for these students who often lack parental encouragement and the monetary resources to pursue this opportunity.

Post-graduation, Isaias ultimately decides to attend a local private college that offers him financial aid. When that school closes, due to mismanagement and financial shortfalls, Isaias chooses not to pursue higher education, but to work as a house painter, a decision driven by economic necessity as his parents have returned to Mexico and he and his brother are now responsible for their youngest sibling. This decision, told with poignant understanding by Connolly, illuminates the heartbreaking reality of Isaias' future with its narrow choice of options.

Connolly, through his perceptive portrayal of Isaias and sobering statistics, argues convincingly that the United States has a political and moral imperative to give children of unauthorized immigrants the opportunities and resources to contribute to American society. By denying these young adults a place in America, the country risks losing student leaders and productive citizens who add to the country's wealth and enrich it culturally. In light of the rescission of DACA on September 5, 2017, this book is for everyone interested in immigrant issues who appreciates a personal perspective. Recommended for public and academic libraries.

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**The Battle of New Orleans in History and Memory.** Laura Lyons McLemore, ed.. Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 2016. ISBN 978-0-8071-6465-5 (Hardback). \$38.00. 232 p.



During a period when many historians are rethinking the legacy of Andrew Jackson, *The Battle of New Orleans in History and Memory* seems particularly timely. Editor Laura Lyons McLemore has assembled nine essays by notable historians which were originally presented at a 2014 symposium held to commemorate the bicentennial of the Battle of New Orleans. The collected works tell the story of the War of 1812 from different perspectives, separating fact from fable concerning this pivotal conflict and the men who shaped its outcome.

The Battle of New Orleans was an important victory for a fledgling nation that had only recently won independence from Britain. In the years after the Revolutionary War, the British continually harassed the United States by restricting their trade with Europe, menacing American ships and pressing their sailors into British service, and encouraging Native Americans to attack settlers in the West. The United States finally declared war against Britain in June of 1812, and their victory at the Battle of New Orleans in January of 1815 ultimately served to increase nationalism and confirm a true American identity.

McLemore's introduction clearly establishes the factors leading to the War of 1812 and the resulting narrative that emerged from America's "glorious victory." This initial discussion contextualizes the chapters that follow, which cover topics such as the role of African Americans and Creoles in the war, the international perspective of the conflict, the commemorative events surrounding the Centennial, and the shaping of the mythic figure of Andrew Jackson. McLemore chooses Donald R. Hickey's aptly titled chapter, "What We Know That Ain't So: Myths of the War of 1812," to explore persistent misconceptions and myths surrounding the war which gradually became part of America's collective memory. Hickey sites historical narratives, such as the importance of the Kentucky Rifle, the potential fate of Louisiana if the battle had been lost, and the possibility of a Canadian invasion, that became muddled and embellished over time, resulting in a mythology that has proven long-lasting.