



Defining the Caymanian Identity: The Effects of Globalization, Economics, and Xenophobia on Caymanian Culture

By Christopher A. Williams

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Defining the Caymanian Identity analyzes the factions and schisms surging throughout the multicultural, multi-ethnic, and polarized Cayman Islands to identify who or what is considered a Caymanian. In the modern world where Caymanian traditions have all but been eclipsed, or forgotten, often due to incoming, overpowering cultural sensibilities, it is a challenge to know where traditional Caymanian culture begins and modern Caymanian culture ends. With this idea in mind, Christopher A. Williams investigates the pervasive effects of globalization, multiculturalism, economics, and xenophobia on an authentic, if dying, indigenous Caymanian culture. This book introduces and expounds the provocative solution that the continued prosperity of the Cayman Islands and their so-called indigenous people may well depend on a synergistic moral link between Caymanianness and foreignness, between Caymanianness and modernity.

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Editorial Review

Review

This book is an insightful study of identity formation, belonging, and indigeneity in the Cayman Islands, a small British dependency in the Caribbean, which has seen high levels of in-migration in recent decades. Its strength is its 'insider' perspective, and its presentation of testimonies from a very wide range of present-day natives and residents of these islands. (Bridget Brereton, Emerita Professor of History, University of the West Indies, St Augustine, Trinidad & Tobago)

The Cayman Islands, known primarily for tourism and financial services, have thus far attracted little scholarly attention, but, as Christopher Williams shows in this insightful study, they are an ideal case study for inquiries into the effects of globalization and multicultural identity formation. Employing methodologies drawn from history, cultural studies, and sociology, Christopher Williams's lucidly written work shows us the highly contested nature of Caymanian history, and communal and individual identity; just as importantly, he demonstrates that developments in the Caymans offer important lessons for the study of the entire Caribbean region. (Natalie Zacek, University of Manchester)

In this impressive study, Williams provides an extensive, enriching, and persuasive account of the encounters and impact of globalization on contemporary Caymanian culture and identity. The breadth of this book's analysis, scope of enquiry, and audacity of its critique will undoubtedly reshape our understanding, and perhaps influence the direction of emerging scholarship on the Caymanian identity. (Abou Jeng, Centre for Research, Development and Social Justice Advocacy)

About the Author

Christopher Williams is assistant professor of history, English, and philosophy at the University College of the Cayman Islands.

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