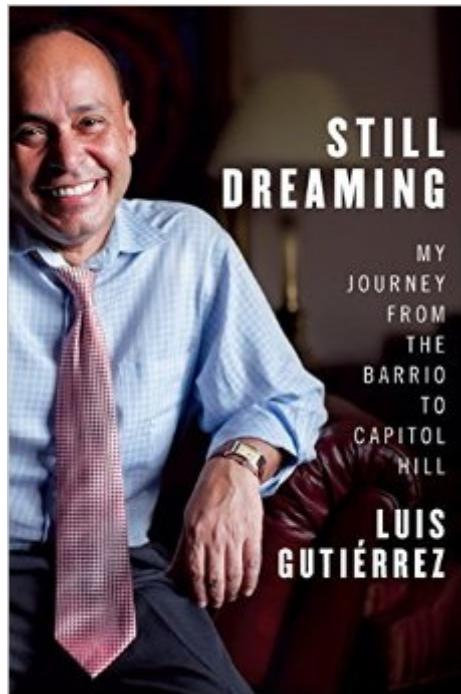


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Still Dreaming: My Journey From The Barrio To Capitol Hill



Synopsis

A candid, savvy, inspiring, and often hilarious memoir by one of America's most fearless political leaders. Beloved by the immigrants and working people whose rights he has championed, eleven-term Congressman Luis Gutierrez is, among Latinos and along with Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, the most recognized Hispanic public figure in America. Here Gutierrez recounts his life between two worlds: too Puerto Rican in America, where he was born and yet was told to "go back to where you came from"; too American in Puerto Rico, where he was ridiculed as a "gringo" who couldn't speak Spanish. For much of his early life, he seemed like the last person who would rise to national prominence. Yet his tremendous will and resilience shaped his varied experiences—from picking coffee beans to driving a cab—into one of the most surprising careers in American politics. He campaigned for Chicago's first black mayor, Harold Washington. Someone threw a Molotov cocktail through the window of his house, and he only grew more committed to reform. Tested in the crucible of the notoriously tough Chicago city council, he earned the nickname "El Gallito": the little fighting rooster. Gutierrez was one of the first Latino public figures to support gay rights; he led the fight to cut Congressional paychecks, hashed out legislation with both Ted Kennedy and John McCain, and fought with Newt Gingrich and George W. Bush. Despite his strong support for Barack Obama in two elections, he has twice been arrested while protesting for immigrants in front of the Obama White House. From recollections of his failures as a teenage activist to his crackling observations of the nautical decor in Kennedy's office and the white-gloved waiters of the Speaker's dining room, Gutierrez is as endearing to the reader as he is sometimes maddening to his colleagues, inspiring us all to stand up for our rights and for those of others. 8 pages of photographs

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The cover of this book, My Journey from the Barrio to Capitol Hill by Luis Gutierrez made me want to read this book. Congressman Luis Gutierrez has such an open and beckoning smile His book tells of his journey as Puerto American in Lincoln Park, Chicago to Puerto Rico and back. He is now in his eleventh term. The book opens with a consequence of going against the political machine. His house was firebombed. His whole family could have been killed. After this dramatic opening, he swings back to when he was growing up in Lincoln Park. The neighborhood was very poor and there were gangs and drugs. When he was growing up, he did not know how to speak Spanish. He could understand what his parents said but could not use the language. Then his parents started buying up expensive things like a new couch and a new stereo. His father who was a cab driver at the time had decided it was time to return his family to Puerto Rico. His father's dream was to have a family restaurant. He was concerned that Luis would join the gangs and never learn about his Puerto Rico Heritage. Luis discovered that Puerto Rico was very different than Lincoln Park. He struggled at first to speak Spanish but mastered it completely later. He learned the value and self-respect that comes with hard work and an understanding of the world of the sugar cane workers. He learned to have pride in his heritage and to court a sweetheart. That is only a glimpse of part of his story. Reading his biography, it is clear why the Comprehensive Immigration Reform is so important to him. He writes of his background and how he came to form his opinions and why he works so passionately to help immigrants.

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