

Historical background of germany and cuba history essay



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The history of my culture is a quite interesting one. I was born a German/Cuban American. Germany and Cuba are two countries that have faced many struggles throughout history, and that's what makes my culture out of the ordinary. In addition, I believe that Germany and Cuba have been two countries that have had to overcome many more obstacles in their history than a lot of other countries have. For instance, Germany and Cuba have both been ruled by dictators. Therefore, Germany and Cuba are very infamous because they have been under control by a fascist and communist government. This helps shape who I am because when I look at my cultures, they have had many struggles, and the struggles I have had to overcome during my lifetime help shape the person I am today.

Historical Background

My German historical background is quite a long one, but there are some quite interesting accomplishments that come with it. For example, The first automobile that was created was created by a German, which is now called Mercedes Benz. Germans have some unique attributes. According to countryreports. org, " Germans are known for being industrious, thrifty, and orderly. Germans also have a strong sense of regional pride, a fact that the German government recognizes and accommodates, and most Germans have a high level of classical education because of the nation's rich heritage in music, history, art, and they expect others to appreciate that heritage." As a result, I feel proud to know that all of these amazing accomplishments came from the German people. Although some people might say, " Germans are a part of Hitler," I believe that's entirely wrong because Hitler was an evil

German, and too many people stereotype that Germans are Nazi's in today's society and that makes me feel very offended.

People you should know

In my German culture there are some people you should know. Ludwig van Beethoven: was a virtuoso pianist and loved composing. Beethoven means a lot to me because I love music so and I appreciate his work. “ Beethoven was born on December 15, 1770, and died on March 27, 1827,” (Kubba, Adam K.). One major thing that Beethoven struggled with was that he was deaf, and this is what I believe makes him a great composer because If you can write music without being able to hear, that is simply astonishing. In my view, Ludwig Van Beethoven was one of the greatest composers in history, and I am proud to say that he was German.

Another Important person you should know is Ferdinand Anst Ernst Porsche. Porsche was born in 1875 and died on 1951. Porsche is important to me and one is because he is the creator of one of the most famous cars built, which is named after him Porsche. In addition, I think you should know Porsche if you want to discover who I truly am. I love automobiles, which of course will make me love the Porsche brand. German car brands are known for being the best cars on the road because of their use of expensive materials and their rigorous build quality. This makes me proud because I have a passion for cars and to know that the best come from your own nation is a very good feeling.

Struggles, Challenges, and traditions

Germans have also had their struggles and challenges. A major challenge for the people of Germany was the cold war, which divided west and south Germany from 1949-1990 because of different political views such as communism, and democracy. Furthermore, Germany has its traditions just like any other country, and the traditions of Germany are quite interesting in my opinion. The holiday Christmas is widely celebrated in Germany, and Germany was the first country to use Christmas tree ornaments. Therefore, I believe that is interesting to know because that is a holiday that is widely celebrated across America and is a part of who I am because I been celebrating Christmas for as long as I can remember being alive.

The German people also hold certain core values. “ The major three are efficiency, organization, and order.” (countryreports. org) However, these core values do not shape who I am because I believe in the American core values. Those values are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness and those values shape who I am today. In addition, I can to relate to some of the traditions that Germany holds such as Christmas. This has always been a tradition in my family and we celebrate this holiday every year. Additionally, my family also uses Christmas tree ornaments to decorate our tree just as many people do in Germany.

The Journey to America and Chicago

The German people have been in America for quite some time now, but they did have reasons for coming to reside here in America. Library. thinkquest. org reports, “ Around the year 1700, Germans started immigrating to the U.

S..... Because the country was repeatedly being attacked.... various armies...
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different nationalities. However, after the year 1800, Germans still poured into the US, but unlike most immigrants Germans did not immigrate for political reasons. Modernization and population growth forced many Germans from their respective family businesses.” That is why Germans came to America, but there were also many that came here to my home town of Chicago for other reasons. “ Many Germans had come to Chicago in the 1830’s-1840 to earn some money to claim a homestead. However, those with skills in demand in the city often stayed. By 1850, Germans constituted one-sixth of Chicago’s population, and until the turn of the century Germans were the largest ethnicity in the city,” (Harzig, Christiane). When discovering those things about my German culture, I was shocked how early we had started immigrating because I always thought the majority came because of Hitler and his Nazis trying to rule Germany. However, that was clearly a misconception.

Historical Timeline of Germans (Maternal)

1918

Germany was declared a republic.

1933

Adolf Hitler appointed chancellor by President Paul von Hindenburg.

1936

Reoccupation of the Rhineland.

1936

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Berlin, Germany hosts Summer Olympic Games.

1936

Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany hosts Winter Olympic Games.

1938

Annexation of Austria.

1938

Sudetenland (largely German-speaking) portion of Czechoslovakia occupied.

1939

Germany occupies Czechoslovakia.

1939

Invasion of Poland and the beginning of World War II in Europe (two days later).

1955

West Germany obtains independence.

1961

The Berlin Wall was built.

1989

The Berlin Wall was demolished and Communist East Germans were able to travel to the West.

1990

East and West Germany was reunited.

(directly copied from <http://www.facts-about.org.uk/history-and-events-timeline-german.htm>)

Brief History and Accomplishments

There is much to say about Cuba's history. For instance, how Fidel Castro overthrew Cuban President Fulgencio Batista and became a communist dictator (Celebrating 50 years of accomplishments). That is probably one of the most known of the many salient points in Cuba's history. So, there is a long history of Cuba, but I want to tell you some major accomplishments from the country of Cuba. The most important accomplishment in my opinion was the Cuban revolution. As a result of this revolution, Cubans have been celebrating fifty one years of freedom from imperialist ruling (Celebrating 50 years of accomplishments) I believe that is a major accomplishment because any foreigner who is living under imperialist rule is more than likely living in fear and that I believe is wrong. However, I do not support Imperialism or any dictators, and believe equality to all is the way all countries should be, but with Fidel Castro being communist I do not see how much could change since the revolution.

According to Richards Owens (author of the Cuban Revolution: Celebrating 50 years of accomplishments), " Cuba has been the world leader in trying to

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overcome major problems in society such as racism, sexism, and homophobia.” I believe that what Owens is saying is great because Cuba strives to overcome these things and these are constant issues in America that have not been resolved. For instance, many young gay men are committing suicides because of the way that people are making them feel. There are many more accomplishments that Cuba has had, but one in particular stood out the most to me and that accomplishment was when Owen said, “ As with education, healthcare in Cuba is completely free.” I believe that is a wonderful thing and the citizens of Cuba should be proud to even have a luxury like that one. Here in America, the Obama administration has just passed healthcare in 2010 and that still does not make it free, so I believe that is a great thing Cuba has going for itself.

Three Unique Attributes

In addition to the many accomplishments that Cuba has had, they also have a few unique attributes. “ One attribute of Cuba is their legendary flowers. Cuba possesses 850 orchid species of flower and there are over 10, 000 specimens,” (thecubaexperience. co. uk). Now that does not mean much to me because I am not very interested in flowers, but I thought that was a very interesting attribute of Cuba to include. In addition, Cuba has another attribute and that is their love for baseball. Here in America baseball is a beloved sport, but in Cuba it is also beloved as well. I believe it is a great attribute to have many great teams and players in Cuba because they can possibly be signed by a Major league Baseball team here in America and thus have a better life that they had back in Cuba.

Finally, one unique attribute that stood out to me is that Cuba is a country known for its Cigars. As portrayed in the widely acclaimed movie of the 1980's "Scarface," Cuba has been known to have quite fine Cigars. This is a very unique attribute because not many countries can make cigars like Cuba. Although this is a very unique attribute, it does not benefit me much because I do not smoke. However, many Americans very much enjoy the Cuban cigar. For instance, my grandfather has always told me "Son there is no cigar like the Cuban cigar," and that is my German grandfather, so that shows that many people enjoy the cigar.

People you should know

There are some interesting people that are Cuban that I want to share with you and they are Fidel Castro, Gilbert Arenas, and Armando Christian Perez. Fidel Castro is a communist dictator born on August 13th of 1926, who took control of Cuba in 1959 (I disapprove of Fidel Castro because I believe that Fidel Castro is wrong in the way that he ran his government in Cuba. For example, Castro disapproved the dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista, yet he became a ruthless leader himself (Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, 6th Edition), so that's why I believe he was wrong because he became a dictator himself even after overthrowing one.

Furthermore, another person of Cuban descent you should know is Gilbert Arenas. Gilbert Arenas is a Professional American Basketball player who was born on January 6th 1982. The reason I mention Gilbert Arenas is because his mother is of Cuban descent, so his original roots trace back to his Cuban ancestors. More importantly, another reason I mentioned Arenas is because I think he is a great player, but he is also very inspiring to me because I love <https://assignbuster.com/historical-background-of-germany-and-cuba-history-essay/>

basketball. The things Arenas does on the court might sometimes seem surreal, but they are happening.

Finally, a person you should know is the Cuban rapper Armando Perez also known as stage name Pitbull. Pitbull is an American rapper who was born I believe he is a perfect example of the opportunity that America brings to the people who are being controlled in Cuba under communist laws. In addition, I believe you should know Pitbull because he is a very famous rapper, and rap music is music that I have always liked since I was a young boy, so to be able say that one of the most famous rappers today is a Cuban makes me proud.

Struggles, challenges, and traditions

There are many struggles and challenges that Cuba has been through, but the one that I want to point out is their struggle for Independence also known as the Spanish-American War. “ That was when Spain lost all of its colonies except for Cuba and Puerto Rico. However, United States declared war on Spain after a U. S warship exploded while visiting Cuba. The U. S won the war after a few months and claimed Cuba, Puerto Rico, The Philippines, and Guam, but Cuba became an independent nation instead of being controlled by the U. S.,” (fcit. usf. edu). So, I believe that it was a bad thing that Cuba became an independent nation because I believe that if the U. S. would have taken control there would be no communist dictators, and less people immigrating to the U. S. because it would be similar to the states.

Although Cuba has had it struggles, they still have certain traditions just like any other countries. My grandmother Patricia had explained to me that one of the traditions we have back in Cuba is the cha cha cha dance, which

originated from the city Havana. I believe that is very interesting to know that your country is the originator of one of the most popular dances of all time here in America. Furthermore, she described that not only did cha cha cha dance originate in Cuba, but mamba and salsa did as well. I believe that is such a wonderful thing to create because so many people love dancing and to be a part of the culture who invented these very famous dances is a very good feeling. Cuba also holds certain core values. According to cal. org “ Cuban values stress collective wealth and collective political awareness, socialist, and believe that there should be guaranteed employment, free Medicare, free education.” I believe that those values are very different from American values and I disapprove of them because even though I am of Cuban descent I believe that the Cuban values seem like non-sense and the American values seem to be the “ right ones.”

Journey to America & Chicago

Cuban Americans have been here in America for a long time, but they did not come to America just to come here. Do research and finish

Although there has been a splurge of Cuban immigrants coming to America, my grandmother came in 1946, and she said that it was too for political reasons, because she and our family did not like what was going on politically with the imperialistic/communist ways, which affected her standard of living. I believe that the Cubans that came over here to America are wise in making that choice because there is more opportunity in America than Cuba in my opinion. So, Cuban immigrants have been coming over too America for quite some time, but there is also reason why many started coming to reside right here in my hometown Chicago, Illinois.

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According to González, Mirza, “ Cubans began migrating to Chicago during the 1950s. A few were attracted by economic opportunities, but most were political dissidents fleeing Fulgencio Batista’s repressive regime so the reason for coming to Chicago is strikingly similar to why Cubans migrated to America,” but I believe that was not even very long ago only sixty years as compared to hundreds for my German Ancestors. However, my great grandmother had told me that we came on a boat in 1946 so; this was even before the big wave to Chicago. I was quite intrigued by what I’ve discovered about the journey because I thought Cubans have been here for hundreds of years, but it turns out they haven’t.

Brief Cuban Historical Timeline

Cuba was first inhabited by Native American Indians

Colonized by the Spanish in the 1500’s

1810 – Overthrow of the king of Spain by Napoleon

The Cuban struggle for independence culminated with the 1898 Spanish-American War which resulted in Cuban Independence from Spain

The USA adopted limited occupation in Cuba up to 1902 but this ended in 1934

In 1959 Fidel Castro led a Communist revolution and the rebel army overthrew the Cuban president Fulgencio Batista

In 1961 a Cuban Communist State was set up with Russian backing

January 1, 1959 Cuban Revolution – Fidel Castro assumes power

December 19, 1960 Cuba openly aligns itself with the Soviet Union and their policies. (directly copied from Facts-about. org. uk/history-and-events-timeline-cuban. htm)

Higher Education of Germans: The journey, the struggles, and the accomplishments

My German culture has one very indulging story on the experience in higher education. In the article “ education” from countrystudies. us, “ German higher education was found in the nineteenth century, and was supported by the state but had primarily been independent, but soon after universities began, the Hitler regime took over and sought to change the educational system in a way that would force schools to teach the views of the government. Those views were to teach students the racist ideology. There were also struggles, which involved Professors not wanting to teach what Hitler was demanding them to and therefore, by 1939 all but six universities were closed in Germany. However, after the Hitler defeat in 1945, Germany sought to rebuild their educational system based on their occupying powers: The United States, Britain, and France, which became West Germany. The views differed from the Western Allies and the rest of Germany, but the view on teaching education for a democracy. Thus, the new system was based on federalism, Individualism, and offered a wide range of educational opportunities as well.” (countrystudies. us).

So, they did accomplish a new educational system for students, but believe that Germany is a country that is on the rise with education, but right now

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just does not rank up there with some of the elite schools in the world. So after discovering that, it makes me happy to live in the U. S. because if I lived with in Germany, I would not have had the opportunity to get an education that is as comprehensive as the one I can receive here. This also shapes my identity because education is a big part of who I am. I am very into school and getting my education. For instance, I wouldn't be in college writing this research paper right now if I wasn't and that is because I had the choice to come to college and I was not forced to. Therefore, education is a significant part of who I am.

One outstanding individual: Albert Einstein

One outstanding individual that I am very happy to write about is the German Genius Albert Einstein. According to Nobel Lectures, Physics 1901-1921, Elsevier Publishing Company, and Amsterdam, 1967, " Albert Einstein was born at Ulm, in Württemberg, Germany, on March 14, 1879. In addition, the article states that, Albert Einstein received honorary doctorate degrees in science, medicine and philosophy from many European and American universities." Those degrees alone show that Einstein had a lot of experience in higher education, and was a very intelligent man. Einstein was known for his theory of relativity, but was also very bright in other areas rather than just one theory alone. With that being said, I believe that Einstein is one outstanding individual who is very popular for his theory and will remain popular for a very long time. Moreover, I believe he makes my German people look good in higher education and he has shown the world that German people can be very intelligent.

Higher education of Cubans: The journey, the struggles, and the accomplishments

Although what is often thought of when people think of Cubans here in America is that they came over on a boat and are just looking for minimum wage jobs, those individuals are assuming wrong about Cubans because they too have a history in higher education's, and are not unintelligent people. According to education. stateuniversity. com, " Cuba's first Universities were initiated between 1962 and 1964 by the government, student, faculty, and party officials. However, Cuba was not very concerned with higher education ten years after the revolution, and only required people to have basic literary education, but that changed as the years went on. In 1975 graduates of higher educations were populating industrial, cultural, social, and governmental institutions as employees and managers. So, this goes to show that Cubans that were pursuing higher education were becoming more involved and making more money. Additionally, the article explains that from 1980 through 1992, higher education flourished in Cuba."

So, Cuba has been on the rise, which is always good when a country can accomplish improving the number of people pursuing education. According to Jason Mitchell, " The gross completion ratio for first-degree studies (the proportion of the overall population at a typical age of graduation that completes a first degree) was 14. 2 per cent in Cuba in 2005 against 40 percent in the UK for the same year, according to Unesco."

Therefore, Cuba has also had its struggles in education, which are relatively current. However, I am a Cuban American that has been fortunate enough to receive the opportunity to pursue a degree in a university with the benefits

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of being an American university. This is beneficial because there is abundant amount of collegiate choices, and I can transfer to any school I want, and use the wide ranges of resources available. As a result, the American education offers more to students and many possible campuses a student can choose from, and America has some of the top colleges in the world.

One Outstanding Individual

One outstanding individual that I want to point out is Celia Cruz. Some people might know Celia Cruz, but some might not. Celia Cruz was born in Havana, Cuba October 21st, 1925 to a family of 14 children. Celia Cruz always said she was drawn to music. So she became a singer. She left Cuba in 1965, and came to the U. S to sing, where her career flourished. Celia Died on July 22, 2003(Karen Juanita Carrillo). Celia Cruz was a great singer and will always be remembered. She means a great deal to my Cuban half of my family, and they absolutely respect and listen to her music. They believe that Celia was one of the Nation's greatest singers of all time, which can hold true if you look at her resume. All in All, Celia Cruz was one outstanding individual with raw talent, and will not be forgotten.

My Families Attainment (German)

When I was growing up, I always thought school was unimportant. However, as I grew older I matured and thought otherwise. The reason I used to believe that is through seeing the failure in my family as far as education is concerned. For example, my mother dropped out of Prosser high school right here in Chicago, Illinois several years ago, but she always told me that she did not want that for me, but I asked her, " Why did you dropout then." She explained that it was due to her getting pregnant, and having to provide for <https://assignbuster.com/historical-background-of-germany-and-cuba-history-essay/>

me and my siblings. However, I believe that she essentially just gave up on school because I see many students even here in college that have kids and still go to class. In addition, she had a roof over her head and was being taken care of, so it is not like she did not have anywhere to stay.

Furthermore, my mother was not the only failure when it comes to education. Many others in my German side have failed as well to succeed in education. My uncle Jeremy, my grandmother Charlotte, my grandfather Anthony, and the list goes on. I am the first one to official go four straight years of high school and attend college. Meaning, from all the people that I have ever known to be my family since being alive, I am the only one to successfully pass all requirements of a high school education, and without a G. E. D., and then continued on into college right after. All in all, My family has faced many challenges with education, but we still manage to make a living, so at least there is something positive.

Although I've mentioned mostly negative facts about my German family's educational experience, I am the first one the first one to even go to college and there is one remarkable experience that I will never forget for the rest of my life. When I was a freshman in high school, my English instructor pulled me to the side of the class on one of the last days of the year and handed me my grade of an A. I was shocked just to receive an A, but what shocked me more is what he told me. He said, " I have never seen a student put so much heart into their class as you did this year in my ten years teaching." I was shocked I did not know what to say, but one thing I did know was that I can be someone, and not like the rest of my family.

My families Attainment (Cubans)

My father is where I get my Cuban descent from, so I did not know much about how my Cuban side faired in education. However, I did not let his distant communication stop me. So, what I did was I called my grandmother (my father's mother) Patricia Ackerman all the way in Bakersfield, California and asked her some questions about how the family does in education. She gave me a considerable amount of information about my family. She had explained to me that my father was one of the only ones in the family to not go to school. I found that to be interesting because that might coincide with the fact that he was never there for me or my brother.

Moreover, Patricia explained that she has a bachelor's degree in accounting from California State University Bakersfield, and her daughter (my aunt) is pursuing bachelors in cosmetics. I was amazed at how successful she seemed to be making my Cuban side sound. She continued on and on about the successes in education, and asked me how I was doing. I told her that I am doing well I am and currently in college. She was very proud and said that is excellent. She also commented " It runs in the family." I did not reply to that comment though because I was not raised by this side and have seen differently.

Furthermore, Patricia explained to me that she had one very memorable experience, but it was negative. She explained to me that when she was in high school everything was falling apart for her, and she did not know what to do. She was recommended to see a school mentor and this mentor helped her make it through high school. She was failing classes, doing drugs, and so on and so forth. However, she told me this mentor changed her life forever

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and she never would have went to college without him. As a result, she gave me some advice saying that whenever you are given the opportunity to seek help, do not be afraid to ask for it, and instead take advantage of it.

Conclusion

Wow, I'm finally at the end of this paper. This paper has been my first true struggle in college, but I put a lot of time and effort into to making it a good paper. I have learned a lot from this paper, and I believe that is what made it so fun even while complicated. I have learned about the many great people of Germany and Cuba and explained some of the bad, such as Fidel Castro from my Cuban side. Furthermore, I discovered one very important message from this exploration. I discovered who I am, I discovered that all of these things that are a part of my culture shape who I am rather I notice it or not. I really believe that I am America, but America is a country of immigrants, a country that has many mixed races that originally derived from other countries. So, what I have discovered through this exploration is that both my German and Cuban culture shape who I am today even though I was born right here in Chicago, Illinois in the United States.

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