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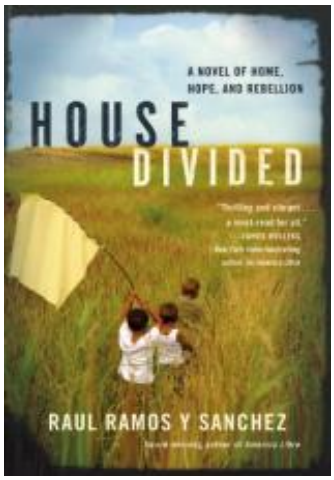
House Divided

by Raul Ramos y Sanchez



About the Book

Once they had a country, a culture, a future. Today, upheaval and betrayal have turned their world upside down. And for one family --- a U.S. war hero, his deeply religious wife, and their impressionable 14-year-old son --- a new struggle has just begun.

Mano Suarez made a choice to fight against injustice, and his wife can only pray for his deliverance. Now their son, Pedro, takes up his father's cause?disappearing into the ranks of a cult-like organization and leaving his family far behind. To rescue him, Mano must face the consequences of his past deeds. But how can he convince his son to give up the very ideals he, Mano, embraced? How can he prove that home and family are the most important ideals of all?

Discussion Guide

1. How do the central characters change during the course of **House Divided**? Who changes the most? Who changes least?

2. Which character did you find most interesting? Which did you identify with most?

3. What surprised you most about a character?

4. Did you find any of the characters disturbing?

5. Was Mano and Pedro?s relationship typical of father and son? What role, if any, do you think ethnicity played in Mano and Pedro?s relationship? Given their very different upbringings, how would you compare Pedro and Sarah?s relationships with their parents?

6. When Sarah is abducted and held in captivity, what effect did the ?Stockholm syndrome? have in her attitude toward Pedro and his family?

7. Do you think an ethnic conflict like that portrayed in **House Divided** could ever take place in the U.S.? If so, what trends present today could lead to such a conflict? And what could we do to avoid the nightmare scenario presented in the novel?

8. How did demagogues and factionalism o n each side escalate the conflict?

9. What did you learn about Hispanic culture from **House Divided**?

10. How do we respect the cultural heritage of the U.S.A.?s diverse people while retaining a unified national identity? In the interest of national unity, should we ignore past injustices like the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II, slavery and Jim Crow segregation, and the annexation of lands from Hispanic landowners following the Mexican-American War?

11. Under the same circumstances, how would you have acted differently than the Latino characters in **House Divided**?

Author Bio

A long-time resident of the U.S. Midwest, Cuban-born Raul Ramos y Sanchez is a founding partner of BRC Marketing established in 1992 with offices in Ohio and California. Besides developing a documentary for public television, *Two Americas: The Legacy of our Hemisphere*, he is host of MyIimmigrationStory.com ? an online forum for the U.S. immigrant community. In his own words: ?The first English word I learned was ?January.? I read it on the calendar thumb-tacked to the wall of our apartment in the Bronx as a seven-year-old. I pronounced it Han-noo-a-ree. I?ve managed to learn a few more English words since.?

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