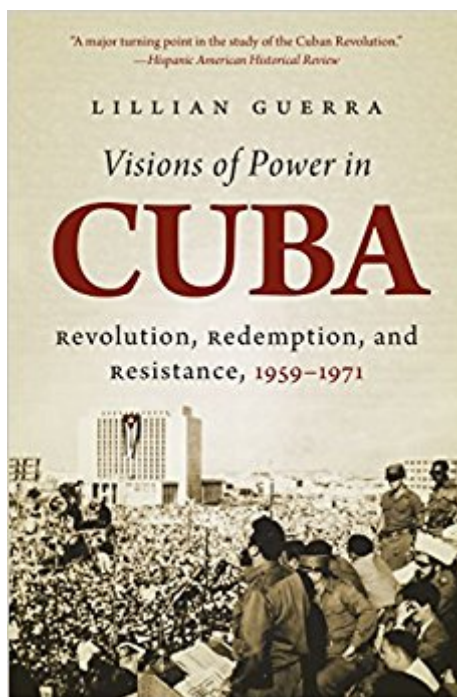




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Visions Of Power In Cuba: Revolution, Redemption, And Resistance, 1959-1971 (Envisioning Cuba)



Synopsis

In the tumultuous first decade of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro and other leaders saturated the media with altruistic images of themselves in a campaign to win the hearts of Cuba's six million citizens. In *Visions of Power in Cuba*, Lillian Guerra argues that these visual representations explained rapidly occurring events and encouraged radical change and mutual self-sacrifice. Mass rallies and labor mobilizations of unprecedented scale produced tangible evidence of what Fidel Castro called "unanimous support" for a revolution whose "moral power" defied U.S. control. Yet participation in state-orchestrated spectacles quickly became a requirement for political inclusion in a new Cuba that policed most forms of dissent. Devoted revolutionaries who resisted disastrous economic policies, exposed post-1959 racism, and challenged gender norms set by Cuba's one-party state increasingly found themselves marginalized, silenced, or jailed. Using previously unexplored sources, Guerra focuses on the lived experiences of citizens, including peasants, intellectuals, former prostitutes, black activists, and filmmakers, as they struggled to author their own scripts of revolution by resisting repression, defying state-imposed boundaries, and working for anti-imperial redemption in a truly free Cuba.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A product of her pain-staking research methods and appreciation for nuance, Lillian Guerra's latest

book is an ambitious and clear-eyed analysis of the Cuban Revolution, charting its progress from the dizzying euphoria of Fidel Castro's initial ascent to power through the gradual disillusionment brought on by the reality of an increasingly entrenched and insular Revolutionary regime. Guerra begins her book by pointing out that, "today, even Fidel is a counterrevolutionary" - the epithet used by the regime to discredit political dissidents. This thesis statement encapsulates the rest of the book, which deals with the sad reality that the promise of revolution often curdles into a new normal of unfulfilled potential as idealistic reformers become institutionalized. Guerra's work gives voice to groups and individuals who are often drowned out by the fevered discourse between Fidel Castro's most strident supporters and detractors. The protagonists of this story are those who exist in a gray area, embracing the ideas of the Revolution while chafing against its excesses of social control.

Although still reading her thorough work that seeks to understanding the culture of the Cuban revolution (and power more generally), I can already say it is one of the most interesting approaches to be published over at least the last two decades.

No academic -- or probably anyone else for that matter -- is writing more thoughtfully, subtly, and surprisingly about Cuba than Lillian Guerra. This is for people who really want to understand the first years of the Cuban Revolution.

As most of you know from viewing our page R. E. Lee Photography on FB that we have a real affinity for Cuba. I think for me it is about the resilience of the human race to adjust to external pressures that life seems to bring to their way of life and to overcome those pressures. It's strange how things come into your life and create an itch that you just have to scratch. After our first trip back in 2012 I have read numerous books on Cuba but they all sort of dealt with the beginning of the revolution and how all of that happened. But what happened after the initial chaos? This book by Lillian Guerra is filling in the reality of what all that meant. Pull back the curtain and there is that human spirit that may have good intentions but is saddled with the desire to control others with their vision and who knows what other human foibles are at work here. Are the good intentions the real reason or is that old human malady of control of others and greed for power and treasures the underlying factor? Who knows as it is all complicated to me. But if you have an interest in Cuba you must read this book. It is fascinating to me. I highly recommend Ms. Guerra's book.

very informative but dense book. I learned a lot.

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