

body of slave-Maroon-Black Amazonian peasants. Yet even for reading Black Amazonian identity on these present, corporeal archives of reality, *The People of the River* provides an inspiring illustration of how time and social processes can become environmentally substantiated, and how the futile words of current politics in Brazil are swallowed by the depths of its immense history.

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Anne Luke, *Youth and the Cuban Revolution: Youth Culture and Politics in 1960s Cuba*

(Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2018), pp. xviii + 161, \$60.00, hb.

Julie Bunck

University of Louisville

Anne Luke's *Youth and the Cuban Revolution* offers a fresh analysis of the complex relationship between the Cuban Revolution's leadership and the island's youth. Although an ample body of interdisciplinary scholarship has already addressed the subject of youth in revolutionary Cuba, most of these studies comprised a small slice of larger works on the Revolution. Luke's book offers a broader, more holistic and nuanced account of the relationship between the Cuban leadership and the island's youth.

The first chapters provide an overview of the regime's obsession with youth as the central player in Fidel Castro's goal to mould a 'new man'. The leaders argued that the island's young people represented, in Che Guevara's terms, the 'purest of ideals' and 'the pliable clay out of which the new man [...] can be fashioned' (p. 25). Youths, the revolutionary leaders insisted, remained untainted by capitalist society and could be re-educated into pure, 'perfect products of the Revolution' (p. 27). The leadership's effort sought nothing less than selflessness, sacrifice and purity, indeed perfection, among Cuban youth. The ensuing chapters review this ambitious effort, focusing particularly on the first decade, before the regime yielded to Soviet pressure after the 1970s economic collapse.

Luke details how the problem of non-compliant youth increasingly frustrated the regime. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Castro continued to rail aggressively against youth recalcitrance, long after the leadership's idealism regarding the role of youth had faded. The effort to make young people the engine to propel the Revolution toward success remained unrelenting. As Luke argues, youth became for the Castro government both the problem and the solution, and this tension continued to plague the government over the decades.

Eventually the leadership discovered that while many Cuban youths cultivated the attitudes outlined by the state – some because they were believers, others because they understood that such behaviour was their ticket to join the elite

class and its markedly higher standard of living – other young people remained less accommodating to the regime's demands. Castro and his cohort thus encountered among youths truants, underachievers, the lazy and less committed. In fact, the numbers of uncooperative youths must have been quite significant, as they triggered among the leaders what Luke labels a 'moral panic'.

This panic prompted ever-greater efforts to bring about conformity. As Luke explains, 'there was significant alarm about those young people who were expressing themselves entirely outside the new revolutionary identity'. Most tellingly, the leaders viewed this kind of behaviour as not only unacceptable but positively beyond reform. 'To reverse the descent into deviance', Luke explains, 'would be impossible' (p. 33). Thus, the leadership initiated aggressive intervention to prevent such an outcome. At one end of the spectrum, an array of policies, including militarising the re-education process and combining education and work, were advanced to promote discipline and physical training. At the other end, the government turned to ever more coercive responses, introducing forced labour camps and an anti-vagrancy law that required those not working to spend up to two years in a 're-education centre' (p. 52).

Luke offers an especially careful analysis of the complex evolution of the various political youth organisations on the island during the first decade of the Revolution. We learn how these organisations vied with each other, differed in ideology and objectives and experienced tensions between university-student organisations and more general organisations of younger youth.

Luke showcases the exceptional characteristics of the Cuban Revolution. In particular, she points to the youthfulness of the Revolution and the critical role the leaders reserved for youth. She argues that the leaders themselves, young and vivacious, offered prime role-model material for the island's youngsters, at least for the first decade. Moreover, she asserts that the Revolution's youthful appeal drew, in part, from a broader global youth awakening that in the United States produced the hippie movement, the Civil Rights Movement, women's rights groups and ultimately the anti-war protests. Although the regime rejected these US examples as 'bourgeois' forms of youth movements that snubbed authority and failed to provide an acceptable example for the island's youth, young Cubans did follow these global political activities closely.

Might Luke overstate the exceptional nature of the Castro regime's energetic focus on youth? The Cuban revolutionary regime was by no means the first twentieth-century authoritarian government to target youths aggressively as a malleable 'blank slate' to be shaped into militarised, disciplined, obedient disciples of the state. Indeed, the government's aggressive social engineering of youth very much followed the examples of dictatorial regimes of the past. In a 1920 address to the Congress of the Russian Young Communist League, Lenin explained that the goal of Russia's schools would be to imbue youths with communist ethics and to organise and unite them behind the goals and values of the state. Likewise, the central role of Mao's Red Guard in China's many brutal cultural campaigns stands out as a central feature of the Chinese Revolution. Mao sent nearly 20 million uncooperative youths to the countryside to be 're-educated', many of whom did not survive. Hitler, too, compelled young Germans to join Nazi organisations in which youngsters would be transformed into obedient, loyal, disciplined, physically

strong and militarily-trained supporters. Through the Hitler Youth organisation, which attracted the participation of as much as 90 per cent of German youth, the state controlled virtually all educational, vocational and recreational opportunities. It effectively coordinated propaganda and utilised carrot-and-stick techniques, much like the Cuban leaders did. Hitler demanded that his young disciples be disciplined, fit and trim: 'A young German must be as swift as a greyhound, as tough as leather, and as hard as Krupp's steel.'

In the end, the Cuban regime's effort to educate youths, to control every aspect of their lives and to rely on them to transform society failed miserably. Cuban youth proved less willing to follow the dictates of the regime than youngsters did in other societies that assigned youth a transformative role. Many of Cuba's youths appeared to be more independent, less deferential to authority and markedly less enamoured by the promises of the revolutionary state. I would suggest it was not so much revolutionary Cuba's focus on moulding youth that was exceptional; instead, what was truly exceptional was the extent to which Cuban youth culture resisted these changes.

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Alison Fraunhar, *Mulata Nation: Visualizing Race and Gender in Cuba*

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Bonnie A. Lucero
University of Houston

Mulata Nation explores representations of the *mulata* in Cuba and parts of its diaspora between the mid-nineteenth century and today. The book captures a series of snapshots of key moments throughout this period through an analysis of a broad range of visual and performative texts, including *marquillas cigarreras* (illustrated cigarette wrappers), popular theatrical productions, popular magazine covers, film, art and photography. Alison Fraunhar contends that these evolving images of the *mulata* serve as markers of Cuban national identity and reflect the values, ideologies and agendas of the historical moment in which they were created.

The book is arranged into five substantive chapters. Chapters 1, 3, 4 and 5 each examine a specific form of artistic representation and a distinct time period, while Chapter 2 covers a broader chronological frame, and a range of artistic genres.

Chapter 1 sets an important foundation for the book by introducing some of the key images and tropes that characterised Cuban *costumbrismo*, and continued to reverberate in the art of subsequent periods. In Chapter 1, Fraunhar situates her analysis of mid-nineteenth-century *marquillas cigarreras* within a broader