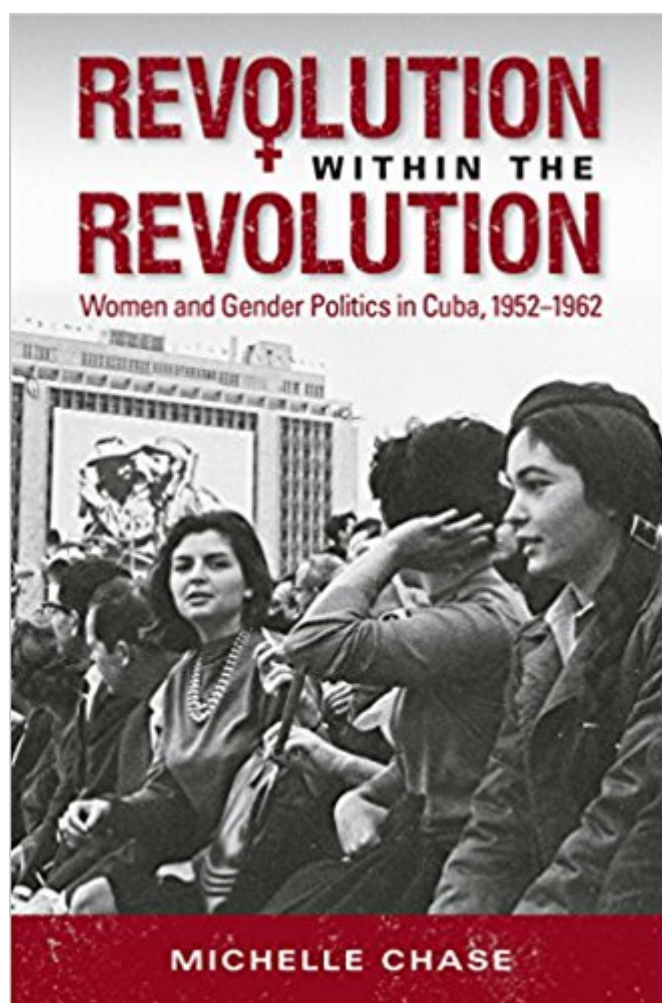


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Revolution Within The Revolution: Women And Gender Politics In Cuba, 1952-1962 (Envisioning Cuba)



Synopsis

A handful of celebrated photographs show armed female Cuban insurgents alongside their companeros in Cuba's remote mountains during the revolutionary struggle. However, the story of women's part in the struggle's success has only now received comprehensive consideration in Michelle Chase's history of women and gender politics in revolutionary Cuba. Restoring to history women's participation in the all-important urban insurrection, and resisting Fidel Castro's triumphant claim that women's emancipation was handed to them as a "revolution within the revolution," Chase's work demonstrates that women's activism and leadership was critical at every stage of the revolutionary process. Tracing changes in political attitudes alongside evolving gender ideologies in the years leading up to the revolution, Chase describes how insurrectionists mobilized familiar gendered notions, such as masculine honor and maternal sacrifice, in ways that strengthened the coalition against Fulgencio Batista. But, after 1959, the mobilization of women and the societal transformations that brought more women and young people into the political process opened the revolutionary platform to increasingly urgent demands for women's rights. In many cases, Chase shows, the revolutionary government was simply formalizing popular initiatives already in motion on the ground thanks to women with a more radical vision of their rights.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A work that should attract not only historians of the Cuban Revolution but anyone interested in

gender and the history of women in Latin America.--Alfonso Salgado, Nuevo Mundo Mundos Nuevos[A]n altogether excellent, informative, and essential book: an opening salvo in a conversation that, as Chase convincingly demonstrates, was long overdue.--Jennifer Lambe, Assistant Professor of History, Brown University, NACLAThe research for this book is extensive, and Chase is evenhanded in her collection and interpretation of the materials.--American Historical ReviewAn innovative and accessible text that underscores the possibility and malleability of early moments of revolution.--Hispanic American Historical ReviewChase's nuanced analysis of the centrality of gender politics to revolutionary struggle merits praise for opening up a promising new direction in the study of the Cuban Revolution, and for reinvigorating dialogue about the Revolution's social legacy in this momentous time in US-Cuban relations.--Choice

Michelle Chase challenges both official and anti-Castro accounts of women's roles during the critical periods of anti-Batista activism, the armed stage of the Cuban Revolution, and the consolidation of the Castro regime, demonstrating how both gender ideologies and women's activism pushed the revolutionary movement in new directions. Chase argues convincingly that women activists led--rather than followed--many of the revolutionary government's most important policy changes.--Jocelyn Olcott, Duke UniversityEngaging, well written, and well argued, this is an important intervention in debates about gender, sexuality, the family, and political struggle in the Cuban Revolutionary victory of 1959.--Carrie Hamilton, Roehampton University

Insightful, thought provoking. Well worth the read for a different perspective on a historic event, one that we never get a chance to normally see

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