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Inside El Barrio: A Bottom-Up View of Neighborhood Life in Castro's Cuba

Henry Louis Taylor

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Inside El Barrio: A Bottom-Up View of Neighborhood Life in Castro's Cuba Henry Louis Taylor
* Revealing portrait of daily life in Cuba that explores how the socialist system has operated on the ground over the last two decades
* Shows how social networks and neighborhoods were critical in sustaining Fidel’s regime while other socialist countries were collapsing in the late 80s

The abrupt collapse of the Soviet Union and the East European Communist Bloc in 1989 plunged Cuba into a catastrophic economic crisis that spawned unprecedented hardship, magnified social tensions, and emigration in the thousands. In July 1990, a somber Fidel Castro called upon the masses to prepare for a sustained period of hard times.

Inside El Barrio charts the legacy of Fidel Castro through the unique lens of Cuban household life during El Período Especial (the Special Period). Taylor traverses the neighborhoods and residential developments of Havana between 1989 and 2006, the final and most complex period in the "Age of Castro’s Cuba" to uncover the hidden vibrancy of Cuba’s streets and citizens. In doing so, he acquires a deeper understanding of Cuban society by exploring what it means to live in a people-centered nation and the importance of neighborhoods in shaping everyday life and culture.

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