Cuban-American political leaders such as Senator Marco Rubio were among the most vocal critics of Cuban "welfare chiselers" as opposed to "real refugees" (meaning themselves and their forebears). Meanwhile, these same Cuban-American Cold Warriors continued to wield significant influence over US foreign policy, insisting on the maintenance and tightening of harsh sanctions against Cuba (209–10).

By the dawn of the twenty-first century, Cuban immigrants had come to see themselves as Cuban-Americans, even while clinging to the label of exile, thereby asserting "a powerful narrative" as a psychological, social, and political identity (214). Using extensive national and local archives, Castro succeeds in presenting a complex history of the evolution of Miami, rejecting the view that it should be seen as "a curious outlier" (22). Although he recognizes that Miami's economic transformation had "distinctive characteristics," he argues that the city's "underlying structures" should be seen as mirroring "broader trends in urban development during the postwar period, particularly in the South" (7).

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Cuba's Transformations from the 1980s to the Present

How Things Fall Apart: What Happened to the Cuban Revolution. By Elizabeth Dore. Durham: Duke University Press, 2023. Pp. 352. $109.95 cloth; $29.95 paper; $29.95 eBook.

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Cuba has been in a downward spiral for the past few years. In July 2021, mass street protests signaled widespread popular discontent. Since then, the island has undergone a staggering exodus as more than a million people have left—the largest migratory wave in the nation's history. How did we get here? While the perfect storm wrought by coronavirus disease (COVID), increased US sanctions, and ill-timed domestic economic reforms provide an immediate answer, Elizabeth Dore's book shows that the makings of the current crisis stretch back years, even decades. Told through the life stories of seven Cubans, mostly born in the 1970s and 1980s, the book is a rich and evocative chronicle of Cuba's dramatic transformations from the 1980s to the present.

This project has long been anticipated among scholars of Cuba, and it is bittersweet to see the book finally reach print after Dore's 2022 death. The expectation was warranted: This is the most ambitious oral history project conducted on the island in decades. With significant funding and the support of Cuban authorities (at least at first), Dore and her team enjoyed unprecedented access, interviewing nearly 125 people, often multiple times, from 2005 to 2016. The resulting material is fascinating, for capturing not only the narrators' lived experiences from the 1980s up to the present but also how narrators' own perceptions changed over time. For example, in the 2000s, interviewees were hesitant to use the term

"racism" to describe the inequalities they experienced during their childhoods, but 10 years later many denounced racism more clearly. Similarly, by that time it was possible for people to assert the once-taboo idea that the revolution had not lifted them out of poverty. As one narrator says, "I've been poor since the day I was born" (109).

The book offers an unflinchingly critical assessment of post-Soviet Cuba. As the island suffered economic catastrophe after Soviet subsidies evaporated, "the leadership that came to power after Fidel introduced market measures," Dore argues, instead of "laying the foundation for a self-sustaining socialist economy" (1). When it became clear that market forces would end up enriching only a small minority, leaving the majority behind, "the leadership relied on repression and emigration to maintain control" (3). That repression fell hardest on the Afro-Cuban poor, who were largely left out of the emerging private sector oriented toward tourism and services. As a result, Dore finds, many Cubans gave up on the revolution's early promise of equality entirely, calling for individual political rather than collective social rights. "Socialism in Cuba is over, at least for the time being," she concludes (320).

Dore's analysis emphasizes the transition from the more idealistic *fidelistas* to the more market-oriented *raulistas* once Raúl Castro succeeded his brother in 2006. But the oral histories do not always reflect such a clear turning point. Interviewees describe the traumatic depravations of the 1990s and the stark inequalities that emerged, especially between those with family abroad and those without. Some also describe severe hardships and class inequality in the 1980s, which is perhaps surprising given that many Cubans remember that decade as a relatively prosperous and egalitarian period. Indeed, the memories expressed here challenge a number of assumptions about the pre-1990 period, but it is unclear whether this reflects our generalized misunderstanding of the 1980s or how interviewees see things in retrospect, through the prism of disillusionment and exhaustion.

The book left me with other questions, some of which perhaps reflected the book's organization. Why these seven individuals? How representative or exceptional are their stories? What patterns did the team find among the 124 interviewees? Structured around individuals' stories in three periods—the 1980s, the Special Period (1990–2006), and the rise of market reforms (2006–20)—Dore's analysis is lightly interspersed throughout the stories, sometimes making it hard to sustain analysis of a given theme or period. Dore also weaves in stories about her own team, including occasional tensions or misunderstandings between her Cuban assistants and the narrators. These anecdotes are illuminating in their own right, as is the meta-story of Dore's interactions with Cuban officialdom. This material and some of Dore's overarching analysis might have been usefully separated into an extended analytical introduction.

What I most enjoyed were the long sections where Dore gave her interviewees free reign to expound on their often surprising lived experiences and their sometimes idiosyncratic views. Those passages give readers the privilege of listening in on free-flowing

conversations in which Cubans grapple with the difficulties of the present and uncertainties of the future. As one young documentary filmmaker muses, pondering how little people have to show for the sacrifices they made: "I don't have the solution. I don't know if there is a solution" (249). It is a simple statement that reveals the immense challenges Cuba faces.

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CHILE'S MIDDLE CLASSES

Identity Investments: Middle-Class Responses to Precarious Privilege in Neoliberal Chile. By Joel Phillip Stillerman. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2022. Culture and Economic Life Series. Pp. 304. $95.00 cloth; $32.00 paper.
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The working class and the urban and rural poor have been the subjects of much scholarship on Chile over the past century. With some notable exceptions, the middle class has largely been neglected; in some cases, authors attempting to cover class in Chilean history and society seem to be uneasy and unsure about how to treat the middle class. In recent years though, scholars have turned to the middle class as a subject worthy of study. Through interviews and participant observation from 2008 to 2010, Joel Phillip Stillerman's book takes the reader into the world of middle-class Chile in the early twenty-first century.

Stillerman develops four categories of middle-class people in Chile: activists, moderate Catholics, pragmatists, and youngsters. Even though differences exist within each group, they are held together by their members' analysis of, and action around, neoliberalism and culture. This gets to the central theoretical category in the book: identity investments, defined as "the set of motivations and practices that guide economic decisions so that they affirm individuals' deeply held values" (7). Importantly, these identity investments not only intersect with class, but also with political and religious ideas, much of which are "preexisting" and help to shape action and self-perception (8). Stillerman's second main theoretical push is precarious privilege, a "relative prosperity alongside their [middle-class] fragile hold on their occupational positions" (10).

One of the problems of working on the middle class is defining the category itself. Stillerman divides the middle class into upper and lower, using factors such as education level and income. Although this is not my area of expertise, I do wonder about the limits of the category because these parameters classify half of the population as middle class.