

strong presence to struggling to survive after the almost total obliteration of the tobacco industry, the returning Latinx World War II veterans who chose the suburbs, and the displacement for what the city coined as “urban renewal.” A sobering historical moment was when Fidel Castro sought to evoke the pro-independence spirit of Tampa and Ybor City, only to find distrust and a lack of support. As McNamara notes, “[n]ot only had Ybor City changed in terms of its needs and interests, but the culture of activism and collective organization had moved beyond models that relegated women to the sidelines” (162).

The book feels politically urgent even as it offers a historical overview of Ybor City. At a moment when Latinx peoples are becoming the largest minoritized group in the United States, the book offers a window into the plurality and porosity of our history. Although it is a history of Ybor City, the author does an outstanding job of pointing out the transnational connections to Cuba as well. Although I have only praised the book thus far, I would note that sometimes women escape the narrative. Of course, this might not be the author’s fault; it might have been due to the silences of the archives she was using.

Overall, this book is an outstanding accomplishment and a welcome contribution not only to Latinx history, but also to the histories of radicalism, labor, and women’s studies in the Greater Caribbean.

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DOMESTIC LABOR AND RACIAL DEMOCRACY IN MODERN CUBA

Hierarchies at Home: Domestic Service in Cuba from Abolition to Revolution. By Anasa Hicks.
 New York: Cambridge University Press, 2022. Pp. 202. \$ 99.99 cloth.
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Over the past two decades, innovative scholars have challenged the dominance of white, male, middle-class experiences in Cuba’s historical narratives (e.g., see: Takkara Brunson, *Black Women, Citizenship, and the Making of Modern Cuba* [2021]; Bonnie A. Lucero, *Revolutionary Masculinity and Racial Inequality: Gendering War and Politics in Cuba* [2018]; and Devyn Spence Benson, *Antiracism in Cuba: The Unfinished Revolution* [2016]). Anasa Hicks’s new book significantly advances this crucial trend. In six crisply written chapters, Hicks investigates the experiences of Cuba’s domestic workers—those who cleaned homes, chauffeured the wealthy, and cared for elite children—from the abolition of slavery on the island in 1886 through the 1959 revolution that toppled the brutal dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista. In 1867, Cuba officially ended its participation in the slave trade, but “the peculiar institution” was not

abolished on the island until 1886. Twelve years later, the US victory in the Spanish-American War ended Spain's colonial dominance over Cuba; on May 20, 1902, Cuba attained its independence from the United States.

As Hicks points out early on, “[i]n exploring the myth and the reality of domestic service in Cuba, this book reveals that intimate relationships between domestics and their employers folded racialized and gendered hierarchies into *cubanidad*—the condition of being Cuban—throughout the twentieth century” (2). At the core of Hicks’s study is the assertion that Cuba’s public declarations of modernity and “racelessness” contrasted markedly with a domestic sphere where racialized and gendered master-servant relations thrived. In the conclusion, she sums up the wider, hemispheric paradox that Cuba’s circumstances exemplify: “A central tension in the histories of the Americas has been the persistence of racialized hierarchies in the context of democratic governments” (172).

Chapter 1 examines Cuban perceptions of domestic labor in relation to discourses of hygiene, honor, and morality during the first decade following independence. The following chapter explores the ways Black Cubans developed strategies of resistance to assert their citizenship rights in the new republic. The book’s third chapter looks at rising labor activism in the early twentieth century, detailing the often-problematic solutions proposed by the state and the Catholic Church to persistent workplace grievances. Chapter 4 discusses the exclusion of domestic workers from progressive labor reforms. The book’s final two chapters carry readers into the era of revolution from 1959 onward. The newly ascendant government employed a discourse of “rescue” when liberating domestics from “lifetimes of drudgery.” In Hicks’s apt phrasing: “People who worked in domestic service had lives more complex than the revolutionary narrative let on. They did not need rescuing. But rescue them the revolution did” (130).

Hicks uses a matrix of archival sources, periodicals, oral history interviews with women who worked as domestics, and published primary sources to read against the grain. Thus, Hicks opens new doors and windows onto the myth of racial democracy in modern Cuba. This important book offers a counternarrative to the persistent claim that domestics are apolitical or conservative defenders of the status quo. In sum, this is a book that offers much food for thought to historians of the Caribbean and the wider Americas.

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