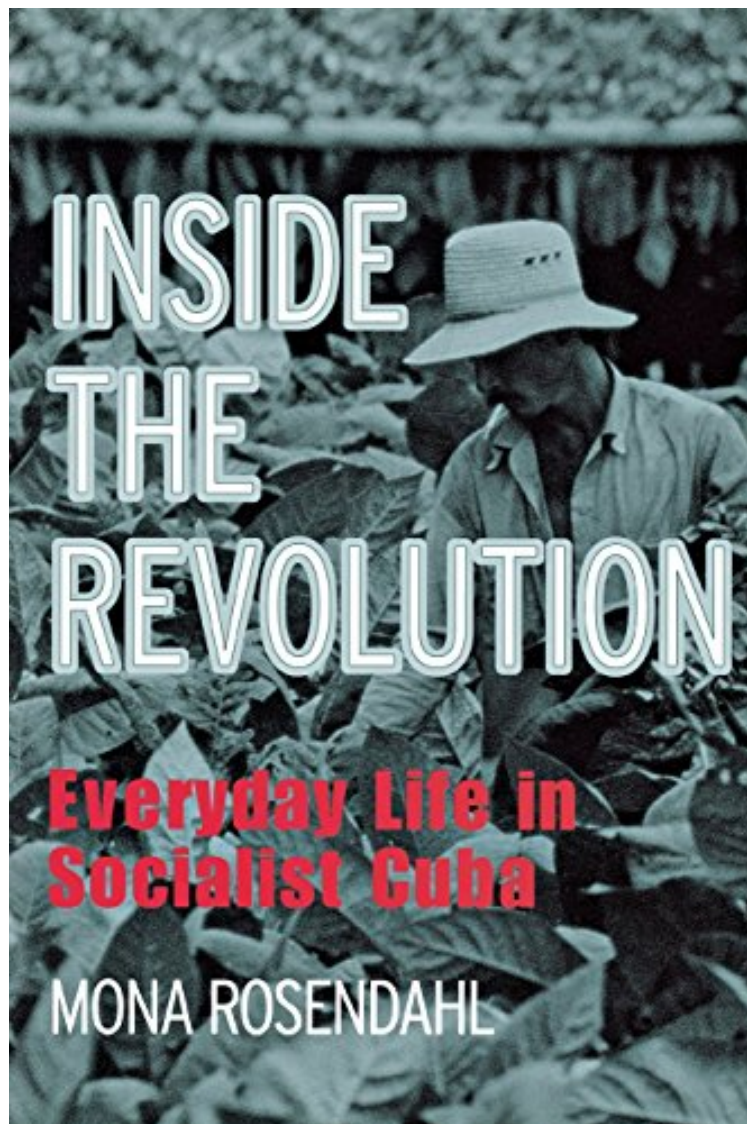


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Inside the Revolution: Everyday Life in Socialist Cuba (The Anthropology of Contemporary Issues)

Mona Rosendahl

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Mona Rosendahl : Inside the Revolution: Everyday Life in Socialist Cuba (The Anthropology of Contemporary Issues) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Inside the Revolution: Everyday Life in Socialist Cuba (The Anthropology of Contemporary Issues):

10 of 13 people found the following review helpful. In Defense of this book By A Customer This book does read like a

master's thesis, in that it is full of statistics and survey results, and has an opening and a conclusion. Despite the sometimes academic style of writing, this book provides an important service: it answers the question, "What is it like to live under Fidel? What does the Revolution mean to everyday Cubans?" Rosendahl makes it clear that this study is based on her experience while living in a small town in a fairly agricultural area, and does not necessarily reflect the feelings of Cubans living in Havana, and certainly makes no comment on the outlook of Cuban exiles in the US. What it does do is give as broad and balanced a perspective as possible of how the communist revolution affects aspects of everyday life, such as schooling, shopping, and interpersonal relationships. The study took place in the 1980's, so it is only in the brief epilogue that Rosendahl has a chance to comment on the devastating effects of the collapse of the Soviet Union. In response to the previous reviewer, the feminist notions that Rosendahl presents are that women are equal to men, and the claims that socialism has been good for Cuba in part can be easily supported by standard of living statistics available from the UN. In conclusion, though the style could be improved, this book provides unique insight into life in Communist Cuba.

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. This book reads like a master's thesis and the author's determination to prove ...By CustomerThis book reads like a master's thesis and the author's determination to prove that socialism has worked from the very beginning is somewhat disturbing. Her use and blind acceptance of official Cuban government statistics makes her either very naive or intellectually dishonest. Don't bother.

17 of 30 people found the following review helpful. In Defence of the RevolutionBy Kevin A. KruseMs. Rosendahl's book reads more like a master's thesis than an informative book. It was apparent to this reader that she started with strong feminist and socialist tendencies which caused the conclusions to be less than candid. Expect a book that starts with preconceived notions that socialism is a very good thing and that without Castro's revolution there would have been no progress in Cuba in the last thirty years. Overall a very dry boring work that was difficult to follow. Many of her conclusions will ring very false with anyone who has visited Cuba in the last eight years or has the ability to form objective opinions of the state of the people.

The first ethnographic study of life in Cuba to emerge in over twenty years, *Inside the Revolution* offers a rare, close view of how socialist ideology translates into everyday experience in one Cuban municipality. Mona Rosendahl draws on eighteen months of fieldwork, in a municipality she calls by the fictional name Palmera, to present a vivid account of the lives and thoughts of residents, many of whom have lived inside the revolution for more than thirty-five years. In Palmera, support for the socialist program remains strong. Rosendahl attributes continuing loyalty to four conditions: improvements in the standard of living from 1959 to 1990, the uniformity and omnipresence of political communications from the government, a historical emphasis on local participation in the revolution, and the consistency of revolutionary ideals with traditional machista expectations and practices. Through an analysis of ideology and practice in contemporary Cuba, Rosendahl documents how its citizens support the present political system, and how reciprocal economics between households and ideas about gender both reinforce and challenge that system. Rosendahl also explains how those who oppose state socialism resist participation in society through inaction or withdrawal.

"It is remarkable that of the hundreds of books published in recent decades on Cuba, so few have provided detail about the impact of Castro's regime on ordinary Cubans. Rosendahl's book does so, and for this reason is an invaluable contribution. . . . *Inside the Revolution* looks at family matters, marriage and work, household economies, bureaucracy, and the concept of mobilization, among other subjects. . . . Attractively printed . . . interesting photographs."Choice

"Rosendahl, a Swedish anthropologist, has written a rare close-up analysis of how the ideology of the Cuban revolution translates itself into everyday experience. Her study of a municipality in Oriente province provides a nuanced antidote to those who would argue that the regime no longer enjoys grassroots support."Kenneth Maxwell, *Foreign Affairs*

"This book not only contributes substantively to our understanding of what the Cuban revolution has meant to its people, but it offers invaluable methodological insight into the challenges of ethnographic research in a society where critical discourse is more tightly controlled. . . . This book not only informs, but entreats students of political economy, Latin cultures, gender roles, and social stratification to go beyond their preconceived ideas and take a systematic, firsthand look at Cuban socialism's strengths and weaknesses. Rosendahl's observations and insights into Cuban life as well as her experiences in doing research in such a unique society should prove invaluable to a wide audience."Contemporary Sociology

"*Inside the Revolution* is a seriously researched and . . . well-written monograph."Gert Oostinde, *New West Indian Guide*. 1999.

"Rosendahl's overall focus is ideology understood broadly as a set of ideas that deals with society and social relations in terms of what is, what ought to be, and what may be. However, her aim is to demonstrate how the official political ideology is met and interpreted from a local point of view. Thus, she not only examines the premises and contents of the official ideology, but also examines how the ideology is codified and experienced in everyday life."Marit Melhuus, *University of Oslo. Ethnos* Vol. 64:3, 1999

"Rosendahl's ethnography takes readers to a place and time when Cubans suffered fewer hardships and shared a stronger faith in the Castro government: Oriente province in the late 1980s. . . . The study analyzes the transmission of socialist ideology, its translation into practice, and its refashioning into a 'folk version' of the official revolutionary

discourse by ordinary Cubans. . . Her observations and interviews offer rare and valuable insights into life in provincial Cuba."Michael Snodgrass, Indiana University-Purdue University, *Latin American Research* , Vol. 36, No. 3, 2001