

## Cuban Privilege

For over half a century, the United States granted Cubans, one of the largest immigrant groups in the country, unique entitlements. While other unauthorized immigrants faced detention, deportation, and no legal rights, Cuban immigrants were able to enter the country without authorization, and have access to welfare benefits and citizenship status. This book is the first to reveal the full range of entitlements granted to Cubans. Initially privileged to undermine the Castro-led revolution in the throes of the Cold War, one US President after another extended new entitlements to Cubans, even in the post-Cold War era. Drawing on archival, interview, and survey data, *Cuban Privilege* highlights how Washington, in the process of privileging Cubans, transformed them from agents of US Cold War foreign policy into a politically powerful force influencing national policy. By comparing with the exclusionary treatment of neighboring Haitians, the book discloses the racial and political biases embedded in US immigration policy.

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Susan Eva Eckstein  
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*The Making of Immigrant Inequality in America*

SUSAN EVA ECKSTEIN

*Boston University*



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*To Meera, Reena, Deven, Ellis, and Aubrey  
With love for the joy you provide and in anticipation  
of the world you will improve*

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## Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>page</i> ix
<i>Preface: Privileged Cubans</i>	xi
<i>List of Acronyms</i>	xxv
1 The Making of Cuban Immigration Exceptionalism, 1959–1979	1
2 The Privileging of Cuban Immigrants in the United States, 1959–1979	43
3 The Immigration Crisis of 1980: Carter Administration Privileging of Cubans Anew, Spillover Benefits for Haitians	74
4 Delinking Cubans from Haitians: The Deepening of Cuban Privileging and the Turn against Haitians under the Reagan and Bush I Administrations	127
5 Taking with One Hand, Giving with the Other: Clinton Administration Retraction and Expansion of Cuban Immigrant Entitlements	182
6 From Further Expansion to the Unraveling of Cuban Privileging amid Mainly Exclusion of Haitians: The George W. Bush and Barack Obama Administrations	241
7 From Heaven to Hell under the Trump Administration: Walls for Cubans After All	287
8 Exceptionalism in Practice? Actual Immigration, Lessons Learned	317
<i>Index</i>	343

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[More Information](#)

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## Figures

- |   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| 8.1 Persons obtaining LPR status by country of last residence: Cuba, Dominican Republic, and Haiti, FY1950–2019                           | <i>page</i> 322 |
| 8.2 Percentage of persons born in Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Haiti granted LPR status as refugee and asylee adjustments, 2000–2019 | 326             |
| 8.3 Refugee admissions from Cuba and Haiti, 1984–2019   | 329             |

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Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

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## Preface

### *Privileged Cubans*

In 1991, during George H. W. Bush's presidency, the US Coast Guard stopped a leaky Haitian fishing boat carrying 161 Haitians and 2 Cubans who the Haitians had picked up in a gesture of brotherhood.<sup>1</sup> Two years later, when Bill Clinton was president, a boat carrying seven Cubans and ten Haitians landed in Florida. All those aboard the boats wanted to come to the land of opportunity. They arrived, however, without US-granted immigration visas. The Immigration and Naturalization Service, nonetheless, admitted the Cubans. In contrast, the Haitians were whisked off to detention facilities. Almost all were repatriated. The Clinton administration refused to admit the Haitians even though Clinton had promised during his campaign that, if elected, he would end the George H. W. Bush administration's cruel practice of sending unauthorized Haitians back to a brutal dictatorship. With the support of Haitian voters, Clinton hoped to make President Bush, running for reelection, a one-term president. Clinton succeeded in winning the election, but even before taking office he announced that he would continue to enforce Bush's Haitian repatriation policy. How could the presidents treat Cubans and Haitians so differently?

Fast forward to May 1, 2006. On that international day honoring workers, approximately three-fourths of a million unauthorized immigrants across America courageously absented themselves from their jobs to participate in what organizers of the work stoppage called the "Day Without Immigrants." They wanted to convince owners of businesses and

<sup>1</sup> Anthony Depalma, "For Haitians, Voyage to a Land of Inequality," *New York Times* (July 16, 1991), sec. A, p. 1.

the American people, and members of Congress in turn, how important immigrants were to the economy. At the time, Congress was deliberating legislation that would determine whether to legalize or continue to criminalize the eight million undocumented workers then in the country.<sup>2</sup> Most of the immigrants who participated in the nationwide demonstrations that May Day came from Latin America. They wanted legal rights to stay and work. Some of them had been in the United States for as long as a quarter of a century without labor rights and other protections.

Even though Cubans constituted the second-largest Hispanic immigrant group in the country, they were noticeably absent from the demonstrations. Were Cubans treated so differently that they saw no reason to join? The United States, indeed, treated them differently, as the book reveals. Despite most Cubans coming to the country without visas issued in conformity with immigration regulations set by Congress, they were admitted and, since 1966, permitted to become lawful permanent residents offering a path to citizenship. The Cubans on the boats with Haitians in 1991 and 1993 were among the hundreds of thousands of Cubans who, by the Day Without Immigrants, were legal residents, even if they had arrived without US-authorized immigration visas. By 2006, many of them also were citizens who enjoyed voting rights.

Fast forward again to 2016. That year as many as 56,000 Cubans came to the United States without authorization,<sup>3</sup> at a time when the United States capped annual lawful immigration from any single country at 20,000 a year. After brief detention, these Cubans were admitted into the country, granted a range of immediate and long-term entitlements, and spared the risk of deportation. That same year the Obama administration deported over 1,500 Haitians<sup>4</sup> and nearly half a million unauthorized immigrants from other countries.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Michael Hoefer, Nancy Rytina, and Christopher Campbell, “Estimates of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population Residing in the United States: January 2007,” Department of Homeland Security, Office of Immigration Statistics, August 2007, p. 2 ([www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/publications/ois\\_ill\\_pe\\_2007.pdf](http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/publications/ois_ill_pe_2007.pdf)).

<sup>3</sup> Jens Krogstad, “Surge in Cuban Immigration to U.S. Continued through 2016,” *Facttank* (January 13, 2017) ([www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/01/13/cuban-immigration-to-u-s-surges-as-relations-warm/](http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/01/13/cuban-immigration-to-u-s-surges-as-relations-warm/)).

<sup>4</sup> Data for October 2016 to January 2017. Makini Brice, “After Daring Voyage to U.S., Haitians’ Dreams End in Deportation,” *Reuters* (February 10, 2017) ([www.reuters.com/article/us-haiti-usa/after-daring-voyage-to-u-s-haitians-dreams-end-in-deportation-idUSKBN15P2RM](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-haiti-usa/after-daring-voyage-to-u-s-haitians-dreams-end-in-deportation-idUSKBN15P2RM)).

<sup>5</sup> Data for 2016. Muzaffar Chishti, Sarah Pierce, and Jessica Bolter, “The Obama Record on Deportations: Deporter in Chief or Not?,” *Migration Information Source* (January 26,

#### WHY CUBAN PRIVILEGING?

Why were Cubans exempt from the fate of other “illegals”? This book explains why and describes the range of unique entitlements they have received since January 1959, when Fidel Castro came to power. The United States extended unique entitlements to Cubans even after Castro died and even after his brother Raúl’s tenure as head of state.

January 12, 2017, however, marks a turning point in US Cuban immigration policy. On that day, President Barack Obama ended special entitlements that a succession of eleven presidents, across the partisan divide, had granted Cuban immigrants. One president after another will be shown to have honored entitlements their predecessors granted and, typically, to have extended additional entitlements to Cubans. At times, Cubans even were privileged *at the expense* of both other foreigners and native-born Americans. In some years, for example, Cubans enjoyed preferential access to limited immigration slots allotted by the United States, and labor market advantage owing to special job training, special job placement services, and special funding for university studies. Cubans who arrived without authorization even enjoyed certain entitlements that were denied authorized immigrants, such as immediate rights to welfare.

Sometimes Congress was the enabler by authorizing funding for special resettlement benefits and granting Cubans unique entitlements. At other times, however, presidents circumvented Congress’ official authority over immigration to privilege Cubans. If interested in immigrating to the United States, it was good to be Cuban. However committed presidents and legislators were to equality and equity, they made exception for Cubans.

Yet, the reasons for privileging Cubans changed over time. Republican Dwight Eisenhower, who was president when Castro assumed power with widespread – though not unanimous – support from his country’s people, immediately welcomed opponents of Castro and the revolutionary remaking of Cuba that he oversaw. President Eisenhower singled them out for special entitlements. His successor, President John F. Kennedy, a Democrat, singled out more Cubans for special entitlements and expanded entitlements for them. Both presidents hoped that, in reaching out to Cubans, they would convince those who remained on the island of the superiority of capitalist democracy over Castro’s nationalist,

2017) ([www.migrationpolicy.org/article/obama-record-deportations-deporter-chief-or-not](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/obama-record-deportations-deporter-chief-or-not)).

populist, and increasingly state-dominated Marxist-Leninist Soviet-allied regime. They also hoped to induce a “brain drain” that would debilitate the Cuban economy to the point of collapse. Meanwhile, they turned to incoming Cubans to assist covert efforts to oust Castro and contain his influence over other Third World countries, especially in America’s “backyard.” They even invested in training Cuban arrivals for leadership positions in a US-friendly post-Castro government.

Both presidents envisioned their immigration policy to serve their Cold War concern with defeating global communism. Paradoxically, though, their outreach to Cubans helped Castro solidify his base of power and the island’s political-economic makeover by ridding the country of opponents to the revolution and by rallying Cubans against US meddling in their national affairs.

Despite the unique welcoming of Cuban immigrants leaving Castro entrenched in power, subsequent presidents granted yet more Cubans unique immigration rights and unique resettlement benefits. They did so to address problems that earlier entitlements generated or left unresolved, and to address new problems that arose. By the time the United States “won” the Cold War, with the Soviet Union’s collapse, Cuban immigrants who had been beneficiaries of earlier entitlements had become so politically influential that they pressed for continued privileging of “their people.” Domestic politics replaced foreign policy as the driver of privileging Cubans. Even presidents who tried to end special entitlements for Cubans reversed their stance in response to pressure from Cuban immigrants who, in increased numbers, made use of their unique path to citizenship, with accompanying voting rights, for ethnic gain. The Reagan administration even facilitated Cuban immigrant transformation into savvy lobbyists for their own concerns, including under subsequent administrations. Presidents, and their administrations, found themselves “locked in” to continued privileging of Cubans. Earlier privileging contributed to continued privileging. Presidents perceived the domestic political costs of ending entitlements for Cubans antithetical to their own interest in reelection.

President Obama finally revoked key entitlements during his last full week in office. He did so against the backdrop of a surge in unauthorized Cuban immigration that undermined US control over its borders, as well as a growing socioeconomic and political divide among Cuban Americans that eroded support for continued Cuban immigrant privileging. He did so when he committed to a new Cuba foreign policy, premised on cross-border bridge building, not continued Cold War hostility. Because he was completing his second term of office, he was also not personally constrained by possibly alienating Cuban American voters. He took

*Preface: Privileged Cubans*

xv

advantage of the new domestic political and foreign policy juncture to make immigration policy more equitable by retracting rights for Cubans, rather than by extending rights Cubans enjoyed to other immigrants.

Campaigning on an anti-immigrant platform, Donald Trump made no effort to reopen Cubans' path of privilege when winning the presidency and succeeding Obama in office. Rather, he further shuttered the path, and aggressively so. He outsourced and offshored immigration control, including of Cubans. He thus opened a new chapter in Cuban immigration history involving privilege and justice for few.

REASONS FOR WRITING THIS BOOK

I wrote this book for several reasons. Most importantly, Cuban privileging for over half a century, and its basis, are not well known. The book is the first to describe and explain US Cuban immigration policy, and its unintended as well as intended consequences, from the time Castro assumed power in 1959 through the first non-Castro to become head of state in October 2019.

I wrote the book also because there are lessons to be learned from the Cuban experience about how policy can be improved so that the United States benefits from immigrants while treating them more equitably. Washington's immigration system is widely believed to be broken and in need of reform. In comparing the Cuban with the Haitian, and in the final chapter, also with the Dominican, immigrant experiences, I highlight how differently the United States has treated immigrants depending on their country of origin, and how differently immigrants have experienced America as a result.

I consider myself particularly qualified to write the book. It draws on my expertise. I have studied Cuba and Cuban immigrants for decades. It builds on my earlier books, *Back from the Future: Cuba under Castro* and *The Immigrant Divide: How Cuban Americans Changed the U.S. and Their Homeland*. The earlier works inform my understanding of Cuba and Cuban immigrants in transnational and historical context, and of US Cuban immigration policies over the years and their unintended as well as intended consequences.

OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK

During the period on which the book focuses, beginning with the Eisenhower and ending with the Trump administration, the world changed considerably, including Cuba.

Assuming power in the throes of the Cold War, Castro challenged US hegemony over Latin America, a region Washington had claimed as its sphere of influence. Eisenhower, president at the time, believed that he could leverage immigration to debilitate and delegitimize the Castro-led government to the point of collapse. He accordingly offered Cubans special immigration privileges. With rare exceptions, subsequent presidents not only honored but expanded entitlements for Cuban immigrants. By the time Trump assumed the presidency nearly sixty years later the Soviet Union was history and Cuba struggled to adapt to the market-dominated world order. Despite efforts by Obama to improve bilateral relations, Trump both revitalized efforts to strangulate the Cuban economy and imposed new barriers on Cuban immigration, both authorized and unauthorized.

Because Cuban immigration policy is best understood in the context of Washington's general immigration as well as refugee policies, the next chapter begins with a brief overview of those policies, insofar as they are relevant to Cubans. I then address Cuban immigration policy during the first two decades of Castro's rule, which provide backdrop for understanding Cuban immigration policy since 1980, the main focus of the book

I proceed in the chapter to describe how both the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations turned to Cuban émigrés to help topple the Castro-led government. They trained émigrés to carry out the famed failed Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) orchestrated invasion of Cuba. The CIA relied on Cuban émigrés to conceal US violation of international law protecting countries' rights to self-determination. The Eisenhower, and especially the Kennedy, administrations also funneled funds to Cuban immigrant groups ostensibly to empower them but in fact to try to control them and involve them as co-conspirators in other plots as well to overthrow Castro. Yet, I describe how the groups, in turn, used US resources to advance their own agendas.

In this and subsequent chapters, Cuban immigrants, and aspiring Cuban immigrants, will be shown to pursue their own interests within constraints imposed by the United States. Cuban immigration history needs to be understood from the vantage point not merely of state institutions with formal power but also of ordinary Cubans, including in transnational context. On several occasions, changes in US–Cuban immigration policy resulted from pressure from ordinary Cubans with no formal power, who defied official policy at the time.

Chapter 1 highlights how Vice President Lyndon Johnson, on assuming the Presidency in 1963 after Kennedy's assassination, built on



precedents set both by Eisenhower and Kennedy, and privileged yet more Cubans. To gain the upper hand over mounting unauthorized Cuban arrivals he extended a welcome mat to all Cubans who wished to come – at US taxpayers’ expense. He announced the welcoming on the very occasion that he signed a new omnibus immigration reform into law that ended the national origin basis of US admission and capped yearly admission from any single country at twenty thousand. His welcome mat authorized the immigration of more than a quarter million new Cubans before President Nixon withdrew it in 1973. The welcoming brought, on average, nearly twice as many Cubans yearly as the new immigration reform permitted from any single country.

The chapter then proceeds to reveal that in the course of the 1970s Cuban privileging appeared to run its course. After 1973, the Republican administrations of Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford, and the administration of Democrat Jimmy Carter during its first three years, admitted few Cubans and reined in resettlement benefits for the Cubans who came. Even fervently anti-Communist Nixon slashed funds for Cubans who sought refuge in America.

Meanwhile, Chapter 2 focuses on the Cuban immigrant experience *in* the United States in the 1960s and 1970s. I describe the unique entitlements Cubans received on arrival and the impact entitlements had on their adaptation to the United States.

Chapters 3–5 focus, in turn, on President Carter’s last year in office and the Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush, and Bill Clinton administrations. They show the contraction of Cuban immigrant privileging to have been short-lived. Cuban privileging resumed in 1980, during President Carter’s last year in office: initially less by design than in response to Castro giving Cubans a green light to immigrate without US entry permission. After initially opposing the onslaught of unauthorized Cuban boatpeople, Carter welcomed approximately 125,000 of them. He built on past privileging of Cubans.

President Carter, together with President Clinton, both Democrats, admitted over 150,000 new Cubans who had not been screened abroad in compliance with Congressionally mandated regulations. President Carter, in addition, extended exceptionally generous entitlements to the arrivals under his watch. Although both presidents initially had tried to block entry of the unauthorized Cubans, they quickly reversed their stance and followed the precedent of previous presidents. They welcomed the new Cubans. President Clinton even privileged Cubans against the backdrop of a nationwide surge in nativist, anti-immigrant sentiment. He

did retract one prerogative Cubans had enjoyed for decades, but concomitantly piled new unique entitlements for Cubans onto old. While calling for the repatriation of Cubans picked up at sea, he guaranteed Cubans a minimum number of immigration visas yearly, a guarantee offered no other nationals; he approved of unique welfare rights for Cubans; and he exempted Cubans from new restrictions imposed on unauthorized immigrants from all other countries.

In the years between the Carter and Clinton presidencies, the Reagan and Bush Republican administrations admitted fewer Cubans. Yet, they permitted a Cuban immigrant group to admit new Cubans on their own. President Reagan, with the assistance of Bush when his Vice President, also will be shown to have turned, anew, to Cuban émigrés to assist covert efforts to rein in Left-leaning movements – this time in Central America, not Cuba. At the same time, President Reagan reimagined the 1980 unauthorized Cuban arrivals as refugees, after President Carter very explicitly had deemed them not to be. The Cubans thereby were able to become lawful permanent residents and enjoy citizenship and voting rights. President Reagan also helped transform Cuban Americans into a political force in their own right, able to independently influence US Cuba policy. Cuban immigration policy, as a result, subsequently became rooted in domestic politics, including after the Cold War’s end when foreign policy toward Cuba ceased to be a primary concern of Washington.

Then, Chapter 6 focuses on US Cuban immigration policy after the turn of the century. Republican George W. Bush (Bush II) was the last President to grant Cubans new, unique entitlements, and also honor earlier entitlements. He went international in extending new entitlements to Cubans, circumventing official Congressional control over immigration. He initiated a program to welcome Cuban medics working for their government overseas. As if the Cold War had not ended, he hoped “defecting” Cubans would discredit their government and deprive it of earnings aid workers generated overseas. President Bush also arranged for Cuban families to reunify in the United States before officially cleared for immigration visas. President Obama continued the policies of President Bush as well as of earlier presidents – until his last days in office, when he reined in Cuban privileging “as we knew it” for over half a century. The chapter details the entitlements he retracted, how, and why.

Chapter 7 focuses on how the Trump Administration took advantage of the Obama policy shift to make Cuban immigration more difficult. It retracted entitlements, de facto if not de jure, such that authorized as well

as unauthorized Cuban immigration became near-impossible, and unauthorized immigration became costly and exceedingly dangerous. At the same time, in further strangulating the Cuban economy, President Trump gave Cubans all the more reason to want to leave. He reversed President Obama's efforts to improve bilateral relations.

The final chapter of this book addresses the impact that more than half a century of privileging had on inducing Cubans to move to America, and how immigration rates from Cuba compare to rates from other Caribbean countries, namely from the Dominican Republic and Haiti. Remarkably, the number of Cubans who immigrated proves to be less exceptional than the formal privileging would suggest. Although US Dominican policy is not a central concern of the book, comparisons with Dominican immigration are noteworthy. Despite the United States offering Dominicans few special entitlements, in the 1980s Dominicans' informal diasporic ties fueled more immigration than Cubans' formal entitlements. The Dominican–Cuban immigration gap did close significantly after the turn of this century, through Obama's presidency, though not because Cubans received new entitlement incentives. Rather, three decades of strained ties between Cuban immigrants in the United States and family they left behind, rooted in their opposing views toward the revolution, broke down when Cubans suffered from the economic crisis caused by the Soviet Union's collapse. Under the circumstances, Cubans turned to family in the United States to help them immigrate, as had Dominicans for decades – with the help of human smugglers who capitalized on an opportunity to profit.

In contrast, far fewer Haitians will be shown to have settled in the United States: the result of decades of US discrimination and exclusion that I detail throughout the book. During the Cold War, Haitians had the misfortune of coming from a country allied with the United States. Consequently, their admission did not serve US foreign policy interests at the time. Haitians also had the political misfortune of being dark-skinned, unlike most Cuban immigrants. As a result, Haitians were victims of racial biases in US immigration policy, before, during, and after the Cold War. The racial biases against Haitians continued even after the 1965 omnibus immigration reform officially ended earlier racial biases in Washington's admissions. Haitians gained special immigration entitlements only when they had the good fortune of arriving without authorization alongside Cubans, when discrimination against them became blatantly transparent, and when immigration rights lawyers and activists fought on Haitians' behalf.

The final chapter also addresses “lessons learned” from the Cuban experience, including when viewed from a cross-national perspective. In a partial preview of what is to come, the book reveals:

1. An initial privileging of Cuban immigrants set in motion a chain of privileging across presidential administrations, Republican and Democratic alike, in what sociologists and political scientists would call a “locked in” path-dependent manner:<sup>6</sup> namely, one set of entitlements spurred implementation of other entitlements, to address problems earlier entitlements generated or left unresolved and new problems that arose, as well as emergent interests in continued Cuban privileging. By the same token, presidents found it difficult to retract entitlements, even after their initial rationale no longer justified their continuation. Only when Cuban privileging worked both against new US foreign policy interests and against interests of influential Cuban Americans did the United States revoke key entitlements. The changed context did not make termination of Cuban exceptionalism inevitable, but made it possible with little political pushback. Even then, Congress did not sunset entitlements it had legislated, reflecting a “stickiness” to its legislation.
2. The Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson Administrations extended immigration entitlements partly as a “soft power” strategy to convince Cubans of the virtues of capitalist democracy.<sup>7</sup> They

<sup>6</sup> On path dependence, see Jack Goldstone, “Initial Conditions, General Laws, Path Dependence, and Explanation in Historical Sociology,” *American Journal of Sociology* vol. 104, no. 3 (November 1998): 829–45; Paul Pierson, “Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics,” *American Political Science Review* vol. 94, no. 2 (June 2000): 251–67; Paul David, “Path Dependence: A Foundational Concept for Historical Social Science,” *Cliometrica* vol. 1 (2007): 91–114; James Mahoney, “Path Dependence in Historical Sociology,” *Theory and Society* vol. 29 (2000): 507–48; Ruth Collier and David Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena: Critical Junctures and the Labor Movement, and Regime Dynamics in Latin America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991); Anik Leithner and Kyle Libby, “Path Dependency in Foreign Policy,” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics* (July 2017) ([oxfordre.com/politics](http://oxfordre.com/politics)).

<sup>7</sup> On soft power, see Joseph Nye, Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004). “Soft power” entails influencing other countries without use of force or coercion; “hard power” rests on utilizing force and coercion. Nye argues that successful states need both hard and soft power: the ability to coerce others as well as the ability to shape their long-term attitudes and preferences. On use of “soft power” by global dominant countries vis a vis Third World countries, see Atul Kohli, *Imperialism and the Developing World: How Britain and the United States Shaped the Global Periphery* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020).

- promoted “soft power” initiatives amid mounting international pressure not to intervene in the internal affairs of other countries.
3. Under the Eisenhower administration, and even more so under the Kennedy administration, the CIA covertly embedded “hard power” in “soft power” strategies to topple the Castro-led regime. Even though neither the “hard” nor the “soft” power strategies accomplished their intended foreign policy purpose, subsequent administrations continued to privilege Cubans.
  4. No single factor explains the ongoing privileging of Cubans for over half a century. The initial Cold War foreign policy rationale created vested domestic interests in the continued privileging of Cubans, such that Cuban privileging continued after the Cold War’s end.
  5. With and without Congressional backing, presidents and their administrations privileged Cubans by deliberately imagining them as refugees, by imagining them as if they were refugees when recognizing that they were not, and by introducing unique criteria for refugee status in order to enable Cubans to qualify for refugee entitlements for which they would not otherwise qualify. Social science “constructivists” would say that in conceiving Cubans as refugees, policy makers could and did privilege Cubans.<sup>8</sup> Accordingly, Presidents and their administrations, as well as Congress, have not subjected all nationals to the same entry requirements and the same entry queue. They even privileged Cubans on the basis of their nationality after the United States officially ended national origins-based admission. Nonetheless, Cuban exceptionalism ebbed and flowed over the years.
  6. Washington has not set and implemented immigration policy entirely to its choosing. The Cuban experience demonstrates that even weak states within the international arena, such as Cuba, as well as ordinary people through their force of numbers, diasporic ties, and defiance of official regulations, may shape US immigration policy and determine who immigrates.

<sup>8</sup> “Constructivists” point to the role of ideas, norms, and culture. For an overview of “constructivism,” see Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, “Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics,” *Annual Review of Political Science* vol. 4 (2001): 391–416. In this book I demonstrate that by framing Cubans as refugees, successive administrations and Congress circumvented immigration regulations to privilege Cubans.

In disrespecting Cuba's right to self-determination, the US rationale for privileging Cubans was never noble. Yet, in due course, Cuban immigrants helped transform Miami into an economically and culturally dynamic city with hemispheric reach. So too did they become politically influential, not only in Florida where they mainly settled, but also nationally. They have made important contributions to America, from which the country at-large has benefited.

#### THE WRITING OF THIS BOOK

I used a range of sources in writing this book. I have drawn on archival materials from the official libraries of Presidents Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Carter, Reagan, Bush I, and Clinton. I am grateful for the assistance of their respective archivists. I have also made use of the *Congressional Record*, Congressional hearings, and other documents. As a sociologist, I draw on the primary sources in an interpretive, analytically grounded manner, to understand policies and their consequences.

Particularly concerned with policy ramifications, I have also drawn on materials compiled by US agencies; immigration statistics; survey and voting data; and news analyses. In addition, I have drawn on secondary sources on Cuba, Cuban immigrants, and US immigration policy.

In writing this book I also benefited from interviews and conversations I had with several members of Congress (and their staff), US diplomats who served in Cuba, officials of the Departments of State and Homeland Security and the former Immigration and Naturalization Service, and former mayors of Miami. I also benefited from interviews and conversations with Cuban American politicians and other Cuban American leaders in Miami, with Cuban American lobbyists and Cuban Americans involved in nongovernmental organizations, with scholars and others well-informed about Cuban immigration, and with ordinary Cubans both in the United States and their homeland. In Cuba, I also benefited from discussions with foreign service officials at the American Embassy and with Cuban scholars knowledgeable about Cuban immigration policy.

The interviews and conversations that I had were open-ended and focused on individuals' expertise. They were designed to deepen my knowledge about and understanding of Cuban immigration policy and Cuban immigrants. I am most appreciative of the insights I gained from these discussions, although, with rare exception, I respect the anonymity of the individuals with whom I spoke and do not refer to them by name.

My understanding of Cuba and Cuban immigrants also draws on decades of research related to my previously noted books, which I wrote while making use, in the main, of a similar mix of source materials. Taken together, my research over the years has helped me understand how and why Cubans benefited from special immigrant privileges for over half a century, and the impact their privileging has had (including in Cuba).

My understanding of Haitian and Dominican immigration, in contrast, derives almost entirely from secondary sources, plus Congressional hearings and immigration statistics, and discussions with Haitian and Dominican scholars. Unfortunately, I do not have the same depth of knowledge about Haitian and Dominican experiences. I compare immigration from the three countries primarily to highlight how differently and inequitably most presidents, along with Congress, have treated immigrants and aspiring immigrants from the three countries. If Cuban privileging merits close attention, so too does what I call the disprivileging of Haitians: a task I leave to others.

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## Acronyms

BTTR	Brothers to the Rescue
CAA	Cuban Adjustment Act
CBP	Customs and Border Protection
CDA	Cuban Democracy Act
CERF	Cuban Exodus Relief Fund
CFRPP	Cuban Family Reunification Parole Program
CHTF	Cuban-Haitian Task Force
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CMPPP	Cuban Medical Professional Parole Program
CRP	Cuban Refugee Program
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
HEW	Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
HHS	Department of Health and Human Services
HRIFA	Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act
ICE	Immigration and Customs Enforcement
IIRIRA	Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act
INA	Immigration and Nationality Act
INS	Immigration and Naturalization Service
IRCA	Immigration Reform and Control Act
LPR	Legal (Lawful) Permanent Residence
MPP	Migrant Protection Protocols
NACARA	Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act
NSC	National Security Council
PRWORA	Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act

PSI	Private Sector Initiative
SCLC	Southern Christian Leadership Conference
SSI	Supplementary Security Income
USCIS	US Citizenship and Immigration Services