

## Laboring for the State

Contrary to claims that socialism opposed the family unit, Rachel Hynson argues that the revolutionary Cuban government engaged in social engineering to redefine the nuclear family and organize citizens to serve the state. Drawing on Cuban newspapers and periodicals, government documents and speeches, long-overlooked laws, and oral histories, Hynson reveals that by 1961, and increasingly throughout this decade, revolutionary citizenship was earned through labor. While men were to work outside the home in state-approved jobs, women found their citizenship tied to affording the state control over their reproduction and sexual labor. Through all four campaigns examined in this book – the projects to control women’s reproduction, promote marriage, end prostitution, and compel men into state-sanctioned employment – Hynson shows that the state’s progression toward authoritarianism and its attendant monopolization of morality were met with resistance and counter-narratives by citizens who so opposed the mandates of these campaigns that Cuban leadership has since reconfigured or effaced these programs from the Revolution’s grand narrative.

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# Laboring for the State

*Women, Family, and Work in  
Revolutionary Cuba, 1959–1971*

RACHEL HYNSON



CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press & Assessment  
 978-1-316-64050-0 — Laboring for the State  
 Rachel Hynson  
 Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)



CAMBRIDGE  
 UNIVERSITY PRESS

Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom  
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA  
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
 314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India  
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Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment,  
 a department of the University of Cambridge.

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 education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)  
 Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781316640500](http://www.cambridge.org/9781316640500)

DOI: 10.1017/9781108105330

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First published 2019  
 First paperback edition 2024

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication data*

NAMES: Hynson, Rachel, 1982- author.

TITLE: Laboring for the state : women, family, and work in revolutionary Cuba,  
 1959-1971 / Rachel Hynson

DESCRIPTION: 1 Edition. | New York : Cambridge University Press, [2019] |

SERIES: Cambridge Latin American studies

IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2019017591 | ISBN 9781107188679 (hardback) |

ISBN 9781316640500 (pbk.)

SUBJECTS: LCSH: Families-Cuba. | Sex role-Cuba. | Sex discrimination-Cuba. |  
 Sexual division of labor-Cuba.

CLASSIFICATION: LCC HQ580 .H96 2019 | DDC 306.85097291-dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2019017591>

ISBN 978-1-107-18867-9 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-316-64050-0 Paperback

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*In loving memory of my grandfather,  
Leon O. Hynson (1930–2006)*

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## Acknowledgments

The publication of this book was never inevitable. I did not enter graduate school with a well-defined project or a novel cache of sources. My dissertation was a late bloomer, and my decision to leave academia removed any obligation to publish. The final version of this book was born of my departure from academia, a decision that slowed down my pace and revealed things I'd missed in the sprint.

My work with and for Lorraine Bayard de Volo at the University of Kansas served as the foundation for this project; I am indebted to her for leading me to graduate school and encouraging my work for a great many years. Kathryn Burns began guiding my research in my first semester of graduate school, and her subsequent offer to advise this project was an unexpected gift for which I am forever grateful. Many thanks go to John Chasteen, who taught me that it is a historian's responsibility to tell a good story, not merely to make a good argument. I must also thank Emily Burrill, who always treated me as a colleague, never a student, and more than once reassured me of my worth. My dissertation committee – Kathryn Burns, Emily Burrill, John Chasteen, Miguel La Serna, Raúl Necochea López, and Lars Schoultz – had the patience of Job as I haltingly outlined the contours of the project; without their discerning comments and provocative insights, this book would be a second-rate version of what it is today. Lillian Guerra has served as an unofficial committee member and one of my greatest cheerleaders. Her acumen for identifying underlying themes and nudging me toward more nuanced arguments has left an indelible imprint on this book.

The financial support I have received from various institutions cannot be disentangled from the predominantly female staff members who



dispensed the funds or processed the paperwork. My first research trip to Cuba in 2008 was funded by the Institute for the Study of the Americas at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, and it continued to fund me for many years. I am especially thankful to Beatriz Riefkohl Muñiz and the late Shelley Clarke for their friendship and assistance in navigating the ever-changing laws and paperwork necessary to travel to Cuba. I am also grateful for the funding provided by the Program in Sexuality Studies and the Department of History at UNC-Chapel Hill. It was the emotional labor of Violet Anderson, LaTissa Davis, Joy Mann Jones, Joyce Loftin, and Nancy Gray Schoonmaker that made the History Department a community space – not just a work space. The Cuban Heritage Collection and the Goizueta Foundation provided generous research support and the opportunity to work in the most welcoming of archives. An early version of this book emerged at Dartmouth College, where the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation awarded me two glorious years to research, write, and teach in the Latin American, Latino, and Caribbean Studies Program. Sheila Laplante was kind company and always remembered to ask after my mother. Dartmouth's Joan Sloan Dickey Center for International Understanding made possible a 2016 research trip to Havana.

There are times when the Cuban Heritage Collection at the University of Miami has seemed the center of my world, and I am grateful for its commitment to junior scholars. In particular, I extend my appreciation to Amanda Álvarez, Esperanza Bravo de Varona, María Estorino Dooling, Glady Gómez Rossié, Marta Martínez, Rosa Monzón-Álvarez, and Lesbia Varona for their kindness and guidance. I also owe many thanks to the librarians and archivists at Harvard University's Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine, Smith College Special Collections, University of Florida's George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Illinois Archives, and Yale University Manuscripts and Archives. Interlibrary Loan staff are gifts from the goddess, and I can say with certainty that I would not have written this book were it not for the hundreds of work hours of Dartmouth, Middlebury College, and UNC librarians.

While in Cuba, I have been nourished by the friendship and guidance of individuals too numerous to count. Belkis Quesada Guerra at the Instituto de Historia has always greeted me with a smile, even while working amidst construction. To her and others at the Instituto de Historia, as well as to archivists and librarians at the Biblioteca Nacional José Martí, Federación de Mujeres Cubanas library and archives, Instituto Cubano de Investigación Cultural Juan Marinello, Instituto de Literatura y Lingüística, and Museo Histórico de las Ciencias Carlos J. Finlay, I owe

*Acknowledgments*

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a debt of gratitude. I am also humbled by and grateful to Yasnay, who easily befriended me and accompanied me on numerous interviews. Her abilities in the kitchen far surpass my own, and I have eaten better because of her. I also owe great thanks to Abel Sierra Madero, who treated me like an old friend, even when our friendship was new. Rolando and Marta welcomed me into their home and made me their daughter; times spent with them, Nerea, and Mauricio have been some of my happiest in Havana. My life in Cuba would not be the same without Lupe, Tania, and Dieguito, to whom coming home at the end of the day was always a joy. Carmita Castillo Herrera, Tomás Fernández Robaina, Milagros Martínez Reinoso, and Daisy Ruberia Castillo all generously facilitated my research. Finally, words are not enough to thank the Cubans who agreed to be interviewed for this book, who trusted their stories with a *yuma* and shaped the counters of this book. The arguments in this book are mine alone, and all mistakes or misinterpretations should be assigned to me.

The love and encouragement of friends and colleagues in North Carolina have sustained me for many years. My heart is forever with the ladies of Pemberley – Rike Brühöfener, Nora Doyle, Kim Kutz Elliott, and Anna Krome-Lukens – who have celebrated my joys and carried me through sorrow. Devyn Spence Benson blessed me with knowledge gained from many research trips to Cuba and unhesitatingly opened her home to me, even in the midst of her multiple moves. Lisi Martínez Lotz also offered her spare bedroom to me, but it is our walks with Nicolas and Alisia on the Bolin Creek Trail that I most treasure. Zsolt and Karla Nagy kept me grounded with the help of whiskey and laughter-filled evenings at the Speakeasy. Samara Dixon and I created a home together, and she patiently copyedited every page of my dissertation, often while cooking me dinner. I am also deeply grateful to the Latin Americanists in the History department – including Justin Blanton, Enver Casimir, Angélica Castillo, Jeffrey Erbig, Michael Huner, Clarisa Mondéjar, Toby Nathan, Teo Radford, Benjamin Reed, and Jeffrey Richey – for the warm and supportive scholarly community that we created at UNC. I have also been sustained by the wisdom and friendships of Samuel Brock, Marko Dumančić, Hannah Fuhr, Aaron Hale-Dorrell, DeeDee Laurilliard, Ian Leinbaugh, Christine McGrath, Sarah McNamara, Sara Schlicting, Dominique Shaw, Trish Swayze, Haruna Suzuki, Pavithra Vasudevan, Priscilla Pinto Ferreira Vaz, David Williard, and many others.

I am grateful that my community also extends well beyond North Carolina. João Gonçalves became my surrogate family in Miami, a city

that I came to love, in part, because of him. I am a better scholar thanks to the research and insights of my community of *cubanólogos*, a group not limited to Alexis Baldacci, Michael Bustamante, María Antonia Cabrera Arus, Antonio Cardentey Levin, Michelle Chase, Daylet Domínguez, Walfrido Dorta, Daniel Fernández Guevara, Yesenia Fernández Selier, Nora Gámez Torres, Jesse Horst, William Kelly, Lauren Krebs, and Kelly Urban. Jennifer Lambe read multiple drafts of this book, and her thoughtful suggestions were instrumental in helping it reach its full potential. Friends and colleagues at Dartmouth helped me establish my personal and scholarly identity as a newly minted Ph.D., and for this I extend my heartfelt thanks. They include Jill Baron, Mary Coffey, Peter DeShazo, Vanessa Freije, Reena Goldthree, Chelsey Kivland, Emily Merchant, Almita Miranda, Douglas Moody, Bethany Moreton, Pamela Voekel, and the students with whom I lived at the LALACS House. I quickly became fast friends with Nisha Kommattam and Sascha Ebeling, and they have continued to enrich my life with Miffy, Mop, and Pip. I must also credit James N. Green, whose initial enthusiasm for the dissertation gave me the courage to begin, and Lisa Baldez, who immediately “got” the project and helped usher it into completion. I am as grateful as the Japanese crane for those who kept me upright and at peace in Middlebury: Aimee Diehl, Stacey Dobek, Jes Sturges, Ronnie Sullivan, and Alfredo Torres. I extend love in abundance to my dear friends Rachel Bernard and Eryn Weigand, who patiently withstood my long absences and continue to honor me with their friendship.

This book was erected with scaffolding supplied by giants. My sincere thanks to the anonymous readers for Cambridge University Press and to series editors Kris Lane and Matthew Restall. It has been a delight to work with the ever-patient Deborah Gershenowitz. I am thankful to Deborah for her long-standing support of this project, as well as to Rachel Blaifeder, Kristina Deusch, Jackie Grant, and Thomas Haynes at Cambridge for the monumental labor of turning the manuscript into a book. Thanks are also due to Hillary Ford and Niranjana Harikrishnan for their dedicated support during production. I am grateful beyond measure to Margy Thomas for her sharp eye, kind tone, and keen insight in the editing process and to Sarah E. Watkins for assisting in the onerous indexing process. I am also fortunate that Mary Allegra Paul enthusiastically volunteered to illustrate the Zipper ring that appears in Chapter 1. The evidence and arguments in Chapter 3 draw from my article in the *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, which I thank for allowing the material to appear in its current form.

*Acknowledgments*

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The model Cuban family of the 1960s was a distant relative of the Reagan-era, rural Pennsylvania evangelicals to whom I was born. Still, it was in my natal home that I first learned that labor could be defined *not* by a 9-to-5 job or a steady paycheck but instead by any action that sustains and reproduces the family. I am eternally grateful to the family members, particularly my parents: Debra Egli-Flanagan and Jonathan Hynson, who encouraged and loved me throughout the duration of this project; and while they may not have always understood what I was studying or why I remained perpetually a graduate student, their support never wavered. In the time it took to write this book, my siblings – Rebekah, Taylor, Dakota, and Levi – have all grown up, and I am overjoyed that the book’s publication allows me time to know them better as adults. I also extend deep thanks to my in-laws, Cindy Burns and Thomas Burns, who lovingly adopted both me and this project. The last and most-treasured mention of all goes to Meg Burns, who danced into my life in the final years of this book’s completion and transformed my conception of family for the better.

## Abbreviations

CDR	Committee for the Defense of the Revolution (Comité para la Defensa de la Revolución)
CPA	Camaguëy Center for Artisanry (Centro de Producción Artesanal)
CTC	Confederation of Cuban Workers (Confederación de Trabajadores Cubanos)
FMC	Federation of Cuban Women (Federación de Mujeres Cubanas)
G2	Popular name for the secret police
INRA	National Institute of Agrarian Reform (Instituto Nacional de Reforma Agraria)
M-26-7	26th of July Movement (Movimiento 26 de Julio)
MINFAR	Ministry of the Armed Forces (Ministerio de las Fuerzas Armadas)
MININD	Ministry of Industries (Ministerio de Industrias)
MININT	Ministry of the Interior (Ministerio del Interior)
MINJUS	Ministry of Justice (Ministerio de Justicia)
MINREX	Ministry of Foreign Relations (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores)
MINSAP	Ministry of Public Health (Ministerio de Salud Pública)
MINTRAB	Ministry of Labor (Ministerio del Trabajo)
PCC	Cuban Communist Party (Partido Comunista de Cuba)
PNR	National Revolutionary Police (Policía Nacional Revolucionaria)
SMO	Obligatory Military Service (Servicio Militar Obligatorio)
UMAP	Military Units to Aid Production (Unidades Militares de Ayuda a la Producción)