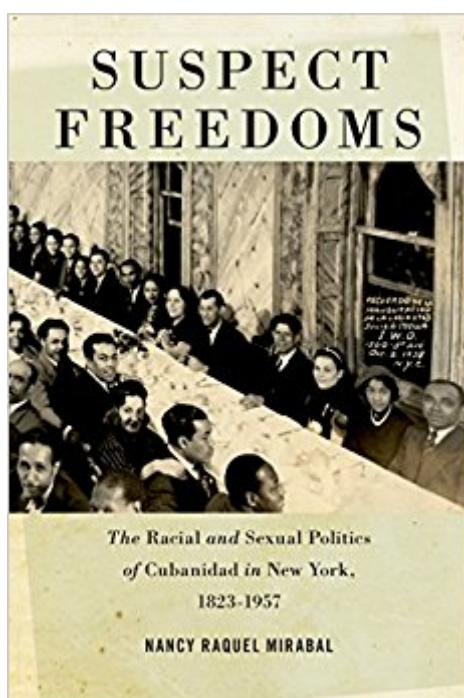


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# Suspect Freedoms: The Racial And Sexual Politics Of Cubanidad In New York, 1823-1957 (Culture, Labor, History)



## Synopsis

The largely unexamined and often forgotten history of more than a hundred years of Cuban exile, migration, diaspora, and community formation. Beginning in the early nineteenth century, Cubans migrated to New York City to organize and protest against Spanish colonial rule. While revolutionary wars raged in Cuba, expatriates envisioned, dissected, and redefined meanings of independence and nationhood. An underlying element was the concept of Cubanidad, a shared sense of what it meant to be Cuban. Deeply influenced by discussions of slavery, freedom, masculinity, and United States imperialism, the question of what and who constituted "being Cuban" remained in flux and often, suspect. Suspect Freedoms is the first book to explore Cuban racial and sexual politics in New York during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Nancy Raquel Mirabal delves into the rich cache of primary sources, archival documents, literary texts, club records, newspapers, photographs, and oral histories to write what Michel Rolph Trouillot has termed an "unthinkable history." Situating this pivotal era within larger theoretical discussions of potential, future, visibility, and belonging, Mirabal shows how these transformations complicated meanings of territoriality, gender, race, power, and labor. She argues that slavery, nation, and the fear that Cuba would become "another Haiti" were critical in the making of early diasporic Cubanidades, and documents how, by the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Afro-Cubans were authors of their own experiences; organizing movements, publishing texts, and establishing important political, revolutionary, and social clubs. Meticulously documented and deftly crafted, Suspect Freedoms unravels a nuanced and vital history.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Suspect Freedoms is a remarkable book that rescues the rich history of Cubans of color in the United States from obscurity. Nancy Mirabal stitches together the entire span of the Cuban diasporic experience in New York, from the arrival in 1823 of Father Félix Varela to a fascinating and moving analysis of the club cubano interamericano in the latter half of the twentieth century. This splendid example of scholarship will be an essential text for scholars of Cuba, the Cuban diaspora, and U.S. Latino studies generally.”—Gerald E. Poyo, St. Mary’s University, San Antonio

Nancy Mirabal’s *Suspect Freedoms* is a groundbreaking work of historical scholarship. Ambitious and wide-ranging, it is sure to redefine the way we understand the relationship between the Cuban Diaspora, Afro-Cuban activism and intellectual history, and their intersections with African American history and thought, especially in New York City. Building upon a dazzling array of sources and contributing to our theoretical understanding of concepts like nation and diaspora, this original and profound work establishes Nancy Mirabal as a major historian and thinker.”—Farah Jasmine Griffin, Professor of English and Comparative Literature & African American Studies, Columbia University

Nancy Raquel Mirabal is Associate Professor in the American Studies Department and U.S. Latina/o Studies Program. She currently directs the U.S. Latina/o Studies Program, and serves on the Advisory Board for the Center for the History of the New America at the University of Maryland, College Park.

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