



# Conceiving Cuba: Reproduction, Women, and the State in the Post-Soviet Era

*Elise Andaya*

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After Cuba's 1959 revolution, the Castro government sought to instill a new social order. Hoping to achieve a new and egalitarian society, the state invested in policies designed to promote the well-being of women and children. Yet once the Soviet Union fell and Cuba's economic troubles worsened, these programs began to collapse, with serious results for Cuban families.

*Conceiving Cuba* offers an intimate look at how, with the island's political and economic future in question, reproduction has become the subject of heated public debates and agonizing private decisions. Drawing from several years of first-hand observations and interviews, anthropologist Elise Andaya takes us inside Cuba's households and medical systems. Along the way, she introduces us to the women who wrestle with the difficult question of whether they can afford a child, as well as the doctors who, with only meager resources at their disposal, struggle to balance the needs of their patients with the mandates of the state.

Andaya's groundbreaking research considers not only how socialist policies have profoundly affected the ways Cuban families imagine the future, but also how the current crisis in reproduction has deeply influenced ordinary Cubans' views on socialism and the future of the revolution. Casting a sympathetic eye upon a troubled state, *Conceiving Cuba* gives new life to the notion that the personal is always political.



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