CHAPTER 10 The Clash Between Cuban Immigrant Cohorts

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The new immigrants, from Third World countries, often retain homeland ties. Theories that focus on assimilation accordingly do not adequately capture their experiences. More useful is a transnational conceptual frame.[1]

But analyses premised on transnational as well as assimilation perspectives typically conceptualize immigrant generations similarly. The big social divide that they point to is between first generation immigrant parents and their children born and raised where they resettle. That is, both perspectives focus on differences between generations genealogically defined.[2] Yet, generations take on distinctive meaning depending on historical context. Though not in reference to immigration, Karl Mannheim (1952), and scholars influenced by him (c.f. Eisenstadt 1956, Zeitlin 1970, and Rumbaut 2004),[3] for example, have addressed how generational political outlooks, shaped by key historical experiences, may be longstanding in their impact. Shared experiences give rise to shared worldviews influencing subsequent involvements and attitudes.

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[1] The literature on transnationalism has already become too extensive to cite in full. Some examples include Basch, Glick-Schillar and Szanton-Blanc (1994), Glick-Schiller (1997), Glick-Schiller and Fouron (2001), Guarnizo (1997 and 1998), Levitt (2001), Portes (1999) and *International Migration Review* (Winter 2004).For a sampling of assimilationist studies see Alba (1990), Alba and Nee (2003), Lieberson (1985) andWaters (1990).

[2] Glick-Schiller and Fouron (2001), however, offer a post-modern deterritorialized conception of generations. They conceive a generation as including all people who share common experiences irrespective of where they live and irrespective of kinship based genealogical remove. Accordingly, they consider the second generation to include the entire generation both in the homeland and new land who live their lives within a transnational social field involving informal social ties spanning country borders.

[3] Rumbaut in this article focuses on immigrant cohorts that are age as well as genealogically but not historically defined. For an earlier discussion of immigrant cohorts, among Poles, see Thomas and Znaniecki (1996).

If true, values shaping life are not necessarily left behind when people uproot. And if true, émigrés who leave their homeland at different points in time may well be influenced by different pre-migration lived experiences, even when all are first generation newcomers. The term "cohort" provides a basis for capturing varying first generation pre-migration experiences. Depending on when émigrés left their homeland they can be presumed to have had different historically grounded experiences of potentially long-term impact.

Of course, pre-migration experiences are not necessarily destiny. Immigrants arrive with assets and views of variable use in their new homeland, and they differ in the use they make of the assets they arrive with, partly depending on opportunities where and when they resettle. Even immigrants arriving with little human, economic, and social capital are not necessarily passive subjects and victims of circumstance. They may find ways to shape conditions to their own advantage, including by resisting domination (see Scott 1985, 1990).

A cohort analysis will be shown below to enhance our understanding of Cuban immigrants. In so doing it possibly can contribute to the formation of a foreign policy toward Cuba attune with the interests of the largest number of Cubans, currently unrepresented by the community's leadership. Émigré cohorts will be shown to differ in political power and influence acquired here and in their cross-border views and involvements. I will focus on Miami where most first generation Cuban émigrés live.

Pre-Migration Background of Émigré Cohorts

In 2000 over a million people in the U.S. identified themselves as Cuban-American (Diaz-Briquets and Perez-Lopez, 2003: i). Fifty-five percent were Cuba-born (Eckstein 2004: Table 1). Most who emigrated came after the 1959 revolution. Among the Cubans who emigrated after 1959, approximately half arrived before 1980 and half since. Since émigrés who arrived in the first five years of Castro's rule lived almost their entire lives in pre-revolutionary Cuba, my cohort analysis of pre-1980 émigrés focuses on them. Similarly, my analysis of post-1980 émigrés focuses mainly on islanders who emigrated since 1990. Émigrés of the 1990s, like those of the 1980s, lived the revolution. However, émigrés of the 1990s also experienced the revolution's unraveling, once the Soviet Union and Soviet bloc were relegated to the dustbin of history and aid from as well as trade with the Communist allies of thirty years ground to a halt.

The archetypal émigré of each of the cohorts arrived with different assets, different pre-migration experiences, and different values.[4] The 1959-1964 cohort included the pre-Revolutionary middle and upper classes who had experienced a life of privilege. They fled as the revolution stripped them of their property and bases of wealth. Known as the "*exilio historico*," "historical exile," they interpreted their exodus politically even when fleeing because their economic interests were at stake. They were conservative, devout Catholic, elitist, and deeply anti-Castro and anti-Communist. They barely if at all knew the revolution first hand and rarely wanted to. Their conception of Castro's Cuba was largely a construct of their imagination, and a very negative construct at that. Hostile to the Castro regime, and wanting to bring it to heel, they advocated a personal along with official national embargo of Cuba.

In contrast, post-1980 émigrés represent another Cuba. Most were laborers and few were professionals. With time many workers became disillusioned with the revolution, as their living conditions stalemated and the revolution made political and labor demands of them they disliked, such as exhorting them to help out in unpopular back-breaking sugar harvesting. And by the 1990s everyday living for nearly everyone took a downward turn. In the post Soviet era economy no one could live on their official salary.

The 1990s émigrés differ from the early émigrés also in their island political formation. They lived the revolution and have a nuanced understanding of it. For them the revolution is not imagined and pre-revolutionary society not idealized. At the same time, they experienced no civil society involvement independent of the state, in contrast to the middle and upper classes, and to a lesser extent the organized working class, before the revolution. And unlike earlier émigrés, many recent arrivals moved to America for economic reasons, including to help, not break with, family left behind. The moral frame of reference of these émigrés is family based across borders, not ideologically grounded in a blockade between life in a capitalist democracy and a Communist dictatorship.

Power and Influence

Cuban Americans have become one of the most politically influential immigrant groups, and the most influential from Latin America. They have become important players in local politics where they have settled in large numbers, and nationally on foreign policy toward their homeland.

Leveraging Local Politics

Most Cuban Americans immigrants live in Greater Metropolitan Miami, Miami-Dade County. In areas of the county where they are concentrated they have joined the political class, since the 1980s (c.f. Garcia 1996, Stepick et al 2003). Sweetwater became the first city in South Florida to elect a Cuba-born

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4. For more detailed discussions of émigré cohorts, see Eckstein (2004), Grenier and Perez (2004), and Pedraza (1996).

mayor. And the City of Miami has had a majority Cuban American Commission since 1985 and a Cuban American mayor almost continuously since then. Similarly, the City Commission of Miami Beach, the county's third largest city, became majority Cuban American around the same time. Meanwhile, Hialeah, home to more Cubans than any city other than Havana, has had a Cuban American mayor since the early 1980s.

Cuban Americans have assumed political importance also at the county level, in Miami-Dade. In the latter 1990s the first Cuban American was elected countywide mayor: Alex Penelas. By then Cuban Americans also constituted the majority of the County Commission, and the county sent a predominantly Cuban American delegation to the state legislature. Cuban Americans became politically influential at the county level even though they accounted for only 29 percent of the county population (Boswell 2002: 11).

Cuban American representation extends to Congressional positions. As of 2004, there were four Cuban American Congressmen and one Senator. The one non-Floridian was Congressman Robert Menendez from New Jersey. He was a former mayor of Union City, NJ, once the second most important city of Cuban settlement, though never a match to Miami. Both he and Mel Martinez, the first Hispanic elected to the Senate, in 2004, required far more than their ethnic vote to win office.

By the century's turn Cuban Americans also acquired top administrative posts. In 2000 in Miami-Dade they held one-third of the top appointed positions, more than any other ethnic group. Miamians, in turn, perceived Cuban immigrants to be the city's dominant ethnic group. Seventy-five percent of the eight hundred Miami-Dade residents polled by the Miami Herald that year believed Cuban Americans to be the most politically powerful of the county's ethnic groups (Miami Herald September 4, 2000).

The Cuban Americans who dominate politically either emigrated in the 1960s or are U.S. born children of émigrés of this cohort. While I am aware of no data documenting first cohort political domination, in my research I never came upon or heard of an influential politician who emigrated since 1980. Two of the Congressmen, Robert Menendez and Mario Diaz-Belart of Miami, are U.S. born children of 1960s émigrés. Mario and his more influential older, Cuban-born brother, Lincoln, elected to Congress before him, moreover, come from a politically prominent pre-revolutionary Cuban family. Their uncle served in Batista's cabinet. While Castro's government crushed the family influence in Cuba, Miami Cuban Americans polled in 2000 named Lincoln more frequently than anyone else as the local person most likely to play a major role in Cuba when a transition to democracy occurs (FIU-IPOR 2000).[5] Martinez and Ileana Ros, the other Cuban American in Congress, also emigrated in the 1960s.

Recent émigrés are so at the political sidelines that few even vote, much less hold political office. As of 2000, nationwide, only 26 percent of eligible 1990s émigrés had taken out citizenship, a prerequisite for voting. In contrast, 92 percent of 1959-1964 émigrés were citizens (Eckstein 2004: Table 4). Since the 1966 Cuban Adjustment Act entitles all Cuban émigrés to citizenship after five years of U.S. resident status, and resident status after one year on U.S. soil, almost all islanders who emigrated before 1995 not "naturalized" by 2000 did so at their own choosing.[6]

Several factors contribute to recent émigrés' low citizenship rate. One, in general, poor and uneducated Americans participate minimally politically (c.f. Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). Recent émigrés tend to be both low income earners and poorly educated (Eckstein 2004: Tables 3 and 4). Two, many 1990s émigrés, as detailed below, remain enmeshed in homeland ties. Consequently, political engagement locally is not necessarily a priority of theirs. Three, recent émigrés may feel politically alienated because the first cohort political class does not speak to and represent their interests, also detailed below.

Cuban American voters, recent émigrés aside, are sufficiently forceful in Greater Miami that most politicians, even if not of Cuban background, address the immigrant group's concerns. But the politicians focus on the preoccupations of the politically active first cohort. For opportunistic reasons if not political conviction they accordingly advocate a hard-line policy toward Cuba. In particular, they support the embargo, a mantra in Miami. To appeal to Cuban American voters when running for reelection in 2004, President Bush, for example, deliberately tightened the embargo at the people-to-people level. The restrictions appealed to the two-thirds of registered Cuban American voters who had emigrated before 1980. Following the announcement of the new regulations polls reported nearly all of these émigrés to favor Bush, more than before (Wall Street Journal September 20, 2004: 4). Foreign policy towards Cuba is a domestic political issue.

Leveraging National Politics

Although Cuban-origin people comprise less than 1 percent of the U.S. population (Boswell 2002: 2), they have become one of the most influential ethnic groups in Washington: through electoral politics, lobbying, appointments to top government positions, and informal ties to powerful non-Cubans. But their influence at the national level as well as the local is first cohort based, and those well placed politically use their influence to advance the interests

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5. In an ironic twist of history, an aunt of Lincoln's and Mario's was Fidel Castro's first wife, their son, Fidelito, thus a Diaz-Belart relative!

6. All Cubans who reach U.S. territory are presumed to be refugees and made eligible, after a year and a day (and after having been inspected, paroled, or admitted), for U.S. residency status.

of the cohort from which they emanate. Sometimes, however, they have worked against their own best interests, when letting their anti-Castro obsession get in the way of respect for U.S. law and when letting intra-ethnic conflicts weaken their collective strength.

While nationally of little demographic importance, Cuban Americans benefit politically from their concentration in Florida. The state commands the fourth largest number of electoral college votes and it is a "swing state." Therefore, both parties pander to the Cuban American vote. The 2000 election made transparent how critical Florida can be to national politics. Florida was decisive to George W. Bush's winning the electoral college but not national popular vote. Some 85 percent of Miami Cuban Americans reported voting for Bush that year (FIU-IPOR 2000),[7] and Cuban Americans defended Bush when the state's vote was contested. Politically indebted, Bush appointed several Cuban Americans to senior posts on the National Security Council, the State Department, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development during his first term of office, and to the Department of Commerce as well in his second term. Such appointments ensured that first cohort views could be heard in the highest circles. All of the appointees emigrated in the early years of the revolution.

Cuban Americans became influential nationally also because they became adept lobbyists: moneyed, well organized, and savvy strategists. Their national influence began under President Reagan, who supported the formation of the Cuban American National Foundation (popularly called the Foundation) in exchange for the Cuban American vote. Jorge Mas Canosa, the community's most influential and charismatic leader, who assumed the helm of the Foundation, in the process gained access to the White House.

Mas Canosa financed the Foundation with a portion of his fortune. He had owned MasTec, which at the time of his death in 1997 was one of the two largest Cuban American owned firms. The Foundation received 200,000 shares of the company's stock. The Foundation also benefited from large annual donations from individuals who by virtue of their contributions influenced Foundation policy. As of the early 2000s the Foundation's 170 directors, trustees, and associates each typically gave $1,000 to $6,500 (if not more) annually to the organization, and some 55,000 regular members paid up to $100 a year (Tamayo 2002).[8]

The Foundation drew on these funds to buy political influence. It formed a Political Action Committee (PAC) that deftly targeted its money for a number of years through a dedicated lobbying office in Washington. The Foundation modeled itself after the influential Jewish ethnic lobby, and among ethnic PACs its financial contributions grew to exceed all but the pro-Israel's. Cuban Americans in Florida provided the lion's share of the funds (c.f. www.opensecrets.org/pubs/cubareport/comparisons.asp)[9]. So influential did the Foundation become that the Center for Public Integrity named the Foundation the most effective lobby in America in 1997 (Miami Herald March 23, 2002, at www.canfnet.org), a lobby that advanced the political concerns of the first post-revolutionary émigré cohort. Although the Foundation is not the only Cuban American lobbying group, at the century's turn none had achieved comparable clout.

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[7] For this and other FIU-IPOR references in the text, see FIU-IPOR (2000).

[8] It is my understanding that Foundation directors contributed $10,000 annually, more than Tamayo specified.

The national influence of the Foundation, however, soon thereafter began to crumble. Changes in Washington, Cuba, the global political economy, and Miami all contributed, in different ways, to a waning of Foundation influence. After refusing to comply with the law of the land the Foundation, for one, lost credibility in Washington, at least under the Clinton Administration. In 2000 the Foundation had led the fight to allow six year old Elian Gonzalez to stay in America when brought ashore after his mother died at sea. Because of Cuban American resistance, the Clinton Administration took Elian at gunpoint. The White House believed that Elian's father in Cuba had paternity rights.

At about the same time Congressional opposition to the embargo gathered storm, especially among farmers (though not among Cuban American legislators). Congress accordingly voted in 1999 to exempt food and medical exports from the embargo. Congressional commitment to U.S. trade embargos in general waned with the Cold War's end and prioritization of free trade to expand markets for American business.[10] In the changed global geopolitical and economic context, business interests got the upper hand. As Dennis Hays, in charge of the Foundation's Washington office at the time, noted, "For a long time there was no significant economic power working against the embargo. Now the mantra is 'market, market, market" (Tamayo 2002). While the Foundation's muscle proved no match to farmers', it sufficed to get a proviso inserted into the multi-country embargo-lightening legislation requiring Cuba, but none of the other countries involved, to pay cash for U.S. purchases. Foundation lobbyists assumed that without access to credit the Cuban government would be too poor to purchase U.S. products. Within two years, however, Castro's government came up with cash, and strategically made purchases from over half U.S. states. In so doing, it astutely broadened

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9. On ethnic lobbies, see Tony Smith's (2000) interesting work.

10. The new legislation opened Cuba to U.S. exports, but Washington continued to restrict Cuban imports to the U.S. Accordingly, U.S. business benefited while the Castro regime could lower its import costs but not gain possible export revenue. Free trade was one of the pillars of the new neoliberal global economic project that Washington and international financial institutions advocated after the Cold War's end.In this case, free trade flowed only in one direction.

the American base of support for trade with Cuba. The Cuban government, along with U.S. business, accordingly eroded Cuban American influence over U.S. Cuba policy.

Against the backdrop of such highly visible defeats, and some political seachange in Cuba, Jorge Mas Santos, the U.S. born son of Mas Canosa who took over the leadership of the Foundation upon his father's death, began to rethink the organization's anti-Castro strategy. Simultaneously, some wealthy, prominent conservative Miami businessmen did the same, independently of the Foundation.[11] They both began to believe that islanders, and not exiles singlehandedly, could democratize island governance. The Foundation consequently began to support selective cross-border political engagement. Mas Santos went so far as to announce willingness to meet with high-level Cuban officials to discuss a democratic transition, and to support a nascent dissident movement on the island (Elliott and de Valle 2003). Mas Santos refused only to meet with Fidel and his brother, Raul, second in command. Especially appealing to Mas Santos and his backers was Oswaldo Paya. Paya, through his courageous and ambitious Varela Project, mobilized over 11,000 islanders to petition for political and economic constitutional reforms.

Mas Santos legitimated his new cross-border tolerance in terms of his deceased father. The charismatic Mas Canosa commanded more respect in death than his son in life (c.f. www.centredaily.com/mld/centredaily/news/4899576.htm), but not enough to avert a split within the Foundation that further weakened its influence. Mas Canosa's son faced the problem of institutionalizing charismatic rule. He was competent, but more business-like and more Americanized in his political style than his father had been and his followers favored. And U.S.-born, he lacked certain authenticity among core Foundation members. Adding fuel to the fire, Mas Canosa's heirs secretly removed some longtime members from the board controlling Foundation funds, replacing them with Mas family members (c.f. Yanez and San Martin 2001; Tamayo 2002).

Against this backdrop, an impassioned, articulate, influential, and moneyed Foundation faction split off in 2001 and formed a rival group, the Cuba Liberty Council (CLC). Mas Santos' support of Miami hosting the Latin Grammys that Cubans could attend proved the coup de grace that led the faction to bolt. The CLC immediately attacked the Foundation, while using its influence to promote a continued hard-line toward Cuba. CLC members are well connected politically. Ninoska Perez Castellon, who had hosted a Foundation radio program, for example, maintained a Miami program of her own. And she, among others, had close ties to then Florida Governor, Jeb Bush, and through him a pipeline to his brother, George W., in the White House. Lending symbolic strength to the new splinter group, President Bush invited CLC members to join him in the Rose Garden on October 10, 2003, when he announced harsher U.S. Cuba travel restrictions. The Foundation was noticeably absent. And the following year Perez Castellon, along with other CLC members, lobbied hard and successfully for the tightening of travel and remittance rights the Bush Administration then instituted. Meanwhile, the CLC won over the support of other hard-line first cohort groups, such as Mothers and Women Against Repression and Unidad Cubana, an umbrella organization comprised of more than thirty exile groups (San Martin 2003). Miami cultural politics further divided and in so doing weakened the Foundation. In 2001 Mas Santos promoted, along with the then county mayor, Alex Penelas, Miami hosting the Latin Grammys. They believed the event would add to the city's luster, plus be a money-maker. Mas Santos himself had vested material interests in the event. But Cuban music groups had been nominated for awards and were scheduled to attend, which hard-line members of the Foundation's inner-circle found intolerable (www.Cunet.org/CNews/y03/jan03/31e3.htm). Hard-line exiles in South Florida so opposed local performances by island musical groups that they had previously used their political muscle to convince the county to ban them.[12] The hard-liners did not want popular and award-winning Cuban talent on U.S. soil, and they successfully won the battle. The event was moved to Los Angeles.

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[11] These businessmen formed the Cuba Study Group. Although moneyed, the businessmen's group never managed to become a significant political player. Politically inexperienced, they proved no match to the Miami leadership opposed to their conciliatory stance. Other anti-Castro groups, such as the Cuban Committee for Democracy (CCD), opposed the embargo as well as favored cross-border engagement. The CCD sponsored a radio program but it lacked the economic resources of the harder-line groups.

The Foundation was yet further weakened by new, internal financial problems. Its revenue nosedived for reasons independent of the loss of annual contributions from the members of the directorate who defected. Coincidentally, the price of MasTec stock, the Foundation's main endowment source, plunged. At the time of Mas Canosa's death the stocks had been valued at about $5 million. By 2001 their value had halved (Miami Herald August 8, 2001 http://64.21.33.164/CNews/y01/ago01/08e7.htm, p. 3).

In 2003 the Foundation was in such financial duress that it sought to sell off both its Washington townhouse, from where it had coordinated its lobbying, and its recently acquired Freedom Tower property in Miami. Cuban émigrés of the first wave considered the Tower their symbolic equivalent to Ellis Island to European immigrants around the turn of the last century. The Tower housed immigration offices that processed Cubans fleeing the revolution until shuttered in the 1970s. The Foundation also downsized its staff, closed its Washington office, and shut down its radio station, its key Miami venue for influencing public opinion. Foundation monthly income from all sources allegedly dropped from $80,000 to $60,000 under Mas Santos' watch (Tamayo 2002; Miami Herald March 28, 2002, cited in www.canfnet.org/News/archived/020401nesa.htm). The crisis was such that a former Foundation employee acknowledged to me, when interviewed in late 2003, that the Foundation persisted mainly as a figment of the imagination. "It existed because in the minds of people it existed," said she. And in 2004 the Foundation's articulate Executive Director, Joe Garcia, a second generation Cuban American whose family emigrated in the 1960s, left the job. He had been the point person for media interviews, including for the national media.

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[12] Miami had been selected to host the Latin Grammys only after a county ordinance limiting performances NOTES by Cuban nationals had been struck down, an ordinance exiles previously had pressed for.

In essence, at the same time that Cuban Americans individually increasingly joined the ranks of Miami's political class,[13] collectively the political class fragmented and accordingly weakened. Nonetheless, members of the community continued to have influence in the highest circles of the George W. Bush Administration. Bush's reelection bid, in 2004, gave the well-connected CLC a window of opportunity to exert political influence, an opportunity they did not let pass by. They pressed the White House to close loopholes in the embargo that had permitted selective travel and remittance-sending, by all Americans, not merely Cuban Americans. They hoped to deprive the Castro government of desperately needed hard currency, to hasten its demise.

The internal political divisions within the émigré community notwithstanding, Cuban American influence remained exceptional among latinos. The comparison with Mexicans is particularly telling. In 2000 Mexicans were by far the largest immigrant group. They accounted for 59 percent of all latinos, Cubans for a mere 6 percent (Ruggles and Sobek et al 2003).Yet, in California in general, and in Los Angeles in particular, where Mexican origin people are most concentrated, few Mexican Americans have attained political preeminence or capitalized significantly on the state commanding the largest number of electoral college votes. Mexican Americans lack the money, organizational prowess, and political connections Cubans of the first post-revolutionary émigré cohort have.

Cohorts, Their Cross-Border Views and Involvements

Although the Cuban American leadership by the early 2000s showed signs of divide, early émigrés continued to dominate public discussion. They advocated a foreign policy consistent with their pre-revolutionary political and class formation. On most matters they opposed cross-border engagement on the presumption that it involved a moral compromise and bolstered the regime.

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[13] In Union City, New Jersey, as well as in neighboring West New York, Cuban Americans also became the most important ethnic group politically. Cuban American elected mayors were either first cohort émigrés or grown children of such émigrés.

The first cohort took advantage of its political dominance both to establish hegemonic influence within the Cuban American community and to speak in the community's name to the non-Cuban American world. Florida International University (FIU-IPOR 2004) survey data indicate that Cubans across the cohort divide concur that not all points of view are heard in Miami, e.g. on how to deal with Castro (see Table 1).

TABLE 10-1. Cross-Border Views and Involvements Among Émigré Cohorts in 2004

	Cohorts	
	1959-1964	**1985+**
Shared Views		
1. At the time of the case interviewee felt Elian should have been returned to father in Cuba*	17	22
2. Strongly favors support for human rights groups in Cuba	84	87
3. Believes that in Miami not all points of view concerning how to deal with Castro are heard	70	74
Divergent Cohort Views		
1. Favors diplomatic ties	29	61
2. Believes that embargo does not work	67	81
3. Favor continuation of embargo	75	56
4. Favors unrestricted travel to Cuba	28	68
5. Favors ban on Cuban musicians	64	44
6. Favors dialogue among exiles, dissidents and Cuban government	45	68
7. Opposes farm trade with Cuba	65	35
Cross-Border Involvements		
1. Currently has close relatives in Cuba	54	95
2. Traveled to Cuba since left	23	45
3. Sent money to relatives	31	75
4. Sent money in 2003	20	50
5. Sent $1,000+ in 2003	3	11

*survey query in 2000

source: FIU-IPOR, FIU/Cuba Poll 2000 and 2004 (www.fiu.edu/orgs/ipor/cuba2000/years.htm).

On a few other issues most Cuban immigrants across the cohort divide agree, either because they have their own independent reasons for sharing the same views or because the dominant cohort convinced them to think similarly. Cubans across cohorts, for example, agreed (in 2000) that Elian should not have been returned to his father in Cuba after his mother died at sea. So strong were sentiments that Elian should have stayed that Manny Diaz, the lawyer for the boy's Miami relatives who fought to keep Elian here, rose from political obscurity to city mayor in 2001. For only the second time in thirty years an incumbent mayor lost a race. Diaz is reputed to have captured the general Cuban "ethnic vote." (c.f. www.usatoday.com/news/washington/nov01/2001-11-13-miami-mayor.htm).

Yet, first cohort influence proves far from complete. Although recent émigrés remain near-voiceless publicly, survey data permit uncovering cohort differences in views about relations across the Florida Straits (see Table 1). The 1959 to 1964 and post-1984 émigrés differ significantly in their stance towards (1) the embargo, (2) the sale of food and medicine to Cuba, (3) diplomatic relations with Cuba, and (4) travel restrictions. They also differ in their views toward cross-border political dialogue and cultural exchanges. The 1990s much more than the first post-Castro émigré cohort want policies that will benefit on-island Cubans and that facilitate bonding across borders.

The survey data also point to differences in actual cohort involvements across borders. In 2004 recent émigrés were nearly twice as likely still to have relatives on the island and to have visited them since emigrating. And though poorer, more than twice as many of recent émigrés send money to help island relatives. Recent émigrés also are more likely to send over $1,000 annually, if 2003 is a typical year. Thus, in advocating for a tightening of travel and remittance-sending rights the Cuban American leadership is promoting interests of its cohort but not of the new immigrants who are growing in numbers by some twenty thousand a year.

The different cohort cross-border views and involvements are traceable to different pre-migration lived experiences and different solidarities maintained and reinforced in the U.S. The differences are not, in the main, traceable to lapsed years since emigrating, for the first post Castro cohort never engaged in life across borders on any scale. First cohort political formation, antipathy to Castro, and commitment to a personal along with a state-to-state embargo of Cuba under Castro have kept their bonding across borders minimal.[14] For them, a personal embargo is a matter of principle (though some quietly defy in practice what they preach). It represents a moral rejection of the revolution. Even in 2000, when over 60 percent of the 1959-1964 émigrés still had close relatives on the island, only 18 percent had ever made a return trip in their approximately forty years in the States.

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[14] Also, Cuban government policy made visiting difficult until the 1990s, except under the Carter Administration (see Eckstein and Barberia 2002).

Recent émigrés, in contrast, are more pragmatic in their views toward cross border ties and they are guided by a different morality, rooted in the moral economy of family, not ideological principles. They want to help, not hurt, family left behind, and they want to continue to bond with them. When the remains of the Cuban American National Foundation in 2003 and 2004 opposed the tightening of travel and remittance-sending regulations the CLC pressed for, they were defending interests of recent émigrés. The Foundation reached out, not with much success, to a new political base, among recent immigrants, after losing its initial "historical exile" base with the CLC split-off.

If recent émigré attitudes differ so markedly from the first cohort's, why are their views not heard? There are several reasons for the silence. For one, the more working class cohort lacks the personal attributes (previously described) associated with political involvement in America. Two, Cubans raised in Castro's Cuba were without civil society experience on which to build. Batista highly circumscribed political activity, but the permissible involved the upper and middle classes. With rare exception, Castro's Cuba blocked citizens from civic engagement independent of the state. And some recent émigrés developed a distaste for political involvement in Cuba, a distaste they brought with them to the States. They disliked the Party controlled political life they experienced in Cuba.[15]

But recent émigré views have not been heard also because the first cohort leadership made no effort, at least until the early 2000s, to represent the interests of recent arrivals ill-served by the Washington Cuba policy it pressed for. The views of the 1990s cohort were off the political radar screen not merely, however, because of benign neglect, leadership unfamiliarity with, and therefore insensitivity to, recent émigré concerns. The leadership never even spoke for all of its own cohort, and deliberately so. Over the years the dominating faction relied on intimidation, economic blackmailing, and violence (especially in the 1960s and 1970s), and denial of media access, when normative means did not suffice to keep dissidents within their ranks in tow (c.f. Forment 1989; Didion 1987, Portes and Stepick 1993).[16]

Like dissidents among the first cohort, recent émigrés have been publicly silent in part because they have been silenced. My interviews reveal that recent émigrés who tried to challenge the dominant early émigré viewpoint experienced repression, rejection, and resistance. Much of the silencing occurred removed from public viewing, for example, when recent émigrés submitted editorials to the news media and when they tried to voice their opinion on popular Miami call-in radio shows. They interpreted their rejection politically.

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[15] Both my U.S. and Cuban interviews suggest this.

[16] My interviews suggest that the less hard-line first cohort émigrés had moved to America as children at their parents' discretion.

The clash of cohort interests came to the fore for the first time in 2004 when President Bush announced that émigrés could visit island family only every three years and even then only visit immediate kin, parents, children, and siblings, not grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins, and the like. The assault on transnational family rights brought hundreds of recent immigrants to the streets. They picketed offices of the first cohort Cuban American legislators whom they blamed for the new restrictions (Wall Street Journal September 20, 2004: 4). The Bush Administration imposed the new restrictions at a time when new immigrant visits soared. The percentage of the cohort who traveled to the island to see family jumped from 31 to 45 between 2000 and 2004 (see FIU-IPOR 2000 and Table 1). Meanwhile, the work of first cohort hard-liners, with their ties to the Bush White House, contributed to a step-up in opposition to unrestricted travel, especially though not only among the "historical exiles" (FIU-IPOR 2000 and 2004).

Conclusion

A historically grounded cohort analysis highlights aspects of immigrant experience that both assimilation and transnational theoretical frames have left undocumented and unexplained. And specifically in reference to Cuba a cohort analysis highlights marked differences in cross-border views and involvements that the current structure of domination, first cohort based, conceals.

Immigrant adaptation and sentiments prove in no small part traceable to pre-migration social and political formation. Pre-migration experiences do not alone determine post-migration experiences but their significance does not stop at the border. They shape how immigrants adapt to their new land and relate to their homeland, and how they exercise political power attained.

Nonetheless, history is not entirely destiny. Even immigrants who arrived with few assets and who remained at the political and economic sidelines have not entirely been victims of circumstance. Covertly if not overtly they have challenged structures of domination, and in ways that appear to be quietly changing norms and practices, even amidst policy set-backs. For example, first cohort informal policing, by ostracizing, stigmatizing, and penalizing economically émigrés who defy the taboo on ties across the Straits, has tapered off. The sheer weight of new immigrant cross-border bonding has eroded early émigré ability to maintain normative and social control. Possibly, U.S. policy in the not distant future, in turn, will be responsive to the cross-border yearnings of the Cuban immigrants who put family above politics and who consequently will maintain ties covertly and illegally if Washington does not allow them to do so legally.

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