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Anniversary Overload? Memory Fatigue at Cuba's Socialist Apex, 1971-1979

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Cuban Research Institute

Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs



Scene from *Un día de noviembre*, dir. H. Solás, 1972

Anniversary Overload? Memory Fatigue at Cuba's Socialist Apex, 1971–1979 Lecture by Michael J. Bustamante

Monday, October 24, 2016 | 12:30 PM | Modesto A. Maidique Campus | Green Library (GL) 220

In the 1970s, the Cuban revolutionary state's modes of self-representation reached a peak of retrospective simplification. Previous narratives argued that the island turned to socialist politics in 1961 due to dialectical forces. Yet by 1975, official government documents described the revolutionary leadership as secretly communist all along. Such pronouncements not only mirrored old conspiracy theories of former Batista supporters in exile; they also found analogous expression in a broader landscape of "memory surplus," comprised of museums, TV series, and films. Still, signs of commemorative excess risked turning once seductive master narratives into stale bromides. Absent fresh struggles to revive earlier ambitions, did repetitive renditions of the Revolution's epic make it more challenging for the present to measure up?

Michael J. Bustamante is Assistant Professor of History at Florida International University. He completed his Ph.D. in Latin American and Caribbean History at Yale University in 2016. His current book manuscript, "Cuban Counterpoints: Memory Struggles in Revolution and Exile," excavates public spectacle, rare press, private correspondence, and visual media to track clashes over Cuban collective and historical memory, on and off the island, in the wake of the 1959 Revolution. His scholarly writings have appeared in the *Journal of American Ethnic History*, *Latino Studies*, *Foreign Affairs*, *Cuban Studies*, and *Perspectives on History*, among other publications.

This event is free and open to the public. To confirm your attendance and for more information, please call (305) 348-1991 or write cri@fiu.edu.