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REVOLUTION AROUND THE CORNER: VOICES FROM THE PUERTO RICAN  
SOCIALIST PARTY IN THE UNITED STATES

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*Revolution Around the Corner* is an exciting account of the rise and fall of the leftist and decolonial politics of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party (PSP) from its beginnings as the Movimiento Pro-Independencia (MPI) in 1959 to its rebranding as the PSP in 1971 to its dissolution in 1993. Through historical analysis, archival work, interviews, oral histories, and focus groups, the editors and contributors demonstrate how the PSP as an organization and its members understood and resisted the colonial relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico. They explain how this colonial relationship was locally manifested in the massive migration of Puerto Ricans from the island to the Northeastern United States (and, eventually, step-migrations further west). This critical context informs the PSP's prioritization of Puerto Rican independence, its struggle for social and economic inclusion for the Puerto Rican diaspora living on the mainland, and the mass mobilizations and interracial coalitions they organized over thirty years.

This book takes a phenomenological approach to the study of the PSP. The contributors, most of whom were former members of the PSP, shed light on how the colonial experience in Puerto Rico and their experience with racialization in the United States influenced their subjectivity by changing their conception of themselves through their encounter with these social structures. These phenomenological accounts explain how individual members and the PSP as an organization asserted their humanity and resistance to this colonial and racial oppression through political organizing, mass mobilizations, and the subaltern construction of knowledge through the publication of the *Claridad Bilingüe* newspaper.

Moreover, these testimonies reveal the importance of individual subjectivity in political parties, where members' grappling with their complex identities reverberated up to the macro-structure of the party as ideological tension and debate. This tension was manifested in the organization's consensus to pursue a "double role" strategy of simultaneously engaging in the struggle for Puerto Rican independence and democratic rights for Puerto Ricans living in the United States. Ultimately, this double role proved too diffuse for even this dynamic organization, and it formally dissolved in 1993.

Despite its dissolution, the richness of the historical and subjective accounts of the PSP's mass mobilizations and interracial coalition-building—such as the National Day of Solidarity (1974), the Save Hostos struggle (1975), the Bicentennial Without Colonies (1976), and the mayoral election of Harold Washington in Chicago (1983) to name a few—convincingly make a case for the PSP's lasting influence on city politics throughout the United States. *Revolution Around the Corner* reaches its goal of demonstrating that the leftist politics in the United States was not only comprised of native and white ethnic groups but included a diversity of people of color resisting and pushing back on the social structures that oppressed them. Empirically, it adds to the conversation about how communities of color have proactively reshaped their political, social, and spatial landscapes (Brown 2019; Hunter 2013).

In the PSP's case, the reshaping of political, social and spatial landscapes in the United States was achieved by pursuing the "double role" strategy. Although the book provides a clear depiction of the importance of the "double role" strategy, it does not elucidate *how* members reached a consensus to pursue it. How did different groups within the PSP (for example, Puerto Ricans born on the island and those born on the United States mainland) understand, articulate, and contest the "double role" strategy during the long ideological debates that took place periodically? This was a missed opportunity

to further explore how the collective self-definition of "Puerto Rican" was not static but contested and (re)constructed over time.

I see this book as part of a larger, contemporary Du Boisian conversation. This analytical approach examines a group's specific history of oppression and exclusion in a way that is contextual, relational, and historical (Itzigsohn and Brown 2020: 60). Methodologically, this work fits within a Du Boisian social scientific method because it accounts for the unique context of the colonial relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States, relates the patterns of Puerto Rican exclusion to broader patterns of neocolonialism, neoliberalism, and racialization, and accounts for the historical Puerto Rican resistance to colonialism. Theoretically, *Revolution Around the Corner* adds to a contemporary Du Boisian conversation through its detailed historical account of the Puerto Rican experience with colonial oppression and socioeconomic exclusion. It adds to our understanding of how different racial and ethnic groups construct their lived experience through their encounter with the American racial and colonial system. This book showcases the history of Puerto Rican self-assertion against colonialism and racialization through political organizing.

#### References

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