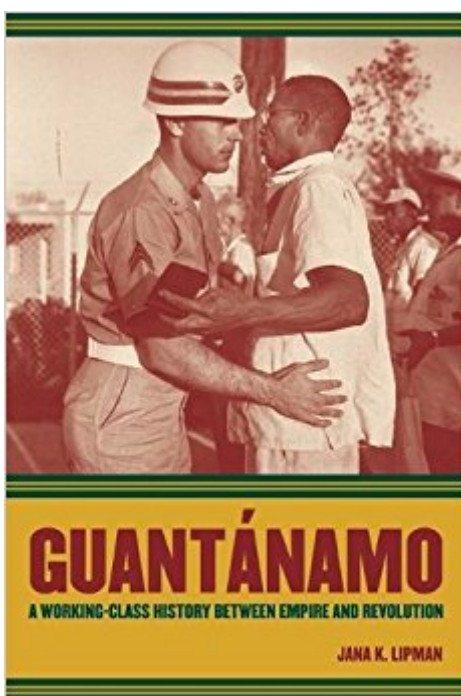


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Guantánamo: A Working-Class History Between Empire And Revolution (American Crossroads)



Synopsis

Guantánamo has become a symbol of what has gone wrong in the War on Terror. Yet Guantánamo is more than a U.S. naval base and prison in Cuba, it is a town, and our military occupation there has required more than soldiers and sailors; it has required workers. This revealing history of the women and men who worked on the U.S. naval base in Guantánamo Bay tells the story of U.S.-Cuban relations from a new perspective, and at the same time, shows how neocolonialism, empire, and revolution transformed the lives of everyday people. Drawing from rich oral histories and little-explored Cuban archives, Jana K. Lipman analyzes how the Cold War and the Cuban revolution made the naval base a place devoid of law and accountability. The result is a narrative filled with danger, intrigue, and exploitation throughout the twentieth century. Opening a new window onto the history of U.S. imperialism in the Caribbean and labor history in the region, her book tells how events in Guantánamo and the base created an ominous precedent likely to inform the functioning of U.S. military bases around the world.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

• Lipman offers a new and compelling angle on the crisis. • (London Review Of Books 2009-03-26) • Lipman's account is impressive, original, and well researched. . . . Should interest foreign relations scholars, Latin America area specialists, and labor historians. • (H-Net Reviews 2010-07-09) • Splendid. . . . Lipman shows successfully that Cuban workers mattered. •

(International History Review 2010-07-13)â œLipman has produced a grounded, powerful critique of United States policy.â • (Estudios Interdisciplinarios De America Latina Y El Caribe (Eial) 2012-09-05)

"Engaging and eye-opening to anyone interested in GuantÃ¡namo's current role, American imperialism, Caribbean history, working-class politics, or gender in international affairs."#151;Cynthia Enloe, author of *Globalization and Militarism* "A compelling example of why good diplomatic history needs to also be social history (and vice versa)."#151;Greg Grandin, author of *Empire's Workshop*

History told from the bottom up almost always forces the reader to think about human injustice. This is certainly true of Jana Lipman's compellingly written, well researched study of those who built and worked at the GuantÃ¡namo naval base prior to the success of the Cuban Revolution in 1959. Lipman did field research in GuantÃ¡namo City and her distillation of the interviews she conducted makes an important contribution to the history of this unique U.S. military installation. As Lipman persuasively argues, Cuban workers had to navigate between being loyal Cuban citizens and trustworthy employees of the U.S. Navy. What is most fascinating to me is Lipman's information concerning those Cuban laborers who were also working to ensure the success of the Cuban Revolution. But what of those workers who liked working for the U.S. government, appreciated the benefits they received, and continued to live in Cuba and commuted to the base long after the Revolution had succeeded? This is an vital part of the history that is missing from Lipman's account. Stephen Irving Max Schwab, author of *GuantÃ¡namo, USA: The Untold History of America's Cuban Outpost*

Jana Lipman is at the forefront of young scholars who are reinventing the field of international relations from (as the metaphor goes) "the bottom up." Her social/labor history provides a news lens on empire, and, perhaps just as important, it demonstrates that "high diplomacy" did not always or by itself determine relations between Cuba and the United States. Everyday contacts and dilemmas, as Lipman shows, proved just as decisive in structuring relations between the two countries. This book should prompt more examination of the worldwide network of US military bases, and, in a deeper sense, the quotidian but crucial components of US hegemony.

This history of the American military base on Cuban soil shows how we arrived at the strange

situation that is Guantanamo today. It explains what it means for the U.S. to maintain a military presence in a country with which our relationship is dysfunctional at best. Although this is a comprehensive historical text, it also makes its points through the stories of individuals. Clearly-written and accessible.

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