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Stability, Transition, and Regime Approval in Post-Fidel Cuba

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What has kept Cuba from transitioning to democracy? As Darren Hawkins argues, the democratization literature predicts that three structural factors conspired against the Castro regime that should have lead to such a transition.[1] First, the people of Cuba participated in intensive socioeconomic and human capital development programs in the 1970s and 1980s. Cuba's population now has high literacy rates, long life expectancy, and overall greater development than several Latin American democracies.[2] The literature clearly states that peoples with higher socioeconomic development, or human development, have higher probabilities of living in democratic states.[3] Second, Cuba endured a major economic crisis in the 1990s, precipitated by the loss of

[1] Darren Hawkins, "Democratization and Transitions: Insights from Cuba," *Comparative Politics* 33 (July 2001): 441–461.

[2] Kevin Watkins, *Human Development Report 2007/2008* (New York, New York: United Nations Development Program, 2007), 229.

[3] See Larry Diamond, Juan Linz, and Seymore Martin Lipset, eds., *Democracy in Developing Countries* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1989); Samuel Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991); and Renske Doorenspleet, *Democratic Transitions: Exploring the Structural Sources of the Fourth Wave* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2005).

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subsidies from the former Soviet Union.[4] Third, the international system exerts pressure on Cuba to become a democracy. The United States has trade and financial embargoes against Cuba, and isolates it diplomatically. Cuba is excluded from the Organization of American States, as well as regional trading regimes.[5]

Further undermining the case for why regime change should have occurred, Fidel Castro is not even President of Cuba any more. On 31 July 2006, Cuban news agencies announced that President Fidel Castro Ruz had temporarily relinquished his seat because of an undisclosed medical condition. There was a global spasm of media speculation on his future, as well as the future of the Cuban regime. While significant because of the exit of Cuba's only leader since the Cuban revolution of 1959, it was not the first time that there had been open speculation about the future of the regime. In fact, there has been significant discussion of various transition scenarios and the prospects for the idea of exodus-free succession over the recent past.[6] Moreover, given the nature of these events and the eventual replacement of Fidel Castro in February 2008, with his brother Raul as President, a transition has, in fact, occurred. That it was not democratic in nature, or that it did not result in a process of destabilization leading to civil unrest, mass exodus, or a coup d'état points to other factors that explain why, in that instance in which transition to democracy could have occurred, it did not.

Because of the intense U.S. interest in Cuba, and because of the strong expectation that Castro would be overthrown, the post-Cold War analysis regarding Cuba has been prolific. Surprisingly, little quantitative analysis has been conducted to ascertain the extent to which the Cuban people approve of the current regime, and the extent to which those attitudes will influence the trajectory of transition toward democratic governance in the post-Fidel environment. Utilizing Cuban public opinion data collected under the auspices of the Gallup World Poll[7], we estimate a structural equation model (SEM) to evaluate the support for the Cuban regime, stability, and transition. This paper consists of five sections. The first is a review of the literature as it pertains to the stability of the Cuban regime, the prospects for transition, and regime approval as measured by public opinion polling. The review includes both a

[4] Hawkins, "Democratization and Transitions," 441.

[5] Ibid.

[6] See Jorge I. Dominguez, "The Day After—Cuba: His Brother's Keeper," *Foreign Policy* (November/December 2003), 34–35; Julia Sweig, "Fidel's Final Victory," *Foreign Affairs* 86 (January/February 2007), 39–56: 1; Marifeli Perez-Stable, *Looking Forward: Comparative Perspectives on Cuba's Transition* (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), 1–16; and Jorge G. Castañeda, "Morning in Latin America: The Chance of A New Beginning," *Foreign Affairs* (September/October 2008), 126–139.

[7] The Gallup World Poll (Gallup Organization 2006) is a public opinion survey of human well-being conducted in over 150 countries. The Gallup Organization in Cuba collected the Cuba data during September of 2006. The data are made available to the authors through a "research advisor agreement" with the Gallup Organization.

critique of qualitative structural analyses of regime stability and transition scenarios. Specifically, this looks at the normative and political assumptions underlying the attempts to predict where and when the Cuba regime falls after the departure of the socialist regime, from both qualitative and quantitative perspectives. Second, we introduce the Gallup World Poll. We then develop the Collective Esteem Model of Confidence in the Cuban government, making a theoretical argument for the centrality of collective esteem in support of authoritarian governments in nations with homegrown, ideology-based, revolutions. We proceed to test the model and discuss the results. Finally, we conclude with some of the implications from the results for the formulation of U.S. policy toward Cuba in terms of opportunities for policy openings that may lead to a full normalization of relations with Cuba.

Literature Review

Scholarly Voices Drawing Attention to the Role of the Cuban People

Hawkins's analysis of Cuba's failure to undergo a democratic transition reveals that classical structural explanations cannot account for the lack of transition in the case of Cuba.[8] According to his analysis, regime stability is based on the absence of key democratizing political actors, namely, soft-liners in the leadership who are sympathetic to liberalization, and independent political groups. He argues that soft-liners have been eliminated from leadership positions through purges and repression, and that independent political groups do not exist, owing to ongoing repression, a culture that encourages citizens' dependence on the state, and Castro's ability to link patriotism and nationalism to support for the regime.[9] It is this last point that we will evaluate here.

Andreas Pickel contends that there is a serious lack of attention to key mechanisms at work with any kind of transition that may occur.[10] These key mechanisms are the role the United States will play, and the roles of Cuban nationalism and public sentiment. He argues that this lack of serious attention is a result of two widely held political and normative assumptions that preempt serious analysis. The first assumption is that the role of the United States is

[8] Hawkins, "Democratization and Transitions," 441.

[9] Hawkins represents only a point of departure situated between the early post-Cold War analysis of Cuban democracy and more-contemporary treatments of the creation and existence of alternative democratic spaces in the first decade of the twenty-first century. For examples of this range of analysis see Carollee Bengelsdorf, *The Problem of Democracy in Cuba: Between Vision and Reality* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1994); and Rafael Hernandez, "On Cuban Democracy: Cuba and the Democratic Culture" in Phillip Brenner, Marguerite Rose Jimenez, John M. Kirk, and William M. Leogrande, eds. *A Contemporary Cuba Reader: Reinventing the Revolution* (New York: Rowan and Littlefield, 2007).

[10] Andreas Pickel, "After Fidel: Mechanisms of Regime Change" in *Changing Cuba in a Changing World*, Mauricio Font, compiler (New York: Bildner Publications, 2008), 201–224.

relatively benign, while the second is that Cuban nationalism is viewed as little more than an instrument of communist state manipulation.[11] For Pickel, the question is not to what extent those assumptions are normatively or politically defensible, but about the actual change processes they hide.[12] Moreover, he warns against the over-determinacy and under-determinacy that is hitched to the policy agendas required to issue *prescriptive* analyses because they overwhelmingly seek to "reduce contingency, intervene in the process, and shape the future."[13] Echoing Hawkins, Pickel critiques the manner in which Cuba transition analyses have, in many cases, adopted particular elements of political agendas that disregard actual political change on the island in favor of indicators of change that flatter the deterministic vanities of the policy agenda being employed.

These analyses are rife with the rich information and description that make them invaluable to the scope and composition of U.S. national security and strategic approaches to engagement, but in the end, they provide the scholarly community with little, if any, measurable sense of what direction the Cuban regime will adopt now that Fidel Castro has permanently left the de facto role of supreme leader of the regime. While it has been alleged that the Cuban people are essentially prisoners in a "socialist paradise," there is a growing sense that their opinions, hopes, and aspirations are becoming a larger part of the ruling calculus of governing and legitimacy for the Cuban state. This is manifest in the effort undertaken by the Cuban regime under Raul Castro to improve monthly salaries and the availability of food through the ration system and the *agromercados*. Such changes resulted from open meetings in municipalities across the island shortly after the transfer of power in 2006 and 2007.[14]

These examples, while useful in establishing the context of Cuban political environment, also call for the growth of methodological sophistication in the analysis of Cuban regime stability and transition. This is important because the general trajectory of Cuba-related qualitative analysis has fallen into two distinct camps. The first camp involves a retrospective set of analyses that details the survival, policy reversals, weaknesses, and shortcomings of the Cuban

[11] This is highly relevant when the idea of *cubanidad* is considered, referencing the complexity of the Cuban identity that influences the abstraction of ideology and politics that supersede the Cuban revolution and most if not all instruments of the state. See Fernando Ortiz, *Nuevo Catuaro de Cubanismos* (Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1923 [1974]); and Fernando Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995); and Carlos Del Toro Gonzalez, *La Alta Burguesia Cubana, 1920–1958* (Havana, Cuba: editorial de Cieneias Sociales, 2003), 301.

[12] Pickel, "After Fidel," 203.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Jonathan Benjamin-Alvarado, "Prospects for Sustainable Energy" in Mauricio A. Font, ed., with the assistance of Scott Larson, *Cuba: In Transition? Pathways to Renewal, Long-Term Development and Global Reintegration* (New York: Bildner Publications, 2007), 25–50, accessed at http://web.gc.cuny.edu/dept/bildn/cuba/cubaintransition.shtml, 14 November 2009.

regime under Fidel Castro Ruz, as well as their implications on transition considerations.[15] The second camp is prospective and, in turn, prescriptive in nature, especially in terms of detailing the elements of some future foreign policy strategy to engage Cuba, but that does not fully explore the assumptions regarding transition.[16]

In addition, it should be noted that the identification and definitions of critical "democratic" triggers, effects, and catalysts, are lacking or entirely absent from these sets of analyses. This is echoed in the assessment of the literature on democratic transitions in general, insofar as there has been a general tendency toward imprecise and inconsistent definitions of what constitutes a democratic system of governance.[17] To address this shortcoming, we employ the seminal work of Juan J. Linz and Alfren Stepan's five interconnected arenas (or conditions) of a consolidated democracy, as a baseline for assessing a transition to democracy in Cuba. These arenas are identified as: first, a free and lively civil society; second, a relatively autonomous and valued political society; third, the rule of law to ensure guarantees for citizen's freedoms and independent associational life; fourth, state bureaucracies that are usable by the government and its citizens, and fifth, an institutionalized economic society.[18] While not nearly as precise in definition as called for by Ariel C. Armony and Hector E. Schamis, this definition does allow for clarifying some of the taxonomical confusion caused by the "babel" within the field of democratic transition, while still preserving room to acknowledge the emergence of "islands of democracy within the sea of Cuban socialism."[19] Jorge I.

[15] For examples of this analysis, see, Oscar Espinosa Chepe, "La Crisis de la Produccion Agropecuaria Cubana: Causas y Posibles Soluciones," *Cuba in Transition* 16 (2006): 14–30; Javier Corrales, "The Gatekeeper State: Limited Economic Reforms and Regime Survival in Cuba, 1989–2002," *Latin American Research Review* 39 (2004): 35–65; Salvador Larrua Guedes, "La Reconstruccion de Cuba: Dificultadas, Reflexiones y Soluciones," *Cuba in Transition* 16 (2006): 169–180; and Archibald R.M. Ritter, "Cuba's Strategic Economic Re-Orientation," *Cuba in Transition* 16 (2006): 140–154.

[16] See Gary H. Maybarduk, "The US Strategy for Transition in Cuba" in *Changing Cuba in a Changing World*, Mauricio Font, compiler (New York: Bildner Publications, 2008), 225–234; Ian Bremmer, *The J-Curve: A New Way to Understand Why Nations Rise and Fall* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2006); Rolando Castañeda, "Cuba: Medidas para Desencadenar Y Hacer Mejor la Transicion hacia una Economia de Mercado," *Cuba in Transition* 16 (2006): 155–168; and Luis Locay, "Labor Market Distortions and Speed of Transition in Eastern Europe: Implications for Cuba," *Cuba in Transition* 16 (2006): 45–56.

[17] Ariel C. Armony and Hector E. Schamis, "Babel in Democratization Studies." *Journal of Democracy* 16 (October 2005): 113–138.

[18] Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post Communist Europe* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

[19] This is a turn on a phrase coined by Jorge Perez-Lopez. See Jorge Perez-Lopez, "Islands of Capitalism in an Ocean of Socialism: Joint Ventures in Cuba's Development Strategy" in *Cuba at a Crossroads: Politics and Economics after the Fourth Party Congress* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1994).

Dominguez and Carollee Bengelsdorf have elegantly detailed the breadth of efforts undertaken by the Cuban regime in the post-revolution period to create "democratic spaces" within the structure of the socialist regime.

Thus, we acknowledge that there are existing and emerging democratic spaces within the socialist milieu that allow for the formation of "tolerated" pockets of self-determination through the expression of self within creative gray-market activity (barter, unauthorized exchange, and illicit sales) and highly developed artistic and cultural forms (that is, jazz, hip hop culture, art, theater, and literature).[20] It is because of the presence of these spaces in Cuban society that there is a vibrant civil society, and while not as pervasive as critics would demand, it is diverse and significant.[21]

The Gallup World Poll—Cuba Data

The Gallup World Poll's data from Cuba are immensely valuable once they are compared to the other studies of Cuban public opinion. The U.S. government has funded two studies of Cuban public opinion. The first was conducted for the United States Agency for International Development, but the sample was of recent émigrés to the United States—hardly a representative sample of Cubans on the island.[22] The second was conducted by the International Republican Institute, a group funded for the purpose of advancing democracy.[23] The data from these studies are of suspect quality because the U.S. government has a definite agenda with regard to Cuba that could bias the findings. In addition, the *Miami Herald* has sponsored public opinion surveys via telephone of Cubans throughout the post-Cold War period.[24] The purpose of that polling has been to gauge the support for the regime and various policy changes undertaken over the past two decades. However, these survey data

[20] Jorge Dominguez refers to the idea of "tolerated illegality" as one of the means by which the Cuban regime dealt with the economic and social crisis of the "Special Period." It is highly likely that the regime continues to tolerate the creation of these types of spaces outside the formal control of the Cuban government. See, Jorge I. Dominguez, "Why the Cuban Regime Has Not Fallen" in *Cuban Communism*, 9th ed., Irving Louis Horowitz, ed. (New Brunswick/London: Transaction Publishers, 1998), 680–688.

[21] See Damian Fernandez, "Society, Civil Society and the State: An Uneasy Three-Way Affair," *Problems of Post-Communism* 48 (November/December 2001): 56–63; and Dominguez, "The Day After," 34–35.

[22] Churchill Roberts, Ernesto Betancourt, Guillermo Grenier, and Richard Scheaffer, *Measuring Cuban Public Opinion: Project Report* (University of Florida, 1999). USAID Contract LAG-G-00-98-00021-01.

[23] International Republican Institute, *2009 Cuban Public Opinion Survey*, 14 March–12 April 2008, accessed at http://www.iri.org/lac/cuba/2009-01-15-cuba.asp.

[24] Luis Martin, "Gallup Poll: Cubans Support the Revolution," accessed at http://www.marxmail.org/facts/cuba_gallup.htm, 12 February 2010.

are of limited use compared to the World Poll because the number of questions asked is small.[25]

In September 2006, the Gallup Organization conducted 1,000 face-to-face interviews in Cuba in two urban locations, Havana and Santiago de Cuba.[26] Findings from the poll indicate that while dissatisfaction in Cuba is present, Cubans have enough confidence to sustain the leadership of the current regime, at least through the near future.[27] It becomes evident from a cursory analysis of the survey findings that American foreign policy considerations toward Cuba must first take into account that while dissatisfaction is surely present, loyalty to the existing regime exists. It is this commitment by the Cuban people to their government that must shape U.S. foreign policy imperatives. In particular, it gives rise to the question of how certain we can be that the trajectories of change and transition inevitably lead to an ostensibly democratic system of governance.

The Collective Esteem Model Of Cuban Government Confidence: Theory

Both Hawkins and Pickel highlight the need to bring Cuban beliefs into the mix to understand why Cuba has failed to transition to democracy. Our earlier

[25] Finally, we must also acknowledge the efforts undertaken by the Cuban regime, dating back to the early 1970s, to assess collective well-being. The government established a number of institutions to engage in systematic data gathering on public opinion by conducting extensive surveys utilizing stratified random sampling techniques. See Jorge I. Dominguez, *Cuba: Order and Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press/Harvard University Press, 1978).

[26] We employ a survey weight of the data that adjusts the survey results by age and gender to be representative of the two cities in which Gallup conducted the surveys. However, one may wonder how representative of the entire island these two cities are. According to the Cuban census reporting, Havana and Santiago de Cuba are home to 25 percent of Cuba's population. The two cities are representative in the sense that 75 percent of Cubans live in urban centers. However, one can also compare the cities' racial composition to that of the nation to ascertain how representative the cities are. Havana's residents are 66 percent white, 21 percent black, and 13 percent mulato. Santiago de Cuba's residents are 70 percent black, and 15 percent white and mulato. Overall, then, the two cities combined are 57 percent white, 30 percent black, and 13 percent mulato. The nation of Cuba is 66 percent white, 25 percent mulato, and 10 percent black. Racially, whites are under-represented in the survey, while mullatos and blacks are over-represented. The implications for how our results would differ if they were from a national sample is unclear. National Census Report 2002, 2009. [Informe Nacional del Censo], Oficina Nacional de Estadisticas (ONE); and Studies and Data of the Cuban Population, 2004 [Estudios y Datos sobre la Población Cubana], Centro de Estudios de Poblacion y Desarrollo (CEPDE), accessed at http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/cuba/cepde2004.htm#_Studies_and_Data_of_the_Cuban_Popul.

[27] Fifty percent of respondents express confidence in the national government, while forty-seven percent approve of its performance. Seventy-five percent of Cubans are confident in Cuba's medical services. Fifty-nine percent are content with the quality of education. Forty-seven percent feel that the social welfare programs are the result of a caring government. However, Cubans's evaluations were not all positive. Only 18 percent found Cuban-made goods to be superior. Seventy-percent have never considered starting their own business, and 70 percent indicated that loans to start small businesses were not accessible.

discussion of some of the findings from the Gallup World Poll survey of Cuba provides some insights: Cubans have moderate levels of confidence in their national government, and they are satisfied with government services and their health care services. This is hardly the picture of a people clamoring for a major change. However, a question arises: Why are people as satisfied with their government as they are? To answer this question, we conduct a deeper analysis of the available data by estimating a statistical model predicting confidence in the Cuban government.

Ideally, we would consider a model that predicts how close Cuba is to democratizing, relating change in political attitudes to how close Cuba would be to democratizing. Unfortunately, Cuba's proximity to democratic transition is unknowable. Because of this, approval, trust, or confidence in the Cuban government is the dependent variable of interest in our analysis. Our link between democratization and attitudes is, ultimately, evaluation of the regime, which assumes that regime unpopularity in non-democratic nations creates pressure for democratization.[28] This may especially be the case in Cuba, which has a long history of direct contact and close relations with the United States.[29]

What, then, should a model of support for the Cuban national government look like? What should be the main explanatory factors, and how might these factors operate directly, or be mediated by other factors? Our argument is that collective national esteem is the most important factor to understanding support for the Cuban national government.[30] Collective national esteem is the degree to which an individual endorses the positive traits that most people believe characterize the nation.[31] People with high collective national esteem

[28] See Katherine McElroy, "External Pressure Mechanisms and Democratization: Carrots, Sticks and the Case of Cuba" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the ISA's 50th Annual Convention, New York, NY, 2009), accessed at http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p314207_index.html; and Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way, "International Linkage and Democratization," *Journal of Democracy* 16 (2005): 20–34.

[29] See Louis A. Perez, *On Becoming Cuban: Identity, Nationality, and Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999).

[30] At the time it was published, Nelson Valdes's work on the collective psychology of Cubans provided superb rich description of how ideology and identity functioned, leading to regime support. However, this work must now surely be considered dated, and thus of limited theoretical use to us. See Nelson P. Valdes, "Revolution and Institutionalization in Cuba," *Cuban Studies* 6 (1976): 1–37. Nelson P. Valdes, *Ideological Roots of the Cuban Revolutionary Movement* (Glasgow: University of Glasgow, 1975).

[31] It is important to differentiate collective national esteem from other related concepts. Two are patriotism and nationalism. As relayed by Leonie Huddy and Nadia Khatib, patriotism is widely regarded as the love and pride felt for one's nation, while nationalism is the sense people have that their nation dominates or is superior to other nations. A third related concept is national character. Leonie Huddy and Nadia Khatib, "American Patriotism, National Identity, and Political Involvement," *American Journal of Political Science* 51 (January 2007): 63–77. Psychologists define national character as "characteristics that persons have in common from experiences shared in given cultures…" Robert J. Smith, "In Defense of National Character," *Theory & Psychology* 18 (2008): 465–482. They

endorse the shared understanding of the positive adjectives that most inhabitants use to characterize their nation. The peoples of the world see their nations as having strengths that are the same and different from those of other nations. These strengths can be core values that people see as characterizing the nation, or positive traits of the people of the nation. For example, a core value of Americans might be freedom, and a core trait might be hard-working.[32] Not all Americans would use the words free or hard-working to describe the United States, but those who do, endorse the collective positive esteem that characterizes the positive ways in which Americans view themselves.

What values or traits might characterize the collective national esteem of Cuba? As is well known, the Cuban revolution was "home-grown," such that Cuba's leaders claim to rule based on the core values of the Cuban people. Endorsement of the Cuban ideology should be a central source of support for the regime.[33] Certainly, a core value of that ideology would involve egalitarianism, also known as equality of outcome. The communist revolution was founded on this political principle because redistribution of wealth was deemed fair to the Cuban people.[34] Alternatively, endorsing beliefs of the revolution could involve national stereotypes, that is, seeing Cubans as being in line with characteristics that the regime uses to describe Cubans. More recently,

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study how individuals' traits relate to how people in other nations perceive those nations. Robert R. McCrae and Antonia Terracianno, "National Character and Personality," *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 15 (2006): 156–161. This definition is different from collective esteem because collective esteem is not the shared traits of individuals, but the collectively endorsed positive beliefs about the nation. In political science, national character is defined as "properties that pluralities display in national communities." Don Martindale, "The Sociology of National Character," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 370 (March 1967): 30–35. It is thus a nation-level characteristic, while collective esteem is individual-level. Political scientists have not studied it since the early 1970s due to its problematic nature, both empirically and theoretically. Kenneth W. Terhune, "From National Character to National Behavior: A Reformulation," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 14 (June 1970): 203–263. A fourth related concept is national dignity. This is a concept in the Comparative Politics literature, and is akin to national pride—the pure, positive effect of pride felt for one's nation; Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "Power and Interdependence," *Survival* 15 (July 1973): 158–165; and Dali L. Yang, "China's Long March to Freedom," *Journal of Democracy* 18 (July 2007): 58–64. National pride, then, is one of the two effects of patriotism (love of country being the other). Finally, core values are different from collective esteem because the former involves the values that individuals in a nation endorse, while the latter involves attributes that individuals endorse that can include values, but also include other attitude objects, such as national stereotypes; Stanley Feldman, "Structure and Consistency in Public Opinion: The Role of Core Beliefs and Values," *American Journal of Political Science* 32 (May 1988): 416–440.

[32] Herbert McClosky and John Zaller, *The American Ethos: Public Attitudes Toward Capitalism and Democracy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984).

[33] See Valerie Bunce, "Rethinking Recent Democratization: Lessons from the Postcommunist Experience," *World Politics* 55 (2003): 167–192; and Chong-Min Park, "Authoritarian Rule in South Korea," *Asian Survey* 31 (August 1991): 743–761.

[34] Perez, *On Becoming Cuban*.

the regime has focused on developing the Cuban people, mainly through education, and so seeing the Cuban people as educated may also involve this national stereotype.[35]

Given our understanding of collective esteem, why should it be the most important factor for understanding why Cubans support their government? In the type of regime that Cuba has, the leader and the nation are evaluated as one. Cuba *is* Fidel Castro. Scholars note how important Cuban nationalism is to Cubans' support for the regime. The population believes in the revolution; Castro was the leader of the revolution; and the Cuban state, the revolution, and Castro are all associated together in the minds of Cubans. This is very different from a democracy in which love of country and the evaluations of the leadership of the country are two different things.

Because in this type of government, positive beliefs about Cuba and confidence in the government itself are so tightly wound, we expect that confidence in the government will, in turn, affect collective esteem. We predict that a large part of what drives people's positive beliefs in Cuba as a nation come from their evaluations of the national government. Evaluations of the national government hearken back to their evaluations of the revolution. Older Cubans remember how things were worse before the revolution, whereas younger Cubans are taught in school about how things were worse before the revolution.[36] A strong link is made in Cuban society between government performance and the success of the revolution. Thoughts of the revolution shape Cubans' national assessments of their own values and traits—the concept that we call collective national esteem. These factors continue to operate as a cycle, reinforcing one another, seemingly making the link difficult to break.

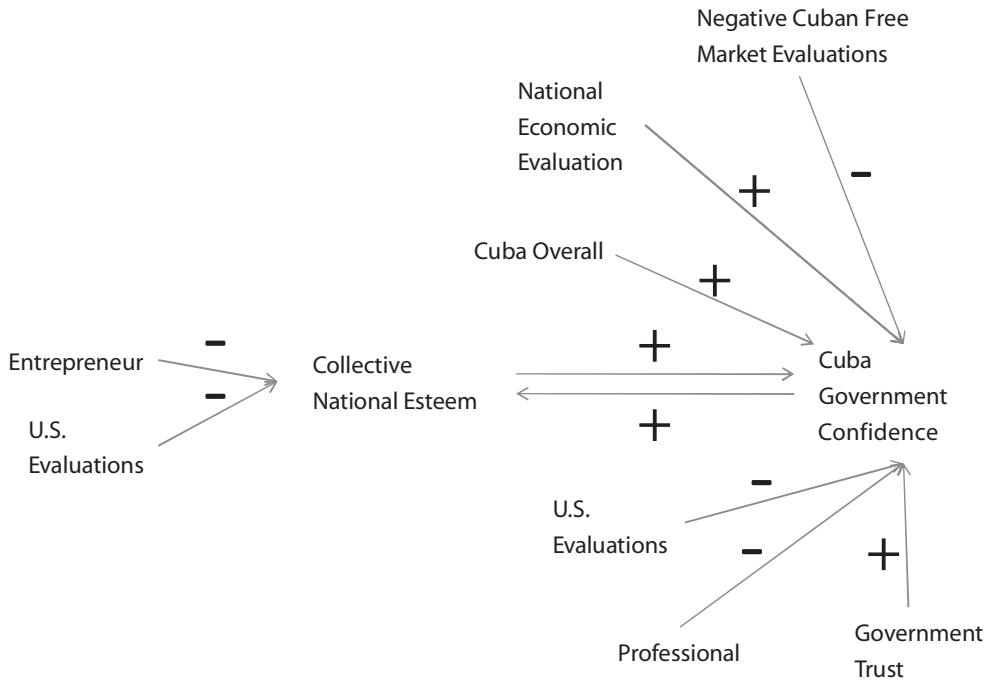
Other Factors

We argue here for reciprocal causality between confidence in the national government and collective national esteem. However, in what other ways do we suppose collective esteem operates? We certainly predict that it directly affects approval of the regime. In addition, it also may serve as the conduit through which other factors exert their influence on support for the regime. We display the complete model in Figure 1.

We hypothesize that several factors operate through collective national esteem to affect confidence in the national government. First, we predict entrepreneurs will endorse collective esteem less than others will. The national government frustrates and blocks entrepreneurs.[37] For most of Cuban history since the revolution, little or no free market has been allowed to operate. Since 1990, there have been occasional periods of liberalization, but they have been

[35] Ritter, "Cuba's Strategic Economic Re-Orientation."
[36] See Louis A. Perez, *On Becoming Cuban*; Hawkins, "Democratization and Non-transitions."
[37] Ritter, "Cuba's Strategic Economic Re-Orientation."

FIGURE 1
Cuba Government Confidence Model



Source: Jonathan Benjamin-Alvardo and Gregory A. Petrow, 2011.

modest. They were also reversed beginning in the late 1990s, once the economic crisis that spawned the liberalization passed.[38] Cuba's anti-free market policies stem directly from the core socialist values of the revolution. Therefore, we expect that entrepreneurs will reject these values, thus rejecting the collective national esteem that other Cubans endorse.

We also expect that positive U.S. evaluations will decrease collective esteem. The Cuban leadership regularly lambastes U.S. leaders and policy, portraying the United States as Cuba's greatest threat.[39] In turn, U.S. leadership attacks Cuba by enacting policies such as the Helms-Burton Act, isolating Cuba diplomatically and economically, and openly plotting regime change on the island.[40] Cuban and American leaders portray the two societies as rooted

[38] In addition to Ritter, see Sweig, "Fidel's Final Victory."

[39] See David J. Carroll, "Still Crazy After All These Years," *New West Indian Guide*, 3–4 (2000): 281–285; and Lars Schoultz, *That Infernal Little Cuban Republic: The United States and the Cuban Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009).

[40] Sweig, "Fidel's Final Victory."

in deeply conflicting and competing ideologies.[41] Because of the animosity between the two governments, we predict Cubans who do hold positive views of the U.S. government and U.S. policies will tend to reject the beliefs that Cubans use to characterize themselves. We expect that Cubans will follow the messages from their leaders. Just as we believe that their leaders influence how Cubans see themselves, we also believe that they will exert influence in leading Cubans to reject U.S. leaders and policies, as an association with what it means to be Cuban. In other words, we do not expect that rejecting U.S. leadership and policies is a core part of how Cubans define themselves, but we do believe that those who positively evaluate the United States will be less likely to share collective esteem—the common positive understanding of what it means to be Cuban.

While we expect the just-mentioned factors to operate through collective esteem, we also hypothesize that other factors will directly impact confidence in the national government. One such factor might be dissatisfaction with the limitations on the free market in Cuba. As we mentioned earlier, there is real dissatisfaction among Cubans with the economy. Especially during the most difficult times of the 1990s, the economy was in a tailspin. The Cuban government reacted to the crisis by allowing some free market economic activities, including entrepreneurialism. After the crisis passed years later, the government reasserted centralized control. This left some Cubans with the experience of having exercised some economic freedoms, and then having them taken away. As a result, some Cubans may resent these economic controls. In Eastern Europe, surveys taken shortly after the transition from communism found an association between positive ratings of the communist economic system and expressions of a commitment to the old communist regimes.[42] This suggests that one source of popular support for the democratic transitions in Eastern Europe was opposition to the centralized economic control exerted by the communist governments, and we hypothesize a similar relationship in Cuba.

We also expect a direct relationship between overall evaluations of the Cuban economy and confidence in the regime. Researchers find a strong relationship between evaluations of the national economy and approval of leaders in democratic nations.[43] Such relationships are even found in non-democratic

[41] In addition to Carroll see, Andy S. Gomez, "Political Transition and Social Transformation: The Ideological and Psychological Reconstruction of Human Values in Russia, Lessons for Cuba," *Cuban Affairs* 2 (2008).

[42] Richard Rose and William T. E. Mishler, "Mass Reaction to Regime Change in Eastern Europe: Polarization or Leaders and Laggards?" *British Journal of Political Science* 24 (1994): 159–182.

[43] See Brad T. Gomez and J. Matthew Wilson, "Cognitive Heterogeneity and Economic Voting: A Comparative Analysis of Four Democratic Electorates," *American Journal of Political Science* 50 (2006): 127–145; and Lee Sigelman, Carol K. Sigelman, and David Bullock, "Reconsidering Pocketbook Voting: An Experimental Approach," *Political Behavior* 13 (June 1991): 129–149.

systems.[44] While economic voting is predicated on democratic accountability, this does not mean that people's evaluations of the economy will not be linked with their evaluations of their leaders in non-democratic systems. It simply means that the institutional link between those evaluations and their leader's governance is missing. People living in non-democratic regimes clearly still evaluate their leaders, and economic performance is one of the most fundamental ways in which people do so.

Related to these economic evaluations, another relationship we expect to observe is between people's overall sense of the status or well-being of the nation, and their evaluations of their leaders. In the United States, this concept is operationalized as the "right track/wrong track" dichotomy, and scholars find that it affects presidential approval.[45] As with evaluations of the economy and of national leaders, we should also expect to find such evaluations to be related to confidence in leaders in non-democracies as well, because such a general sense of national status is endemic to citizenship in a nation.

The literature on democratization predicts that a factor leading to opposition to the regime might be white-collar professionalism. Democratic transition scholars suggest that white-collar professionals are generally a source of support for democratization.[46] People who work in such occupations are among the highest in human development, with the highest levels of education and income, and their situation in society may lead them to be more interested and active in politics as well.

A further factor we expect to matter, affecting confidence in Cuba's national government, is people's trust that the government is not corrupt. Corruption is a serious problem in Cuba; Fidel Castro himself reported an incident in which he encountered public construction workers selling building materials to passers-by.[47] There is a thriving black market. However, not all Cubans necessarily believe that the government is completely corrupt. A belief that the government can perform some important functions, free from corruption, should lead to greater confidence in the government. Chong-Min Park finds a strong relationship between trust in the authoritarian government of South Korea and other evaluations of the performance of the national government.[48]

Finally, we expect that positive evaluations of U.S. leaders and policies will decrease support for the Cuban regime. This argument closely follows

[44] Examples are found in Rose and Mishler, "Mass Reaction"; and Park, "Authoritarian Rule in South Korea."

[45] Clyde Wilcox and Dee Alsop, "Economic and Foreign Policy as Sources of Reagan Support," *The Western Political Quarterly* 44 (December 1991): 941–958.

[46] Doorenspleet, *Democratic Transitions*; and Rasma Karklins, "Soviet Elections Revisited: Voter Abstention in Non-Competitive Voting." *American Political Science Review* 80 (June 1986): 449–69.

[47] Ritter, "Cuba's Strategic Economic Re-Orientation"; and Daniel P. Erickson, "Corruption and Transition: The Challenge to Cuban Democracy," *Cuban Affairs* 2 (2007).

[48] Park, "Authoritarian Rule in South Korea," 751.

our argument regarding U.S. evaluations and collective esteem. Clearly, the Cuban and American governments stand in opposition to one another. This relationship must act as a bipolar one, where positive evaluations of one nation lead to negative evaluations of another.[49] Because of this, Cubans who endorse positive U.S. views should hold less confidence in the Cuban government because Cubans perceive the two nations as opposing one another.

We also wish to discuss the expected relationships for a few of our control variables. Given the path-breaking nature of this work, the relationships that all of the control variables share with collective national esteem and confidence in the national government should be of great interest.

We begin with age. We predict that older Cubans will endorse collective esteem and hold more confidence in the government than younger Cubans, because they lived through the Cuban revolution. Living through the revolution may have inculcated in them the values of the revolution more than subsequent generations. In addition, because of their experiences living through the overthrow of the democratic regime, they may have a higher base-line of confidence in the current regime because they remember how things improved economically.

As we have indicated, we expect that U.S. evaluations will lead to less endorsement of collective esteem and confidence in the national government. However, we see there being an important confounding factor to control for—approval of world leaders. We believe that individuals may have a predisposition to, in general, approve (or disapprove) of national leadership outside of Cuba. A source of this predisposition could be a kind of personal optimism that tends to see objects in a positive light.[50] If this is the case, then this predisposition will confound the relationships that evaluations of the United States share with collective esteem and confidence in the national government, because the effects of U.S. evaluations might reflect a predisposition of some people to evaluate attitude objects positively in general. This control, then, should increase the magnitude of the negative effect that U.S. evaluations have on collective esteem and confidence in the national government.

The final control variable we discuss is for receiving remittances from overseas. We expect that people who receive remittances from overseas may have more confidence in the Cuban government because the remittances cushion any negative consequences from the economy. These remittances may, then, cause those who receive them to have more confidence in the national government because the government's economic actions have less-negative consequences for these individuals.

[49] McElroy, "External Pressure Mechanisms and Democratization."

[50] See Christopher Peterson, "The Future of Optimism," *American Psychologist* 55 (January 2000): 44–55.

The Cuban Government Confidence Model: Methodology

As previously noted, we analyze data from the Gallup World Poll collected in 2006. We discuss the poll methodology in Appendix A. There are two major concerns of conducting survey research in an authoritarian regime. The first is that response bias will enter into the sampling design because only those who approve of the regime will respond to the study. The second is that people will simply lie.[51] The response rate for this survey was 85 percent, which helps allay our concerns, and is consistent with the response rates from surveys in other authoritarian regimes published in political science journals.

We tested our hypotheses using three-stage least-squares regression (3SLS). This procedure begins by building on the two-stage least-squares procedure. In the first stage of the model, estimates for the reduced form equation are calculated. The estimates for the endogenous variables are then utilized to create instrumental variables in the second stage, uncorrelated with the equations' error terms.[52] However, the 3SLS procedure estimates all of the equations in the model simultaneously, controlling for the possibility that the residuals for some or all of the equations in the model might be correlated with each other.[53] This is a more cautious approach to control for possible correlated error terms across the equations, and it presents two advantages. The models' estimates have smaller variances, making them more efficient than those in two-stage least-squares.[54] The model also produces a system-weighted R^2 statistic for the entire model. We can thus measure the explained variance for all of the endogenous variables in the model and compare the model fit between different nested models.

The disadvantage of using the three-stage least-squares method is that it is a "full information" estimator, and thus carries with it the assumption that the model is properly specified. If specification errors seep into any of the model's equations, the error affects the estimations in all of the model's equations. We believe our model is properly specified, based on our theory and previous findings from the literature. We also conducted diagnostic tests of the model to confirm that the model is well-specified, and that our identification and exclusion restriction assumptions are valid. We report these results in Appendix B.

Measurement of the concepts is also an important issue to detail. The Gallup World Poll's questions are dominated by dichotomous answer categories,

[51] William M. Reisinger, Arthur H. Miller, and Vicki L. Hesli, "Public Behavior and Political Change in Post-Soviet States," *Journal of Politics* 4 (November 1995): 941–970 at 952.

[52] William D. Berry, *Nonrecursive Causal Models* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1984).

[53] In addition to Berry, see Deborah D. Godwin, "Simultaneous Equations Methods in Family Research," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 47 (February 1985): 9–22.

[54] Godwin, "Simultaneous Equations Methods."

such as approve/disapprove. In order to operationalize the factors in the model, it was necessary to find at least three indicators of each concept for the two endogenous factors, so that each factor had at least four categories. The three-stage least-squares model abides by the assumptions of ordinary least squares (OLS) that make categorical data problematic (such as the normal distribution of error). The exact questions that we use to operationalize our concepts, as well as the measurement properties of our scales, are included in Appendix C.

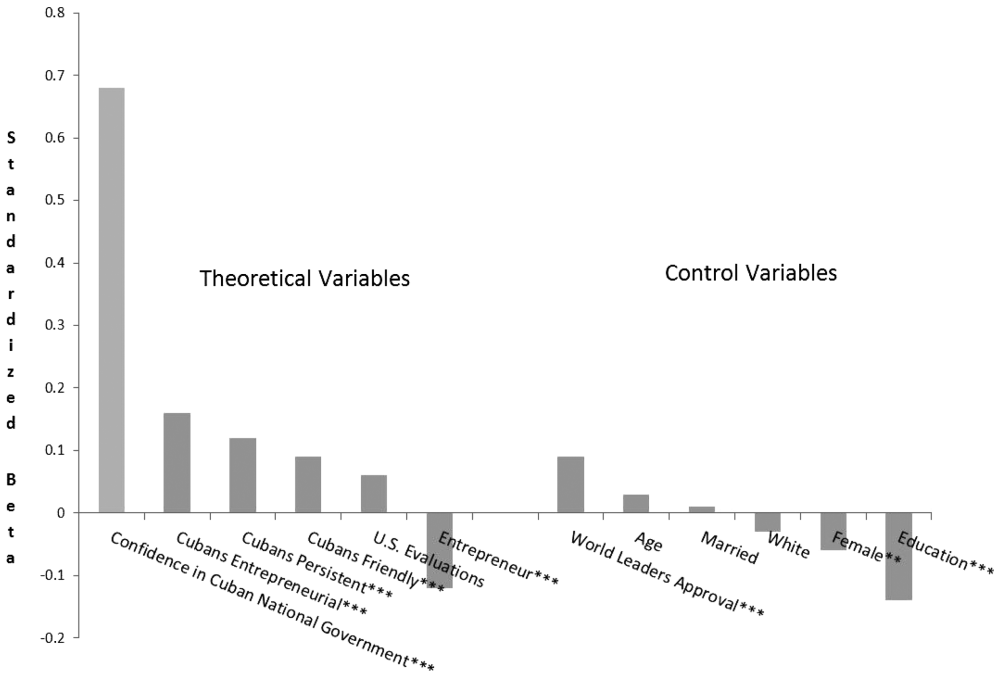
Our two endogenous variables are *Collective National Esteem*[55] and *Confidence in the Cuban National Government*.[56] The following variables are exogenous predictors of collective national esteem: if the respondent is an *Entrepreneur*, and *U.S. Evaluations*. We included the *Cuba Overall* evaluation, the *National Economic Evaluation*, *Negative Evaluations of Cuba's Free Market*, trust in the non-corruption of government (*Government Trust*), *U.S. Evaluations*, and the white-collar, professional occupation variable (*Professional Work*) as exogenous factors for *Confidence in the National Government*. We include *Household Income*, *Education*, and *Age* as control variables that affect both of the endogenous variables. In addition, we include *Female*, *White*, and *Married* as control variables that only affect *Confidence in the Cuban National Government*.[57] Finally, we include *World Leader Approval* as a control in the collective esteem model. For theoretical reasons, we endeavored to include it in both of the models. However, we found that including it in the confidence in the national government model produced diagnostic test results that indicated that it was more likely that we were biasing the estimates of the other variables in the model. In addition, including the variable did not increase the measure of model fit or change the estimate of the effect of *U.S. Evaluations* on *Confidence in the National Government*; but it *did* produce a statistically *non-significant* coefficient. Thus, we decided not to include it. We utilize a survey weight based on Havana's and

[55] We performed an exploratory factor analysis and found that the following adjectives explained the most variance for *Collective National Esteem*: Educated, honest, fair, disciplined, egalitarian, and peaceful. We had theoretical reasons to expect that egalitarian and educated would load on the factor, which they did. See appendix C for more details.

[56] As an alternative to survey methodology, another way to consider attitudes toward the national government might be to consider the behaviors of the citizens as indicators. For example, perhaps dramatic outward migration and rampant public property theft are indicators of low approval of the Cuban regime. For the former, this most certainly must be the case, although as the dissatisfied leave, then average satisfaction must increase. In our minds, public property theft may not be an indicator of government dissatisfaction as much as an indicator of a culture of corruption, or of economic desperation.

[57] In appendix B, we report the results from diagnostic tests which indicate our exclusion restrictions are correct, and our instruments are strong. In order to obtain these results, we needed to exclude *Female*, *White*, *Married* and *World Leaders Approval* from the confidence in the national government equation.

FIGURE 2
Direct Determinants of Collective National Esteem



***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.10, two-tailed test. Results are standardized regression coefficient estimates from a Three-Stage, Least-Squares model. Degrees of freedom = 1670. System weighted R^2= .31. *Source:* Table D1.

Santiago's demographic characteristics (for gender and age) to correct for possible sampling bias.

The Cuban Government Confidence Model: Results

As explained, we estimated Structural Equation Models (SEMs) to ascertain the causal effects of the independent variables on the dependent variables. We use the SEMs to estimate standardized regression coefficients (Betas, typically represented by B), which results in all of the independent variables sharing the same metric—the standard deviation of the dependent variable. Because the coefficients from the independent variables are all in the same unit, the magnitudes of the effects can be directly compared to one another.

We have decided to present these standardized results in graphical form to more clearly communicate how the different factors have different magnitudes of impacts on *Collective National Esteem* and *Confidence in the National Government*. We present the first such results for the predictors of *Collective National Esteem* in Figure 2. The tables that all of the figures are based on are reported in Appendix D.

We begin by noting several differences with the theoretical model from Figure 1. Some additional variables are included. In order to estimate the non-recursive paths between *Collective National Esteem* and *Confidence in the National Government*, we employ *Collective National Esteem* as an instrument for esteem considerations. These considerations have a positive effect on *Collective National Esteem*.[58]

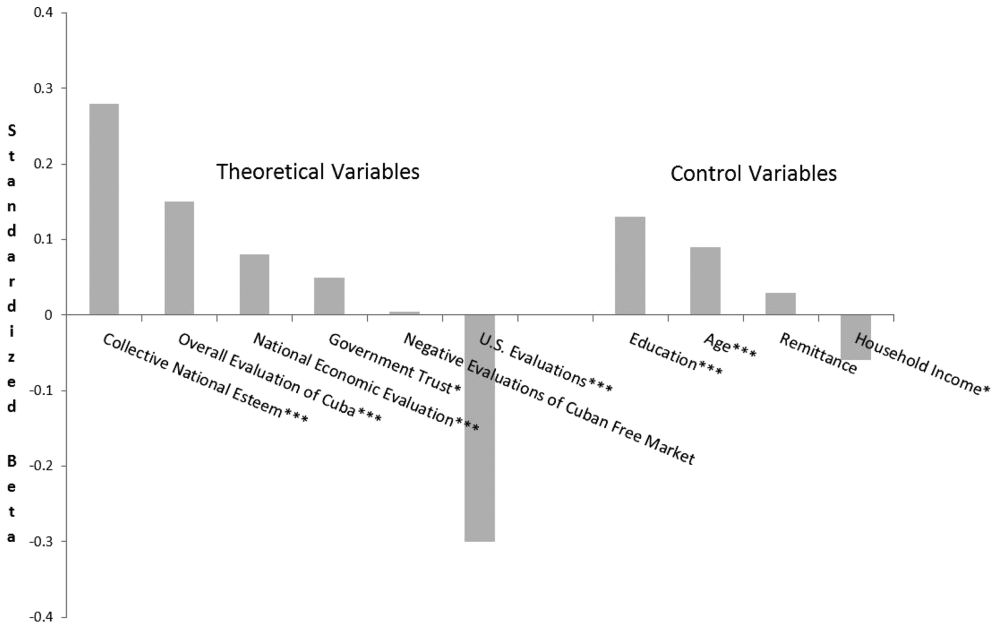
We begin by discussing the factors that affect Cubans' endorsement of *Collective National Esteem*. The variable with the strongest relationship with *Collective National Esteem* is clearly *Confidence in the Cuban National Government*. Because the coefficients are in the standardized metric, we can see that a one-standard deviation increase in Cubans' confidence in their national government leads to a .68 standard deviation increase in *Collective National Esteem* ($p < .01$). Ignoring the effects for the esteem considerations, the next-largest effect is for *Education*, which reduces *Collective National Esteem* ($B = -.14$, $p < .01$). Close in magnitude, *Entrepreneur* ($B = -.12$, $p < .01$) also decreases endorsement of *Collective National Esteem*. Finally, *World Leaders Approval* increases *Collective National Esteem* ($B = .09$, $p < .01$), while *Females* endorses lower *Collective National Esteem* ($B = -.06$, $p < .05$). Because the coefficients are in standardized format, we can see that *Confidence in the National Government* has almost five times the impact on *Collective National Esteem* than the next most important factor, *Education*. Indeed, the effect of *Confidence in the Cuban National Government* on *Collective National Esteem* is one-and-a-half times greater than the absolute values of the combined effects of all of the other variables. The three effects of the esteem considerations of seeing Cubans as entrepreneurial, persistent, and friendly are statistically significant at the $p < .01$ level. The relationships that *U.S. Evaluations*, *Household Income*, *Age*, *White*, and *Married* share with *Collective National Esteem* are not statistically significant.

We now report results for *Confidence in the Cuban National Government*, from Figure 3. *U.S. Evaluations* share the strongest relationship with *Confidence*, where a one-standard-deviation increase in that variable leads to a .30-standard-deviation *decrease* in *Confidence* ($p < .01$). The next-largest effect, which is effectively a tie with *U.S. Evaluations* for size, is *Collective National Esteem* ($B = .28$, $p < .01$). We note that *Confidence in the Cuban Government* is a stronger cause of *Collective Esteem* than *Collective Esteem* is a cause of *Confidence in the Cuban Government*. Both relationships, however, are strong.

The next-largest effect on *Confidence in the Cuban National Government* is a tie between Cubans' *Overall Evaluation of Cuba* ($B = .15$, $p < .01$) and *Education* ($B = .13$, $p < .01$). The third-largest effect is another tie, this time between *National Economic Evaluations*, where more-optimistic appraisals of the economy predict greater confidence in the government ($B = .08$, $p < .01$), and *Age* ($B = .09$, $p < .01$). Finally, greater *Household Income* predicts lower

[58] These are other adjectives used to describe the Cuban people that did not factor load on the initial dimension of collective esteem. They are entrepreneurial, persistent and friendly.

FIGURE 3
Direct Determinants of Confidence in the Cuban National Government



***p<.01, **p<.05, *p<.10, two-tailed test. Results are standardized regression coefficient estimates from a Three-Stage, Least-Squares model. Degrees of freedom = 1670. System weighted R^2= .31. *Source:* Table D1.

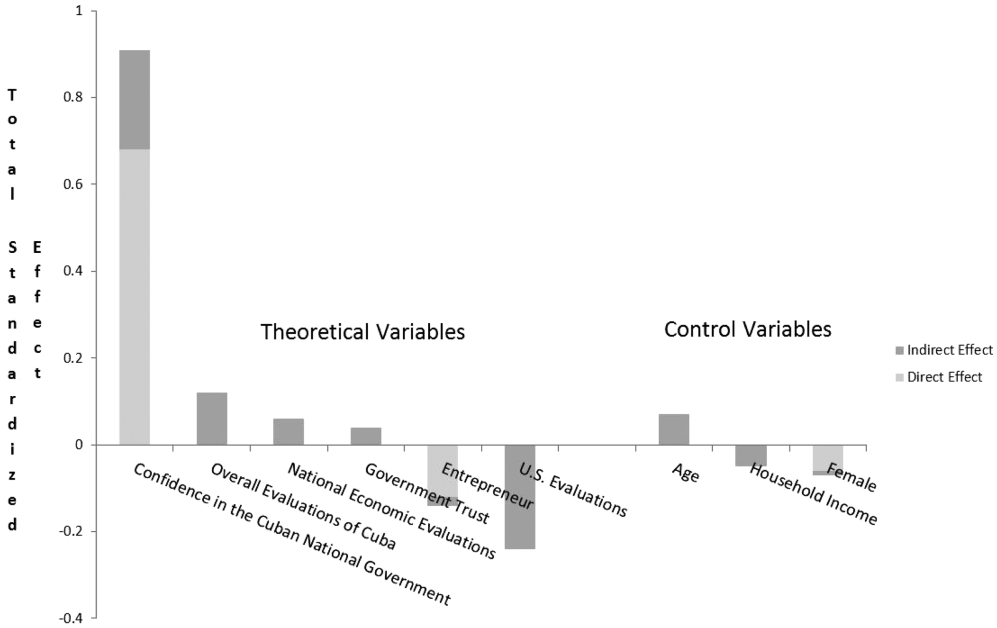
Confidence in the Cuban National Government (B = −.06, p < .10), while greater *Government Trust* predicts more confidence (B = .05, p < .10).

The remaining relationships with confidence are not statistically significant. *Negative Evaluations of the Cuban Free Market* shares virtually no relationship at all with *Confidence*. White-collar professionals (*Professional Work*) have slightly lower confidence. Finally, people who receive remittances from overseas (*Remittance*) have slightly more confidence. Because the results are not statistically significant, all we can say is that these are the relationships among the people in the sample, and that we cannot generalize the results to the population.

Considering Total Effects and Assessing the Importance of Collective National Esteem

So far, we have reported only the direct effects of the variables on the endogenous variables. However, a substantial strength of using the SEM method is that one can estimate the total effects of variables—their direct effects, but also their indirect effects, as those effects are mediated by the endogenous variables. In Figure 4, we display the total effects for the variables upon *Collective National Esteem*. We display the effects for all of the theoretical variables of interest,

FIGURE 4
Direct and Indirect Effects on Collective National Esteem



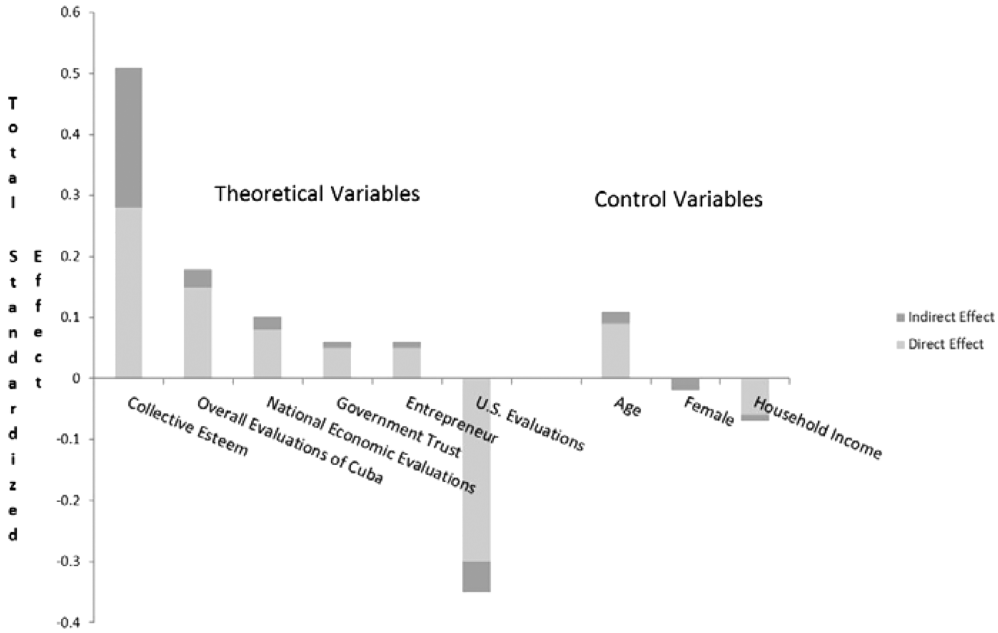
Source: Table D2.

but for the sake of brevity, we display only the control variables that are of the most theoretical interest to us (*Age*, *Household Income*, *and Female*).

One can see that the largest total effect upon *Collective National Esteem* is *Confidence in the Cuban National Government*. The direct effect is .68, while the indirect effect is .23, for a total effect of .91. We calculate the indirect effect by multiplying the effect that *Confidence in the National Government* has on *Collective Esteem* (.68) with the effect that *Collective Esteem* has on confidence (.28), resulting in .23. We then take that product again and square it, to capture the residual influence which cycles through the system, one additional time.

The next-largest total effect is *U.S. Evaluations*, which is −.24. The direct effect is not statistically significant, meaning that the total effect is the indirect effect. The third-largest total effect on *Collective Esteem* is *Entrepreneur*, at −.14. In this case, the effect is almost entirely direct, with some residual influence cycling through *Confidence in the National Government* and lowering *Collective Esteem* further. *Overall Evaluations of Cuba* has essentially the same-sized total effect, at .12. The five remaining variables with total effects on *Collective Esteem* all have single-digit magnitudes: *Age* and *Female* (.07 and −.07 respectively), *National Economic Evaluations* (.06), and finally, *Household Income* and *Government Trust* (−.05 and .04). As was seen in Figure 2, the dominant determinant of *Collective National Esteem* is *Confidence in the National Government*.

FIGURE 5
Direct and Indirect Effects on Confidence in the Cuban National Government



Source: Table D3.

We display the total effects for *Confidence in the Cuban National Government* in Figure 5. One can see that the greatest total effect is from *Collective National Esteem*, at .51. The next-largest total effect is for *U.S. Evaluations*, at −.35. While *U.S. Evaluations* had the largest direct impact (see Figure 3), when the total effect is calculated, *Collective National Esteem* has about one-and-a-half times greater effect. This is because much of the effect of *Collective National Esteem* is indirect, while almost all of the effect of *U.S. Evaluations* is direct. *Overall Evaluations of Cuba* has the third-largest total effect, which is about half the size of the total effect of *U.S. Evaluations*, and about a third of the size of the total effect of *Collective National Esteem*.

Two variables have total effects of about .10: *Age* (B = .11) and *National Economic Evaluations* (B = .10). Four variables have total effects below .10: *Household Income* (B = −.07), *Government Trust* (B = .06), *Entrepreneur* (B = −.04), and *Female* (B = −.02). Clearly, the largest total effect on *Confidence in National Government* is *Collective National Esteem*.

We have demonstrated that *Collective National Esteem* matters greatly if we wish to understand the sources of Cubans' confidence in their national government. *Confidence* and *Collective National Esteem* share a close relationship. However, to drive this point home even further, we drop *Collective Esteem* from the model and assess the change in the system-weighted R^2. The

R^2 from the model with *Collective Esteem* is .31 (Figures 2 and 3). After dropping it, and allowing all of the factors that affected *Collective Esteem* to affect *Confidence in the National Government* directly, the R^2 drops to .23 (model not reported). This is a 23 percent decrease. Dropping *Collective National Esteem* in this way results in the new model being nested in the old model, allowing one to estimate an F-test for the difference in the R^2. Such a test is statistically significant at the $p < .01$ level. The drop in model fit, then, is both statistically significant and substantively significant.[59]

Aggregate Analysis

These relationships, of course, are only part of the picture for understanding the confidence that Cubans have in their government. An equally important part of the analysis must address the *levels* at which Cubans endorse these variables. In other words, what are the averages for the variables? This allows us insight into, generally speaking, how satisfied or dissatisfied Cubans are with their government.

All of the variables range from 0 to 1, except for age.[60] The average for confidence in the Cuban government is .50, indicating that the average level of confidence is exactly at the middle of the scale.[61] If there is a link between confidence in regimes and pressure for democratization, this suggests that the pressure in Cuba must be low.

Why might the confidence in government be as high as it is? Our model results suggest that collective national esteem has a great deal to do with levels of confidence, and the average for *Collective Esteem* is quite high for a scale that ranges from 0 to 1: .69. Clearly, collective esteem is pulling the average up. We also consider the averages for other factors with a positive influence on confidence in the government. The average for the evaluation of *Cuba Overall* (.5/1), *Government Trust* (.49/1), and *Education* (.55/1), are all in the middle of their scales, drawing the average for *Confidence in the Government* in that direction. The average for the *National Economic Evaluation* is .33/1, indicating that people generally do not view the economy as strong. This would tend to draw the average for *Confidence in Government* down. The average for

[59] Some readers may be concerned that *Collective National Esteem* and *Confidence in the National Government* are TOO closely related: perhaps they are measures of the same concept? We present strong arguments here that they are theoretically distinct. Our empirical analysis supports this view as well. An exploratory factor analysis finds that our measures of *Collective National Esteem* and *Confidence in the National Government* load on separate factors (results not reported but available on request), while a confirmatory factor analysis that combines the two concepts into one measure generates a Cronbach's alpha of a lowly .22.

[60] For all of these variables, the standard error for the averages is .01, meaning that a 95 percent confidence interval around the average would be only .02 above and below the average.

[61] The averages for the components of the scale are, for the national government, .50, for the national courts, .47, and for the national police, .56. The average for approval of Cuban leaders is .47. In other words, none of the results are very different from one another.

World Leaders Approval is a bit low as well (.42/1), indicating this factor may depress *Confidence in the Cuban National Government* a bit. Finally, the average *Age* in the sample is 42, which is about at the midpoint of the sample, indicating that while older people do have more confidence in the government, the distribution between older and younger is about equal. This also indicates a minimal effect on the aggregate level of *Confidence*.

Finally, we consider the factors with a negative effect on *Confidence in Government*: *U.S. Evaluations*, *Household Income*, *Entrepreneur*, and *Female*. The total effect of the *U.S. Evaluations* is large (B = −.35), but the average for *U.S. Evaluations* is .2/1, indicating that Cubans have a largely negative view of the United States. *U.S. Evaluations*, then, clearly play a role in *increasing* support for the Cuban regime, because the average is so low (reflecting that the vast majority of Cubans hold negative U.S. evaluations). The total effect of *Household Income* is much smaller (B = −.07), and the average is .56/1, indicating that household wealth in Cuba plays a small role in decreasing support for the regime. Finally, the total effects for *Entrepreneur* and *Female* are small (B = .04 and B = .02, respectively). The average for *Entrepreneur* is .31, which is low, indicating that the influence on the average of *Confidence* is small. In contrast, while the total effect on *Confidence* of being *Female* is even smaller, females are approximately half of the population, indicating that the influence has a larger effect. Taken as a whole, the average level of *Collective National Esteem* has a lot to do with *Confidence* being as high as it is, as well as *Evaluations of the U.S.*, Cubans' evaluations of the economy, their experiences as entrepreneurs, and the evaluations of women in Cuba explain why it is not higher.

Discussion of Model Results

Hawkins and Pickel are right.[62] If one wants to understand what is going on among the masses in Cuba, then one absolutely needs to understand Cubans' collective beliefs about the regime and the state. Some may dismiss the importance of the findings for democratic transition, believing scholars should focus only on the role of government elites in transitions. However, other scholars write about the importance of the relationships between the masses and the elites; namely, the relationships between the regimes' soft-liners, and nations' independent social groups that foment change.[63] Clearly, both the strong relationship between *Collective Esteem* and *Confidence in the National Government*, as well as the high average for *Collective Esteem*, serve to maintain the moderately high average of *Confidence in the Cuban National Government*.

[62] See Hawkins, "Democratization and Non-transitions" and Pickel, "After Fidel," 201–224.

[63] Scott Mainwaring. "Transitions to Democracy and Democratic Consolidation: Theoretical and Comparative Issues" in *Issues in Democratic Consolidation: The New South American Democracies in Comparative Perspective*, Scott Mainwaring, Guillermo O'Donnell, and J. Samuel Valenzuela, eds. (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), 294–341.

Positive evaluations of the United States play the dominant role in undermining the confidence that Cubans have in their government. The standardized effect is −.35, which is five times larger than the next-largest negative effect, for *Household Income* (−.07). The only reason that the average for *Confidence in the National Government* is not lower is because so few Cubans hold positive evaluations of the United States. If the average were to increase, this should cause a potent decrease in the confidence Cubans hold in their government. Not only is the effect of *U.S. Evaluations* five times greater than for *Household Income*, but the combination of all of the remaining negative effects (*Household Income* = −.07, *Entrepreneur* = −.04, and *Female* = −.02) is −.13, which is about a third of the size of the negative effect of the *U.S. Evaluations*.

The results from the analysis lead to several conclusions about the nature of government confidence in Cuba. First, *Collective Esteem* plays a major role in government confidence. The size of the direct standardized effect is very large, as is the total effect. The fact that the average for *Collective Esteem* is higher than the average for *Confidence in Government* means that it is a major factor keeping confidence as high as it is. If we drop *Collective Esteem* from the model, our measure of how well the model fits the data drops by 23 percent, meaning that we lose almost a quarter of our understanding of what causes *Confidence in the National Government*.

How do we account for the high level of *Collective National Esteem*? Tautologically, the main factor affecting it is *Confidence in the National Government*.[64] This is actually what we should expect to find, based on our understanding of the Cuban regime and the Cuban state existing as one, in the minds of Cubans. In democratic societies, the regime and the state exist independently, with love and belief in the nation not typically leading to support for the regime. However, in a personality-based and ideology-based authoritarian government, the state and the regime become one. Thus, a major factor leading people to endorse what it means to be Cuban is that their government is capable and efficacious. In a state like the Cuban one, support for the regime is less performance-based and more values-based. In contrast, in a democratic state support for the regime is less values-based and more performance-based because support for the regime is much less important to how people think of themselves as citizens of the nation.

Some scholars write about the link between human development and opposition to authoritarian regimes.[65] We include several measures of human development: *Education*, *Household Income*, and working in a professional occupation (*Professional Work*). *Education* actually has a net total positive

[64] Of course, the relationship is not a true tautology, because *Confidence in the Cuban National Government* is a function of several variables, which thus also affect *Collective Esteem*, the largest being *U.S. Evaluations*, *Entrepreneur*, and *Overall Evaluations of Cuba*.

[65] Doorenspleet, *Democratic Transitions*; Karklins, "Soviet Elections Revisited."

effect on *Confidence in the National Government*. *Education* does operate to decrease *Collective Esteem*, which then operates to reduce *Confidence*, but the direct effect of *Education* on *Confidence* swamps the indirect negative effect. *Household Income* has a net negative effect on *Confidence in the National Government*. Finally, *Professional Work* shares no statistically significant relationship with *Confidence*. Overall, then, the results are mixed: *Education* increases *Confidence*, but *Household Income* decreases it, negating about half of the positive effect of *Education*.

Implications for U.S. Foreign Policy

From the outset of this inquiry, we sought to utilize an application of a quantitative analysis of survey research data to inform our understanding of the role that public sentiment may play in the future evolution of a system of governance in Cuba. The policy implications of this analysis are significant. First, it may signal that if the regime possesses both the willingness and the capacity to make changes sufficient enough so that it can satisfy the communal and material demands of the Cuban people, little change will result in the system of governance. Second, this will impact both the scope and objectives of U.S. foreign policy vis-à-vis Cuba over the immediate and near term.

Our model was developed to capture the interaction between collective national esteem and confidence in the Cuban government on behalf of the people. While the literature on regime stability and democratization strongly suggests that Cuba presents many of the elements required for regime transition, the results of the analysis suggest that other mitigating factors are at play. The results reflect and affirm the notion that the Cuban sense of "public virtue and bonds of affection,"[66] plays a profound role in explaining why the regime has remained stable, as opposed to the inevitable collapse that many have predicted since the early 1990s.[67] Moreover, it is this type of analysis that policymakers could be utilizing—the analysis as the basis of the design, formulation, and implementation of a foreign policy vis-à-vis Cuba, especially now in the wake of the historic transfer of power from Fidel Castro to Raul Castro.

Public support for the regime should be taken into consideration in how the United States approaches the question of Cuba. If we are considering an approach to "win the hearts and minds" of the Cuban people, or designing a policy that would promote cooperation and stability with the presiding regime on the island, it stands to reason that this type of analysis serves as a critical indicator of the attitudes of the Cuban people toward their government. This is informed by the references to *cubanidad* (Cubaness) as a source of the internal societal linkage that defies the transitory nature of a notion such as regime

[66] Dominguez, "Why the Cuban Regime Has Not Fallen."

[67] Andres Oppenheimer, *Castro's Final Hour: An Eyewitness Account of the Disintegration of Castro's Cuba* (New York: Simon and Shuster/Touchstone, 1993).

support. Insofar as the support of and confidence in the governing structure of Cuba is positive, one may conjecture that any policy that seeks to dismantle and replace that structure would in all likelihood encounter a high level of resistance, particularly if it is external in nature. This is supported by this analysis with the linkage between negative evaluations of the United States and the support for Cuba's regime. Moreover, it suffices to say that under the present circumstances, it is highly unlikely that there is, or will be in the near future, any internal force or sentiment able to initiate the type of change that meets the conditions for the normalization of relations with Cuba advanced through U.S. policy. While there is certainly speculation as to what a change in leadership would augur for regime support, it comes as little surprise that the elevation of Raul Castro to the Cuban presidency essentially resulted in an "exodus-free succession" that has produced little if any internal demand for transition to any other configuration in the Cuban system of governance. Moreover, the results of the quantitative analysis point to an overriding influence of negative evaluations of the United States as an important factor in the sustainability of the present system.*

Appendix A: Gallup World Poll Methodology

Interviews were conducted from 1–15 September 2006. Six hundred interviews were in Havana and 400 in Santiago, of Cubans aged 15 and older. The sample is representative of the three million Cubans who live in the two largest cities. All interviews were face-to-face. Sampling was conducted using census listings of primary sampling units (PSUs), consisting of clusters of households. PSUs were proportionally allocated to the population in each stratum, and typically, 125 PSUs were sampled, with an average of eight interviews, one interview per sampled household, per PSU. If maps of the PSUs were available, then they were used; otherwise, the selected PSU was mapped. Random route procedures were used to select sampled households. Once the researchers selected a household, either the latest-birthday method or the Kish grid method was used to randomly select an individual respondent within the household.

To choose the interviewers, a team of Gallup researchers, field supervisors, and trainers was flown into Cuba from its offices in Panama and Costa Rica. They hired and trained university students to complete the interviews. The Gallup team accompanied the interviewers at all times during the fieldwork. The interviewers told prospective respondents that they were conducting a global survey on well-being on behalf of a consulting organization based in

* The authors would like acknowledge Phil Ruhlman, Gale Muller, Jesus Rios, Johanna Godoy, and Todd Johnson of the Gallup Organization for their assistance in making the Gallup World Poll data on Cuba available through a research consultant agreement. We also thank the anonymous reviewers for their comments leading to valuable additions to the article.

Panama. Panama is where CID-Gallup, Gallup's joint venture partner for the survey, is headquartered.

Gallup did not seek permission from the Cuban authorities to conduct interviews because the Cuban government does not explicitly require that survey companies seek permission to conduct interviews. In countries that do have such policies (such as China), Gallup seeks permission before interviewing.

A concern with interviewing in non-democratic nations is that respondents will provide deceptive answers. Gallup addressed these concerns by conducting a pilot test of the questionnaire, holding debriefing sessions with the interviewers during the pilot test and extensive data quality tests after interviews were complete. The feedback from these exercises revealed that the initial pilot survey contained questions that made some respondents feel ill at ease, and once these questions were removed, respondents felt comfortable answering the questions (according to reports from the field team). The questionnaire is written to generate great rapport between the interviewer and interviewee. It starts with very engaging questions about personal well-being and life experiences, then it moves into questions about the community, and then asks about the country. By the time the interviewer gets to the country-level questions, respondents generally feel more confident answering them than they would have at the beginning of the survey.

The observations from the Gallup field team were consistent with the results of the data quality tests. These tests included cross checks against response patterns observed in World Poll data from other nations, cross tabulations of question results by interviewer, and internal consistency tests to assess the internal logic of individuals' response patterns.

Gallup deals with respondent fear issues in several countries around the world, including some in which answering certain questions (or asking them) can be life threatening. Based in its experience in this kind of environment, Gallup refines its data vetting process. It is not uncommon for Gallup to discard entire datasets due to conforming issues of all kinds.

Appendix B: Assessing the Three-Stage Least-Squares Model's Assumptions

TABLE 1C

Three-Stage Least-Squares: Collective Esteem Model of Confidence in the Cuban National Government

Collective Esteem Confidence in the National Government
[A] Under-identification Test: Anderson Canon. Corr. LM statistic (p value) 69. ($p < .001$) 123.4 ($p <. 001$)
[B] Weak identification test: Cragg-Donald Wald F Statistic 12.3 15.9
[C] Over-identification test of all instruments: Sargan χ^2Statistic (p value) 5.5 ($p = .36$) 6.4 ($p = .61$)
[D] Tests of endogeneity Durbin-Wu-Hausman test (p value) 38.6 ($p < .001$) 8.6 ($p < .01$)

(Continued)

TABLE 1C

Continued

Collective Esteem Confidence in the National Government
Analysis of results:
[A] The under-identification test tests the relevance of the instruments to the endogenous variable. If the null hypothesis is rejected, then the equation is identified and the instruments (the variables that affect the endogenous variable only) are relevant. In these two models, we reject the null hypothesis, $p < .001$.
[B] With the weak identification test, we test whether or not the instruments are weak instruments; in others words, that they are only weakly correlated with the endogenous variables. Instruments are considered to weak if the resulting F statistic is less than 10.[68] Both of the statistics here are greater than 10.
[C] The over-identification test checks whether the instruments are correlated with the equations' error terms. If they are correlated, the parameters are biased. The null hypothesis is that they are not correlated, and that the exclusion restrictions are correct. We accept the null hypothesis for both equations, $p > .10$.
[D] We assess with the test of endogeneity whether the three-stage least-squares technique is required, instead of OLS, in the face of possible endogeneity bias. Rejecting the null hypothesis means that the instrumental variables approach is required. We reject the null hypothesis for both equations.

Appendix C: Measurement[69]

Collective Esteem: Cubans were asked if various adjectives described Cuba. Performing an exploratory factor analysis, the following adjectives accounted for 33 percent of the variance: Educated, honest, fair, disciplined, egalitarian and peaceful. The alpha is .82. Variable range: 0 to 1, seven categories.

Confidence in Cuban National Government: Approval of the Cuban government; Confidence in the Cuban national government, courts, and police. The alpha is .68. Variable range: 0 to 1, five categories.

Overall Cuba Evaluation: Cubans were asked to imagine a ladder with 10 steps and place Cuba on one of them. They were then asked to do this for where Cuba was five years ago, and where it will be five years from now. The alpha is .83. Variable range: 0 to 1, eleven categories.

U.S. Evaluations Index: Approval of the U.S. leadership, belief the U.S. war on terror makes the world safer, and desire to increase trade with the United States. Variable range: 0 to 1, four categories.[70]

[68] Douglas Staiger and James H. Stock, "Instrumental Variables Regression with Weak Instruments," *Econometrica* 65 (May 1997): 557–586.

[69] For full question wording, response categories, and frequency distributions, visit http://myweb.unomaha.edu/~gpetrow/index_files/cubainternetappendix.pdf.

[70] Some readers may be concerned that the index lacks variance due to a skew toward anti-U.S. attitudes. The index's four categories are distributed as follows: 0 (51 percent), .33 (40 percent), .66 (8.5 percent), and 1 (.5 percent). Clearly, Cubans on average had very negative attitudes toward the United States. Most of the index's variance is associated with the question of whether the United States should be a trade partner with Cuba (40 percent Yes, 60 percent No). The variance for the

Entrepreneur: Cubans who say they have an economic idea, and also are thinking about starting a small business. Variable range: 0 to 1, alpha = .34, three categories.

Negative Free-Market Evaluation: This was the belief that the city in which respondents lived was bad for entrepreneurs, people could not get ahead by working hard, and people were dissatisfied with jobs in their city. The alpha is .46. Variable range: 0 to 1, four categories.

National Economic Evaluation: This is the belief that the economy in the city is good, that the economy in the city will improve, and that it is a good time to find a job. Alpha = .65. Variable range: 0 to 1, seven categories.

Government Trust: This is those who believed that if they lost their wallet on the street, that the police would return it. Dichotomous.

Professional Work: Those employed in a white-collar occupation, such as lawyer or doctor. Dichotomous.

World Leader Approval: Approval of all world leaders included in Gallup World Poll, excluding Cuba and the United States. The included nations are: UK, France, Germany, Russia, China, Japan, Costa Rica, Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Venezuela, Chile, Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, and Spain. Variable range: 0 to 1, Alpha = .91.

Remittance: Does the household receive fixed cash aid from those living abroad? Dichotomous.

Household Income: Annual household income. Variable range: 0 to 1, nine categories.

White: Those Cubans who self-identify as white. Dichotomous.

Education: Level of education. Variable range: 0 to 1, five categories.

Female: Cubans who are women. Dichotomous.

Married: Cubans who are married. Dichotomous.

Age: Age in years.

Esteem Considerations (all dichotomous):

Cubans Entrepreneurial: This is the belief that the word entrepreneurial describes Cubans well.

Cubans Persistent: This is the belief that the word persistent describes Cubans well.

Cubans Friendly: This is the belief that the word friendly describes Cubans well.

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other two items is smaller: Approval of U.S. Leadership (President George W. Bush) 14 percent Approve, 86 percent Disapprove; and Does the U.S. War on Terror Make the World Safer, 3 percent Yes, 97 percent No. Clearly, the war on terror question contributes the least to the variance, although the 3 percent represents 31 Cubans who do believe the war on terror makes the world safer, thus contributing to the variance of the overall index. A lack of variance contributes to finding no relationship, not finding a relationship when none exists. We also note that the strong relationship between the index and Confidence in the Cuban National Government indicates that the index has construct validity; in other words, the index is valid.

Appendix D: Tables for Figures 2 to 5

TABLE D1

The Collective Esteem Model of Confidence in the Cuban National Government

Variable	*Collective National Esteem*	*Confidence in the Cuban National Government*
Confidence in Cuban national government	.68***	
Entrepreneur	−.12***	
Esteem considerations		
Cubans entrepreneurial	.16***	
Cubans persistent	.12***	
Cubans friendly	.09***	
U.S. evaluations	.06	−.30***
Collective esteem		.28***
Overall evaluation of Cuba		.15***
National economic evaluation		.08***
Negative evaluations of Cuban free market	.004	
Government trust	.05*	
Professional work	−.03	
Control variables		
Household income	−.02	−.06*
Education	−.14***	.13***
Age	.03	.09***
World leaders approval	.09***	
Female	−.06**	
White	−.03	
Married	.01	
Remittance	.03	

***$p < .01$, **$p < .05$, *$p < .10$. Results are standardized regression coefficient estimates from a three-stage, least-squares model. Degrees of freedom = 1,670. System-weighted $R^2 = .31$

TABLE D2

Direct and Indirect Effects on Collective National Esteem

Variable	*Direct Effect*	*Indirect Effect*	*Total Effect on Collective Esteem*
Confidence in the Cuban national government	.68	.23[A]	.91
U.S. evaluations	Not significant	−.24[B]	−.24
Entrepreneur	−.12	−.02[C]	−.14
Overall evaluations of Cuba	N/A	.12[B]	.12
National economic evaluations	N/A	.06[B]	.06
Government trust	N/A	.04[B]	.04
Professional work	N/A	Not significant	Not significant
Negative evaluations of Cuba's free market	N/A	Not significant	Not significant
Control variables			
World leaders approval	.09	.02[C]	.11
Age	Not significant	.07[B]	.07
Female	−.06	−.01[C]	−.07
Education	−.14	.08[D]	−.06
Household income	Not significant	−.05[B]	−.05

(Continued)

TABLE D2

Continued

Variable	*Direct Effect*	*Indirect Effect*	*Total Effect on Collective Esteem*
Control variables			
White	Not significant	Not significant	Not significant
Married	Not significant	Not significant	Not significant
Remittance	N/A	Not significant	Not significant

A, indirect effect: $(a \times b) + (a \times b)^2$; B, indirect effect: $(d \times b) + (d \times b \times a \times b)$; C, indirect effect: $(c \times a \times b) + (c \times a \times b)^2$; D, indirect effect: $(c \times a \times b) + (c \times a \times b)^2 + (d \times b) + (d \times b \times a \times b)$, where a = effect of collective esteem on confidence in national government, b = effect of confidence in national government on collective esteem, c = effect of independent variable on collective esteem, and d = effect of independent variable on confidence in national government.

TABLE D3

Direct and Indirect Effects on Confidence in the Cuban National Government

Variable	*Direct Effect*	*Indirect Effect*	*Total Effect on Confidence in Government*
Collective esteem	.28	.23[A]	.51
U.S. evaluations	−.30	−.05[B]	−.35
Overall evaluations of Cuba	.15	.03[B]	.18
National economic evaluations	.08	.02[B]	.10
World leaders approval	N/A	.07[C]	.07
Government trust	.05	.01[B]	.06
Entrepreneur	N/A	−.04[C]	−.04
Negative evaluations of Cuba's free market	Not significant	Not significant	Not significant
Professional work	Not significant	Not significant	Not significant
Control variables			
Age	.09	.02[B]	.11
Education	.13	−.02[D]	.11
Household income	−.06	−.01[B]	−.07
Female	N/A	−.02[B]	−.02
Remittance	Not significant	Not significant	Not significant
Married	N/A	Not significant	Not significant
White	N/A	Not significant	Not significant

A, indirect effect: $(a \times b) + (a \times b)^2$ B, indirect effect: $(d \times b \times a) + (d \times b \times a)^2$ C, indirect effect: $(c \times a) + (c \times a \times b \times a)$ D, indirect effect: $(d \times b \times a) + (d \times b \times a)^2 + (c \times a) + (c \times a \times b \times a)$, where a = effect of collective esteem on confidence in national government, b = effect of confidence in national government on collective esteem, c = effect of independent variable on collective esteem, d = effect of independent variable on confidence in national government.