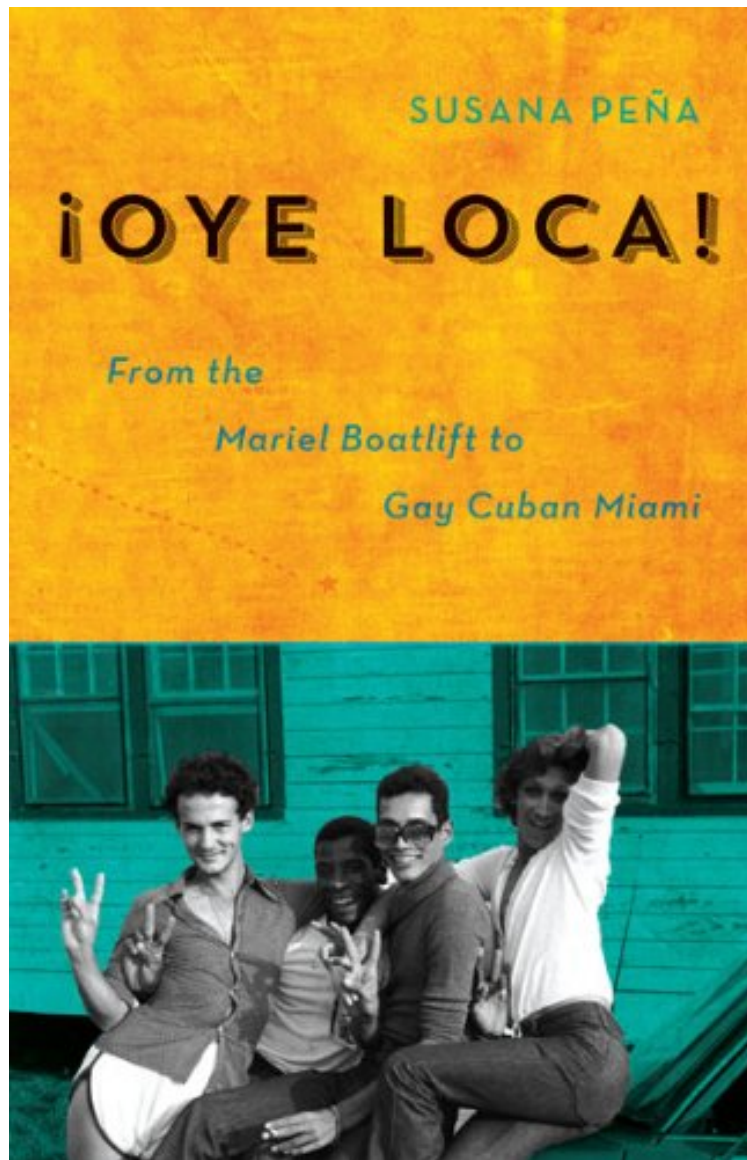


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Oye Loca: From the Mariel Boatlift to Gay Cuban Miami

Susana Pea

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Susana Pea : Oye Loca: From the Mariel Boatlift to Gay Cuban Miami before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Oye Loca: From the Mariel Boatlift to Gay Cuban Miami:

During only a few months in 1980, 125,000 Cubans entered the United States as part of a massive migration known as the Mariel boatlift. The images of boats of all sizes, in various conditions, filled with Cubans of all colors and ages,

triggered a media storm. Fleeing Cuba's repressive government, many homosexual men and women arrived in the United States only to face further obstacles. Deemed undesirable by the U.S. media, the Cuban state, and Cuban Americans already living in Miami, these new entrants marked a turning point in Miami's Cuban American and gay histories. In *Oye Loca*, Susana Pea investigates a moment of cultural collision. Drawing from first-person stories of Cuban Americans as well as government documents and cultural texts from both the United States and Cuba, Pea reveals how these discussions both sensationalized and silenced the gay presence, giving way to a Cuban American gay culture. Through an examination of the diverse lives of Cuban and Cuban American gay men, we learn that Miami's gay culture was far from homogeneous. By way of in-depth interviews, participant observation, and archival analysis, Pea shows that the men who crowded into small apartments together, bleached their hair with peroxide, wore housedresses in the street, and endured ruthless insults challenged what it meant to be Cuban in Miami. Making a critical incision through the study of heteronormativity, homosexualities, and racialization, ultimately *Oye Loca* illustrates how a single historical event helped shape the formation of an entire ethnic and sexual landscape.

This wonderful work unravels the complex and messy strands of emergences, disappearances, visibilities, and erasures of the loca, the gender, and sexually transgressive Cuban male homosexual figure who arrived in America via the Mariel boatlift. Susana Pea carefully and sensitively excavates through layers of historical and cultural abjection in order to persuasively demonstrate how the loca's stigmatized exilic trajectory is intimately connected to the advent of a Cuban American gay culture in Miami. Martin F. Manalansan IV, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign