



# The Other Side of Paradise: Life in the New Cuba

*Julia Cooke*

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## **The Other Side of Paradise: Life in the New Cuba** Julia Cooke

Change looms in Havana, Cuba's capital, a city electric with uncertainty yet cloaked in cliché, 90 miles from U.S. shores and off-limits to most Americans. Journalist Julia Cooke, who lived there at intervals over a period of five years, discovered a dynamic scene: baby-faced anarchists with Mohawks gelled with laundry soap, whiskey-drinking children of the elite, Santería trainees, pregnant prostitutes, university graduates planning to leave for the first country that will give them a visa.

This last generation of Cubans raised under Fidel Castro animate life in a waning era of political stagnation as the rest of the world beckons: waiting out storms at rummy hurricane parties and attending raucous drag cabarets, planning ascendant music careers and black-market business ventures, trying to reconcile the undefined future with the urgent today.

Eye-opening and politically prescient, *The Other Side of Paradise* offers a deep new understanding of a place that has so confounded and intrigued us.

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