

WORLD HISTORY SECTION II

Note: This exam uses the chronological designations B.C.E. (before the common era) and C.E. (common era). These labels correspond to B.C. (before Christ) and A.D. (anno Domini), which are used in some world history textbooks.

Part A

(Suggested writing time—40 minutes)
Percent of Section II score—33 1/3

Directions: The following question is based on the accompanying Documents 1–10. (The documents have been edited for the purpose of this exercise.)

This question is designed to test your ability to work with and understand historical documents.

Write an essay that:

- Has a relevant thesis and supports that thesis with evidence from the documents.
- Uses all of the documents.
- Analyzes the documents by grouping them in as many appropriate ways as possible. Does not simply summarize the documents individually.
- Takes into account the sources of the documents and analyzes the authors' points of view.
- Identifies and explains the need for at least one additional type of document.

You may refer to relevant historical information not mentioned in the documents.

1. Using the following documents, analyze the effects of the Cuban Revolution on women's lives and gender relations in Cuba in the period from 1959 to 1990. Identify an additional type of document and explain how it would help analyze the effects of the revolution.

Historical Background: Cuban revolutionary Fidel Castro assumed power after overthrowing the dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista in January 1959. Castro then began a radical restructuring of Cuban society along socialist lines.

Document 1

Source: Ofelia Dominguez Navarro, female Cuban socialist feminist, autobiography, reflecting on pre-revolutionary conditions, 1971.

A son was freed from paternal authority when he reached the age of majority, but both the mother and the daughters of the family had to tolerate that male authority as long as they lived with the father or the husband. Article 154 of the Spanish Civil Code states that the father exercises *patria potestad* [paternal power]. In spite of the military orders imposed by the United States occupiers in 1898-1902, the different laws passed by the Republic, and the new Constitution, the lower status of women, with the fluctuations imposed by time, remained in place. These conditions prevailed until 1959.

Document 2

Source: Yolanda Ferrer, female politician, General Secretary of the Federation of Cuban Women, speech, 2003.

In 1960, the Ana Betancourt School for Peasant Women was created. Over a few years' time, 14,000 young women from the countryside, including the most remote areas, came to Havana to learn basic job skills. The program included sewing, reading, and writing, and basic health and hygiene such as eliminating body parasites and fixing teeth. On Mother's Day parents coming to Havana to visit their daughters attending the school could barely recognize them because of the changes in their skills, confidence, and health.

In addition, the Schools to Upgrade Skills for Domestic Workers gave women training in skills that would enable them to break out of household work. As a result, Black women, formerly domestic servants, were for the first time hired as bank workers, a job from which they had previously been excluded.

Document 3

Source: Male Cuban revolutionary sympathizer, interview in Cuba with United States anthropologist, published in 1969.

I'm against women's liberation. Most of the older generation is also. The Revolution gave women a lot more freedom by giving them jobs, so now they don't depend so much on their husbands. I think that's not right. I expect my wife to stay home and look after the house. She has plenty to do here. She owes herself to me and the children.

Document 4

Source: Genoveva Hernández Díaz, age 17, teenage daughter of a Cuban revolutionary, interview in 1970.

Before the Revolution, women didn't have nearly as many opportunities as they do now. If they didn't sell themselves to some boss or some dictator, they didn't have a chance. The only other opportunity was to be a servant, scrubbing floors or taking in laundry. But now women are independent, free. A woman can work in the daytime, and if she wants to study, she can go to night school. Who ever studied before the Revolution? What money did they have to study with? What facilities for study were there?

There are a lot of older women who think women's liberation is terrible because women go around in the street like men and do men's work. But when *they* were young they sat in a chair all day doing embroidery or playing the piano or taking classes on this and that subject or stuffing themselves with food while waiting for their sweethearts to come and visit them. Those women never learned anything useful to themselves or to the Revolution. They regard liberation as a kind of hell. I, on the contrary, think it's a good thing because now women are equal to men.

Document 5

Source: Fidel Castro, Cuban president, speech to the Federation of Cuban Women, 1974.

There continues to be a certain discrimination against women. It is very real, and the Revolution is fighting it. It undoubtedly will be a long struggle. Women's full equality does not yet exist.

Document 6

Source: Alina Fernández in her memoir *Castro's Daughter: An Exile's Memoir of Cuba*, published in the United States, 1997.

In 1978, I asked for maternity leave [from medical school] and received instead a resolution whereby I had been expelled for having abandoned my field of study.

Motherhood and ration books are irreconcilable enemies. My infant daughter didn't even have a mattress when I got home, because I couldn't get one at the hardware store without a hospital certificate stating that she had been born alive. Our monthly ration of laundry soap was not enough for the inexhaustible pile of dirty diapers; nor was the fifteen yards of absorbent fabric enough to make the number of diapers needed.

There had been no water at home since the minister of transportation had a swimming pool built in his garden a few blocks down. And bananas, pumpkins, and taro roots, the traditional baby foods, existed only in our memory.

Document 7

Source: Cuban mother, interviewed by a United States journalist in Cuba, 1980.

Now, in Cuba, there is a Family Code* that guarantees the equal rights of women in their homes. Everything is not different in a single day, but it has made a difference for us all. The day-care centers also help us develop our careers. My daughters are students in the public schools. The little one goes to a day school. My older daughter is a student at a five-day-a-week boarding school in the countryside.

*Adopted by the Cuban government in 1975

Document 8

Source: Data collected by the United Nations and other international organizations from 1953 to 1982.

DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS FOR SELECTED
LATIN AMERICAN NATIONS

Year	1953				1982			
	Illiteracy		*EAP		Illiteracy		EAP	
Country	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Costa Rica	21%	22%	58%	9%	7%	7%	54%	21%
Cuba	26%	21%	57%	12%	4%	4%	54%	31%
Dominican Republic	56%	58%	65%	12%	32%	31%	48%	20%

*EAP = Economically Active Population (income-earning population)

Document 9

Source: Communist Party of Cuba, 1975-1986.

FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS IN CUBA 1975-1986
(in percent)

Time Period	1975-1976	1984-1986
Communist Party members	13	22
Communist Party, local leaders	3	24
Communist Party, national leaders	6	13
Young Communists, members	29	41
Young Communists, local leaders	22	48
Young Communists, national leaders	10	20

Document 10

Source: Vilma Espín, female scientist, president of the Federation of Cuban Women and longtime member of the Cuban Communist Party's Central Committee, speech, 1989.

It cannot be denied that women have successfully burst into the economic life of our country. At present, 39 percent of the total labor force in the civil state economy is female, compared to 25 percent in 1974, and in some areas, like the city of Havana, the figure is 45 percent.

However, we have not yet seen the same progress on men's participation in the sphere of family life, in the fulfillment of their responsibilities as fathers and co-participants in the establishment and development of the family. Spouses with the same degree of work commitments do not yet shoulder an equal burden.

In many working families, women still bear the full responsibility for the education and formation of their children, as well as the organization of the household and household chores. This gives rise to the extremely unfair "double work shift" that exhausts women.

END OF PART A

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