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CUBAN AMERICANS ON REMITTANCES AND THE EMBARGO

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my friend Onnie Waller who has inspired me to appreciate the history and uniqueness of Miami.

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

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This study addresses the seeming contradiction of Cuban American support for the trade embargo (designed to worsen the economic situation in Cuba) and simultaneous economic assistance to the island in the form of remittances. One hundred Cuban-born Cuban Americans in Miami Dade County were anonymously surveyed for this study.

The findings of this study show that nineteen percent of all respondents both supported the continuation of the trade embargo and reported to have sent remittances to Cuba in the past year (2003). Of this group, only forty-two percent displayed contradictory behavior, as they support the embargo because they believe that it is a functioning tool to incite a change of government in Cuba while at the same time they send remittances to family and friends in Cuba which undermines the effects of the policy. The

remainder cite economic rationales for their support of the embargo, or identify the embargo as a symbol as opposed to a functioning policy.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

A. Statement of Purpose

From the Bay of Pigs to the Mariel Boatlift to the Elian Gonzalez affair, the Cuban American community in Miami has not slipped under America's public radar. Part of this community's ability to draw attention to itself rests in its historic political focus around a single issue: the end of the communist regime in Cuba. For over forty years the main feature of U.S. foreign policy toward Cuba has been an embargo that prohibits most types of trade between the two countries. Despite the fact that the embargo has not succeeded in ousting Fidel Castro from power, the Cuban American community in Miami has vigorously supported its continuation. In 1991 the embargo was softened to allow Cuban Americans to send remittances (a portion of a migrant's earnings in their country of destination sent back to their country of origin) to family members in Cuba. Tens of thousands of people have taken advantage of this opportunity, with the Cuban Americans remitting hundreds of millions of dollars to Cuba every year. Despite the assistance that these remittances provide to the Cuban economy, support for the embargo within the Cuban American community remains strong. This study intends to address

the seeming contradiction of Cuban American support for the trade embargo, designed to worsen the economic situation in Cuba, and simultaneous economic assistance to the island in the form of remittances.

The persistence of the embargo as the main feature of U.S. policy toward Cuba is perpetuated by a domestic political strategy by U.S. elected officials to please Cuban American voters. Why then are Cuban Americans sending millions of dollars a year to Cuba, undermining the policy that they support? Using an oral interview and written survey strategy, this study finds that not all Cuban Americans support the embargo, and not all send remittances. There is in fact a wide range of attitudes toward the embargo throughout the community, as well as a varied level of economic support of family members on the island in the form of remittances. An examination of the rationales for embargo support reveal that of the small percentage of people who support the embargo and send remittances, less than half believe that deterioration of the economy will result in a change of government and thus undermine this policy by sending remittances. The remainder support the embargo because they believe that the policy is serving a purpose by preventing Castro from

obtaining additional resources, or they identify the embargo as a symbol of resistance as opposed to a functioning policy. For people who do not believe that the embargo will result in a change of the government, the economic support provided to family members on the island in the form of remittances does not conflict with their rationale for supporting the embargo.

B. Significance of the Study

While some studies have attempted to gauge Cuban American opinions on the embargo (FIU/Cuba Poll) and others have captured remittance patterns of Cuban Americans (Blue, 2004; Diaz-Briquets, 1994; Diaz-Briquets & Perez-Lopez, 1997; FIU/Cuba Polls), to date no published scholarly work has examined the reasoning behind these behaviors. This study will establish that there is an overlapping group of remitters and embargo supporters, something that no previous study has shown thus far. In addition to establishing a percentage of the Cuban American population that both support the embargo and send remittances, based on participants' responses, this study offers an explanation as to why these behaviors are not as contradictory as they appear.

C. Literature Review: Transnational Migration Framework

The study of remittances and their effects have been increasingly incorporated into the study of transnational migration. Since the 1980s, migration scholars have found that existing theories of migration neglected to account for the ties that migrants retain to their home countries. In their efforts to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the implications of immigration, many researchers (among them Glick-Schiller; Goldring; Eckstein; Faist; Mahler) have turned to a new framework: that of transnational migration. Loosely defined, the transnational migration framework considers the connections that migrants retain to their home countries, and the social, economic, and political consequences of these ties. Use of the transnational framework in the analysis of Cuban Americans' views on the embargo and the remittances they send to Cuba will help us understand these actions in terms of connections between people and places. As we will see below, both Cuban Americans and Cubans on the island have been greatly affected by the social, economic, and political consequences resulting from their shared affective ties and the dynamic relationship between Cuban Americans and the Cuban government.

Remittances are one of the primary means to measure transnational ties since it is a connection between loved ones that can be easily quantified. Before examining the literature specifically relating to remittances to Cuba, we will locate the study of remittances within the literature on transnational migration. We begin by defining transnational migration in broad terms and compare it to previous approaches to the study of migration. We follow this with a review of the transnational migration literature and then proceed to studies that specifically relate to Cuba.

1. Defining Transnational Migration

Until the emergence of the transnational migration framework in the late 1980s, migration research was dominated by studies that were based on two questions: "Why do people begin to migrate, leaving their region and country of origin?" and "What problems emerge for them and for members of the region or country they move to?" (Pries, 1999, p. 20). These questions imply a unidirectional flow of people and resources from one country to another. In the late 1980s, some researchers began to find these questions inadequate for addressing the

increasing number of immigrants whose lives were influenced both by the receiving country, and the connections that the immigrants maintained with their country of origin (Mahler, 2001, p. 2).

In 1992, migration scholars Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch, and Christina Szanton Blanc edited an edition of the Annals of the New York Academy of Science that addressed these transnational ties and popularized the term "transnational migration." As defined by Glick Schiller and partners, transnational migration is "the process by which immigrants forge and sustain simultaneous multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement" (Glick Schiller, Basch, and Szanton Blanc, 1992, p. 73). They called this approach a "framework," not a theory, because it offered an outline of how to study migration rather than an explanation of why migration occurs (Mahler, 2001, p. 2). Studies that are conducted within the transnational migration framework focus on a (any) connection that a migrant has maintained with his/her home community, and how this connection has affected either the migrant or the migrant's community socially, economically, or politically.

Previous research downplayed the importance of these connections, focusing on either issues of assimilation or "theories of migration." Theories of migration attempt to explain the reasons why people migrate. There are six main theories of migration: neoclassical economics, the new economies of migration, segmented labor market theory, world systems theory, social capital theory, and cumulative causation (Massey, 1999, pp. 35-44). These theories outline the economic and social conditions that dictate the likelihood that a person will migrate.

Neoclassical economic theory suggests that international migration occurs because of the worldwide distribution of supply of and demand for labor. In the neoclassical theory, the decision to migrate is made by each individual by weighing the costs and benefits of migration (Massey, 1999, p. 35). The new economies of migration theory states that decisions to migrate are made at the household level. Family units decide which member will migrate in an attempt to maximize income for the entire household (Massey, 1999, p. 36).

The segmented labor market theory suggests that international migration is fueled by a demand for labor to fill low status jobs in capitalist economies. This theory

speculates that since most migrants are motivated to migrate by the possibility of higher income, they are willing to take low status jobs (at least initially) to achieve their goal. These people often continue to identify themselves within the social structure of the home country where their status may be elevated by evidence of their increased income (Massey, 1999, pp. 37-39).

World systems theory takes a historical-structural approach to explaining the cause of international migration. This theory suggests that as capitalism expanded into peripheral countries, people became displaced from previous economic systems. The expansion of capitalism created flows of people in both directions between the core and the periphery. Capitalists from the core moved to the periphery to exploit labor and natural resources while people from the periphery who were displaced from their previous economic subsistence by the expansion of capitalism became a mobile population willing to move to obtain greater wealth (Massey, 1999, pp. 40-42).

The social capital theory proposes that people from a certain home society increasingly migrate to a specific place in a host society as migrant networks form. These networks facilitate employment in the host country as well as

provide support functions for new migrants (Massey, 1999, pp. 43-44).

Finally, cumulative causation theory suggests that "each act of migration alters the social context within which subsequent migration decisions are made, typically in ways that make additional movement more likely" (Massey, 1999, p. 45). As migrations create social structures conducive to further migration, the migration becomes self-perpetuating. This theory suggests that reports of success of migrants from a certain community can affect a person's decision to migrate (Pries, 1999, p. 25).

While some of the theories of migration such as the social capital and cumulative causation theories take into account the networks of previous migrants in the receiving country and their influence on a person's decision to migrate, all of these theories primarily focus on factors that explain why international migration (at the macro and micro level) occurs. The theories do not help explain other facets of migrants' behavior after migration, particularly behaviors and social structures shaped by the relationships that migrants maintain with the home country. For this we turn to the contributions of transnational migration research.

2. Contributions of Transnational Migration Research

The shift in the focus of migration research away from the causes of migration and towards migrants' transnational ties has been fruitful in producing studies that explain social, economic, and political changes for the migrant or his/her community of origin. Contributions that transnational researchers have made to an understanding the immigrant experience fall into three main categories: issues of identity, economic activities, and the relationship between migrants and the government of the sending state.

Identity

One of the most important contributions of transnational migration research has been its ability to show how the ties that migrants maintain between their home communities and the places that they migrate to greatly impact identity creation. In the case of Miami, Cuban American transnationalism has shaped the identity of the city as well as the identity of Cuban Americans (Portes and Stepick, 1993). The new dimensions to a migrant's identity can help explain certain behaviors exhibited by the migrant and the people they interact with in both communities.

Class, race, and gender roles are the facets of identity most studied by transnational migration scholars. In this section we will briefly examine how each of these facets of identity is affected by transnational migration, and what behaviors result from these changes.

Social class for both migrants and those people with whom migrants retain transnational ties in the country of emigration can be altered as a result of the transnational relationship. Migrants may conceptualize their social standing in their host country differently owing to their retention of social standing in their home country (Salih, 2002, 228). Non-migrants may experience an elevated social standing as a result of the transnational relationship they maintain with the migrant (Goldring, 1999, p. 168). Below we will examine examples of both of types of alteration of social class.

As the above-mentioned theories of migration indicate, the primary motivation for migration for many people is to improve the economic situation of themselves and their families (Stalker, 2001, p. 35). Previous studies of migration that focused on assimilation in the receiving country found that immigrants often landed in a lower class in their country of destination than the one they had left.

The transnational migration framework allows us to analyze this move in a different context. Migrants may be content with their reduced status in their new country because they identify with the social hierarchy in their home community. The material wealth that they accumulate in their new country may raise their social status at home (Salih, 2002, p. 228). Furthermore, some communities that retain many transnational ties with emigrants find the social class structure changes over time as migrant elite social class emerges, challenging the traditional landholding elite (Goldring, 1999, p. 175).

In his study of transnational migrants from Las Animas, Mexico, to California, Luin Goldring (1999) finds that Animeños deliberately took actions to increase their social status in Las Animas despite the fact that many did not intend to return to live in the community permanently (173). Goldring relates the stories of families who have bought land, made improvements to homes, and make an annual visit to Las Aminas to show off their improving economic status. Migrants use the annual celebration of the town's patron saint (which includes a dance and a rodeo-like event called the *coleadera*) as an opportunity to improve their social status. Many migrants interviewed for the study

used savings to purchase new clothes for the dance and the entrance fee to compete in the *coleadera* (marks of status). Also on their trip home they would pay for drinks and entertainment for family and friends. Younger migrants distinguish themselves from non-migrants by going to the nearest city for a night on the town that the non-migrants cannot afford. In addition, migrants' remittances through hometown associations (discussed below) have caught the attention of local and national politicians who court favor with the migrants. Because of this, some migrants develop considerable pull with politicians which leads to increased respect and social status within Las Animas (Goldring, 1999, pp. 169-177).

In her research on transnational migrants from El Salvador, Sarah Mahler found that new symbols of status were developed as a result of the transnational migration. As in Las Animas, migrants used their home communities in El Salvador to show off their increasing economic wealth. Migrants built large houses for the family members they had left behind, and returned to the community in new pick-up trucks. Both large houses and new trucks were symbols previously available only to the towns' traditional elite. However unlike Las Animas, where the social hierarchy

permitted migrants to use these symbols to increase their social status, the Salvadorian elite responded by building an additional story onto their homes to maintain the status quo (Mahler, 2001, p. 13). The creation of new symbols of status can be understood in terms of a reaction to changing conditions created by transnational migration.

Gender roles have been modified or intensified by transnational migration in some interesting ways. In many cases, women are left behind in the home community when their husbands migrate to find work in other places. In her study on the effects of transnational migration on women in the 1000-person village of Los Pinos, Dominican Republic, Eugenia George (1992) found that some of these women's behavior was restricted by the social implication of an absent husband (p. 91). Women whose husbands had migrated were often expected to move in with other family members so that they would not be suspected of being sexually unfaithful while their husbands were away.

Women are greatly affected by the "astronaut family" transnational strategy used by migrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan where in an effort to distribute economic resources around the globe, the wife and children live in Canada while the husband works most of the year in his home

country. Johanna Waters (2002), who studied a group of "astronaut" wives in Vancouver, Canada, to see how they were affected by this transnational arrangement, found that initially in these situations the women felt extremely isolated, many having given up the nannies, housekeepers, and fast-paced careers they had in Asia (p. 122). After the initial period, some found a life of increased independence where the wives were free to pursue leisure activities and educational opportunities without being "watched" by their husbands' and their husbands families (Waters, 2002, p. 124).

Transnational migration research has also delved into the area racial identity. Jorge Duany (1998) studied Dominican racial identity in the Dominican Republic and New York City. He found, as others before him, that the U.S. and the Dominican Republic use two very different systems of racial classifications: the U.S.'s system is based on a white/black, or white/not-white dichotomy while in the Dominican Republic, racial identity is primarily based on physical appearance and place of birth (only Haitians are considered to be "black") (Duany, 1998, p. 155). The physical transnationalism of the Dominican migrant population between the U.S. and the Dominican Republic

means that many people also travel between two racial identities: that assigned by the U.S. (usually "African American" or "black") and that from the D.R. which may afford them a higher status depending on the shade of their skin.

Economic Transfers

While the affects of transnational migration on identity may be difficult to quantify, economic ties across borders are not. For this reason, many scholars (Eckstein, 2003; Georges, 1990; Goldring, 2001; Mahler, 2001; Portes, Guarnizo & Haller, 2002; Pries, 2000) point to economic transactions as concrete evidence of a transnational relationship. Economic ties can take many forms: remittances, personal investments in property or businesses in the home country, donations made by hometown associations, or taxes paid directly to the home country government.

The difference in the above-mentioned types of transnational economic transfers is the direct beneficiary of the monetary resources. At the micro end of the spectrum, family remittances directly benefit a migrant's loved ones. Thomas Faist (2000) theorizes that there are three types of transnational social spaces that result from

international migration: transnational kinship groups, transnational circuits, and transnational communities (discussed in more detail below). Faist categorizes small groups with transnational ties such as families as transnational kinship groups. He asserts that each type of transnational social space is characterized by a resource that allows for members to cooperate over borders (Faist, 2000, p.192). Transnational kinship groups are characterized by "intrakinship obligations and reciprocity." Faist (2000) explains how remittances fall into this framework:

Reciprocity can be seen, for example, in remitters sending back money to members of their kinship group in the country of origin; especially where territorial exit is part of a strategy which includes economic survival or betterment for migrants and for those who stay behind-- migration as a sort of informal risk insurance (p. 193).

Faist claims that remitters send money for people who had to stay behind to maintain their household until either the remitter returns home, or family unification occurs in the host country. Remittances are a way to demonstrate love

between family members- a way to improve family members' living conditions.

Portes, Guarnizo, and Haller (2002) measure transnationalism in terms of the form of economic adaptation exhibited by immigrants, specifically "transnational entrepreneurship." Transnational entrepreneurs are defined as "self-employed immigrants whose business activities require frequent travel abroad and who depend for the success of their firms on their contacts and associates in another country, primarily their country of origin" (Portes et al., 2002, p. 287). The ability to be successful in a transnational business arena depends on the ties that entrepreneurs maintain with their home country.

Faist (2000) would categorize transnational entrepreneurship in his second type of social space- the transnational circuit. Transnational circuits involve the circular exchange of goods, capital, and services over national borders through exploitation of "insider advantages-- knowing the language, having friends and acquaintances abroad" (Faist, 2000, p. 196).

Hometown associations are further evidence of the economic ties of transnational migrations. Discussed

briefly in other contexts above, hometown associations are organized clubs of migrants from a specific area (town or state) in the home country. The clubs are designed to encourage connections between migrants and hometowns, educate second generation children about the home country culture, and provide economic support to hometowns- often in the form of public works projects. Many examples of such organizations can be found in Manuel Orozco's (2001) study of Latino hometown associations. One example is the United Committee of Chinameca, an association of Salvadoreans in Washington who have donated thousands of dollars in infrastructure development projects to their hometown of Chinameca, El Salvador. According to Orozco (2002), the Chinameca Association members have donated funds to build a school, a Red Cross clinic, and a septic tank among other projects (p. 91).

Hometown associations also attempt to build transnational ties for second-generation immigrants. The Federation of Zacatecan Clubs of Southern California sponsors an annual Miss Zacatecas pageant where the competitors are second-generation immigrants that go on a club-sponsored tour of Zacatecas to learn about their cultural heritage (Goldring, 2001, p. 502).

As alluded to above in our discussion of changes in social class identity as a result of transnational ties, transnational economic transfers and transnational identity creation sometimes go hand in hand. Some people who remit money to their local communities for public projects may do so to increase their social standing in the community. One example of this is a woman from Eritrea who migrated to Saudi Arabia and later remitted approximately \$100,000 to build a mosque in her hometown. The contribution elevated her status in the hometown. She also stated that with the contribution she "had earned the respect of both Eritreans and Arabs-especially men-in Jeddah [the Saudi city where she lived]" (Koser, 2002, p. 144).

Relationship between Emigrants and the Sending Country Government

The economic activities of hometown associations bring us to another important contribution of transnational scholarship: the ties that the sending country government forges with transnational migrants. Some governments have found that encouraging transnationality among emigrants has proved advantageous for the sending state and have

instituted policies to this effect. Present at the Miss Zacatecas pageant in California were the governor of the state of Zacatecas, Mexico, and several mayors from small towns throughout the state (Goldring, 2001, p. 502). This is because in 1991 the Mexican government established the Program for Attention to Mexican Communities in the Exterior to "encourage Mexicans and people of Mexican origin to maintain social and cultural ties with Mexico, reinforcing national identity" (Goldring, 2001, p. 515). Coming out of this special unit of the federal government were programs such as the "2 for 1" program designed to encourage remittances. The government would contribute two dollars for every one dollar raised by the associations to fund projects in their hometowns.

Some governments go as far as requiring their emigrants to contribute to the home country economy:

Since independence, every adult Eritrean in the Diaspora has been asked to pay 2 per cent of their annual incomes to the Eritrean state. The rate applies across the entire Diaspora, and includes the unemployed and all social categories. Even though it is voluntary, every respondent in this research stated that they pay this contribution, and none--not even

those in open opposition to the PFDI--seemed to resent paying (Koser, 2002, pp. 144-5).

Other examples of governments fostering relationships with their communities abroad include the Dominican Republic and El Salvador. The Dominican Republic has taken measures such as hiring Dominicans with U.S. residency to run their consulates, and providing representation to Dominican Americans in the Dominican congress (Itzigsohn, 2000, p. 1133). El Salvador's consulates in the U.S. have invested resources in encouraging cultural connections with emigrants and their home countries, and have provided legal services to Salvadorian immigrants in the U.S. to help them legalize their status. The Salvadorian government hopes to secure steady remittance flows by ensuring that immigrants can legally work in the U.S. (Itzigsohn, 2000, p. 1138).

The Transnational Community

Above we have examined two of Faist's (2000) transnational social spaces: transnational kinship groups and transnational circuits. We will now turn to Faist's final transnational social space- transnational communities.

According to Faist, the transnational community is a community where people in at least two different geographic locations are connected through the resource of "solidarity: shared ideas, beliefs, and symbols expressed in some sort of collective identity" (Faist, 2000, p. 195). Transnational communities are characterized by the "mobilization of collective representations." The Jewish diaspora is an example of a transnational community as Jews worldwide share symbols (such as the Israeli homeland) and a collective identity that link them to each other (Faist, 2000, p. 197).

We have now reviewed some of the areas where the transnational framework has made significant contributions to our understanding of the immigrant experience. We will now examine transnational ties of Cuban Americans and their loved ones in Cuba, and locate support both for the embargo and remittances within the transnational framework.

3. Transnationalism among Cuban Americans

As seen in the examples above, economic transnational ties, the formation of identity in response to transnational relationships, and the relationship that migrants maintain with their home government are highly interconnected, and

collectively contribute to the formation of a transnational community. While in this respect the case of Cuban Americans is no exception, there are some unique factors that set Cuban Americans apart from the transnational cases discussed above. As we enter into the research specifically relating to Cuban Americans, we find that the political barriers that stand between the U.S. and Cuba have shaped the transnational relationships between Cuban Americans and the island.

The identity of Miami's Cuban American community was built around the original exiles who departed Cuba soon after the triumph of the Cuban Revolution in 1959. The first post-Revolution wave of Cuban immigration to the U.S. (1959-1962) was composed of approximately 248,070 individuals of middle and upper social classes (Garcia, 1996, p. 13). The emigrants of this first wave were either people of power under the Batista government, or people who had been negatively affected by the Revolution. As "exiles" in the U.S., the Cuban American community was defined by their opposition to the Cuban government.

Thus the political culture of the Cuban American community was formed in response to the exiles' relationships with the governments both of Cuba and of the

United States. Political culture, as defined by Gabriel Almond (1990), takes into account the "values, feelings, and beliefs in the explanation of political behavior" of a certain group of people (p. 9). Sociologist Lisandro Perez (1992, 2003) claims that a persistent "exile ideology" dominates the political culture of the Cuban American community. His first version of the "ideology," published in 1992, includes four characteristics that shape the political culture of the Cuban American community: 1) primacy of issues and concerns that deal with the homeland, 2) uncompromising struggle against the current Cuban government, 3) lack of debate allowed about the previous point, and 4) support for the Republican Party (Perez, 1992, pp. 95-96). This ideology is perpetuated within the community by demographic factors, political and economic dominance of exiles from earlier waves, and the reinforcing environment of the Cuban enclave. Support for the embargo has been a staple of the "exile ideology" as it has been the U.S.'s chief tool of opposition to the Castro regime. Here we see that the original political culture of the Cuban American community was constructed around its adversarial relationship with the home government.

Part of Perez's original "exile ideology" was "overwhelming support for the Republican party" (Perez, 1992, p. 96). Maria de los Angeles Torres (1999) argues that the GOP took a hard stance against Castro in 1980 in an effort to win Cuban American support (hence gaining a foothold in Florida) and reach-out to Latino voters (Torres, 1999, p. 121). The Reagan administration helped to create the Cuban American National Foundation (CANF) in 1980 (Torres, 1999, p. 115). Administration officials believed that a Cuban American lobby would be beneficial as their conservative foreign policy goals coincided on some points. Jorge Mas Canosa, the Community's most outspoken leader, was selected to organize CANF by a National Security Council employee. CANF, known for its strong stance against Castro, largely set the tone for Cuban American politics after 1980 until Mas Canosa's death in 1998. Perez (1992) claims that Cuban-Americans would have been "Democrats in overwhelming numbers" if not for their focus on issues relating to the homeland (p. 96). Perez states that the Democratic agenda is more closely aligned with the domestic issues of importance for immigrants, and most of the measures taken by the U.S. government to assist

Cubans to migrate and integrate into U.S. life have been undertaken by Democratic administrations.

In 2003, Perez updated his "exile ideology," to contain the following three pillars: "1) the primacy of the homeland; 2) uncompromising hostility towards the Castro government; and 3) emotionalism, irrationality, and intolerance" (p. 87). Perez categorizes support for the embargo under "emotionalism, irrationality, and intolerance." He claims that while many Cuban Americans admit that the embargo has not been effective, they believe that lifting it would be a victory for Castro. Perez suggests that the emotionalism and irrationality that underlies Cuban American politics is not surprising considering the degree to which the lives of many Cuban Americans have been affected by the policies of both governments. Perez also points to the "highly-personalized nature of the anti-Castro struggle" as further explanation of the emotional nature of Cuban American politics.

The concept of emotion as a driving force in Cuban American politics was emphasized in an earlier work by political scientist Damian Fernandez. In his book, *Cuba and the Politics of Passion* (2000), Fernandez elaborates on two phenomena that characterize the political culture of

both Cuba and the Cuban American community in Miami: first, the "politics of passion," that is "the crusade for absolute moral ends for the community at large"; second, the "politics of affection," which is "an affective logic that justifies breaking the norms of the state to fulfill personal needs as well as those of loved ones" (Fernandez, 2000, p. 1). Fernandez argues that in subscribing to the politics of passion (institutionalized in Cuba after the revolution in the form of political religion), Cuban Americans adopt an ends-justify-the-means mentality in their struggle against Castro. Support for the embargo (a policy designed to deteriorate living conditions on the island in effort to incite a popular uprising to oust Castro) is one manifestation of the politics of passion. Because the end result of a change in government will bring a better life to all Cubans, Cuban Americans are willing to let their family members on the island suffer as a result of the embargo. Or are they? Fernandez claims, and this study confirms, that some Cuban Americans simultaneously engage in the politics of affection, breaking with the norms of the exile community to send remittances to suffering family members. Members of the Frente Democrático Revolucionario faced a similar dilemma in 1960.

A U.S. State Department memo stated that arriving Cuban exiles were unwilling to make strong statements against Castro while their family members were still in Cuba (Torres, 1999, p. 63).

Maria de los Angeles Torres (1999) argues that it is no coincidence that Cuban American political culture formed in response to policies of both the U.S. and Cuba. Torres explains that in 1960 the CIA employed and trained many members of the first wave of Cuban emigrants to participate in a military invasion of Cuba (p. 57). This event had an important impact on the identity of the Cuban American community as a whole. Emigrants who had already been painted by the Castro regime as privileged classes who did not believe in the ideals of the Revolution became an actual "enemy" of the state when they staged the Bay of Pigs invasion. The Cuban government's subsequent depiction of all émigrés as *gusanos* and *escoria* served to eliminate gray areas for the original exiles (Torres, 1999, p. 51). Either you were with Fidel, or you were in Miami.

As we have seen, Cuban Americans' on-going relationship with their home government has largely defined their participation in U.S. domestic politics. Over the past forty-four years the Cuban government has recast its

relationship with Cuban Americans numerous times in order to serve political and economic objectives. As we saw above, Cuban American collective identity has been built around its relationship with the Cuban government. In repositioning itself in relation to Cuban Americans, the Cuban state actively attempts to alter the identity of both Cuban Americans and Cubans on the island by controlling the transnational ties between the two groups. For the first twenty years after the Revolution, the Cuban government encouraged Cubans on the island to sever ties with family members and friends who had emigrated. Then in 1978 Castro invited a group of emigrants to attend a dialogue in Cuba. After secret talks between the U.S. and Cuba to lift the embargo stalled, Castro attempted to use the dialogue to gain support of his most outspoken opponents in the U.S., the Cuban Americans (Garcia, 1999, p. 47). Rather than referring to Cuban Americans as *gusanos* and *escoria*, Castro recast the emigrants as the "Cuban community abroad" (Garcia, 1999, p. 47). Following the dialogue, in 1979 Cuban Americans were permitted to visit their family members on the island. Using the affective ties between island Cubans and Cuban Americans to its advantage, the government required visitors to buy expensive hotel

packages even if they intended to stay in private homes. With over 100,000 Cuban Americans taking advantage of the opportunity to visit family members (and many bringing expensive gifts from the U.S.), the Cuban government raked in over \$150 million (Garcia, 1996, p. 52). The Cuban government's encouragement of transnational ties between its citizens and Cuban Americans has been especially strong following the decline of the Cuban economy in the 1990s. During this period of economic decline when food rations and public services were reduced, the government took measures such as legalizing the dollar and easing restrictions on visits from emigrants in an attempt to increase emigrant remittances (Eckstein, 2003, pp. 16-19).

As we have seen in previous sections, foreign governments with large populations of transnational migrants in the U.S. tend to forge partnerships with their emigrant communities to ensure that financial flows back to the home country are maximized. In Mexico, the government sponsored a 2 for 1 program with hometown associations (Goldring, 2001, p. 502). The government of the Dominican Republic encourages Dominicans living in the U.S. to become U.S. citizens and lobby for policies that benefit trade relations with the Dominican Republic (Itzigsohn, 2000, p.

1133). The difference between these countries and Cuba is that while all three countries benefit financially from ties of affection maintained across borders, the Mexican and Dominican governments work in partnership with their emigrant communities, while the Cuban government benefits in spite of the wishes of Cuban Americans. In stark contrast to the other Latin American governments mentioned above, Cuba has a vested interest in simultaneously encouraging cooperative relationships between the Cuban Americans and the Cuban people and an antagonistic relationship between Cuban Americans and the Cuban government. With this dual strategy, the Cuban government encourages remittances to capture hard currency, while sustaining pressure that Cuban Americans exert on politicians to maintain policies such as the embargo on which Castro can blame the economic deterioration of his government. By encouraging Cuban Americans to identify themselves in opposition to the Cuban government, Castro also retains the option to externalize dissent from his government's policies.

Susan Eckstein (2003) evaluates the effects of the Cuban state's efforts at stimulating remittances by promoting transnational ties between island Cubans and

Cuban Americans. She finds that the Cuban government instituted various measures to encourage remittances from the United States following the collapse of the Soviet trading bloc in the early 1990s. In need of hard currency, the Cuban government legalized the dollar, opened state-run dollar stores to the public, and exchanged dollars at the black market rate (Eckstein, 2003, pp. 17-18). At the same time, as mentioned above, the government reconfigured its public attitude toward Cuban Americans, renaming them the "Cuban Community Abroad."

Eckstein finds that while the Cuban government succeeded in bolstering remittances, the hard currency has come at a price. Remittances undermine the goals of the state and the principles of the Revolution. Despite the state's effort to equalize the benefits of dollars by charging a 140 percent tax at government dollar stores, remittances divide the county into people who have access to dollars, and people who do not (Eckstein, 2003, p. 17). As a result, the transnational relationships that have produced remittances for families and hard currency for the Cuban government are affecting social class composition in Cuba. The economic divide between black and white Cubans is widening. Since white Cubans are more likely to have

family members in the U.S (owing to the composition of the original waves of emigrants), they are more likely to be recipients of dollars (Eckstein, 2003, p. 23). People who have dollars are involved in the same consumerism that the revolution has attempted to avoid for the society as a whole. The informal economy has grown and staples such as food rations and housing which used to be completely under government control are now bought and sold on the black market (Eckstein, 2003, p. 26). In addition, the increased ties that Cubans were encouraged to forge with Cuban Americans in an effort to bolster remittances have given Cubans a sharper picture of the lifestyle available in a capitalist democracy.

We have now reviewed the literature on transnational migration and found that the study of remittances directly relates to the core categories of identity, economic transfers, and the relationship that migrants maintain with their home country governments. We have also identified where studies on Cuban Americans fit into the transnational framework. We will now proceed with a review of previous studies on remittances to Cuba and a brief overview of the history of the embargo.

Chapter 2: Background and Previous Studies

A. Previous Surveys on Remittances

Cuban American remittances to the island are difficult to calculate. Not all people use official means to transfer money. Estimates for the amount of total remittances to Cuba range from \$500 million (Monreal, 1999) to \$1.2 billion (estimated by Cuban economists) (Grogg, 2003) annually. \$800 million is a frequently cited estimate calculated by the Comision Economica para American Latina (Orozco, 2002). This is based in part on estimates that Western Union alone transmits approximately \$400 million a year (Economia, 2001). If the \$800 million figure were accurate, remittances would have accounted for 4.5 percent of Cuba's 1999 GDP based on World Bank and IDB data (Orozoco 2002). While not nearing the twenty-five percent of GDP that remittances to Nicaragua constitute, remittances to Cuba provide a significant source of financial support for the Cuban economy.

Research regarding remittances to Cuba has been a very recent trend in scholarly studies. Louis DeSipio (2002) found only three recorded surveys which asked Latin Americans whether or not they send remittances including

the Mexican Migration Project conducted in 1982-1996, the Emerging Latino Study conducted in 1996-1997, and the Latino Portrayals on Television Study conducted in 1998 (DeSipio, 2002). The only one of these to include Cubans in their sample was the Latino Portrayals on Television Study.

The study was conducted by the Tomas Rivera Policy Institute to evaluate opinions on a completely different topic; however, it included one question about remittances. The sample consisted of 1,013 Latino adults and 404 non-Hispanic white adults in California, Illinois, New York, Florida, and Texas. Data was collected through a telephone survey conducted in August 1998 (DeSipio, 2002, p. 185). The study asked respondents to indicate whether or not they sent remittances to their home country on a regular basis. Based on a logistic regression analysis, DeSipio finds the Latino Portrayals study data shows Cubans and Central Americans to be twice as likely to remit as Mexicans (p. 177). This is a surprising finding considering that Mexicans in general are considered to be economic migrants, particularly migrant workers who come to the U.S. specifically to send remittances home. DeSipio does not develop the Cuban case and his finding was not confirmed by

data from the other surveys as Cubans were not polled in those studies (p. 179).

In 2003 the Pew Hispanic Center released a report on remittances based on the 2003 National Survey of Latinos. The survey focused on Mexicans, Ecuadorians, and Central Americans. It did not contain data on Cubans. Nevertheless, their recent findings shed some light on the current remittance trends. Forty-two percent of respondents from the study reported sending remittances to their home country on a regular basis (Pew Hispanic Center, 2003, p. 5). Twenty-three percent of people who have been away from their home country for twenty to thirty years still send money compared to fifty percent of people who have been away ten years or less (p. 6). Seventy percent of remittances are sent by a wire transfer service such as Western Union or MoneyGram, and the majority of remitters are women (pp. 3-4). The Pew Hispanic Center also found that remittance flows were not affected by the downturn of the U.S. economy that occurred in 2001 and 2002 (p. 4). Finally, the survey found that sixty to seventy-eight percent of recipients in each of the countries studied reported spending remittances on household expenses such as food, housing, and utilities. The remainder was spent on

investment, savings, real estate, education, and luxury items (PHC, 2003, p. 11).

Sergio Diaz-Briquets (1994, 1997) was one of the first scholars to undertake research on remittances to Cuba. Diaz-Briquets (1994) developed a census data-based model to estimate a range of Cuban Americans' propensity to remit in terms of waves of arrival based on a variety of demographic and socioeconomic predictors (including place of birth, period of entry, naturalization status, age, family composition and household size, education attainment, employment status, occupation, income, and housing ownership). Based on his model, he does not believe that remittances to Cuba (in 1994) surpassed \$300-\$400 million a year (Diaz-Briquets, 1994, p. 227).

Diaz-Briquets and Jorge Perez-Lopez(1997) cite two main categories of factors that contribute to the likelihood that an immigrant to the United States will remit money to her/his homeland: level of attachment to the home country and economic ability to remit. The longer someone is away from her/his homeland and the fewer people s/he is close to there, the less likely s/he is to remit (Diaz-Briquets and Perez-Lopez, 1997, p. 418). The level of income (and level of disposable income) is also

important. The more disposable income someone has, the easier it will be to send a portion to the homeland (Diaz-Briquets and Perez-Lopez, 1997, p. 420). Data gathered for this thesis do not support the finding that there is a direct correlation between level of income and propensity to remit.

While aspects of the Cuban immigration to the United States mirror the experiences of immigrants from other countries, Diaz-Briquets and Perez-Lopez (1997) suggest that there are several factors which make the Cuban American's propensity to remit unique (pp. 431-32). First, there is no return migration to Cuba. The Cuban government does not allow people who have left Cuba as emigrants to return as anything but tourists. Many immigrants never go back even to visit after they leave Cuba. Diaz-Briquets and Perez-Lopez claim that the lack of return migration has a moderating effect on remittances, as people have no plans to return to Cuba to retire, and the connections to their homeland are weakened. Also, because Cubans may not return, they are more likely to help family members emigrate. Once family members are in the United States, money that would have been remitted is used to care for

those people in the U.S. (Diaz-Briquets and Perez-Lopez, 1997, p. 419).

Diaz-Briquets and Perez-Lopez (1997) suggest that owing to the communist government in Cuba, political exiles may not remit on an ideological basis. Political exiles may regard sending remittances to Cuba as helping the Castro regime fight its economic problems. Diaz-Briquets and Perez-Lopez claim that strategies the Cuban government has employed to increase remittance flows from the United States to help the Cuban economy create resentment from remitters (p. 432). Remittance maximizing strategies include taxation of gifts, high fees for exit permits, and high prices on commodities that can be purchased with dollars. These factors, combined with a U.S. restriction allowing only \$1200 per household per year to be sent to Cuba may decrease a remittance flow that would otherwise be higher (Diaz-Briquets and Perez-Lopez, 1997, p. 432). While Diaz-Briquets and Perez-Lopez's argument seems plausible, they do not present empirical evidence to support their claims. Data collected for this thesis indicate that few Cuban Americans remit at the \$1200 level. The majority remit in amounts well below the legal maximum,

while a few admit to breaking the law to remit higher amounts.

In his study on Latin American remittances, Manuel Orozco (2002) finds that people wiring money to Cuba incur one of the highest transfer costs for any country in Latin America. The high transfer cost could have a moderating impact on remittance flows as well as the result of encouraging people to seek informal ways of remitting.

Sarah Blue (2004) has completed the most recent published study on remittances to Cuba. Blue uses data from a poll taken in Havana in 2000 which asked respondents about remittances in addition to other topics. Blue finds that one-third of households surveyed receive remittances with a median amount of \$425 per household (p. 10). The remittances created a huge difference in income for recipients on an otherwise level playing field. This finding supports Eckstein's claim that remittances are creating economic classes in Cuban society.

Contradicting Diaz-Briquets' findings that people are less likely to remit the longer they are away from the homeland, Blue finds that people who left Cuba twenty to thirty years ago are most likely to remit (p. 12). Blue also finds that pre-1980 migrants were also more likely to

have traveled to Cuba at least once. Again contradicting Diaz-Briquets' study, Blue asserts that political ideology was not a deterrent for remitting. She uses the year of departure as a measure of political ideology, assuming that people departing Cuba prior to 1980 would be more influenced by "political disincentives" (Blue, 2004, p. 13). The survey data collected for this thesis suggest that Blue's method of measuring political ideology is flawed. As we will see below, thirty-three percent of non-remitters in waves of departure before 1974 cite ideological reasons for their reluctance to remit, while only fourteen percent of non-remitters in later waves claim political ideology as a deterrent.

Finally, the FIU/Cuba Poll, conducted six times since 1991, is one of the most comprehensive surveys of Cuban Americans. The most recent, released in March, 2004 asks respondents for both their opinion on the embargo and their remittance behavior. The poll found that fifty-nine percent of respondents supported the continuation of the embargo. Fifty-three percent (up from thirty-nine percent in 2000) of respondents reported sending money to relatives in Cuba (although no time period was specified). These percentages establish that the categories of embargo

supporter and remitter do at least minimally overlap, however no published study has elaborated on these findings to indicate how many embargo supporters and remitters are actually the same people. The poll finds that while only twenty-four percent of respondents felt that the embargo "has worked well," fifty-nine percent of respondents supported the policy's continuation.

B. Brief History of the Embargo

Although limited remittances to Cuba are permitted by law, support for the economy contradicts the spirit of U.S. policy toward Cuba, encapsulated in the economic embargo of the island. This policy has been in place for over forty years. The primary goal of the embargo was widely considered to be the destabilization of the Cuban government and the overthrow of Fidel Castro (Kaplowitz, 1998, p. 45). The embargo began in 1960 following the nationalization of American (U.S.) businesses and property in Cuba. This policy was consistent with the Cold War strategies of the time, and followed embargos placed against North Korea, North Vietnam, and Egypt during the previous decade. After breaking diplomatic ties in 1961,

the first travel ban to Cuba was issued. First formal legislation on the embargo occurred in 1962.

The impact of the embargo was evident in the early sixties. Owing to historical ties and proximity between the two countries, the U.S. had been Cuba's largest trading partner, supplying more than seventy percent of imports to the island (Perez, L.A., 2003). Cuba's mechanized industries ordered most of their spare parts from the U.S. Because the U.S. was so geographically close to Cuba, little stock of spare parts was actually warehoused on the island. Companies would order parts directly from U.S. manufacturers, and the items would arrive within days. Following the placement of the embargo, many of Cuba's industries suffered from the lack of spare parts. This was particularly hard on transportation, putting one-fourth of Cuba's buses and one-half of its passenger rail cars out of service by 1962 (Perez, L.A., 2003, p. 251).

During the 1960s, the U.S. government received extensive support for their embargo against Cuba from their Western allies (Kaplowitz, 1998, p. 59). Ironically, despite this support, in late 1960s and 1970s the embargo had less of an impact on the actual state of the Cuban economy as Cuba was receiving subsidies from the Soviet

Union in the amount of approximately \$1 million a day (Perez, L.A., 2003, p. 259). During the Cold War, the embargo was considered in the best interests of U.S. foreign policy. The U.S. should not trade with a country in its own sphere of influence that had aligned itself with the Soviet Union. Security concerns were paramount.

By the mid-1970s, the strength of the embargo had subsided. Latin-American and other western countries had slowly resumed limited trade relations with Cuba and the U.S. was not in a position to enforce sanctions. In 1975, the Ford administration loosened the embargo to allow foreign subsidiaries of American companies to trade with Cuba (Kaplowitz, 1998, pp. 87-91). Under the Carter administration, economic and diplomatic relations between the U.S. and Cuba slowly increased. Developments included the opening of "interest sections" in both Washington, DC, and Havana, the approval of the transmission of remittances in the amount of \$500 per quarter and \$500 to help a family member emigrate, and significant reduction of restrictions on travel to Cuba (Kaplowitz, 1998, p. 97).

In the 1980s, the Reagan and Bush administrations re-tightened the embargo by reversing changes that had been made in the previous administrations. Couched in Cold War

rhetoric of the time, the embargo was painted as a tool to contain Communist influence in the Americas-- a topic of concern given the socialist movements in some Latin American countries. While the interest sections remained open, the Reagan administration began enforcing provisions of the embargo (particularly those relating to travel) to send a message that trade with Cuba would not be tolerated (Kaplowitz, 1998, p. 125; Torres, 1999, p. 117).

With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989, a shift took place in the factors governing the future of relations with Cuba. While the embargo had until that time been viewed in the light of the foreign policy strategy of the Cold War, after the Communist threat disappeared U.S. policy toward Cuba took cues from domestic politics. Politicians used the embargo to show Cuban-American voters that they were hard on Castro (Perez, L.A., 2003, p. 264). In May 1992 (an election year), President George Bush signed the Cuban Democracy Act (CDA) into law at a campaign stop in Miami (Kaplowitz, 1998, p.152). The CDA re-strengthened the embargo to once again prevent subsidiaries of American companies from trading with Cuba, while at the same time added provisions to allow increased humanitarian assistance to the island (U.S. Congress, 1992, p. 3).

Under President Bill Clinton, the embargo again underwent changes: some areas such as restrictions on travel and remittances were tightened while other aspects were loosened, such as the opening of Western Union offices in Cuba. However, the Helms-Burton Act, signed in 1996, was by far the most important change to the embargo under the Clinton administration. The Helms-Burton Act further tightened the embargo but more importantly, the Helms-Burton Act codified into law an embargo that was previously governed by executive order. This means that the only way the embargo can be lifted is through an act of Congress. The act also provided criteria that must be met by the Cuban government before the embargo can be lifted (Kaplowitz, 1998, pp. 182-83). Like the CDA, the Helms-Burton Act was signed into law in an election year. Clinton's decision to sign the law was likely based on an effort to win the vote of the Cuban American community (Kaplowitz, 1998, p. 183; Roy, 2000, p. 34).

In the current election year, the debate on the embargo has resurfaced in Congress and in the White House. Currently, there is a growing movement to lift at least some restrictions of the embargo while the White House has suggested strengthening others. Several senators have

requested to end the travel ban, while others support increased agricultural trade with Cuba. President Bush has recently suggested decreasing the cap on household remittances to Cuba (Ovalle, 2004).

While studies on remittances to Cuba are a relatively new trend, the debate on the embargo has been raging in academic and political circles for years. Academic works and policy reviews on the embargo and Cuban American politics (of which the embargo has been a central theme) abound. This thesis does not intend to enter into the debate on the success of the embargo as a policy choice, nor evaluate whether or not it should be continued; however a brief look at the arguments on both sides of the debate will provide context for the survey findings that follow. We now examine a few representative works from the vast collection of authors who have weighed in on the question of the embargo.

William Ratliff and Roger Fontaine (2000) are two of many scholars to find that the embargo, born out of U.S. Cold War strategy, has failed to meet its objectives. They find that the embargo was co-opted by Cuban American lobbyists, led by the far right-wing Cuban American National Foundation (CANF), and turned into a long-term

crusade for regime change in Cuba. Ratliff and Fontaine claim that in maintaining the embargo, the U.S. has really accomplished the antithesis of its objective-- strengthening Castro's support by providing him with the perfect scapegoat for the island's financial problems.

Prominent immigration scholar Alejandro Portes (1998) concurs with Ratliff and Fontaine. Portes relates how the embargo's supporters hoped it would strain the Cuban economy enough to promote a popular uprising against Castro. In the end, the embargo succeeded in promoting nationalism in Cuba as Castro blamed the U.S. for starving Cuba's people (Portes, 1998). Portes also suggests that a small yet powerful group of Cuban exiles were able to gain enough support in Congress through large financial contributions and anti-communist rhetoric to sustain a failed policy (Portes, 1998).

In contrast, Jaime Suchlicki (2000), Director of the Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies at the University of Miami, believes that lifting the trade embargo against Cuba will be devastating to U.S. foreign policy goals, and prolong a transition to democracy on the island. Among his warnings, Suchlicki states that lifting the embargo will enable Castro to obtain loans from

international organizations that he will not be able to repay, lead to greater repression on the island to control U.S. influence, and send the message to terrorists and other enemies of the U.S. that America is willing to "forgive and forget" (p. 3).

The FIU/Cuba Poll found in 2004, and as this study finds as well, that the embargo retains significant support from the Cuban American community in Miami. This study intends to explore Cuban Americans' rationale for expressing support for the embargo while they undermine its effects with considerable financial assistance provided to the island in the form of remittances. By examining the ideology behind individuals' decision to remit and their attitudes toward the embargo, we will find diverse viewpoints among the Cuban American community in Miami. In the eyes of some Cuban Americans who both support the embargo and also send remittances, they are fulfilling two equally important goals: symbolically opposing Castro and helping their family members abroad. There are also practical reasons why other Cuban Americans feel (in the face of its failure to oust Castro) that the embargo should not be lifted.

We have now examined previous studies on remittances to Cuba and traced the history of the embargo from its inception in 1960 to its current state. We have also briefly reviewed the debate on the effectiveness of the embargo as a policy to oust Castro to provide context for the findings of this thesis. In the following section we will look at the methodology used in this survey research project.

Chapter 3: Methodology

As this study seeks to explain attitudes and actions through an understanding of participants' rationales for such behaviors, the study employed a survey technique using both closed and open ended questions. The open ended questions allowed respondents to express their rationale for their behavior in their own words. While in-depth interviews would have provided a more complete picture of respondents' rationales for their behavior, the survey format allowed for a much larger sample than in-depth interviews would have produced. Due to the diverse nature of Miami's Cuban American community, the larger sample was essential to capture trends in different segments of the community.

This study was conducted using both written and oral anonymous surveys. A total of fifty-five oral surveys were conducted in various locations throughout Miami (Café Versailles, Little Havana, Sweetwater, and Hialeah). Written surveys were distributed through a snowball technique by acquaintances of the author in Doral, Miami Lakes, and Hialeah. The written surveys were distributed with security envelopes to maintain confidentiality of

responses. The combined use of oral and written surveys was employed to obtain a diverse and representative sample of Miami's over-eighteen, Cuban-born population.

The oral and written surveys asked the same questions. The survey forms are slightly different. The oral survey form (Appendix 1) is more abbreviated than the written survey (Appendix 2), which was reworded to be self-explanatory.

Sixty qualifying individuals were asked to participate in the oral survey. Five individuals declined, resulting in a ninety-two percent response rate for the oral surveys. Eighty written surveys were distributed and forty-eight were returned. Three were incomplete, and were removed from the sample resulting in a sixty percent response rate for complete written surveys. Research methods specialist Earl Babbie (1992) considers a fifty percent response rate to be "adequate for analysis and reporting" (p. 267). Sixty percent is considered "good" and any rate over seventy percent is considered "very good." Based on Babbie's acceptable response rates, both the written and the oral surveys were completed at sufficient rates for analysis.

To address this study's primary research question of why Cuban Americans both support the trade embargo against Cuba and undermine the policy by sending remittances, the survey presented two main questions:

1. Have you sent money to anyone in Cuba in the past year?
2. Do you support or oppose the continuation of the trade embargo against Cuba? Why?

The above questions intended to establish whether supporters of the embargo are the same people who send money to family and friends in Cuba, and if so, what was the thinking behind their decision to undermine the embargo with remittances. Respondents were also asked if they still have friends and family members in Cuba to evaluate whether there is any correlation between people who have friends or family on the island (but who may or may not remit) and their attitude toward the embargo.

The survey also asked several other questions designed to establish a profile of people who remit to Cuba and people who support the embargo. The responses to questions such as "Have you traveled to Cuba? Why or why not?" will be analyzed for correlations to attitudes toward the embargo and evaluated for embargo supporters'

justifications for another type of economic support to Cuba.

If respondents stated that they had sent money in the past year, they were asked a series of questions regarding their transactions. The questions included "Who did you send it to?" "Did you send it with a specific purpose?" "How much did you send?" and "How did you send it?". The responses produced both a limited profile of remittance recipients, as well as an opportunity to evaluate the level of financial support provided to Cuba in the form of remittances. If the respondent claimed not to have remitted in the past year, a different series of questions were asked. "Why didn't you remit?" was intended to evaluate if people did not remit for ideological, economic, or other reasons. The remaining questions addressed previous remittance activity since the respondent's arrival in the U.S. In addition to controlling for emigration and death of previous recipients, these questions were intended to evaluate the impact of the economic downturn in the U.S. since Sept. 11, 2001, on remittance flows to Cuba. The relationship between household income and amount of money remitted was also assessed.

Questions regarding political affiliation and political issues were designed to evaluate the relevance of the "exile ideology" in today's Cuban American community. Responses will also identify if there is a correlation between political affiliation and support for the embargo. Finally, a question on social services intends to assess respondents' views on the state's responsibility for the social welfare of its citizens.¹

To provide an economic and political context in which to analyze responses, respondents were asked for their year of birth and the year they departed Cuba. These questions produced a year of departure (wave of emigration), age at time of departure, and current age. Respondents were asked for their year of departure from Cuba rather than their year of arrival in the U.S. as some people departed Cuba for a third country before arriving in the U.S. a few years later. Previous studies on remittances refer to years away from the homeland as a determinant of a person's propensity to remit. The year that respondents arrived in the U.S.

¹ The original oral survey asked people whether they "support" or "oppose" government services such as food stamps, Medicaid, and subsidized housing. After several surveys it became apparent that more elaboration would be needed to capture accurately the attitudes of the respondents. The written survey reflected this change, asking respondents to give their opinion without offering any choices.

may not accurately portray how many years they have been away from Cuba.

To analyze the data, the responses were divided into categories of "waves" of emigration from Cuba. The first category of emigrants includes those who departed Cuba prior to the triumph of the Revolution in 1959. The second group is commonly referred to as the "first wave," and includes people who left Cuba from 1959 when Castro took over to 1962 when commercial air service between the U.S. and Cuba was stopped. The second wave begins in 1965 when Castro opened the Port of Camarioca, and the "Freedom Flights" airbridge that resulted. The second wave ended when Castro abruptly ended the Freedom Flights in 1973 (Garcia, 1996). Few people were able to emigrate between 1962 and 1965. Only two out of the one hundred survey respondents departed Cuba in 1963 or 1964. Their responses were included with the Camarioca/Freedom Flights wave. For this reason, the tables show the Camarioca/Freedom flights wave as 1963-1973. The fourth group (really not a "wave") consists of those respondents who left Cuba between 1974 and 1979. Few people left Cuba during that time due to restrictions on emigration. The fourth group in this study (what is considered to be the third "wave" of emigration

from Cuba) was the Mariel Boatlift which occurred in the spring and summer of 1980. Because people were not asked in what month they left, anyone leaving in 1980 was counted as part of this wave. The fifth group includes people who left after the Mariel Boatlift in 1980 and before the influx of *balseros* (rafters) in 1994. Anyone who reported leaving between 1981 and 1993 was included in this group. The final group includes anyone who left Cuba since 1994.

This study used a small sample (100 people) to evaluate current attitudes and behaviors of Miami's Cuban American community. While such a small survey cannot encapsulate all dynamics of this community, it has provided a glimpse of the state of embargo ideology and remittance behavior of today's Cuban Americans. The information obtained from the survey detailed above will be reported in the following chapter in the form of descriptive statistics.

Now that we have examined the methodology used to administer the survey for this thesis, we will turn to an in-depth look at the findings produced by this study.

Chapter 4: Findings

A. General Profile of Respondents

1. Age, Gender, and Year of Departure

Of the 100 people interviewed, thirty-six percent left Cuba in the Camarioca/Freedom Flights wave of emigration and fifteen percent left during the initial "exile" wave between 1959 and 1962. Together, fifty-one percent of respondents can be considered part of the original group of Cuban exiles. Fifteen percent of respondents left during the Mariel boatlift and another fifteen percent left Cuba since 1994. The remaining seventeen percent were spread throughout the remaining three groups (see Table 1). The percentages of respondents in each wave of emigration are roughly representative of composition of the current Cuban American population (Grenier and Perez, L., 2003, p. 119).

Seventy-one percent of respondents were between forty and sixty-nine years of age (see Table 2). Sixty-nine percent of respondents were between the ages of eighteen and thirty-nine when they departed from Cuba. There is a sharp drop to eight percent of respondents departing between ages forty and forty-nine (Table 3). The lower numbers of respondents who arrived from Cuba after age

forty could be attributed to the fact that many would have since died, and others would have been too elderly and frail to be out of the house to be interviewed in the oral survey. The age of respondents at the time of departure from Cuba increases with each wave of emigration (Table 4). All respondents who departed Cuba after age forty arrived since 1981, and the percentage of children (under eighteen) departing Cuba shows a downward trend. The trend can perhaps be attributed to two factors. The original exiles (through the airlifts) tended to emigrate in family groups. The Mariel boatlift had less family groups and more young adults. Because respondents were required to be at least eighteen years old to complete the survey, children who arrived in the last two waves were less likely to be eligible for participation.

Fifty-one percent of respondents were women. Female respondents departed Cuba in higher percentages during the Freedom Flights and between 1981 and 1993 (see Table 5). A distinctly lower percentage of female respondents departed Cuba during the Mariel boatlift, corresponding to the fact that seventy percent of all Mariel Cubans were male (Garcia, 1996, p. 68).

2. Income

Annual household income of respondents also tends to decrease with each additional wave of emigration (see Table 6). The decrease in income may be attributed to two factors. First, the early waves of "exiles" tended to include people of higher education and social class. Second, people departing Cuba in later waves have had less time to establish themselves in the United States.

3. Ties of Affection between Miami and Cuba

Seventy-seven percent of all respondents reported to have close family members and friends still in Cuba and fifty-one percent of all respondents reported to have sent money to someone in Cuba during the past year² (see Table 7). Table 8 shows a steady upward trend of people reporting to have close family and friends in Cuba based on wave of emigration. Logic would suggest that the longer a person has been away from Cuba, the more likely s/he is to have lost ties with people there. Research that has been done on remittances throughout Latin America confirms this finding. The longer that someone is away from her/his homeland, the less likely s/he is to remit because the

² Respondents who specified that they would be sending money in December 2003 were included in this category.

connections have been lost (Diaz-Briquets and Perez-Lopez, 1997). Diaz-Briquets and Perez-Lopez believed, however, that a lack of connections in the Cuban case would have a moderating affect on remittance flows, stating "it is common for many Cuban-American families today not to have close relatives in Cuba" (p. 420). The findings from this study, as well as Sarah Blue's (2004) and the FIU/Cuba 2000 poll confirm that Cuban Americans are very likely to have close family on the island. In fact, almost fifty percent of people in this study who departed Cuba between 1959 and 1962 reported to have close family or friends on the island.

B. Remittances

1. Ties of Affection

Of respondents who reported to have family members or friends in Cuba, sixty-six percent have sent remittances to Cuba this year (see Table 9). This leaves forty-four percent of people with close family members and friends in Cuba who did not remit in the past year. Why didn't they send money to any of their family or friends in Cuba? Twenty-two percent cite their personal economic situation, fourteen percent state that their family does not need or

ask for money, and nine percent claim that they have no family in Cuba now (but they have friends on the island) (see Table 10). Combined, these three categories indicate that forty-five percent of people with close family members or friends on the island might remit if they had more disposable income or if they had family members there that needed money. Only eighteen percent of people will not send money because they believe it will ultimately end up in Castro's hands and fourteen percent state that they will not send money until Castro is gone. Summarized, the previous two categories indicate that thirty-two percent of people with friends or family in Cuba believe that a change in government is more important than alleviating their loved ones immediate material needs. The thirty-two percent of respondents with family and friends who will not remit on an ideological basis perhaps feel that a change of government would be in their families' best interests, a goal that might be prolonged if they sent remittances. This ends-justify-the-means mentality is characteristic of the politics of passion: respondents who will not remit on an ideological basis believe that the goal of removing Castro is worth the suffering of their family members in Cuba (Fernandez, 2000).

2. Year of Departure from Cuba

Of all respondents, the percentage of people in each wave of emigration that sends money to Cuba increases with more recent waves (see Table 11). A larger gap exists in the earlier waves of emigration between the percentage of people who have family or friends in Cuba and those that remit. Sarah Blue (2004) finds that people in pre-1980 waves of emigration are most likely to remit. This study's findings do not support her results. We might consider that owing to the intolerance of the early waves of emigrants in terms of divergent opinions that Torres (1999) discusses, it is *possible* that earlier emigrants were less likely to report accurately their remittance behavior.

Thirty-three percent of the people in the earlier waves that do not remit cite ideological reasons. Thirty-eight percent of people departing Cuba before 1974 that have close family and friends on the island but do not remit cite ideological reasons. They believe that Castro will ultimately benefit from remittances or they refuse to remit until there is a change in government. Only fourteen percent of non-remitters in later waves cite ideological reasons. As people who departed Cuba before 1974 are considered to have left for political reasons, it is not

surprising that they are more likely to cite political factors for not remitting. This finding contradicts Blue's (2004) finding that political ideology was not a deterrent for sending remittances. Blue came to this conclusion using the year of departure from Cuba as a representation of political ideology. There is no indication from her article that respondents were asked why their relatives did not remit yet even that question would not likely have produced accurate results as the interviewees were the recipients, not the remitters themselves.

Below, we see that the use of year of departure from Cuba is not an accurate indicator of political ideology.

3. Age

The older respondents were at the time of their departure from Cuba, the more likely they were to have sent remittances in the past year (see Table 12). The longer people lived in Cuba, the more time they had to form strong ties to family and friends, and as a result may have a stronger desire to remit. Respondents who were at least fifty years old at the time of departure all departed Cuba in recent waves (refer to Table 4). Their departure in a recent wave may account for the jump in remitters from sixty-two percent of people who departed in their forties

to 100 percent for people who departed Cuba in their fifties.

The data show a correlation between current age and the likelihood that a person will remit (see Table 13). The percentage of people in each age group that sent money to Cuba this year decreases as age increases. A rough correlation can be found between age and propensity to remit, and age and income level (see Table 14). As age goes up income tends to go down. We might attribute this to the older respondents reaching retirement age and thus have a lower income and less extra money to send to others. Income data may be misleading, however, because people may have savings or other investments not reflected in annual income.

Of respondents who reported sending money to Cuba this year, thirty-two percent departed Cuba in the latest wave of emigration, followed by twenty-two percent who departed between 1963 and 1973 (see Table 15). We can explain this result in terms of the increased likelihood that recent arrivals will remit, and by noting that the 1963-1973 wave of departure was significantly larger than the others (refer to Table 1).

4. Amount of Remittances

Thirty-four percent of people sending money to someone in Cuba sent between \$200 and \$400, followed by twenty percent who sent \$500 to \$700. Twelve percent claimed to send \$100 or less, and ten percent sent between \$1000 and \$1200 (see Table 16). Only eight percent admitted to sending an amount in excess of the \$1200 limit set by the U.S. government. Sixteen percent of respondents declined to specify how much money they sent. We can speculate that this might be attributed to the time it would take to calculate the amount, or that perhaps people did not want to admit that they sent more than the legal limit. Regardless, the finding that sixty-six percent of remitters stated that they sent \$700 or less would suggest that the \$1200 cap may not have decreased remittances as the people who advocated for the cap hoped it would. We should note, however, that this study specifically asked respondents about their remittance behavior in the "past year." This time period corresponds to the downturn of the U.S. economy following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. While respondents were not asked for prior levels of remittances, twenty-two percent of people who did not send money this year stated that they could not do so for economic reasons.

Four of these people listed 2001 or 2002 as the last time that they sent money to Cuba. It is thus possible that the amount of money remitted in the past year does not reflect levels of prior years.

The median amount of money remitted (among people who reported how much they sent) was \$360. This is somewhat less than the \$425 median found in Blue's (2004) study. In this study, annual household income does not appear to have any correlation with the amount of money remitted by an individual (see Table 17).

5. Method of Transmission

When asked what method remitters used to send money to Cuba, only forty-nine percent reported using a money transfer service such as Western Union (see Table 18). Forty-seven percent took it themselves, sent it with a family member or friend, or paid someone to deliver it. Two percent did not specify what method they used. The high percentage of people using informal means to send money could be reflective of two factors: the high transaction cost of wiring money, and the United States government restriction on the amount of money that can be sent. In a study of remittances sent from the U.S. to eleven Latin American countries, Cuba was found to have the

highest average transfer cost at \$28 to send \$250 (Orozco, 2002). U.S. laws prohibit any one U.S. household from sending more than \$300 in a three month period. Someone who wishes to send more than this amount would likely seek informal, undocumented means. The finding that less than half of remittances to Cuba are sent through wire services suggests that estimates of the total amount of remittances sent based on wire transfers alone may be a gross underestimation of the actual level of remittance flows.

B. The Embargo

1. Ties of Affection

Of the seventy-seven people who reported to have close family members or friends in Cuba, those who expressed an opinion on the embargo were even split between support and opposition: forty-four percent believe the embargo should be continued, forty-three percent believe the embargo should be lifted, and thirteen percent declined to express an opinion (see Table 19). Of people who reported not to have family or friends in Cuba, sixty-two percent said that the embargo should be continued and twenty-six percent stated they felt the embargo should be lifted. Overall, people with family and friends were more likely to say that the embargo should be lifted.

2. Remittances and the Embargo

Of people who sent money to Cuba in the past year, thirty-seven percent believe that the embargo should be continued. Another forty-nine percent state that the embargo should be lifted (see Table 20). Fourteen percent did not express an opinion. For people that did not send money to Cuba this year, the percentage of people who support the continuation of the embargo climbs to fifty-five percent. When we reconfigure the remitter category to include all people who have sent money to Cuba since their departure from the island (but perhaps not in 2003), we see that embargo proponents increase from thirty-seven to forty-two percent (see Table 21). We also see that the percentage of people who believe that the embargo should be lifted drops to forty-four.

A glance at the surveys of people who remitted in the past does not reveal any specific pattern that might explain the rise in support for the embargo. The percentage of people who did not express an opinion on the embargo jumps to eighteen percent when we look solely at respondents who remitted in the past year. All of the people who have never sent money to Cuba and did not wish to express an opinion on the embargo were from pre-1980

waves of emigration. Half stated that they had no opinion because the embargo does not make a difference in the situation of the people. Others stated that they had no family there or this simply was not an issue they thought about. Because these respondents were from earlier waves when diversity of opinion regarding the embargo was not tolerated, there is a possibility that they are not embargo supporters but have learned not to express this view publicly.

3. Year of Departure from Cuba

Table 22 shows a drop in support for the embargo for people departing Cuba after 1973. The prior waves of emigration are considered to be the original political exiles. It was these first groups of emigrants that supported the embargo in its early years. Later emigrants were exposed to years of propaganda in Cuba that blamed the embargo for Cuba's economic difficulties. It is no surprise that people arriving in later waves would be more skeptical of the benefits of the embargo. The persisting drop in support for the continuation of the embargo could be an indication that L. Perez's "exile ideology" is eroding. Perez himself indicates that as the transition from the "exile" generation to the "immigrant" generation occurs, the

political culture of the Cuban American community will change. He is referring to the children of exiles--second generation Cuban Americans--who have been socialized into the "exile ideology" of their parents, but lack personal connections to the island (Perez, L., 1992, p. 102).

The last wave of emigration considered in this study occurred after Perez's article was written. This wave undermines one of Perez's three forces that keep the exile ideology strong: demographics. Perez states that the older generation of original exiles (those leaving Cuba by 1973) still dominates the community and will "continue to do so in the near future" (p. 97). He apparently did not anticipate the large influx of Cubans in 1994 with a decidedly different outlook on the Cuban situation. These recent immigrants may be more willing to oppose the embargo because they have experienced extreme poverty in recent years in Cuba. They may also have been influenced by the Cuban government's depiction of the embargo as the cause of Cuba's economic problems.

4. Rationales for Lifting the Embargo

Of the people who opposed the continuation of the embargo, thirty-nine percent believe that the policy may be prolonging a change of government in Cuba (see Table 23).

They state that the embargo "*no ha funcionado*" (has not worked), "*ha servido como una excusa*" (has served as an excuse), or should be removed "*para que pueda llegar al pueblo las ideas y los beneficios de la democracia*" (so that the ideas and benefits of democracy can be seen by the people). Fifty percent gave some version of "*el pueblo (o mi familia) está sufriendo*" (the people are [or my family is] suffering), "*la gente tiene muchas necesidades*" (the people have many needs), or "*la gente tendra mejores posibilidades*" (the people would have better possibilities). All of these answers indicate that the respondent believes that if the embargo were lifted, the people's needs would be met and they would not suffer. In other words, these respondents believe that the embargo is the cause of Cuba's economic problems.

In Table 24 we see that higher percentages of people in the two most recent waves of arrival were more likely to believe that the embargo works. Again we might attribute this to the longer period that people departing Cuba in later waves were exposed to the propaganda of the Castro regime blaming the embargo for the country's economic situation. Among people who have sent money to someone in Cuba this year, sixty percent believe that the Cuban people

will be better off without the embargo and twelve percent state that the embargo should be lifted because it would then be easier to send assistance to Cuba (see Table 25). The people who say that it would be easier to send assistance to Cuba if the embargo were lifted seemingly do not believe that the embargo has worked, as they indicate that without the embargo in place they would still need to assist their families in Cuba.

There is no obvious correlation between age at the time of departure and support for the embargo (see Table 26).

5. Rationales for Continuing the Embargo

Forty-seven percent of people who stated that they supported the continuation of the trade embargo expressed that the embargo is a way of resisting Castro or will help remove him from power (see Table 27). "*Contribuye a que el gobierno caiga*" (contributes to the fall of the government), "*Es una manera de apretar el regimen*" (it is a way of squeezing the regime), and "*Es una forma de resistencia contra el comunismo*" (it is a form of resisting Communism) were some of the reasons that people in this group gave for supporting the continuation of the embargo.

Twenty-five percent of people who think the embargo should be continued said that if the U.S. did engage in trade with Cuba, the products would never get to "the people." Their comments included "*todo llega a Castro y sus amigos*" (everything goes to Castro and his friends), "*nada va a llegar al pueblo*" (nothing will get to the people), "*el pueblo no se beneficia con nada de lo que llega*" (the people don't benefit from anything that arrives), and "*Castro tiene un embargo contra el pueblo*" (Castro has an embargo against the people). Twenty-two percent of embargo supporters called the embargo "*simbolico*" (symbolic). Some specified that although the embargo does not function, "*sera un triunfo para Castro si se lo quiten*" (it would be a triumph for Castro if it was lifted). Finally, four percent of embargo supports stated that Castro would not pay back anything he received on credit.

The view that the embargo should be supported because it is a way of resisting Castro or removing him from power essentially identifies the embargo as a symbol. The embargo has been in place for forty years and Castro is still in power. If the embargo has not been effective thus far in effecting a change of government, it seems unlikely

that the embargo will succeed in ousting Castro now. Despite the policy's apparent failure, people support the embargo for what it was designed to do even though it has not worked. They support the intent, not the result. People who believe that lifting the embargo would give products to Castro--and the products would never reach the people--reflect a different interpretation of the embargo. While the policy has not succeeded in removing Castro from power, it has succeeded in limiting the amount of money and goods available to him and his government. Lifting the embargo would then strengthen the Castro regime while the people would experience no change in their living situation.

6. Remitters and Support for the Embargo

Of respondents who sent money to someone in Cuba in the past year *and* support the continuation of the embargo, forty-two percent stated that the embargo is a form of resisting Castro or will remove him from power (see Table 28). Sixteen percent call the embargo symbolic. Sixteen percent believe that if the embargo were lifted, products from the U.S. would not get to the people, and eleven percent felt that Castro would not pay for anything bought on credit. With respect to this study's effort to explain

why people would support a policy designed to weaken Cuba's economy while bolstering the economy themselves by sending remittances, Table 28 shows this group to be diverse in rationale. The forty-two percent of respondents who believe that the embargo is a method of resisting Castro or will remove him from power either do not realize that their actions minimize the effect of the embargo, or have made a conscious decision that the well-being of their family members supersedes this policy goal. The sixteen percent of respondents who see the embargo as symbolic, do not believe that it works anyway. Therefore there is no functioning policy whose effects would be weakened by sending remittances.

Finally, we have the remaining twenty-seven percent of remitters who believe that if the embargo were lifted, Castro would not pay for anything purchased on credit (hence taxpayers would shoulder the burden) or that products would not get to the people even if the embargo were lifted. These people take a practical attitude toward the situation: the embargo keeps goods away from the government while remittances provide resources directly to the people whom remitters care about. While the Cuban government might ultimately benefit from purchases made

with remittances, remitters are assured that their family got the food and products they needed. The rationale regarding non-repayment of credit is similar: if the remitter believes that s/he will ultimately pay for Castro's purchases on credit through taxes, why not keep him from obtaining credit, and instead send the money directly to family members? In the analysis of rationalization for embargo support among remitters, we see that less than half of the group (those who believe that the embargo will remove Castro from power) present contradictory behavior.

7. Respondents with No Opinion on the Embargo

Of people who did not express an opinion about the embargo, thirty-four percent declined to comment about why they would not give their opinion (see Table 29). Others gave statements such as "*solo me interesa mi familia*" (I'm only interested in my family), "*no tengo familia allá*" (I don't have family there), "*la situacion de la gente no cambia si hay embargo o no*" (the people's situation won't change), and "*no pienso en eso*" (I don't think about that).

Seventeen percent were conflicted, giving responses such as "*Me gusta el embargo porque hace daño a Castro, pero a la vez no me gusta porque el pueblo esta sufriendo*" (I like

the embargo because it causes damage to Castro, but at the same time I don't like it because the people are suffering).

D. Other Factors

In an effort to evaluate additional circumstances that might help explain the dynamics of the Cuban American community's relationship to Cuban people and politics on the island, this survey assessed several other factors regarding Cuban American politics.

1. Travel to Cuba

Thirty-six percent of people who believe the embargo should be lifted have traveled to Cuba since they emigrated compared to twenty-eight percent of embargo supporters (see Table 30). Of embargo supporters, fifty-four percent have not traveled to Cuba, nor can they imagine any family emergency or personal circumstances that would motivate them to visit under the current regime. A third of people who think the embargo should be lifted have not traveled and cannot imagine any circumstances that would cause them to go to Cuba before a change in government. Ninety-one percent of all people who have traveled to Cuba since they emigrated cite family as the motivating factor (see Table 31). Only one person (three percent) cited work as the

reason for his visits. Forty-four percent of people who have not traveled to Cuba since they emigrated state that they will not do so until there is a change of government (see Table 32). This survey found a very small militant group of people (three percent) who stated "*Si yo voy a Cuba, voy armado*" (If I go to Cuba, it's with arms). Six percent of respondents who have not traveled to Cuba stated that due to their status as former political prisoners, they have no possibilities to return before a change of government. Eighteen percent of respondents who have not traveled wished to, but have been unable on account of insufficient personal finances or the lack U.S. residency. If we add the twelve percent of people who declined to elaborate on their decision not to travel to Cuba to the forty-seven percent of individuals who either oppose traveling until Castro is gone or would only go in a combat role, we find that roughly forty-percent of all people surveyed object to travel to Cuba on ideological grounds. This is an interesting finding in light of President Bush's recent insistence that the ban on travel to Cuba not be lifted.

Twenty-percent of people who stated that they would not travel to Cuba before a change in government, or would

only go if they were armed, admitted that they could imagine a family emergency or personal circumstances that would result in a trip to Cuba without a change in government (see Table 33). As with the portion of embargo supporters who were willing to undermine the policy to help their families, people who stated they might travel to Cuba for a family emergency are willing to put love for their family before political convictions.

2. U.S. Political Party Preferences

One of the four pillars of Perez's 1992 "exile ideology" is in unwavering support of the Republican Party. This survey finds that only forty-eight percent of respondents believe that the Republican Party best represents their views. Only thirty-five percent of respondents both currently support the Republican Party and are registered to vote (see Table 34). Twenty-seven percent of respondents expressed support for the Democratic Party, and the remainder felt that neither party represents their views at this time. Perez removed support for the Republican Party from his updated "exile ideology" in 2003. He explains, however, that support for the Republican Party falls under "Primacy of the Homeland": Republicans push hard-line Cuba policy. Perez states that:

In the mind of a typical Cuban American, loyalty to the Republican Party demonstrates the importance of international issues in the political agenda of Cubans. If a substantial number in the Cuban community disagreed with elements of the exile ideology, or if there was a greater balance in that agenda, with importance given to purely domestic issues, the Democratic Party would have made greater inroads. (p. 89)

The results of this survey call Perez's conclusion into question. Only eleven percent of all respondents reported that "international political issues" were more important to them than domestic issues (see Table 35). Seven percent of all respondents reported international political issues to be most important, *and* were supporters of the Republican Party. An overwhelming seventy-nine percent of all respondents stated that domestic and international issues were of equal importance. In addition, we should note that the survey did not specify that the international issues necessarily related to Cuba. While the survey did not ask about opinions on specific political issues, several respondents made remarks about the war in Iraq. It is possible that the international issues that some

respondents referred to did not pertain to Cuba at all. These findings suggest that "primacy of the homeland" for Cuban Americans may be more of a stereotype than a reality for the majority of the Cuban American community in Miami.

The majority of people who felt that the Republican Party best represents their views departed Cuba in earlier waves of emigration (see Table 36). Higher numbers of people in later waves either feel that neither party represents their views or expressed a preference for the Democratic Party. These findings suggest that as the earlier waves age and die off, we may see a shift in the political leanings of the Cuban American community as a whole.

People who send money to Cuba are fairly evenly distributed between supporters for the Democratic, Republican or neither party (see Table 37). People who have not sent money in the past year were much more likely to support the Republican Party. When respondents were asked about their opinions on U.S. Government social services³, thirty-seven percent of non-remitters stated that the system is highly abused, should be limited, or

³ See footnote on page 19 regarding the change in wording of this question. Anyone responding "Support" in Table 35 was given the choice of "Support" or "Oppose" by the interviewer. As the respondent did not elaborate, this response may not accurately reflect his/her views.

expressed outright opposition to the services (see Table 38). Only twenty-two percent of remitters expressed this view (see Table 39). The higher levels of criticism of social services in the non-remitter group correspond to higher numbers of non-remitters who support the Republican Party. This might indicate that Republican supporters might feel that the party represents their views on domestic issues as well as international issues.

Conclusion

This thesis has sought to explain the contradictory behavior of Cuban Americans in support for the trade embargo against Cuba while simultaneously bolstering the Cuban economy through remittances. In seeking an understanding of this situation, this thesis has developed a profile of Cuban American remitters.

Through an oral and written survey of the Cuban American community in Miami, this study has established that Cuban Americans maintain strong ties with Cubans on the island: a majority (seventy-seven percent) of Cuban Americans still have close family or friends in Cuba and about half (fifty-one percent) of respondents reported sending money to a family member or friend in the past year.

Despite claims by some scholars (Diaz-Briquets and Perez-Lopez, 1997) that patterns in remitting by Cuban Americans (exiles) and people remitting to other Latin American countries (immigrants) will be different, this study has found that overall the patterns are quite similar. With the exception of the percentage of people remitting through wire transfer companies as opposed to

informal means, the findings of this study are similar to findings released by the Pew Hispanic Center in their recent (2003) study of remittances to various Latin American countries. This study actually finds that, in general, Cuban Americans are more likely to remit than the Pew Hispanic Center study average.

In many ways, Cuban American remittance patterns are highly logical. The older the respondent was at the time of his/her departure from Cuba, the more likely he/she was to remit. The longer period a person lived in Cuba, the more time s/he had to develop bonds of affection that would later be maintained after his/her departure from the island.

This study found that recent arrivals are more likely to remit with thirty-two percent of remitters having departed Cuba since 1994. This finding is explained by two factors: first, the more recently respondents departed Cuba, the less time they have had to lose ties of affection with people on the island; and second, recent emigrants left Cuba during a time of economic hardship and it is possible that their immediate family members are still on the island and in desperate need of funds. Recent arrivals are more likely to remit despite lower incomes than people

in earlier waves. This study did not find a correlation between level of income and propensity to remit.

Cuban Americans are twenty percent more likely to remit through informal channels than people remitting to countries studied by the Pew Hispanic Center. This might be attributed to the official government cap on remittances to Cuba, as well as the higher transaction costs charged by wire transfer companies to send money to Cuba.

In contrast to Blue's (2004) study, this thesis found that political ideology is a deterrent for sending remittances for some Cuban Americans. The level of political ideology as a deterrent to sending remittances was higher in the waves of original exiles (thirty-eight percent of non-remitters departing Cuba in 1950-1973, as opposed to fourteen percent of all non-remitters in later waves).

This study found that the legal cap of \$1200 in household remittances to Cuba per year may not be as important in determining remittance levels as the Bush administration has recently indicated by proposing a reduced cap (Ovalle, 2004). Sixty-six percent of respondents reported sending \$700 or less in the last year.

This study found Miami's Cuban American community to be quite diverse with regards to political affiliation and opinions on the embargo. In terms of the Cuban American community being dominated by an exile ideology that focuses on "primacy of the homeland" and support for the Republican Party (Grenier and Perez, 2003; Perez, 1992), this study has not found empirical evidence to support this claim. Only eleven percent of respondents claimed that international political issues were more important to them than domestic issues, and forty-eight percent (less than half) of all respondents reported that the Republican Party best represented their views.

With respect to the primary research question of this thesis (Why does Miami's Cuban American community support the trade embargo against Cuba and undermine it by bolstering the Cuban economy with remittances?), this survey has established that there is an overlapping, albeit relatively small (nineteen percent), group of respondents who have sent remittances to Cuba this year *and* support the embargo. Based on their rationales for supporting the embargo, three different groups emerge from the group of respondents displaying seemingly contradictory behavior:

1) Remitters who see the embargo as a method of resisting Castro or removing him from power.

The remitters who believe that the embargo is successful at resisting Castro or will ultimately remove him from power can be understood in the context of two different theories. The first is Fernandez's (2000) "politics of passion" vs. "politics of affection" theory. People support the embargo because they believe it will help remove Castro from power—the best outcome for the community as a whole despite the suffering to Cuban people the embargo is intended to cause. At the same time they practice "politics of affection" by sending money to suffering family members despite the remittances' positive effect on the Cuban economy. Here love for family members entices embargo supporters to break with the perceived norms of the Cuban American community.

The behavior and attitudes of remitters who believe that the embargo is an effective means of resisting Castro can also be explained by Faist's (2000) theory of transnational social spaces. These remitters are simultaneously operating in two distinct transnational social spaces: a transnational kinship group and a transnational community. The remittances can be seen in light of emigrants' responsibility to family members on the

island who have not been able to emigrate and are hence in more dire economic circumstances than those in the U.S. The "social norm of equivalency" requires emigrants to remit to members of their kinship group in Cuba (Faist, 2000, p. 195). At the same time, Cuban Americans are members of a transnational community that functions with the resource of "solidarity: shared ideas, beliefs, and symbols expressed in some sort of collective identity" (Faist, 2000, p.195). The solidarity of the Cuban American community in Miami, aside from shared cultural characteristics, is based on their opposition to the political situation in Cuba. Not one person surveyed for this study expressed any type of support for the current Cuban government. Particularly among the early waves of emigrants, the embargo has become a symbol of opposition to the Cuban government. The debate in the Cuban American community over whether the embargo should be lifted can be explained in terms of disagreement over a means or a symbol, not the opposition to the government that the symbol represents. The respondents supporting the embargo while sending remittances identify the embargo as a symbol of their opposition to Castro.

2) Remitters who support the embargo because they specifically identify it as a symbol, not as a functioning policy, cannot display contradictory behavior because they do not see the embargo as effective. If the embargo does not work, then there is no real policy to undermine by sending remittances.

3) Finally, those people who support the embargo because they believe that the goods would not get to the people if the embargo were lifted, or believe that Castro would accumulate debt that he would not repay demonstrate a logic based on economics. They believe that the embargo should remain in place to prevent Castro from obtaining additional resources to help his regime that they do not believe would get to the people if the embargo were lifted. At the same time they send money to family members because they are assured that the money will go directly to benefit the people for whom it is intended, before it reaches the hands of government officials.

The transnational ties between Cuban Americans in Miami and their family members in Cuba have produced substantial support for the Cuban economy in the form of remittances. This study has shown that only a portion of

remitters who also support the embargo are pursuing divergent goals by engaging in both support for a policy designed to weaken the economy while sending hard currency to Cuba. In all cases, people who sent remittances were motivated by love and concern for their family members on the island. The varying rationales provided by respondents for their opinions on the continuation of the embargo reveal two important characteristics of Miami's Cuban American community: tremendous unity in the opinion that there must be a change of government in Cuba, and great diversity of opinion in terms of the political strategy that should be used to reach that goal.

In conclusion, nineteen percent of all respondents reported to both send remittances to Cuba and support the continuation of the embargo. However of this nineteen percent, only half appear to be pursuing contradictory goals with this behavior. Therefore, most Cuban-Americans that send remittances either do not believe that the embargo should be continued or find that the embargo is effective at limiting Castro's power despite its inability to incite a change of government by worsening the economic situation in Cuba.

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Appendix 1

Encuesta Estudiantil

Florida International University, Departamento de Relaciones Internacionales

En que año nacio usted? _____ En que año salio de Cuba? _____

Tiene familiares cercanos que estan todavia en Cuba? S N Buenos amigos? S N

Ha mandado dinero a alguien en Cuba este año? S N y su esposa/o? S N

Que tipo de parentesco tiene con esa persona?

Amigo Padre Hermano Primo
Sobrino

Abuelo Tio
Otro _____

Envio el dinero para un proposito especifico?

Cree usted que el dinero se utilizo de esta manera?

Aproximadamente cuanto dinero envio este año?

Como mando el dinero?

- a. Lo llevo usted mismo
- b. Lo mando con un amigo o un familiar
- c. Pago una persona para llevarlo
- d. Lo mando con un servicio de transferencia de dinero
- e. Otra forma _____

Alguna vez en el pasado ha mandado dinero a otra persona en Cuba?

Quien?

Porque no?

Desde que usted llevo en Estados Unidos ha mandado dinero a alguien en Cuba?

Que tipo de parentesco tenia con esa persona?

Amigo Padre Hermano Primo
Sobrino

Abuelo Tio
Otro _____

En que año realizo su ultimo envio de dinero a esa persona?

Por cuanto tiempo mando dinero a esa persona?

Porque dejo de mandar dinero a esa persona?

Esta a favor o se opone al embargo comercial contra Cuba?

Support

Oppose

Por que?

Desde su salida de Cuba, ha viajado a la isla?

Si

No

Por que?

Puede imaginar alguna emergencia familiar o circunstancias personales que pudiera motivar su visita a Cuba sin que cambie el regimen? N EF CP

Usted se fue de Cuba por motivos politicos o economicos? Politico Economico

Esta registrado para votar? Si No

Cual partido politico mejor representa su punto de vista? Democrata Republicano Ninguno

Cual es mas importante para usted: asuntos internacionales or asuntos domesticos?

En general, esta a favor o se opondre a los programas del gobierno como food stamps, Medicaid, y seccion 8 (subsidijs para vivienda)? Support Oppose

Cuántas personas viven en su casa? _____

Para propósitos estadísticos, puede indicar cual de estas ingresos familiares anuales representa el de su hogar?
A B C D E F

Appendix 2

Encuesta

Florida International University, Departamento de Relaciones Internacionales

- 1) Usted es hombre o mujer? *Hombre* *Mujer*
- 2) En que año nacio usted? _____ En que año salio de Cuba? _____
- 3) Tiene familiares cercanos que estan todavia en Cuba? *Si* *No*
- 4) Tiene buenos amigos que estan todavia en Cuba? *Si* *No*
- 5) Ha mandado dinero a alguien en Cuba este año? *Si* *No*
- 6) y su esposa/o? *Si* *No*

Si usted ha mandado dinero este año, favor de llenar caja A. Si no, llene caja B.

A

B

<p>A quien le mando dinero? <i>amigo</i> <i>padre/madre</i> <i>hijo/a</i> <i>hermano/a</i> <i>primo/a</i> <i>sobrino/a</i> <i>abuelo/a</i> <i>tio/a</i> <i>otro</i> _____</p> <p>Envio el dinero para un proposito especifico? <i>Si</i> <i>No</i></p> <p>Que proposito?</p> <p>Cree usted que el dinero se utilizo de esta manera?</p> <p>Aproximadamente cuanto dinero envio este año?</p> <p>Como mando el dinero? a) <i>Lo llevo usted mismo</i> b) <i>Lo mando con un amigo o un familiar</i> c) <i>Pago una persona para llevarlo</i> d. <i>Lo mando con un servicio de transferencia de dinero</i> e) <i>Otra forma</i> _____</p> <p>Alguna vez en el pasado ha mandado dinero a otra persona en Cuba?</p> <p>A quien?</p>	<p>Porque no?</p> <p>Desde que usted llevo en Estados Unidos ha mandado dinero a alguien en Cuba? <i>Si</i> <i>No</i></p> <p>Si usted contesto "si," favor de contestar las siguientes preguntas. Si respondio "no," favor de saltar a la proxima pagina.</p> <p>A quien le mando dinero? <i>amigo</i> <i>padre/madre</i> <i>hijo/a</i> <i>hermano/a</i> <i>primo/a</i> <i>sobrino/a</i> <i>abuelo/a</i> <i>tio/a</i> <i>otro</i> _____</p> <p>En que año realizo su ultimo envio de dinero a esa persona?</p> <p>Por cuanto tiempo mando dinero a esa persona?</p> <p>Por que dejo de mandar dinero a esa persona?</p>
---	--

7) Cree usted que el embargo comercial (el bloqueo) contra Cuba se debe continuar o quitar?

Continuar

Quitar

8) Por que? (describa por que usted cree que el embargo se debe continuar o se debe quitar).

9) Desde su salida de Cuba, ha viajado a la isla?

Si

No

10) Por que? (describa el motivo de su viaje o por que no ha viajado)

Si usted contesto “no” a la pregunta 9, favor de contestar la 11. Si contesto “si,” siga a la pregunta 12:

11) Puede imaginar alguna emergencia familiar o circunstancias personales que pudiera motivar su visita a Cuba sin que cambie el regimen?

Si (emergencia familiar)

Si (circunstancias personales)

No

12) Usted se fue de Cuba por motivos politicos o economicos ?

Politico

Economico

13) Esta registrado para votar en los Estados Unidos?

Si

No

14) Cual partido politico mejor representa su punto de vista?

Democrata

Republicano

Ninguno

15) Cual es mas importante para usted:

asuntos politicos domesticos

asuntos politicos internacionales

ambos tiene igual importancia

16) Que opina usted sobre los programas del gobierno como food stamps (estampillas de comida), Medicaid, y seccion 8 (subsidijs para vivienda)?

17) Cuantas personas viven en su casa? _____

18) Para propositos estadisticos, cual de estos ingresos familiars anuales mejor representa la realidad de su hogar?

A) menos de \$10,000

B) \$10,000-\$24,999

C) \$25,000-\$49,999

D) \$50,000-\$74,999

E) \$75,000-\$99,999

F) \$100,000 o mas

Appendix 3

Table 1

General Profile of Respondents

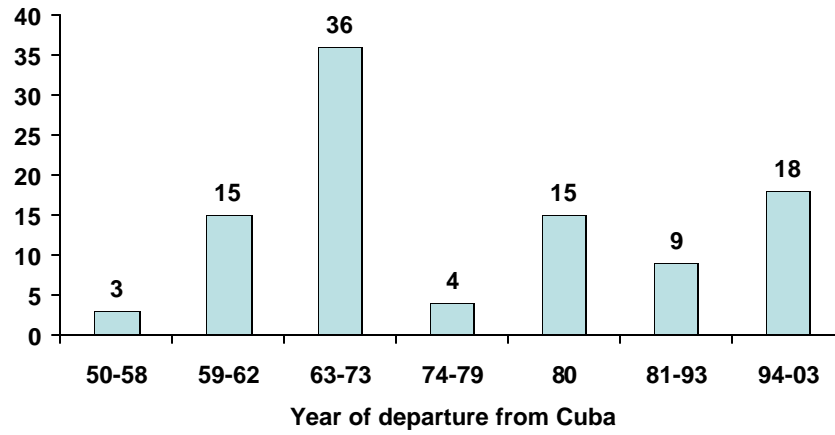


Table 2

General Profile of Respondents

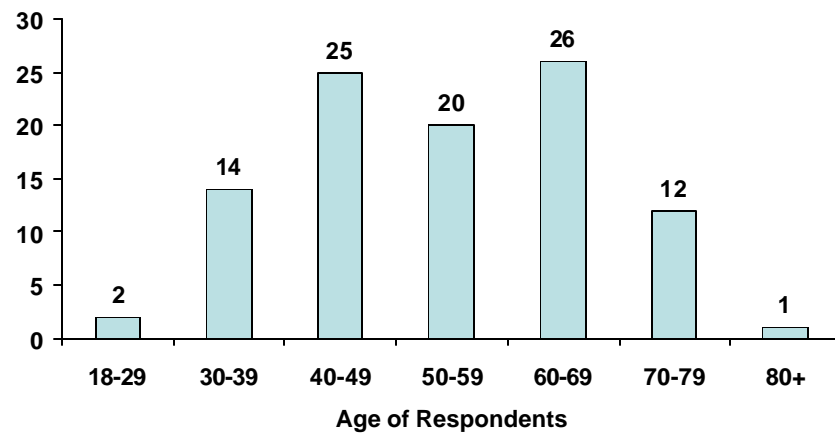


Table 3

General Profile of Respondents

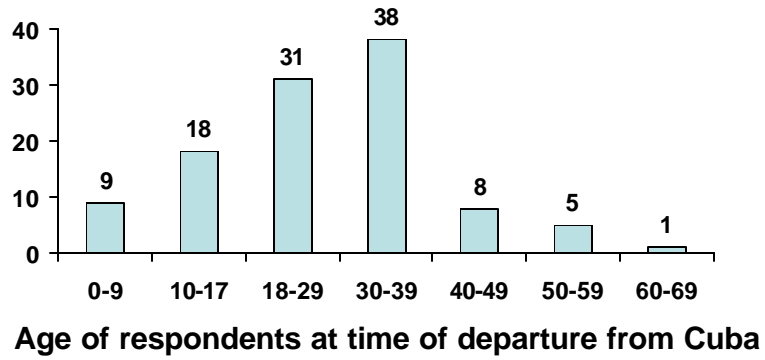


Table 4

General Profile of Respondents

Age at time of departure from Cuba

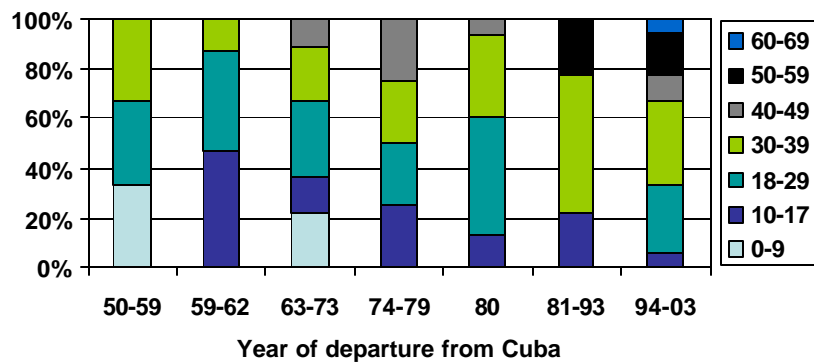


Table 5

Gender Distribution of Respondents

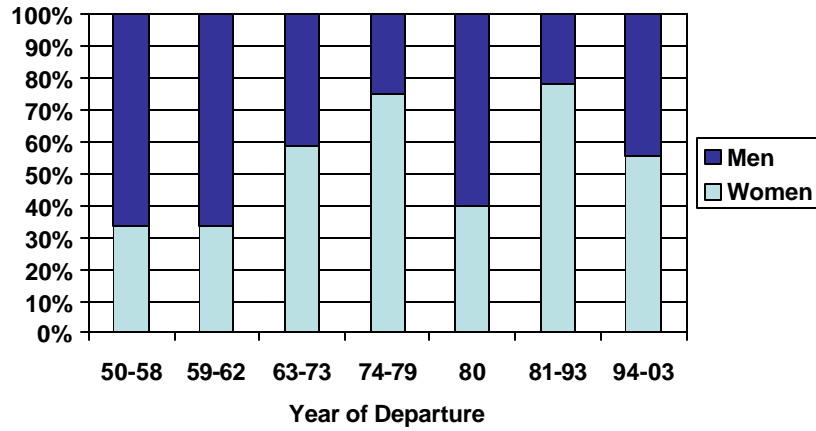


Table 6

General Profile of Respondents

Annual Household Income

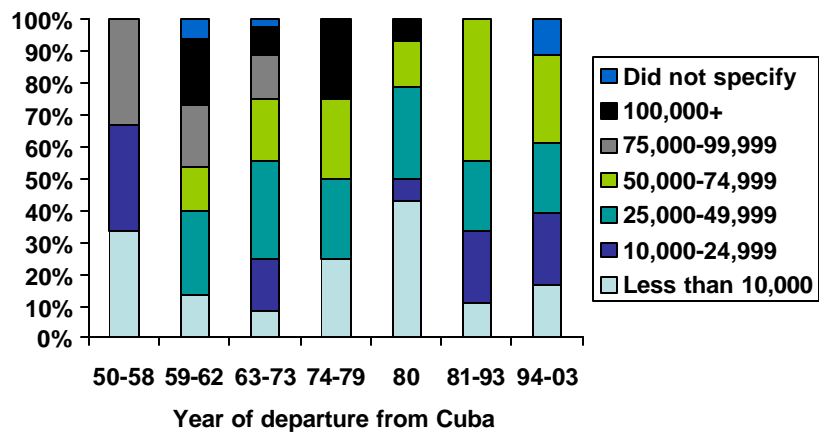


Table 7

General Profile of Respondents

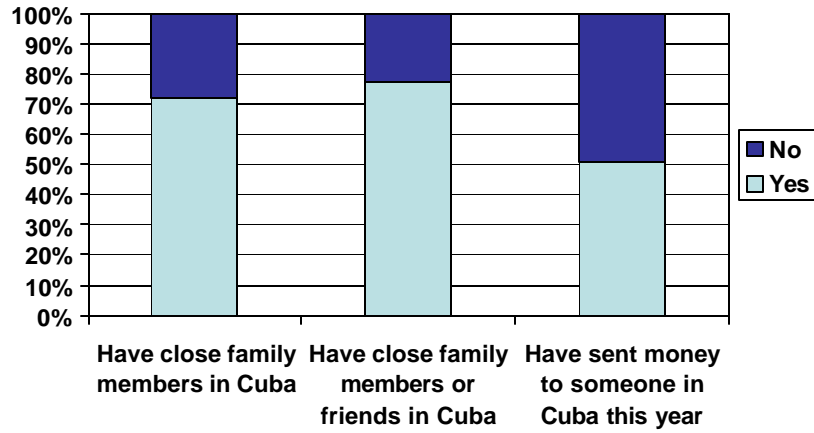


Table 8

Do you still have close family members or friends in Cuba?

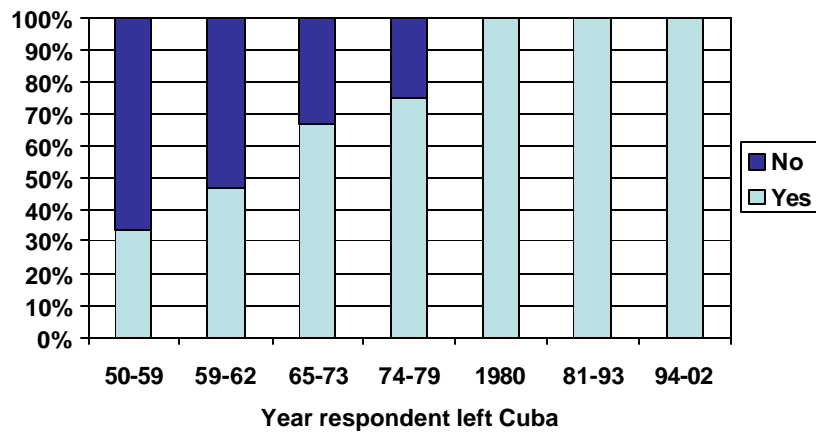


Table 9

Have you sent money to anyone in Cuba this year?

Respondents with close family members and friends in Cuba

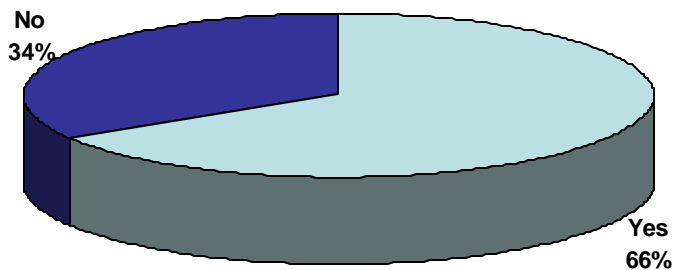


Table 10

Why didn't you send money to anyone in Cuba this year?

Respondents with close family or friends in Cuba

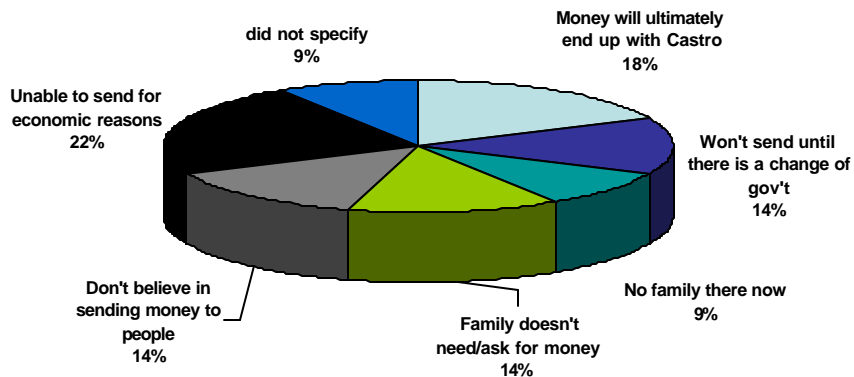


Table 11

Have you sent money to anyone in Cuba in the past year?

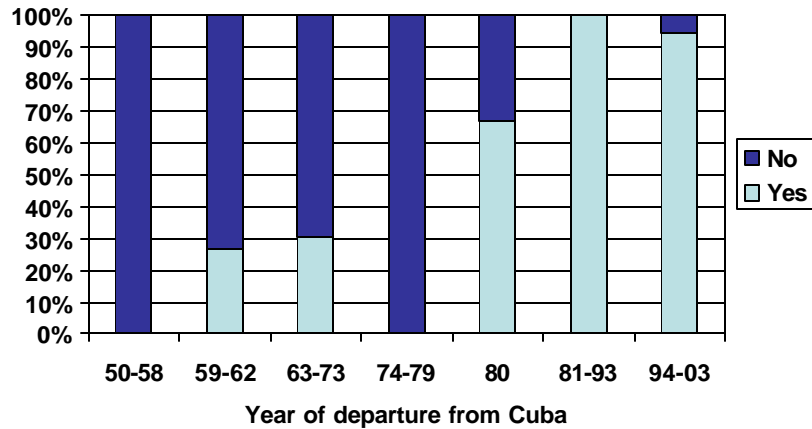


Table 12

Have you sent money to anyone in Cuba in the past year?

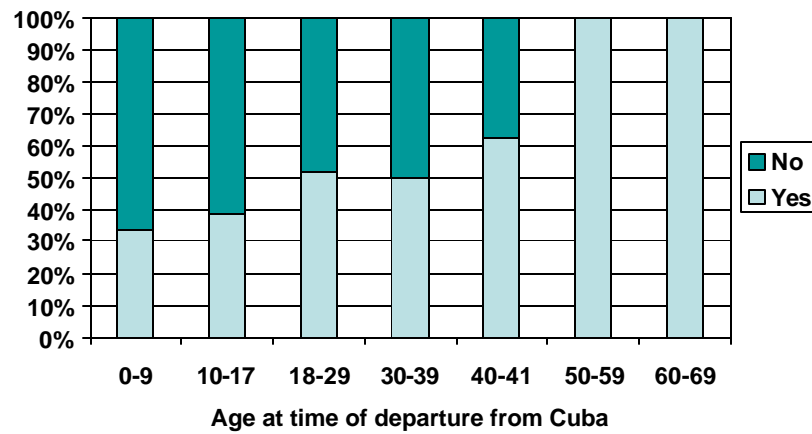


Table 13

Have you sent money to anyone in Cuba in the past year?

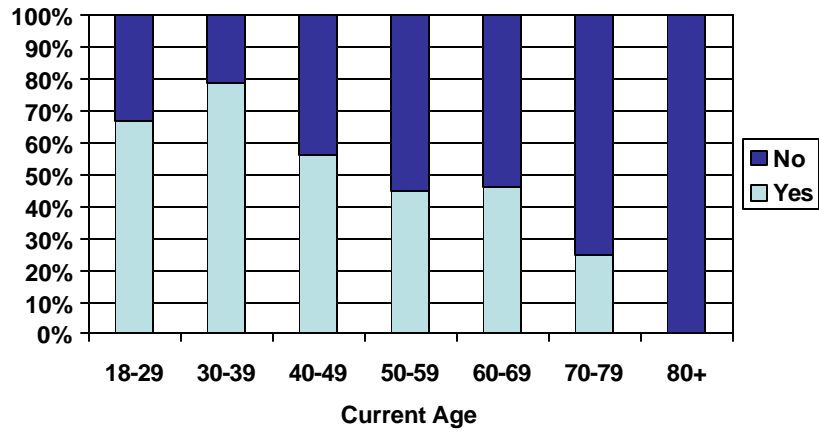


Table 14

Income by Age

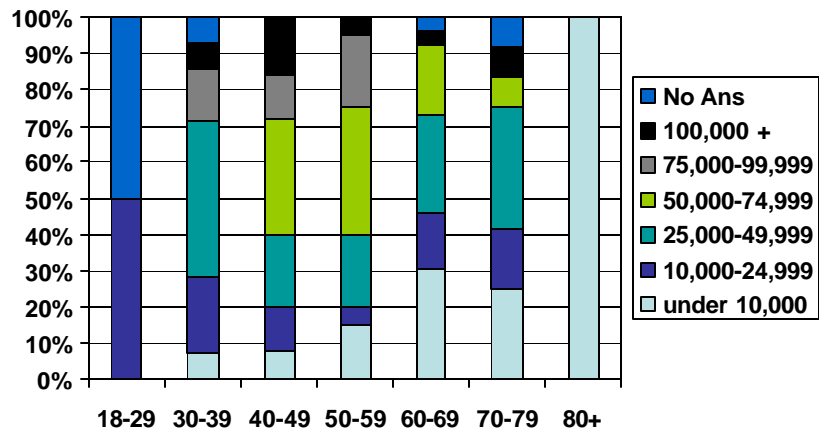


Table 15

Respondents who have sent money to someone in Cuba this year

Year of departure from Cuba

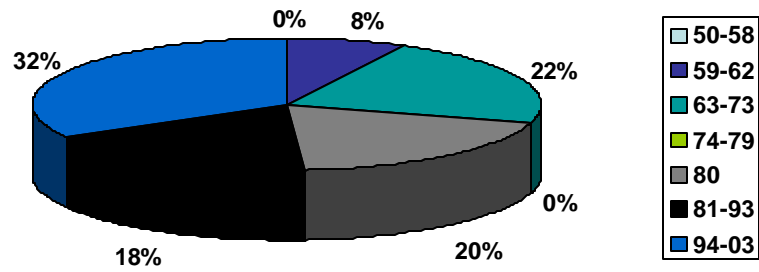


Table 16

How much money did you send to Cuba in the past year?

Amount sent in U.S. dollars

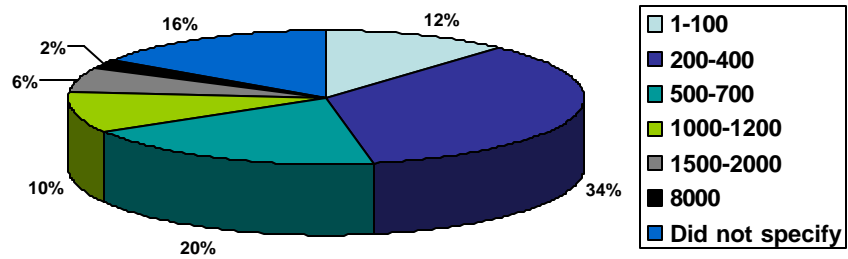


Table 17

How much money did you send to Cuba this year?

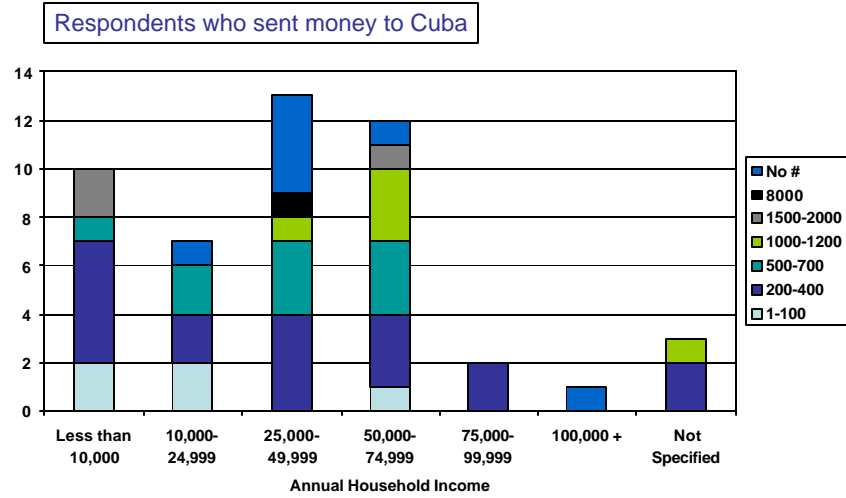


Table 18

How did you send the money to Cuba?

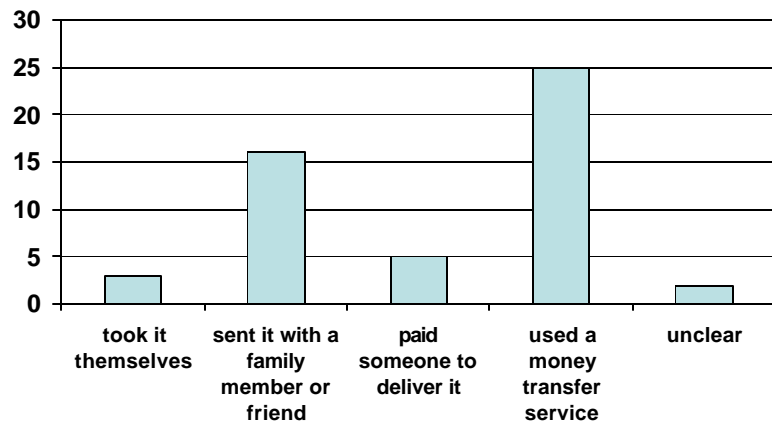


Table 19

Do you support or oppose the continuation of the trade embargo against Cuba?

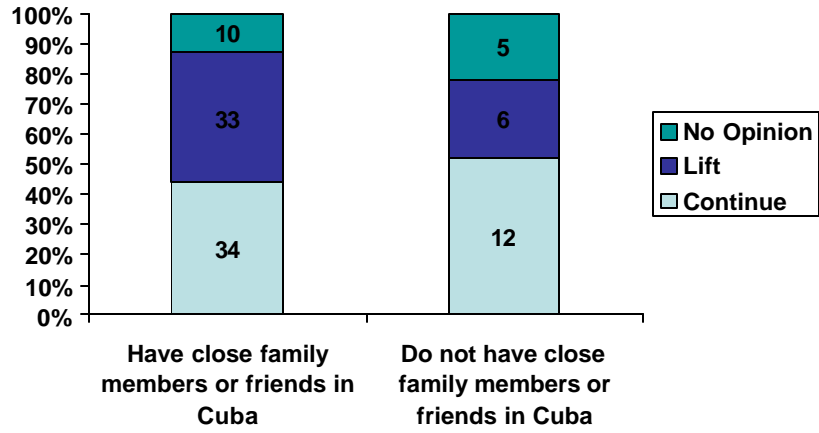


Table 20

Do you support or oppose the continuation of the trade embargo against Cuba?

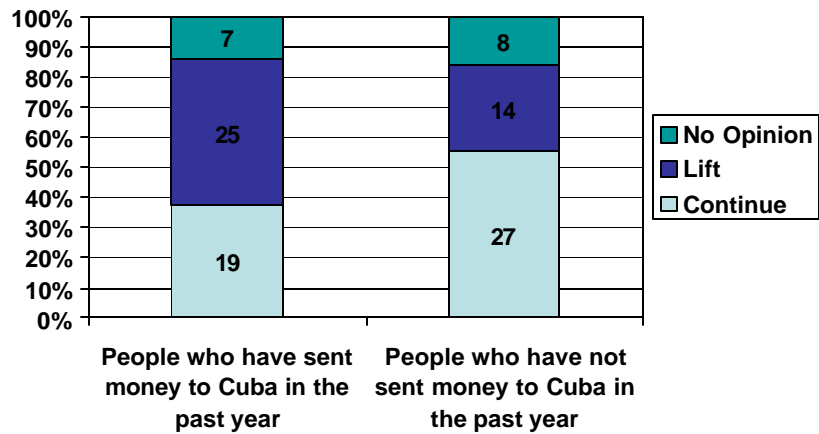


Table 21

Do you support or oppose the continuation of the trade embargo against Cuba?

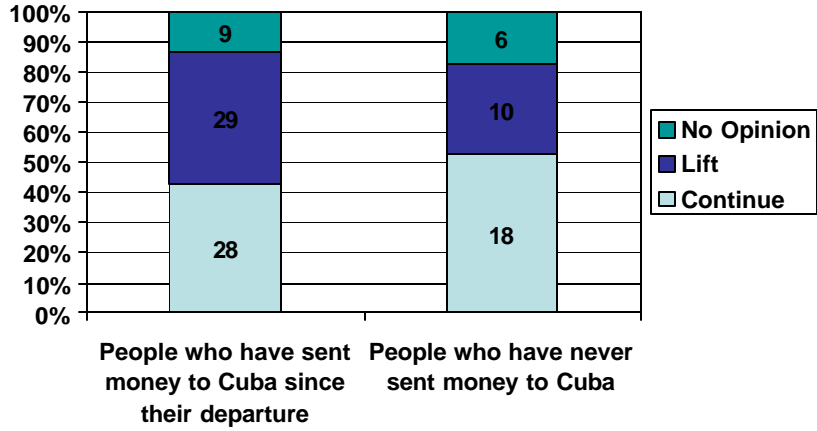


Table 22

Do you support or oppose the continuation of the trade embargo against Cuba?

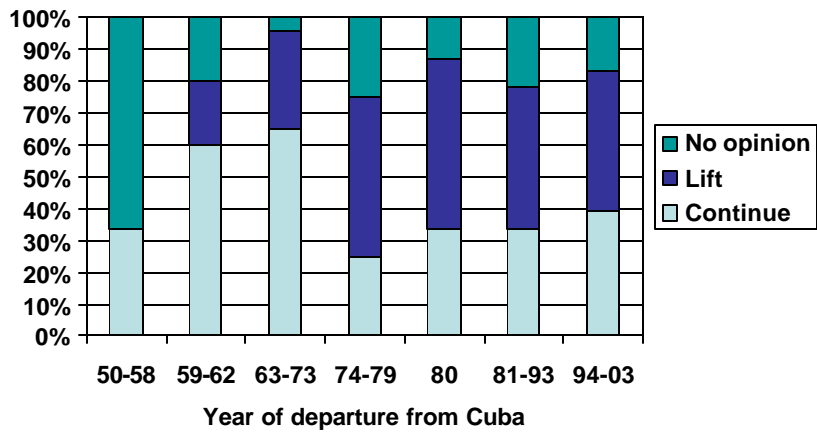


Table 23

Why do you believe the trade embargo against Cuba should be lifted?

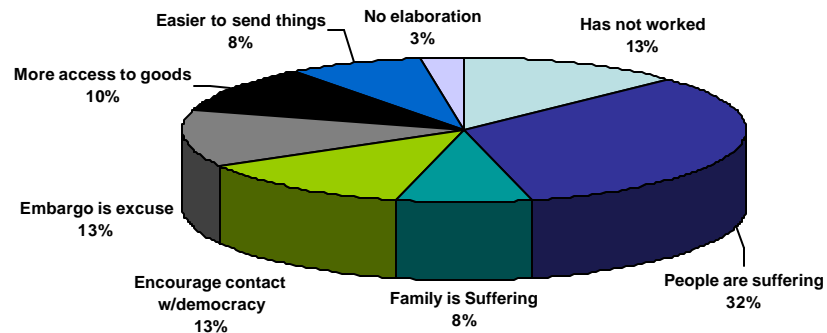


Table 24

Why do you oppose the continuation of the trade embargo against Cuba?

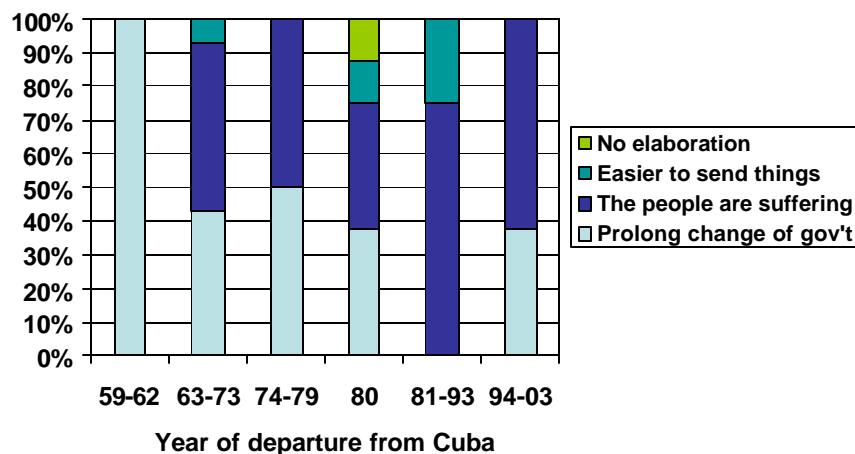


Table 25

Why do you believe that the trade embargo should be lifted?

People who have sent money to Cuba in the past year

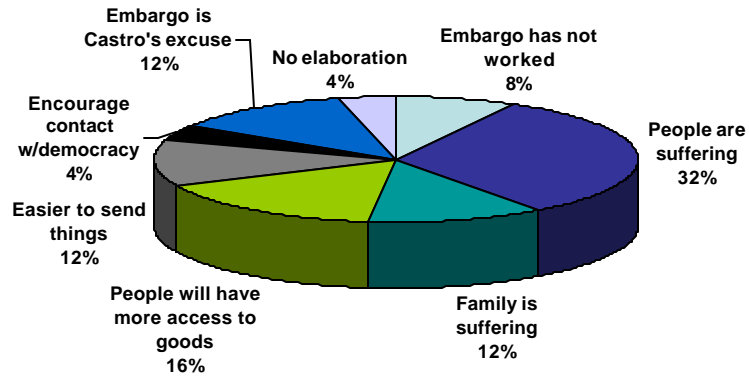
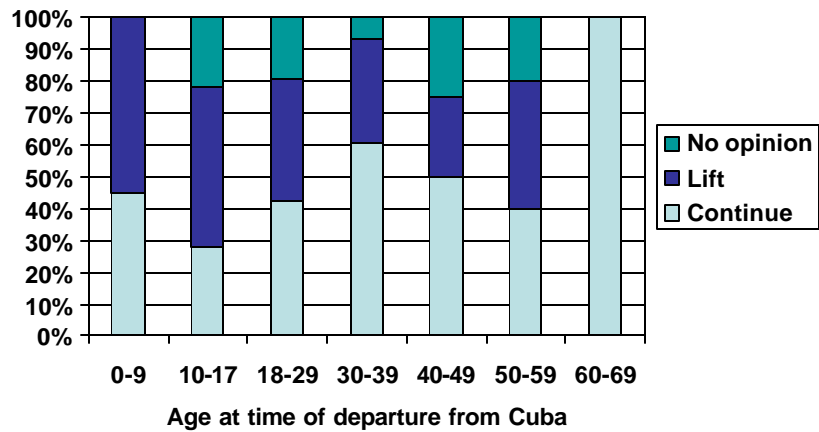


Table 26

Should the U.S. continue or lift the trade embargo against Cuba?



Note: 60-69 had only one respondent

Table 27

Why do you support the continuation of the trade embargo against Cuba?

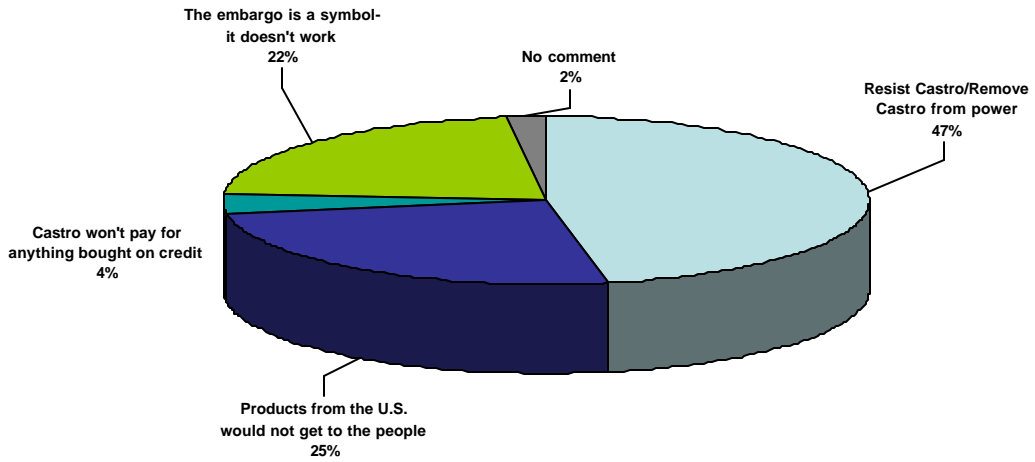


Table 28

Why do you support the continuation of the trade embargo against Cuba?

Respondents who have sent money to Cuba in the past year

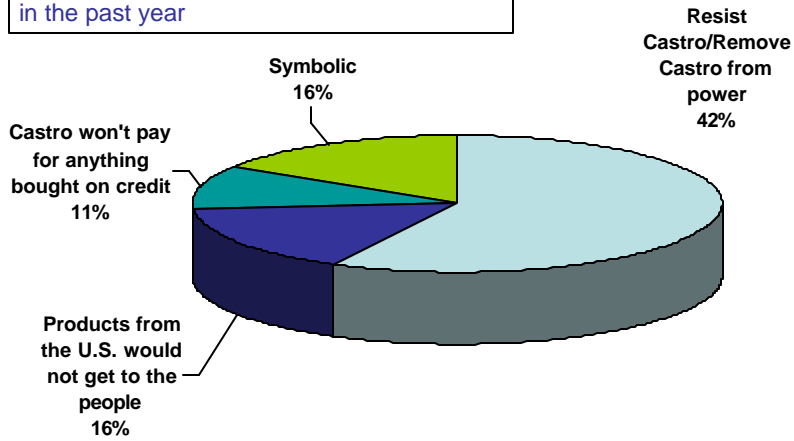


Table 29

Why don't you have an opinion on the embargo?

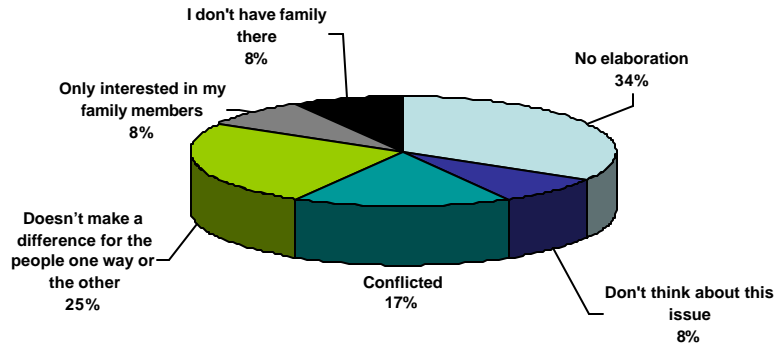


Table 30

Travel to Cuba

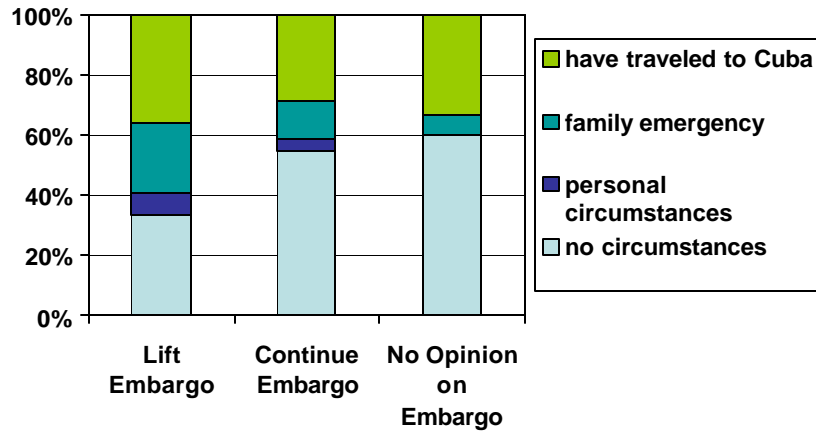


Table 31

Why did you travel to Cuba?

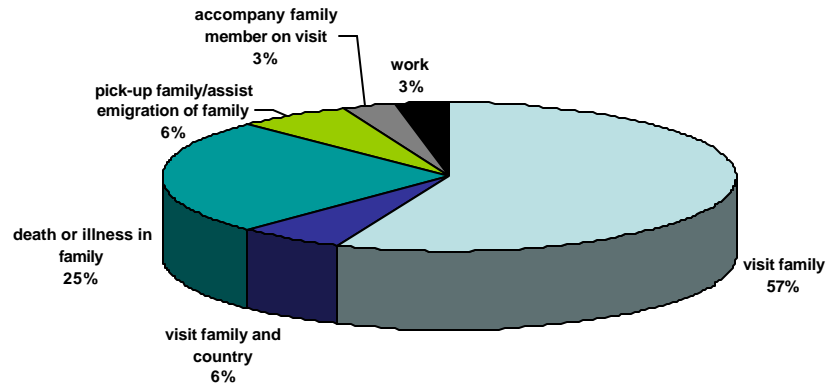


Table 32

Why haven't you traveled to Cuba?

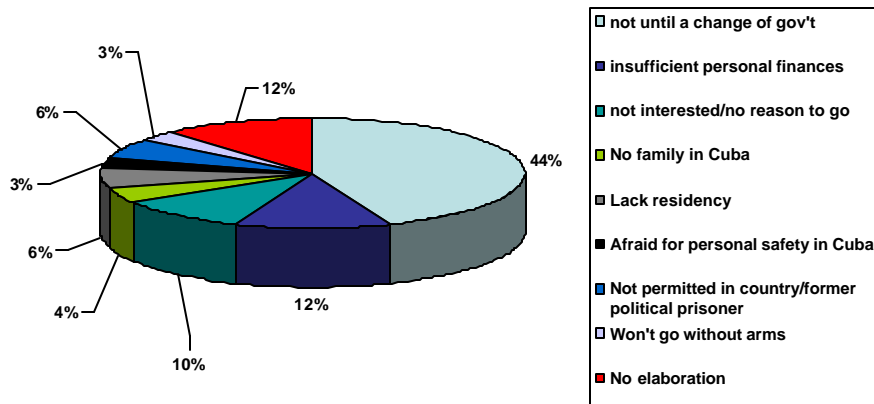


Table 33

Can you imagine any circumstances under which you would travel to Cuba w/o a change in government?

Respondents who cited ideological reasons for not traveling to Cuba

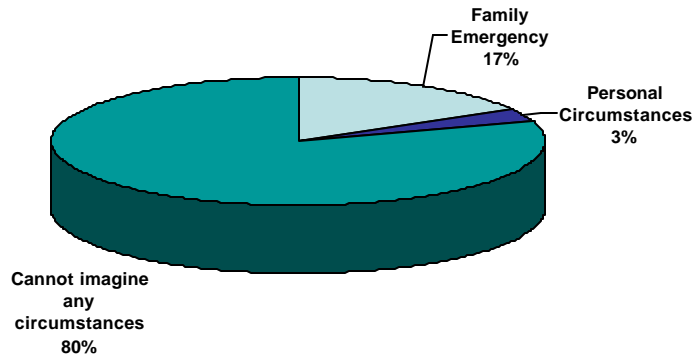


Table 34

Which political party best represents your views?

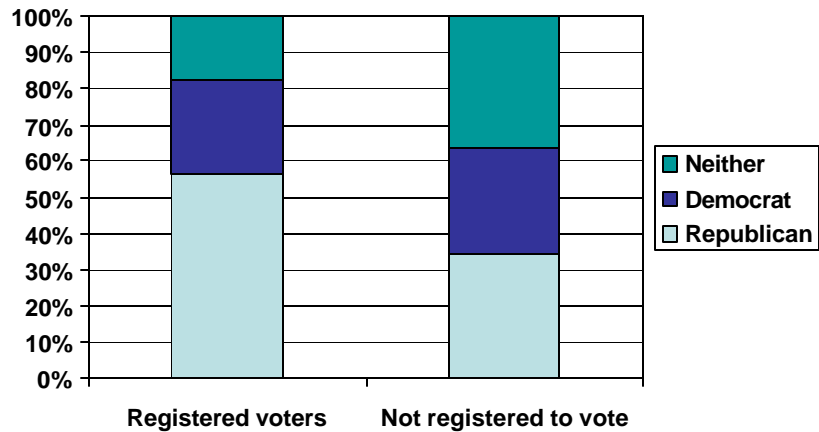


Table 35

Are international or domestic political issues more important to you?

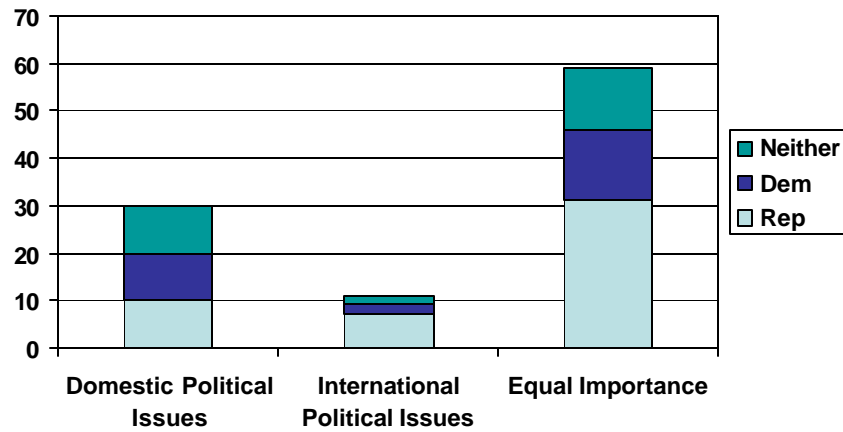


Table 36

Which political party best represents your views?

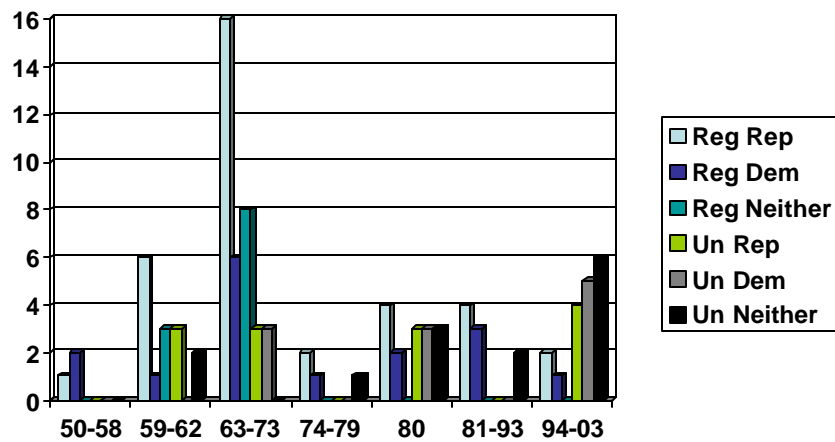


Table 37

Which political party best represents your views?

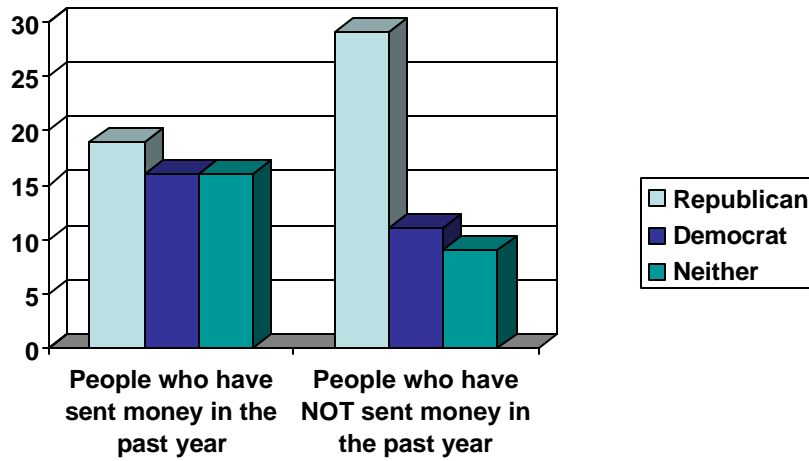
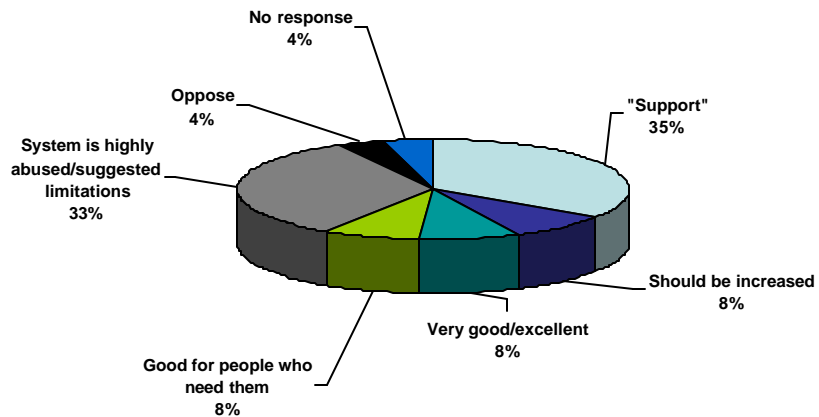


Table 38

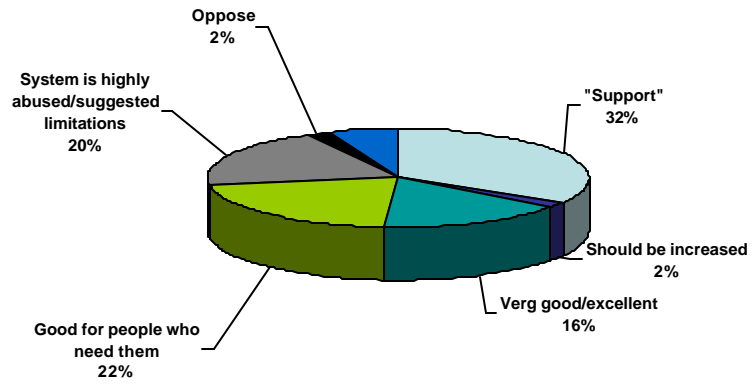
What is your opinion of government social services?



People who did NOT send money to Cuba in the past year

Table 39

What is your opinion of government social services?



People who sent money to Cuba in the past year