



Fidel and Che: A Revolutionary Friendship

Simon Reid-Henry

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A unique dual portrait shines new light on two of the most dramatic figures of the twentieth century.

Drawing on sources in Cuba, Latin America, the United States, Europe, and Russia, and on material not available to previous biographers, Simon Reid-Henry has crafted a compelling portrait of a revolutionary era and the two men whose names and deeds personify it: Fidel Castro and Che Guevara. What began as an association of convenience would fundamentally shape their political visions, propelling them further than either had dared imagine. Ironically, though, their jointly conceived vision of revolution would ultimately force them to choose between friendship and their beliefs.

At a momentous turning point in Cuban history, Simon Reid-Henry offers a fascinating and original chronicle of two of the most powerful personalities in recent memory.

Fidel and Che: A Revolutionary Friendship Details

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From Reader Review Fidel and Che: A Revolutionary Friendship for online ebook

Maggie says

Deeply moving, beautiful and desperately important.

"Patria o Muerte!" ... and I thoroughly agree.

Stephanie says

it is the story of a remarkable friendship between two iconic figures while both in exile in Mexico City. Guevara, the Argentine doctor had reached the end of his travels on his motorcycle had had begun many years before. Castro the peasant's son, scholar & rebel had just fled Cuba fearing for his life. until Guevara's death in 1967 their journey together was as interesting, exciting & sometimes as dangerous as their friendship....

Tom says

An excellent introduction and history into the early years of Che, Fidel and Cuba from the early fifties to Che's death in 1967, very easy to read and well paced, looks at the political machinations going on in the background as well as Che and Fidel's personalities and how they worked off each other as well as ultimately changing each other. All against the background of the Cold War and U.S. Soviet tensions it's a fascinating and worthwhile read.

Mike says

Amazing! Admittedly, I have a morbid fascination with Fidel Castro. Before starting this book however, I was not deeply familiar with Che Guevara. As a historical book, this was a page turner. Mr. Read-Henry does an outstanding job of painting the picture of how these men were shaped by the events of their early life and how their friendship was then borne out of mutual respect and benefit. I would recommend this highly to anyone interested in either of these individuals, in the history of the Cuban-Castro revolution, or in the way that different dynamic individuals form relationships.

Mary says

A very thorough history of Fidel and Che's time working together. Although the title concerns friendship, I'm not entirely sure the dynamic of their relationship is exemplified enough through all the historical detail. The author has obviously done extensive research and has articulated the key points of their history together, gives a few cues here and there, but does leave some of it up to the reader to figure out on their own. Plus,

since one guy's long dead and the other not really accessible, much is left to speculation.

As a general Cuban Revolution enthusiast with a working knowledge of the events and key players, I found this book laid another layer of granular information I hadn't yet gleaned from other readings - there was more to this than the same old rehash of the revolution. This is not a quick read by any means, and Cuban Revolution/Che/Fidel novices may find this book a bit overwhelming.

Paul Kearney says

Individually both partook in the solemnity of vivacious reading. In Class both were top of educationally, middle of socially. Strategy and ideology formed in adolescence, Willing to take up arms and make the ultimate sacrifice for a cause.

While Fidel enjoyed the limelight of leader, Che the rigid discipline of ideological rebellion. Daring in battle both were lucky gamblers fighting against the odds.

While Fidel understood warfare was just one weapon in the arsenal of rebellion. Che strove for a pure revolution without compromise. Encompassed in the 'Cuban missile crises' While Fidel fought to politically strategize a way out, Che still only thought to revolutionize.

"No impediments to revolution should be able to exist all should be swept away" Fidel's words that long serving leaders modify. But Che lived as if they never left his mind.

While Fidel veered towards safeguarding his leadership and its achievements of increased literacy and healthcare. Che wanted to gamble it all in the pursuit of an all encompassing revolution that didn't respect national borders. When Fidel accepted the generous soviet offer to purchase sugar cane at above market prices. Che would only contemplate the pure struggle of self sufficiency, Without Soviet bureaucracy, A pure gorilla government.

Although Fidel was a radical and deified the wishes of the worlds super powers by funding Che's failed revolutions in North Africa and Latin America. He was also conscious of Politics being the art of the possible. And pleaded with Che to slow down and wait for the opportune moment to strike. Unperturbed Che had a fearless suicidal restlessness. And was A true believer in Fidel's rhetoric of one mans spirit to raise revolution. In Che's death it would be left to Fidel to politically fight for the revolutionary ideal embodied completely in the image of Che.

Asif says

This is a superb double-biography of both Che and Fidel which breaks new ground in having their friendship as its central theme and focus; especially the revelations that, unlike what was previously thought, the decision for Che to leave Cuba was fully backed by Fidel and the latter was intimately involved in Che's guerilla tactics in the Congo and then in Bolivia. It was a part of the two friends' strategy of internationalising their revolution without antagonising the USSR upon whose economic support Cuba depended.

This book had so many details about Che and Fidel which were fascinating including of their love-lives and the way they almost played good-cop, bad-cop with outsiders.

My admiration for these two grew after reading this book. Will definitely re-read it some time soon. Highly recommended.

Hasta siempre, Comandante, Che Guevara!
Hasta siempre, Comandante, Fidel Castro!

Nabila says

A great insight into one of the most famous partnerships of the 20th Century. The book gets to grips with what shaped them to become the men they did and how their differences actually worked to strengthen their friendship. Very good read, would highly recommend for anyone like me who never really knew quite what Che Guevara was all about.

Neil Novesky says

Highly readable and intriguing. It is too bad more outside of Cuba don't know much about it but for the embargo. It is shameful that a country with a higher literacy rate than we have is so little understood. Reading this will take away some of the ignorance about Cuba and its dramatic history. This well written book elaborates on one of the greatest, and least known, collaborations in modern times. Highly recommended.

Mehdi says

It has to be the best book I've read on South America, Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro, Camilo and Che Guevara by million miles. As I was flipping the pages of this book, a fear tended to grow inside me thinking will I get to read a better book than this? Absolutely one of my favourite book.

Viva Che

Viva Fidel.

Laura says

I love Latin American history and politics, so I was really excited to read this. Fidel Castro and Che Guevara have loomed in international affairs for decades, and in the case of Che, long after his death. And while many people know how ruthless both men were when they came into power, this book showed their path to that point and really humanized them in a way.

Glorious says

A biography of the friendship from two very different revolutionaries from very different backgrounds. Ultimately, modestly successful on their own in their respective fields, to use a socialist phrase to describe

their relationship, it is when they are both united that they become better than the sum of its parts.

A great book if you want to find out about the friendship, values and views on what the plans were for continent-wide revolution that sadly never came to fruition after Che left Fidel's side to progress the Trotskyite plans of perpetual revolutionary progress.

Louise says

This book couldn't make up its mind whether it was for the general, interested reader or an academic audience. I guess that wasn't too bad for me, as I have a 'history' background but don't know an awful lot about this subject. However, I didn't like the fact that the end notes weren't numbered in the text; I like to find out where ideas have come from. Anyway, it is an interesting approach as its a biography of a friendship rather than of the individuals. It does start with Fidel and Che's backgrounds, which was interesting, and then a good account of the Cuban Revolution and early years of the regime. From then on it gets a little dull, picking up again once Che leaves Cuba for Africa. The writing style is simple and reasonably fluid. A decent read, but not a brilliant one.

Ch3wbacca says

I knew a little about these 2 historical figures but this book simply blew me away! I thought it was fantastically written by an author who has definitely gone above and beyond in his research.

It had me hooked from the start and I found it very difficult to put it down. For someone like myself who knows a little about Che, Fidel and the Cold War, but really would like to know more without being overloaded then this is the perfect book.

Also it is important to know that the book mainly revolves around the friendship between the Fidel and Che, in particular their time together in Cuba.

Mänsomläser says

Den kubanska revolutionen inleddes med att Fidel Castro, Che Guevara och 80 ytterligare revolutionärer landsteg på Kuba den 2 december 1956. Tre dagar senare överfölls de av den kubanska armén som dödade över 60 av dem. Drygt tre år senare marscherade Castro och Che in som segrare i Havanna. Vilken jävla historia.

Som titeln antyder ligger fokus i boken på Castros och Chés relation, vilket jag tycker var ett lyckat grepp. En annan sak jag gillade var att boken skingrade den revolutionära, mytiska dimma som brukar omge Ché senare (misslyckade) försök att starta revolutioner i Kongo och i Bolivia och framställer dem istället mera som konsekvenser av (historiska!) omständigheter än av individuella, hjältemodiga beslut.
