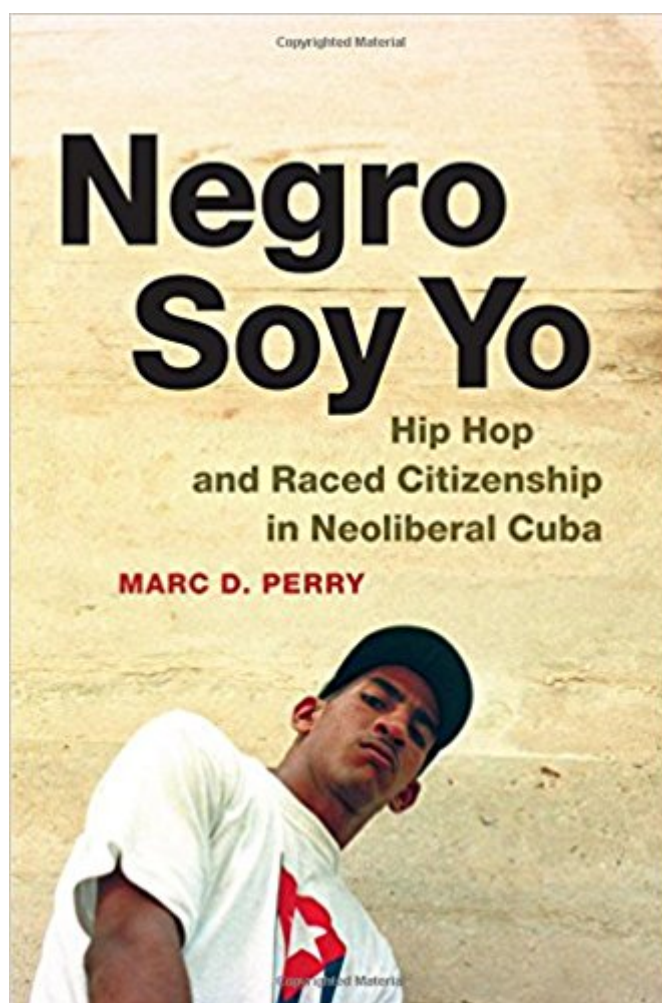


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# Negro Soy Yo: Hip Hop And Raced Citizenship In Neoliberal Cuba (Refiguring American Music)



## Synopsis

In *Negro Soy Yo* Marc D. Perry explores Cuba's hip hop movement as a window into the racial complexities of the island's ongoing transition from revolutionary socialism toward free-market capitalism. Centering on the music and lives of black-identified raperos (rappers), Perry examines the ways these young artists craft notions of black Cuban identity and racial citizenship, along with calls for racial justice, at the fraught confluence of growing Afro-Cuban marginalization and long held perceptions of Cuba as a non-racial nation. Situating hip hop within a long history of Cuban racial politics, Perry discusses the artistic and cultural exchanges between raperos and North American rappers and activists, and their relationships with older Afro-Cuban intellectuals and African American political exiles. He also examines critiques of Cuban patriarchy by female raperos, the competing rise of reggaeton, as well as state efforts to incorporate hip hop into its cultural institutions. At this pivotal moment of Cuban-U.S. relations, Perry's analysis illuminates the evolving dynamics of race, agency, and neoliberal transformation amid a Cuba in historic flux.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Offering a wealth of ethnographic detail, *Negro Soy Yo* is a welcome addition to the study of international hip-hop, contemporary Cuban culture and society, and the Black Atlantic. Marc D. Perry's foregrounding of the role of race in the history of Cuban hip-hop, and in the transnational engagements of Afro-Cuban culture more broadly, is a crucial contribution." (Wayne Marshall, coeditor of *Reggaeton*) "In this much anticipated book, Marc D. Perry provides a

nuanced and compelling analysis of how Cuban raperos are crafting new understandings of black selfhood and citizenship in the wake of the collapse of the USSR and Cuba's ambivalent embrace of neoliberal capitalism. Boldly reflexive, Perry's intensive, long-term ethnographic research yields a theoretically nuanced and historically attuned perspective on the politics and poetics of racialization both within Cuba's rapidly changing political imaginary, and across diasporic fields of black cultural production. "By all measures, *Negro Soy Yo* is a masterful contribution to the literature and an ethnographic tour de force." (Steven Gregory, author of *The Devil behind the Mirror: Globalization and Politics in the Dominican Republic*) "If you're not familiar with Cuban hip hop, *Negro Soy Yo* is an excellent starting point to get the wheels turning in your head, to start thinking about the music and all of the different places it is coming from, what it's discussing and why. Perry has given us an excellent text to get people from outside of the island to consider how the music communicates things about society that we don't get elsewhere." (Scratched Vinyl) "*Negro Soy Yo* makes a distinguished contribution to the study of raced citizenship and the performance of blackness through the self-fashioning of Cuban hip-hop." (Melisa Riviére *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 2017-06-01)

Marc D. Perry is Assistant Professor of Anthropology and African and African Diaspora Studies at Tulane University.

Marc Perry's *Negro soy yo* is a must-read for anyone who wants to understand race and artistic expression in Cuba. I brought a Kindle version of the book with me on a recent trip to the island; I found it invaluable to understanding some of the complicated and often (to me) subtle racial politics on the island. Perry's long-term research in the country shows us the interplay between the revolutionary state and Cuban hip-hop after the state opened to more kinds of expression, and expanded recognition of difference, in the 1990s. The author, a cultural anthropologist trained at the University of Texas's famed African Diaspora Studies Department, argues that black raperos helped shape a new kind of public awareness of race and racism in Cuba. His approach is ethnographic, demonstrating deep, personal engagement with Cuban musicians, but also, crucially, historical, showing the long history of the struggles that raperos took up in the late 1990s and into the 2000s.

Marc D. Perry writes clearly and accessibly about Cuban Hip Hop. In "*Negro Soy Yo*" Perry both paints a picture of the Hip Hop scene and engages in through discourse of the significance of Hip

Hop in modern societies especially as it relates to issues of race and racial identity. By relating entertaining stories to more abstract concepts Perry creates a compelling book that is entertaining and academic.

Perry's book is a powerful assessment of the continued relevance of race and racism in socialist and increasingly post-socialist Cuba. It is a must read for scholars of race and racism, the African Diaspora, gender, and those interested in the provocative and at times pernicious workings of capital in Latin America and the Caribbean.

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