

## Document Citation

Title	<b>One way or another</b>
Author(s)	
Source	<i>Tricontinental Film Center (New York)</i>
Date	
Type	distributor materials
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	De cierta manera (One way or another), Gómez, Sara, 1974



# One Way or Another

ONE WAY OR ANOTHER is a thoughtful, provocative work, a convincing illustration that a film from a socialist society need not be merely a glorification of socialism, but can actually offer a critical perspective on the problems of a society undergoing revolutionary change. The film shows us a Cuba in transition, providing an unflinchingly honest examination of social problems still being resolved despite the profound transformation of the Cuban revolution.

Set in a new housing district built and inhabited by former residents of a shantytown just outside Havana, ONE WAY OR ANOTHER reveals the difficulties of assimilation into socially productive life for people from a formerly marginal sector of the population, those whom the previous society had consigned to lives of poverty, chronic unemployment, illiteracy and disease. Further complicating their development is the persistence of outdated traditions and beliefs, such as animistic religions, an exaggerated individualism, rampant sexism, and a false code of honor between friends.

The story focuses on the personal relationships between three protagonists: Yolanda, a young, middle-class schoolteacher who fully identifies with the revolution and who attempts, not without difficulties, to put its ideas into practice both in her professional and private lives; Mario, a young worker raised in the slums whose romantic relationship with Yolanda becomes the testing ground for his realization of the need for new attitudes and his difficulty in breaking with his old, *macho* ways; and Humberto, Mario's friend, who has nominally accepted the revolution but still tries to live by the old ways.

Director Sara Gomez brings to the film an 'inside view', a familiarity with her subjects — both the fictional characters as well as the real-life inhabitants of the community who portray themselves in the film — that results in a sensitive and perceptive social portrait. Most importantly, the film's examination of the way reactionary human relations are shaped by impoverished social surroundings offers insights that are equally valuable to us here in the U.S.

35mm/16mm b&w, 78 minutes

Spanish dialog with English subtitles

Produced by the Cuban Film Institute (ICAIC);

directed by Sara Gomez

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"...a revealing drama about contemporary Cuba...honesty — and no sloganizing — distinguishes the entire film...Although it deals with Cuba, the film dramatizes situations that have counterparts in American slum schools and communities where people who have led battered lives are slow to accept changes that will improve their conditions." — Judy Stone, *SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE*

"...the degree of self-analysis is remarkable...absolutely refutes the notion that art in a communist country amounts to nothing more than propaganda praising the virtues of the government while ignoring the ills... the characters are real, the conflicts human, and, most importantly, the plot reveals the dilemma of man in a changing society...[offers] a great deal of insight into the situation in Cuba today." — Angel Lagraiz, *LATIN NEW YORK*

"...one of the best and most ideologically complex Cuban films to date...Practically every aspect of current Cuban life comes under scrutiny (racial relationships, male-female extramarital relationships, social conditions, religion, education, etc.) — and Gomez finds no simplistic answers to any of these." — Rob Baker, *SOHO WEEKLY NEWS*

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