

THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

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**CINEMA IN CUBAN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT:  
WOMEN AND FILM MAKING CULTURE**

By

MICHELLE SPINELLA

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The members of the Committee approve the dissertation of Michelle Spinella defended on October 6, 2003.

Vandra Masemann  
Professor Directing Dissertation

John Mayo  
Outside Committee Member

Michael Basile  
Committee Member

Steve Klees  
Committee Member

Approved:

Carolyn Herrington, Chair, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies

The office of Graduate Studies has verified and approved the above named committee members.

Dedicated to the Beloved

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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this qualitative study is to contribute to a fuller understanding of cinema in processes of national development and social change. The study explores the use of cinema as an educational strategy in post-revolutionary Cuba. The research focuses closely on the experience of women filmmakers' and their participation in the production of cultural meaning and creation of a national Cuban cinema. My central thesis is that cultural renewal is primarily an epistemological task and the study of cinema as a way of knowing can inform the practices of education and development.

The themes of representation, culture and development are explored using interviews with women filmmakers, Cuban films, primary source documentation from Cuba's historic archives, participant observation during a women's conference on film and video, and the methodology of film elicitation during a filmmakers' focus group, which evoked taken-for-grant cultural meaning. These data are presented in a contextual analysis that illustrate cinema is a rich context for studying culture and representations of social change processes.