

## CUBA HISTORY ONE

### **Biographical**

The female subject, 54 years old, was born in 1954, in Habana, Cuba. She moved to Miami, Florida, when she was six years old. Then she moved to New Jersey for two years, and returned to Miami. She stayed in Miami until she was 26 years old, at which time she moved to California where she still resides. She received her B.A. in Psychology from Florida International University. She received her Certificate Program Degree in Spanish Interpretation and Translation from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). Currently she works as a court certified interpreter in California, she trains interpreters, and is a Spanish dialect coach. Her website can be found at [www.aliciaernand.com](http://www.aliciaernand.com). As a dialect coach, she specializes in working with English speaking actors that need to speak with a Spanish accent, English speaking actors that need to speak Spanish, Spanish speaking actors that want to work on a specific accent: Argentinian, Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, etc., and Spanish students who want to reduce their American accent.

### **Accent**

The listener should note that the subject is re-creating the accent she uses in this recording. It is a “performance” in that she no longer speaks English with any discernible Spanish accent in her daily life, but recreates that accent from her strong memories and associations with friends and family who do use this accent.

### **Transcription**

Although I am very grateful to the United States of America for opening its doors to Cuban refugees, I am very proud of my Cuban roots. And, I have to thank my mamá and papá for insisting that I never forget where I came from! Many second and third generation Hispanics do not speak Spanish. That was unacceptable in my family. On the contrary, we were not allowed to speak English at home. If you walked in my house, there was no doubt Cubans lived there. Celia Cruz's record albums were playing, the smell of Cuban food made you go nuts, the neighbors were having their cafecito with my parents, and the topic of conversation was always the same...memories of yesterday's Cuba. Eventually, we accepted that there was no return, but we kept the Cuban traditions. One very special day that comes to mind is my amazing quinceañera party. In this country girls celebrate their sweet 16. Cuban girls celebrate their 15th birthday. If you are fortunate, you have this amazing debutante-type party. The quinceañera is the star, and fourteen couples dance around her. In my party, we started out with a waltz, followed by a cha-cha-chá, and then the American pop slow-dance. I felt like a princesa Cubana! A Cuban princess.

### **Spanish Translation**

Aunque estoy muy agradecida a los Estados Unidos por haberle habierto las puertas a los cubanos refugiados, estoy muy orgullosa de mis raíces cubanas. ¡Y, les tengo que dar las gracias a mí mamá y a mí papá por insistir que nunca olvidara de donde vine! Muchos hispanos de segunda y tercer generación no hablan español. En mi familia, eso no se aceptaba. Al contrario, no se nos permitía hablar inglés en nuestro hogar. Si entrabas a

mi casa, no había ninguna duda que allí vivían cubanos. Los álbumes de Celia Cruz se tocaban en el tocadisco, el olor de comida cubana te enloquecía, los vecinos estaban tomando su cafecito con mis padres, y el tema de conversación siempre era el mismo.....recordando la Cuba de ayer. Eventualmente aceptamos que no había regreso, pero mantuvimos las tradiciones Cubanas. Un día muy especial que recuerdo es de mi fiesta increíble de quinceañera. En este país, las muchachas celebran los diez y seis años. Las muchachas cubanas celebran los quince años. Si eres afortunada, tienes una fiesta increíble como de debutantes. La quineañera es la estrella, y catorce parejas bailan a tu alrededor. En mi fiesta, comenzamos con un balse, seguido con un cha-cha-chá, y después una canción lenta de pop americano. ¡Me sentía como una princesa cubana!

Edited by Paul Meier, February 14, 2009.  
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