

Interviewee: Olga Chao
Interviewer: Manuel Gonzalez Pando
Date: August 1997
FIU Number: 530

Olga Chao = OC

Manuel Gonzalez Pando = MGP

MGP= Olga, let's kind of go back in time. Close your eyes.

OC= OK.

MGP= We are in 1997, let go back to 1987. Keeps your eyes close, let's go back to 1977, 1967, [19]64, [19]63, 1962, 1961, 1960. You are Olga, the little girl. You are in Cuba Matanzas probably.

OC= For sure.

MGP= As you look around in your mind, you are going to see your house, you are going to see your parents a lost younger, you are going to smell

OC= Mariposas and pico alas

MGP= Okay and you are going to listen to the sounds of your home. When you open your eyes, all of that is going to be in front of you. Let's start by recalling the atmosphere at Castro came to power.

OC= It was a moving fun. Active, very energetic, life-filled-house. Always filled with people from the, we lived in front of the ocean. La Calzada General Betancourt. La playa en Matanzas. And it was a very old house that my great grandfather had built. With beautiful pillars, columns in the porch. And the porch was the place where my parents and their friends and then later I and my friends sat only veranda to past the time talk, have tertulias. My parents entertained a great deal in a very informal manner. If the leader of the local estivadores of the union came by for lunch, he was welcome at table and a place was made for him. If, I remember, Simone de Beauvoir, later, I remember Miguel Angel Asturias, a retired presidents of the Republic. Very lustrous Cuban, very aristocratic Cubans and some real characters like this Union Leader and so on.

And part of our upbringing had to do with conversing with everybody in the table since I was just a very little girl, although you brought me back to [19]60 and in [19]60 I wasn't so little. I was already sixteen. But the luncheon was a liturgy and a ritual in my house. Where you really, you had a lot of fun, but you were tested and you couldn't be petulant [Telephone rings] and you couldn't be self-centered in any point.

Completed by Ximena Valdivia, August 30, 2020