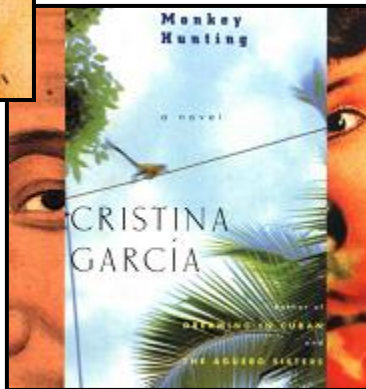
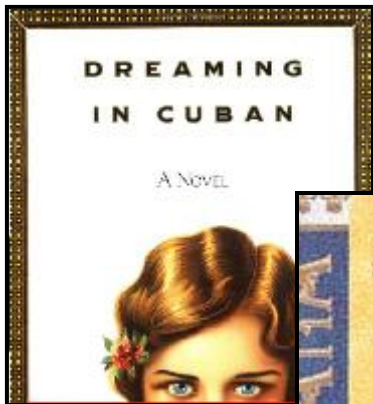




ALA/ACRL
Literatures in English Section
Membership Forum

Cristina García



- Born:** July 4, 1958 in Havana, Cuba; Immigrated to the U.S. in 1960
- Works:**
- *Dreaming in Cuban*. Knopf, 1992
 - *Cars of Cuba*. H.N. Abrams, 1995
 - *The Agüero Sisters*. Knopf, 1997
 - *Monkey Hunting*. Knopf, 2003

Education:

Barnard College, BA in Political Science 1979
Johns Hopkins University, MA in European and Latin American Studies 1981

Career:

Time (magazine);
Reporter and Researcher, 1983-85
Correspondent, 1985-90
Miami Bureau Chief, 1987-88
University of Southern California
English Department, 1995 -

Awards:

National Book Award Finalist, 1992
Hodder Fellowship, Princeton, 1992-93
Cintas Fellowship, 1992-93
Guggenheim Fellowship, 1994
Whiting Writers Award, 1996

Cristina Garcia is the first Cuban-American woman to publish a novel written in English. Although born in Havana, Cuba, she immigrated to the United States with her parents in 1960 when she was only two years old in order to flee the effects of the Castro led revolution. Her family settled first in Queens, New York and then in Brooklyn Heights where they operated a restaurant and bar in which Cristina later worked. At home Garcia spoke English as her first language and she attended Catholic grade schools followed by her undergraduate education at Columbia University's Barnard College, graduating with a BA in Political Science in 1979. She also attended Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies in Baltimore with an eye toward a career in the Foreign Service. Instead, Garcia went to work for *Time* magazine as a reporter, researcher and correspondent, and for a brief period she served as Miami Bureau Chief. While in Miami, Garcia was surrounded by the rich and vibrant culture of the local Cuban community, an environment that further inspired her creativity and desire to begin writing about her own experiences and those of fellow Cuban-Americans. Around 1990 she began to move away from journalism toward writing fiction, a transition that resulted in the 1992 publication of her critically acclaimed first novel, *Dreaming in Cuban*. Choosing to write a multigenerational story interspersed with political and familial conflict, Garcia's novel was described by *New York Times* reviewer Michiko Kakutani as "Fierce, visionary, and at the same time oddly beguiling and funny, 'Dreaming in Cuban' is a completely original novel. It announces the debut of a writer, blessed with a poet's ear for language, a historian's fascination with the past and a musician's intuitive understanding of the ebb and flow of emotion." There are aspects of *Dreaming in Cuban* that closely parallel Garcia's own life story of a daughter who is born into one culture, but raised in another, and who must therefore reconcile the uneasy balance between two worlds. Since her success with *Dreaming in Cuban* Garcia has been the recipient of numerous honors, awards and fellowships, and has written two more novels (*The Agüero Sisters* and *Monkey Hunting*), all dealing with central themes of family, immigration and Cuban identity. Garcia was married in 1990 and has a daughter, Pilar Akiko, whom she lives with in California. In a 2003 interview published in *Criticas* discussing her most recent book Garcia said "For me, each book further embroiders the themes and obsessions that drove me to write in the first place. The characters may be different, the settings and times and particulars may vary wildly but the bigger questions of where do we belong and how do we negotiate our identities between and among cultures is what keeps me going."

Selected Book Reviews of Dreaming in Cuban:

- Davis, Thulani. "Fidel Came Between Them." *New York Times Book Review*. 17 May 1992: 14.
- Eder, Richard. "Cuban Revolution Tugs on Family Ties." *Los Angeles Times*. 12 March 1992: E10.
- Kakutani, Michiko. "The Dreams and Yearnings of a Family of Exiles." *New York Times*. 25 Feb. 1992: C17.
- Weiss, Amelia. "Fantasy Island." *Time*. 23 March 1992: 67.
- West, Alan. "So Near and Yet So Far." *Washington Post Book World*. 1 March 1992: 9.

Selected Criticism:

- Araújo, Nara. "I Came All The Way From Cuba So I Could Speak Like This? Cuban and Cubanamerican Literatures in the US." *Comparing Postcolonial Literatures: Dislocations*. Eds. Ahok Bery and Patricia Murray. New York: St Martin's Press, 2001. 93-103
- Bramshuber-Ziegler, Irène. "Cristina Garcia, *Dreaming in Cuban* (1992): Collapse of Communication and Risteva's Semiotic as Possible Remedy." *Language and Literature* 24 (1999): 43-64.
- Davis, Rocío G. "Back to the Future: Mothers, Languages, and Homes in Cristina García's *Dreaming in Cuban*." *World Literature Today* 74.1 (200): 60-68.
- Gómez-Vega, Ibis. "The Journey Home: Defining Identity in Cristina García's *Dreaming in Cuban*." *Voces: A Journal of Chicana/Latina Studies* 1.2 (1997): 71-100.
- Herrera, Andrea O'Reilly. "Women and the Revolution in Cristina Garcia's *Dreaming in Cuban*." *Modern Language Studies* 27.3/4 (1997): 69-91.
- López, Kimberle S. "Women on the Verge of a Revolution: Madness and Resistance in Cristina García's *Dreaming in Cuban*." *Letras Femeninas* 22.1-2 (1996): 33-49.
- Mitchell, David T. "National Families and Familial Nations: Communista Americans in Cristina Garcia's *Dreaming in Cuban*." *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 15.1 (1996): 51-60.
- Payant, Katherine B. "From Alienation to Reconciliation in the Novels of Cristina Garcia." *MELUS* 26.3 (2001): 163-82.
- Socolovsky, Maya. "Unnatural Violences: Counter-Memory and Preservations in Cristina García's *Dreaming in Cuban* and *The Agüero Sisters*." *Littérature* 11.2 (2000): 143-67.
- Vásquez, Mary S. "Cuba as Text and Context in Cristina García's *Dreaming in Cuban*." *Bilingual Review* 20.2 (1995): 22-27.
- Viera, Joseph M. "Matriarchy and Mayhem: Awakenings in Cristina Garcia's *Dreaming in Cuban*." *Americas Review* 24.3/4 (1996): 231-42.
- Viera, Joseph M. "Navigating the Straits of Florida: Gender, Politics and Culture in Cristina García's '*Dreaming in Cuban*'". PhD. Diss. Florida State U, 1996.