“A Conversation with Alana: One Boy’s Cultural Rite of Passage”
performed by the author and playwright, Dr. Carlos Cortés, UC Riverside Professor Emeritus of History

In this one-person autobiographical play, Carlos Cortés presents his story of growing up as a young man of mixed ancestry in racially segregated, religiously divided, early post-World War II Kansas City, Missouri.

The son of a Mexican Catholic immigrant father and an American-born Jewish mother, whose parents came from Austria and Ukraine, Cortés had to learn to navigate Kansas City’s rigid racial, ethnic, and religious fault lines, while simultaneously dealing with the internal conflicts of his own divided family.
Dr. Carlos Cortés is a nationally known and award-winning author, teacher, consultant and speaker on a wide variety of issues related to multiculturalism, diversity, the impact of media, and cross-cultural understanding. He is Professor Emeritus of History at the University of California, Riverside.

Among his many awards and citations, Dr. Cortés has been recognized with the National Multicultural Trainer of the Year Award of the American Society for Training and Development (1989), the Hilda Taba Award of the California Council for the Social Studies (1995), the Outstanding Contribution to Higher Education Award of the National Association for Student Personnel Administrators (2001), the Emeritus Professor of the Year Award of the University of California, Riverside (2004), and the Inspiration Award of the California Association for Bilingual Education (2005).

Dr. Cortés has authored numerous articles and books. Among his books are: The Children Are Watching: How the Media Teach about Diversity (2000) and The Making—and Remaking—of a Multiculturalist (2002). His most recent book is Rose Hill: An Intermarriage before Its Time (2012), a memoir of the son of a Mexican Catholic father with aristocratic roots and a mother of Eastern European Jewish descent whose early years were spent in legally segregated Kansas City. This book is adapted from his nationally successful one-man play, A Conversation with Alana: One Boy’s Multicultural Rite of Passage.

Dr. Cortés is the Editor of Multicultural America: A Multimedia Encyclopedia, published by Sage Publications in 2013. This publication consists of a four volume version, and an on-line version with video links, and addresses the historical development of multicultural America, the contemporary American multicultural mosaic, and possible future directions of American multiculturalism. Content includes relevant historical events, laws, and court decisions, as well as the intersection of ethnicity and popular culture.