

Public eye

Lisa Schultz, 35

Monroe and Dearborn Streets

Hey, what's going on?

I'm waiting to meet up with a friend. I'm in Chicago for the day shopping.

Where are you from?

I'm originally from a small, small township called Limestone, which is farther south of the city near Kankakee. And I used to live in Andersonville, but now I live in Flossmoor.



Andersonville is sort of like a small town.

I know. When I first moved to Andersonville, the cops called it the Mayberry of Chicago.

What do you do?

I'm a hypnotherapist.

What's the most common misconception about your job?

Everyone thinks it's such a mystery, but basically it's just a method of deep relaxation—calming the rest of your body and mind so that you can connect with your reality. I work mostly with oncology patients.

What kind of requests do patients make when they come into your office?

There are a lot of different reasons people come in. If they want to quit smoking, or if they want to lose weight, or if they want to move on from a relationship. I do more pain management kind of stuff for people who are going through radiation.

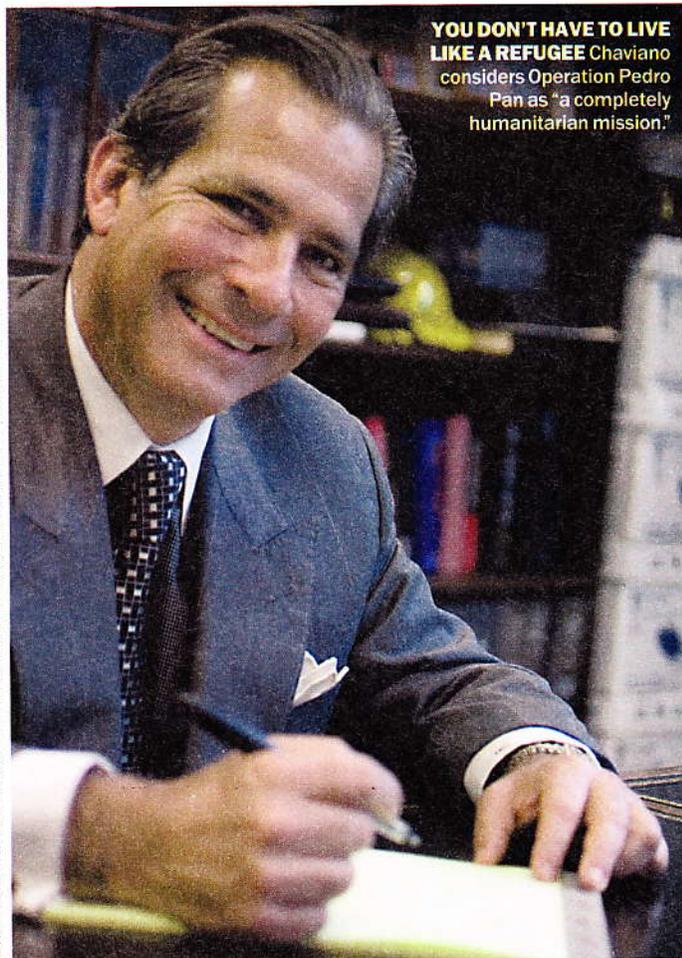
So you're not turning people into chickens?

That's what people expect. A lot of people are afraid of hypnotherapy because our nature is to always be in control.

—Jake Malooley

Cuba libre

A Castro refugee lends his insight to *Steppenwolf*. By Christopher Piatt



YOU DON'T HAVE TO LIVE LIKE A REFUGEE Chaviano considers Operation Pedro Pan as "a completely humanitarian mission."

Cuban-born Chicago attorney Hugo Chaviano has handled some nail-biters in his time, but the father of three (and former national president of the Hispanic Bar Association) made the most crucial decision of his life four decades ago when, at 13, he chose to leave his family to flee his native

Cuba, with no idea of when they might be reunited.

At the time the Castro regime forbade men ages 15 to 27 from leaving the country, and any male in that demographic was eligible to be drafted for military service. Starting puberty on Cuban soil was a prison sentence.

Chaviano got out, like thousands of others during the period, and was taken in by family friends in Spain. (He came to the States in 1970, and eventually to Chicago for law school.) But while he was eventually joined by his parents a few years later, many Cuban children who left during the same era were not, including some of Chaviano's now-adult friends. Given his harrowing experience, Chaviano was an ideal consultant to the company of Melinda Lopez's play *Sonia Flew*, which opens on Sunday 10 at Steppenwolf. The play recounts the emotional fallout of Operation Pedro Pan, a 1960 U.S.-led plan that brought 14,000 Cuban children to the U.S. and placed them with American families, specifically focusing on a woman named Sonia, who, years later, is married with kids in Minneapolis.

"Castro was closing down Catholic schools, nationalizing everything," Chaviano recalls. "When your kids are uprooted from their schooling, and you can't control what the state is teaching them, you start to panic."

Operation Pedro Pan—which took its name from Peter Pan, who also famously stole children away from their parents—is criticized by some as an American Cold War attempt to destabilize support of the Cuban government internally, a scare tactic to convince Cuban families that the best thing they could do for their children was give them away. But Chaviano, who shared his insight with *Sonia Flew*'s actors, sees it as "a completely humanitarian mission."

"We forget how unthinkable it was for the U.S. to allow a communist regime to take root 90 miles from American soil. I think it was in part an act of apologia."

Sonia Flew is playing at Steppenwolf. See Theater, Resident companies.



Dear Second City... Ever wonder where Dear Santa letters go? The roughly 17,000 mailed in Chicago end up at the post office, where they sit until, with a little luck, a Secret Santa comes along to deliver the goods. For five years, Heather Winna has sifted through piles of letters to select 12 to answer with the money raised from the **Second City That Never Sleeps: Letters to Santa**. The 24-hour annual event—which starts Tuesday 12 at 7pm and features some of the best improv acts in the city, along with music from the likes of Jeff Tweedy, Robbie Fulks, Shellac, Jon Langford and the Blisters—raised nearly \$55,000 last year. Over the years Winna has hand-delivered gifts ranging from Barbie dolls to \$5,000 in cash to save one woman's home, "and almost always they end up sobbing...it's that moment of being picked." This year, one of the mothers of a former letter writer whom Winna has gotten to know will speak at 8pm. Though the 24-hour event can be grueling for the hundreds of performers (cofounder Andy Cobb and cohost TJ Jagodowski said they vomit each year after overdosing on caffeine to keep going), the group has no trouble finding willing performers. Shelly Gossman, a Second City alum who lives in Las Vegas, participated the first year despite undergoing chemotherapy at the time, and is flying in this year to continue the tradition. "Bring sleeping bags, pillows," Cobb says. "If you need to lie down, we've got aisles for that." \$10; See Music listings.—Kate Rockwood

PHOTOS: TOP LEFT AND RIGHT, CAROLINE VORGEN NELSON; BOTTOM, LAURA CASTADY