Vietnamese American Oral History Project, UC Irvine

Narrator: THU HUYEN

Interviewer: Michelle Le Pham

Date: October 28, 2012

Location: Garden Grove, CA

Sub-Collection: The Grove Senior Apartments

Length of Interview: 01:17:13

Track 01

00:00 Introduction of narrators and interviewer, narrator states date of birth and place of birth

01:00 Huyen describes her childhood as moving from one place to another due to war. Her husband, Phuoc Tran gives a brief history lesson.

03:00 Huyen briefly describes her nuclear family, education, and what her parents did for a living

05:20 Huyen describes her life as a young adult and discusses what she knew of the war then. She also states that she met her husband around that time

06:20 Phuoc describes how he met his wife and goes into detail about their courtship. He also explains what qualities women should have had back then

10:30 Phuoc briefly describes the types of warfare he witness while fighting in the Vietnam war.

12:50 Huyen describes having raising her first child and having a husband in the military during the rise of Communism and escalating war.

15:40 Switching gears to the fall of Vietnam. Huyen and Phuoc describe the days leading up the fall of Vietnam, how those of the north flock to the south to escape from the carnage of war.

23:40 Huyen tells of her own personal experience getting ready to flee the country via boat and becoming part of the first wave of Vietnamese boat refugees.
29:30 Phuoc states his opinion on the mentality and attitudes of Vietnamese refugees and highlights the selflessness of the American people.

36:56 Huyen states when she came to the United States and how long she stayed at the refugee camps before settling in America.

Track 02

00:00 Huyen describes what it was like living in Guam’s refugee camp and how she reunited with her husband and the rest of her family.

02:45 Phuoc describes what happened to him when he was separated from his wife and children.

05:40 Huyen and Phuoc describes coming to the United States for the first time arriving at Camp Pendleton and eventually moving to Pennsylvania.

14:35 Phuoc and Huyen discusses why they decided to move to California and the memories they made in Pennsylvania.

19:40 Phuoc discusses he methodology on raising his children in the United States with Vietnamese values.

22:45 Huyen describes her feelings towards her new Vietnamese community in the United States.

25:45 Huyen and Phuoc describes their identity after escaping Vietnam and living in America.

27:05 Both narrators discusses the similarities and differences between American and Vietnamese culture and how future generations should be living the best of both worlds.

35:00 Both narrators state their final thoughts leaving messages for future generations of Vietnamese Americans.