Vietnamese American Oral History Project

Narrator: THIEN SI PHAM
Interviewer: Jennifer Duong
Date: May 4, 2014
Location: Santa Ana, California
Sub-collection: Vietnamese American Experience Course, Spring 2014
Length of Interview: 01:30:52

Time Log

00:01:00 Thien Pham discusses his educational background.
00:01:40 He talks about educational differences between Vietnam and America.
00:06:10 He explains why he likes the American education system.
00:08:00 School violence stands out as something very negative in American society.
00:10:19 He continues on the subject and expresses what he sees as problems in regulations that allow school violence to occur.
00:11:42 He discusses his arrival to America.
00:12:48 His parents are very traditional and sometimes he doesn’t agree with everything they do.
00:15:40 His own adjustment to America was not that difficult.
00:17:37 He discusses culture shock.
00:20:01 Learning English was the hardest obstacle for him to overcome.
00:21:31 He took ESL classes.
00:23:03 He discusses certain things about America that surprised him.
00:25:00 He talks about perceptions of foreigners in Vietnam and foreigners in America.
00:26:43 Disagreements within the Vietnamese community always exist.
00:29:00 Anticommunist sentiment is very prevalent.
00:31:07 He discusses politics in the Vietnamese community.
00:32:06 He votes because he feels that it is his right as an American citizen.
00:32:38  He does not support gay marriage, but supports the increase in school funding.

00:34:11  He discusses voting for President Obama and his subsequent shift away from supporting Obama.

00:36:50  The Catholic faith is very important to his life. His father converted to Catholicism from Buddhism.

00:37:58  He is very involved in the Vietnamese Catholic community.

00:39:18  He talks about the upholding of Vietnamese traditions by youth within the Catholic community.

00:40:41  He talks about “ao dai”.

00:42:53  The Vietnamese culture is very rich. He recalls some childhood memories of Tet. He believes Vietnamese youth should appreciate their culture.

00:48:50  He is fine with interracial dating/marriage. In his family, marrying another Catholic is of primary importance.

00:53:18  He discusses his dad’s religious background.

00:54:58  He believes it is difficult for the children when parents are of two different religions.

00:56:55  He discusses the importance of marriage within the context of his faith.

00:58:53  He explains why he thinks couples sometimes end up divorced.

01:00:33  He talks about different ways people can get involved in the community besides church.

01:01:43  He discusses Vietnamese traditions within the context of America.

01:03:46  Differences between the 1.5 generation and the generation born in America.

01:05:16  It is important for youth to know the Vietnamese language.

01:06:38  He talks about his siblings.

01:07:25  He recalls some childhood memories.

01:09:49  He discusses his own family’s traditions.
He has friends of various ethnic groups.

The Vietnamese tradition will continue to evolve in accordance with time. He discusses arranged marriages.

He talks about the Vietnamese wedding tradition.

He talks about paying respects to ancestors.

His dad served during the Vietnam War and was sent to a reeducation camp.

He discusses his family still in Vietnam.

He does not have the desire to return to Vietnam yet.