Vietnamese American Oral History Project, UC Irvine

Narrator: LAM THANH NGUYEN
Interviewer: Claudia Thanh Nguyen
Date: May 21, 2015
Location: Montclair, California
Sub-collection: Vietnamese American Experience Course, Spring 2015
Length of Interview: 01:27:13

Time Log

00:00:15 Lam Thanh Nguyen introduces himself with his name, birthday, birth place, parents, and where he grew up.

00:04:50 He talks about where and how he spent his childhood days.

00:06:57 He talks about the different jobs he had in Vietnam and a little bit about what he did after the Fall of Saigon in 1975.

00:09:05 He went to elementary, high school, and had 2 years in college at Hue University, but had to quit school for the Vietnam War.

00:11:03 He talks about family and kinship. He starts by talking about what he remembers the most about his parents and grandparents when he has a child.

00:13:25 He discusses about his siblings and the history/origin of their names.

00:16:20 Lam lists the different languages he knows and in which settings he uses the languages in the U.S.

00:17:28 A memorable story about his grandparents that was passed down from his parents is told.

00:18:37 He talks about the celebrations and ceremonies that occur with his family in the United States.

00:19:36 He tells the story of how he meets his spouse, Xuan Huynh, and how long they have been married.

00:21:27 He talks about his four kids and what they each are doing. He also explains why he tells his kids about his history.

00:25:13 With his big family in the USA, he talks about the traditions, customs, songs, foods, and his Buddhist religion.

00:29:52 He speaks briefly about the heirlooms and mementos that he lost after 1975, but does discuss about some pictures and videos he has made and kept until this day.
00:32:21 Lam talks about the Vietnam War time and his post-war experiences. He also talks about the family members that were involved.

00:39:30 He talks about how he wanted to escape from the Da Nang airport to the harbor, but he got put into the re-education camp.

00:40:08 He talks about how his father was associated with the American soldiers and his opinions about the American soldiers.

00:41:50 He discusses about his experiences of when he was in re-education camp and what kind of food he was fed during that time.

00:43:14 He talks about the people he knows that were and are still in re-education camp.

00:49:40 He talks about his uncle’s injury and death. Then he talks about his injuries, which were very light.

00:52:16 He mentions where he was at during the Fall of Saigon.

00:54:43 He talks about what it was like after the Vietnam War and how he felt leaving his country.

00:56:50 He talks about his opinions of the US policy after the war and how he is involved with the Vietnamese community.

00:58:00 He talks about how he didn’t know where he will end up when he escaped oversea.

01:00:39 Lam talks about the lack of possessions he brought with him, but the things he was kept from when he first came to America, especially the pants he has kept for 26 years now.

01:02:30 He describes his journey and conditions of his refugee camp experience.

01:09:04 He talks about his experiences when he first arrived to America and the occupations he had since he has traveled to America.

01:10:08 He talks about where he first settled and the reason why settled in the Inland Empire area.

01:12:01 He talks about how he feels about his decision to come to US today.

01:14:00 He talks about all his occupations he had since he traveled to America.

01:14:48 He talks about racism in his neighborhood and workplace, and how he gets a long with them.

01:17:05 He talks about one thing he thought was a culture shock.
01:17:55 He talks about voting in the US elections and why he does.
01:19:42 He discusses about the times he went back to Vietnam and how he felt about it.
01:21:28 He explains the traditions and customs he has made an effort to preserve.
01:22:58 He talks about what he thinks the differences of the first generation and the second generation.
01:24:14 He talks about how his generation will be different than his grandchildren’s generation.
01:25:08 He talks about his visits to Little Saigon and how frequent he goes.
01:26:48 He talks about what he does for entertainment.
01:28:22 He talks about what Vietnamese-Americans should remember about their heritage.
01:29:24 He talks about other stories he wanted to share and what goes through his mind when he hears certain songs and movies.
01:31:22 He talks about how proud he is for his military life.
01:32:47 He expresses his appreciation for interviewing him and allowing him to share his story.