Narrator: LOAN PHAM THAI

Interviewer: Christina Tran

Date: May 11, 2012

Location: Huntington Beach, California

Sub-collection: Linda Vo Class Oral Histories, 2012

Length of Interview: 01:49:44

**Time Log**

T01

00:01:15 Loan Pham Thai talks about where she lived during the war.

00:02:10 She talks about how the war affected her family.

00:02:54 She talks about how her family was involved in the war.

00:03:25 She talks about where she was during the last days of the war.

00:04:44 She talks about the Viet Cong and what they did in Vietnam once they took over.

00:05:58 She talks about how she felt leaving Vietnam, and why she decided to flee.

T02

00:00:10 Loan talks about why she left Vietnam.

00:00:58 She talks about what the communists did to control her life after the war.
The communists want to take her stepson to join the communist army.

The communists take all the coffee that they made from their small business.

The communists change the currency of the South Vietnam.

Loan’s husband gets taken into the re-education camp.

The communists try to convince her family to live in the countryside of Vietnam and give up everything she owns in the city.

Loan’s husband has connection to escape Vietnam.

Loan and her family get the message that it was time to go.

She had to drug the kids to sleep so that they wouldn’t cry.

Loan and her family get onto the boat and hide in the bottom cabin.

She gets robbed by Thai pirates.

The women and children are separated from the men and are forced to go on the pirate ship.

They see land. (Malaysia)

The Malaysian policemen take them into jail/warehouse.

Her youngest daughter, Phuong, gets really sick.

The Malaysian police put them into another boat and kick them off the country.

They finally reach Indonesia.

They are taken to Air Raya Island.
T04

00:00:03 Tried to cut tree branches off to make a tent for the family to stay under.

00:02:00 Loan’s husband had hid money in his address book which allowed them to go buy food and necessities.

00:04:15 At least 5,000 refugees lived on that island.

00:05:39 Registered the family to get sponsored to America.

00:10:25 Tried to teach her children how to read and write as they waited to get sponsored.

T05

00:00:09 Talks about how as she went to collect tree branches to use for cooking she runs into a snake.

00:03:08 United Nation comes to the island and tries to assist the refugees.

00:04:06 The Thai Family get sponsored to America by Mr. and Mrs. Rummergburs.

00:05:22 She goes to Galang island.

00:05:50 She goes to Jakata to get an examination on the family’s health.

00:06:10 The family then goes to Singapore where they fill out paperwork to come to America.

00:06:30 They arrive in Bakersfield, California on January 31·1980

T06

00:00:18 She talks about how she felt when she first arrived to America.

00:02:40 She talks about how she and her family got their first job.
She talks about how her husband had to ride a bicycle to work in the cold.

She talks about how when she first came to America, she didn't know how to use the heater and washing machine in her home.

She talks about how much her husband made during his first job.

She talks about how her life was getting better after moving to America.

Hung, Bang, and Nguyet move to Boston with their aunt and uncle to try out the new job opportunities.

Loan decided to take the rest of the family and move to Boston, Massachusetts.

She started working for a company called T & T.

Loan and her husband took turns switching off to take care of the children.

She talks about her experience with a snow storm in Boston.

She talks about how hard she worked living in Boston.

One of Loan’s daughters move to Huntington Beach, California.

Loan decides to take the whole family to move back to California.

She started working at a company called Smart Flex.

She opened up her own pizza shop in Huntington Beach.

After one year, the business started to lose money so she had to close it down and go back to work at Smart Flex.
She talks about how she got the job at where she currently works at, WAMCO Inc.

She talks about the discrimination she faced when she came to America.

She talks about how she learned to speak English.

She talks about her first time visiting Vietnam since she left.

She talks about how she had to help the non-English speaking women with translation.

She is happy and grateful that her children are successful. She thanks our country for giving that opportunity to the refugees.