

[Due to a malfunction in equipment, there are some gaps in the interview]

N: This is Nancy Tran interviewing Mrs. Lam from a Taste of Saigon. Where did you live before you came to America?

L: Before I came to America I live in the Mi Tho, its [a] town far from Saigon, about seventy miles south of Saigon.

N: When did you come to the United States?

L: I left my country in 1978, and we arrived to Thailand and from Thailand we went to West Germany. Then from West Germany I came to the United States in 1979.

N: How many people are in your family?

L: I have four children, including my husband, we have six.

N: What was expected of you? What were your responsibilities? Did you work outside the home?

L: In Vietnam? No, in Vietnam I just stayed home and did nothing. I take care of my family.

N: You were a housewife. Did you go to school in Vietnam?

L: I had a Tu Tai Mao, I don't know how to say it in English. I graduated from an education school. I finished my high school, from grade one to grade twelve. After that I took the test for the degree we call Tu Tai Mao. In Vietnam I don't know what the degree equals to [in] America. But after that I had two years, it look[ed] like education school to become a teacher.

N: Like a vocational school. How did the war affect your family? How did it affect your life?

L: _____ Because we came from the North, oh no we came from the south. When they took over the country, we had a lot of difficulty. That is why we tried to escape.

N: Did it affect you directly? Did you see soldiers?

L: The first thing I wanted was freedom, and the second thing, because we came from the south, that means my children they cannot go to school if we stay over there. They can go to school but just have the basic they cannot go higher because we are south. Then the reason we left Vietnam was to give our children the opportunity and the freedom for everybody. We don't want to stay.

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N: Did you ever imagine yourself out of Vietnam before the Communists took over?

L: We love our country. _____ but after three years [we had to move.]

N: Did you know a lot about America before you came here?

L: No, nothing. Because we never think we go to America and we never ever tried to understand everything or try to find some information about America. But we still know_____. _____because we never think we are going to leave our country behind. _____. But when I was in high school we learned geography and we know exactly where is [the] U.S.A.

N: But it wasn't something you really thought about, it was just on the map.

L: No, [we] just think maybe someday our children can go over there for their education.

N: Did you know other people who moved to this country before you moved here?

L: A lot of people left the country before the war. I stayed over there for three years, that means the war happened in 1975 and we left in 1978. That means we stayed over there for three [years]. At that time my husband's family, somebody already left before the war was over, they got here.

N: Could you feel the affects of the Communists after they took over? Did they treat the South a lot differently from the North?

L: Yes. That's why we left.

N: Had they not been so harsh would you have stayed?

L: Maybe, I don't know, its hard to say. I think maybe, if they took over and they tried to help the people have a normal life and everything the same. I think nobody would try to escape.

N: So you realized you had to leave the country when the Communists came over, how did you leave the country? Could you do it legally?

L: Yes, for the first few times we had to try the illegal way. If they know we can go in jail anytime because we tried to escape. That means we had to try to do everything to try to escape by illegal ways. We tried a few times but we are not

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successful. Then for the last time, because at that time the Communists let the Chinese citizens come back to their homeland. We had to become Chinese citizen and then we could go.

N: You and your family all left the country together. Did anyone else, from your husband's family or the nuclear family?

L: No.

N: What did you have to leave behind? What kind of business did you have?

L: Everything. My husband was a doctor in the army and he had a private office.

N: Tell me about your voyage, how did you leave? Did you go on a ship?

L: On a small boat about four hundred people.

N: How did you find out about this?

L: They were my husband's patients.

N: Did you have to pay them?

L: Yes.

N: Did you have to pay a lot?

L: Yes, by gold.

N: So you never went to a refugee camp did you.?

L: No, we _____.

N: But you did go to West Germany?

L: A few days after that we met a German ship, a business German ship in the ocean. Then they _____ during the time on the sea. After, I think about two days, two or three days, they allowed [us] to go to West Germany. We had to stop by Thailand because we had to do [a] health check and paperwork. We were in Thailand for two weeks and after that we went to West Germany for that time.

N: How long did you spend on the boat?

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L: I don't remember, because it happened almost twenty-seven years ago. I think about three or four days.

N: Was it really hard on the boat?

L: No.

N: What did you carry with you?

L: Tape unclear. Because we say if we had it with them, just in case we had to go in jail we lost everything or everything belong to the sea. When we tried to escape we only had one hundred dollars and two of my wedding rings. We left everything behind, money, gold, for the family, because at that time they needed the money. If we go _____ we don't keep anything with us.

N: Whose idea was it to leave Vietnam? Your husband, you, or was it both?

L: I think both because like I told you we can't escape from our country before the war because from my husband's side they are in the government. We don't know exactly, we but knew something happened. If we want[ed] to go we had to leave early, but like I told you, my husband's mother, she's very old. My husband he doesn't want to leave my mother-in-law behind.

N: How old were your kids?

L: I have four children, at that time my oldest was nine, my second son he's about eight and another he's six, and my youngest daughter, she is five.

N: Do they remember leaving?

L: Tape unclear. She only five at that time, she only remembers a little bit, not much.

N: Do you think they remember leaving the country?

L: Just the little things, but my oldest daughter she remembered everything.

N: Why did you decide to go to the United States instead of staying in West Germany?

L: When we arrived in West Germany_____ and my husband he can practice his medical because_____ West German government accepts the degree from France. If we don't go to America, and we stay over

there, he can go to the practice like a normal one for the doctor, but we had to learn German. Another thing, at that time West Germany, they take care [of] the refugee people very, very good. If we don't decide to go to the U.S.A. and we stayed over there, everything would be okay. My husband's side [his family] they are here and they want us to come here with them. They left before 1975. They sponsored for us to come here. My husband, we wanted to have a reunion with his family here.

N: In West Germany, did the government give you housing?

L: Yes, they took care of the refugee people, at that time. We had four children. When you have four children that means you have too much, a lot of children. Usually they have one or two and they don't have an apartment with four or three rooms for us. We had _____ and they give us an apartment, everything we needed for a normal life, we had everything.

N: The kids started school and they started to learn German?

L: Yes, but they had to downgrade about two classes because we cannot speak German fluently so they had to [drop] down two grades.

N: How did the kids feel about Germany?

L: I think at that time because they are only, five, six, seven, eight years old, they don't think anything. Just like normal life, go to school everyday, make friends with the Germany students. I think at that time they don't think anything.

N: When you came to the U.S. you were sponsored, correct? By your husband's family?

L: My husband's sister.

N: Where were they?

L: They lived in Minnesota.

N: When you first came here, what was the first thing that shocked you the most?

L: Everything! When I came here, we lived with my husband's sister for one month in their house. After that we rent a house by ourselves and after I came here about a month I go to work, right away.

N: Where did you work?

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L: Control Data Corporation. They call it CDC.

N: What did you do there?

L: Just assembly.

N: How did you get to the United States? Did you go by plane?

L: Yes, by plane because my husband's side [his family], they had a residence church and they sponsored us to come here. We came here by plane.

N: What were the major differences between here and Vietnam?

L: Everything, the first thing is the language. The second thing is the life around here. Too many things different.

N: Was it very difficult for you to learn the language?

L: Yes, because I had my English whenever I was in high school, that means about 1960-something. When I came here, it was almost twenty years--I never speak English and its hard to me. We had nine months in Germany we only speak German. When we came here everything was a big difference, looks like black and white.

N: Did you want to leave Germany at all or did you not care? When your husband's family sponsored you did you want to leave Germany because you lived there for nine months already, you had a house.

L: When we got the papers from my husband's sister it took us about two months, I think, to fill out the paper because we [were] scared. We don't know what can happen in the future. But I met one gentleman, he's like a translator. He's a young man, he can speak five different languages. He told us you have to _____ because if you left your country behind and you want your children to have a future, then you have to go to the U.S.A. Over here, [in the U.S.], you have more chances. But you know, in West Germany, at that time, everybody was very nice and the government tried to help us. Everything is very good and we had a sponsor, they are a very nice couple. They worked for the government. They tried to help us. When they heard about we going to leave Germany to go to the U.S.A., they were very sad. They told us they don't want [us to] leave, but because we had our own future, they let us go.

N: Where there a lot of Vietnamese people in West Germany?

L: Like I told you on our ship we had four hundred, each group we had about fifty. That means they divide us and then we go to a different city.

N: Did you find it difficult to search for a job?

L: I don't know because I just go to find a job. But my sister-in-law, she brought me to the office to take a test because at that time I could not speak very well English. I just took a test by handwriting and then I passed a test. At that time at the company they needed a lot of employees. I applied and they accepted me. I means I didn't have a hard time finding a job because [in] a month I go to work.

N: You could read English?

L: Yes.

N: When you came over did the U.S. government give you any aid like they did in West Germany?

L: At that time it's easy to have the welfare but when we filled out a lot of paperwork to apply for welfare but we refused. We refused because my husband, he said both of us are healthy and we have two hands, why don't we go to work? And he doesn't want to apply for welfare. We just filled out [the] paperwork for the medical because of our four children. When I have a job and go to work I had a doctor's insurance and then we refused everything. We don't take [anything] from the government. The lady, the social worker, she said she never ever see any refugee family to refuse support from the government. It's her first time. She told us our paperwork is still open, anytime if you need me just come to see me. But sorry, we never ever see her again because after a month I go to work.

N: Was your husband's degree good over here also? Could he use that medical degree in the U.S.?

L: No, it took him about three years to review everything and take the test. Three years.

N: He had to start all over?

L: Yes, he started from the beginning. He didn't go to school but he had a book and he studied and took a test. If he passed the test, I think he had three different tests, one is English test, he took it three times. He could speak French at that time and we could speak German. But to him, the difficult thing is listening and speaking. If he want[ed] to have his degree back here he had to take three different tests. It took him three years. At that time he's not working

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but I told him no, just try to take care of your degree. Let me go to work.

N: Was he frustrated that he had to do it all over again?

L: Yes. From the beginning, everything from the beginning. He went to the library everyday, twelve hours a day, everyday.

N: Did he have any help learning English? Did he go to school?

L: No, he had a text. He had no time to go to school. [I think he took some classes] at the University of Minnesota. I don't remember, maybe one or two or three semesters.

N: You just worked, did you have school?

L: No.

N: Your kids were enrolled in school then? How were they getting along? We're they assimilating well?

L: Yes, easy. They were still young, easy, makes sense. I think for the first few months they cannot speak English very well. But after, because they had that program, the ESL program. I think after six months, maybe seven months or a year they speak very well.

N: Did you have any family members help you, to adjust to life in America?

L: Yes, [they helped us], but we want[ed] to support ourselves. We don't want to ask anybody. They [were] still very nice though, but they have family, they have children and we don't want to bother them.

N: How long did you live with your husband's family?

L: We lived up there for seven years. After that they moved to California because it [was] too cold and they had a job. [So] they moved out of Minnesota.

N: Was there a large Vietnamese community there in Minnesota?

L: Yes, big community.

N: How did you think it affected your life in the U.S.? Did you think it made it easier for you because of the large Vietnamese community or harder for you to get used to the new life?

L: I think maybe from beginning we needed to live in a Vietnamese community because everything is different and difficult. We needed the idea and support of the community, but after, I think about a few years we feel okay, we can go anywhere.

N: Did you go out much?

L: At that time my husband had to study. Monthly [rent] cost \$350. I brought home \$156. That was a two week salary, it was still not enough to pay for the rent. _____ I had about \$156.00 for each week, that means we had _____. Three paychecks, I can pay for the rent, the electricity for the telephone. Then we had only \$156.00 left for whole month. Then at that time we had to bring home some job to do to try to make more money.

N: What other jobs did you do?

L: I don't how to say, but usually on travels you have a kit with you. You have one needle, few threads. We make a thousand of them. Three thousands kits, no one thousands kits we make.

N: How did you find out about that job?

L: My husband's family they saw it for us and then we get that kind of job. We signed up for that every weekend _____. If my children they don't finish the thing, I have to sit down to do because the next morning we had to bring [the kits] to the people to get another one. If I cannot finish, how can tomorrow I give back to them? Besides that I have to work overtime in the weekend, too.

N: Who watched the kids while you were at work, since your husband was at the library?

L: Usually, he went in the morning, when the kids go home, he stay home with them. We take turns taking care of my children.

N: The Vietnam war had a lot of publicity in the United States, did that affect your life here? Where you discriminated against at all for being Vietnamese?

L: No, when we came here, we had a lot of good friends in Minnesota because they are from my husband's sides' friends for a long time. They are from the church and they are very nice. Even now, once a year, my husband sends a card to keep in touch with them. I think, not one hundred percent, but around that time we had a lot of good friends. Sometimes, something small happens, we cannot

act [like] everything [is] one hundred percent perfect. We still have good friends up there, like I told you, once a year we [are] still in-touch with them.

N: Can you remember anything that happened that was kind of discriminatory?

L: Yes, during the holiday coordinator season we bought one sweater. At that time it costs about twenty [dollars] or something, I don't remember. The saleswoman she asked only one driver license [for identification to pay with a check]. When you buy with a check they ask you for your driver's license right? She asked us for our driver's license, how many credit cards, we don't like. We don't buy it and we gave it back to her. Besides that we have a lot of good friends and we love them.

N: In America, what was the easiest thing for you to get used to? Was it the food, was it the language?

L: Language was not easy. I think, in America, the most easy thing, if you want to do something you can do it. Because there are a lot of opportunities.

N: Did you spend a lot of time with the American people [outside of the Vietnamese community]?

L: Usually [we spent time with my] co-workers and their friends. We have a party at my house and we invite all of them to come to my house. We sit down and eat the food and talk and they are very, very nice.

N: Do you think it was easier for your kids to live here than it was for you because of all the new changes?

L: I think for the children they follow the life very, very easy. They are young and they don't remember a lot about Vietnam. But we always teach our children, we brought you here because of your future. If we want to live here, we have no choice, you have to work hard. You have to try to finish your school, at least you have to have four years in the university. If not, we get lost, because we have no choice. Here, we have a lot of opportunity. We want you to have to study hard, work hard, because for your future you need a degree, you need a job, you need money to take care of your family. You are going to have a wife or you are going to have a husband, that means you are going to have a family. You have [to] support [your] family and then you have to have education. If not you cannot take care of your children. My husband we always say, you have to study because it's our goal. When I left my country, I still had my parents, my sisters and my brothers. Everybody stayed there. After I came here, when I became a U.S. citizen, I sponsored my parents. Then my sister and my brother they tried

to escape, too. All my family, we are here now.

N: How do you try to keep Vietnamese traditions alive in your family, especially with the kids who live with American traditions?

L: I think for the kids, when you grow up to get married, don't get married with American customs. Before, when we came here, it was difficult and different. We just think, we had to keep traditional ways, but now I know I am wrong. Yes, I am wrong. They are in school everyday, eight hours, ten hours a day, and they have American friends. [How] can they keep Vietnamese way one hundred percent. It's unfair for them. One time my eldest daughter, she told me she's going to have a boyfriend, he's American. I told her I am so sorry, please forgive me. Before, I think you have to have Vietnamese husband, but now, after twenty years living here, I think I am wrong. Just forgive me and forget because now you have your own future. If you think you have a choice, a right choice, then go ahead.

N: Do you still celebrate a lot of the Vietnamese holidays?

L: Yes, usually, when we came here, Orlando, Jacksonville, or Tampa, usually they celebrate Vietnamese New Year's. For the first few years, when I came to Gainesville, we always went there. After that we have not time and its hard to go and I already sponsored to have a Vietnamese Students at UF [University of Florida] [for] almost eighteen years. Every time something like that we meet a lot of parents. They come from anywhere, from Florida, because they came here to visit their children. I've met a lot of Vietnamese students.

N: Do you think a lot about your life before you came to the U.S.?

L: Yes, I really miss my country because I grow up there. When I came here I was thirty-three years old. I spent thirty-three years in my country, how can I forget. I remember everything until now.

N: Have you ever gone back to visit?

L: No.

N: Do you ever want to?

L: Just my husband and my children just came back to visit [Vietnam]. They just came back about two weeks ago.

N: Why didn't you go?

- L: I have the business, I cannot go.
- N: Let's talk a little bit about the differences between Vietnamese and American culture again. What do you think the differences are, like in education.
- L: [In] each country they have their own different system. I think in America the students, they have more freedom than we [had] in Vietnam. Even for the lives of the children, you can say anything you think in your mind, but in Vietnam, no. Nobody _____. They teach the student, it's different in here because usually for the children, life _____ through the parents. _____ that means in here for the students, for the children, for the young kid you can say anything you think in your mind. You can do anything you want. In Vietnam, we have to belong to the family, we have to listen to the parents. If your parents say yes, then you have to do. I think just small things different, not much.
- N: Do you think that is a good thing, that there is more of a sense of self over here? Do you like this better or do you like the old way better?
- L: If we let the children open their minds, and we listen to them. We will know exactly what do they want, what do they think. If the parents [are] wrong, we can correct the mistake to help our children. But in Vietnam, like I told you, usually parent['s way]. I think here, for the young teenager, for your life, you have more opportunities to go out, to go to school, to find a job. In Vietnam, I just know from house to school and from school to house. We never go out to eat or have a boyfriend, or go to the movies. To have a parent to cook, to wash the dishes, wash the clothes, and sometimes I went to the movies with my mom. I don't have any boyfriends.
- N: When you raised your kids in the United States, how did you try to balance the Vietnamese way and the American way? How much did you let them go towards the American system and the Vietnamese system?
- L: Short time ago, when we came here we try to teach our children keep the Vietnamese way, always. But, I think, if I do something like that, I lost my children because they are here. They grow up in here, everyday they spend eight to ten hours with the school. How can we keep them [in the Vietnamese tradition]?

[End of Side A]

- N: When did you apply for American citizenship?
- L: When did I apply? Oh, after five years. We applied for the U.S. citizenship.

N: Was it easy?

L: Yes, it was easy.

N: What did you have to do?

L: We just studied out of a book, and then when we applied they just asked us simple questions.

N: Do you remember the questions?

L: Yes, they asked me, who is the president to help the black people [gain] more freedom. The second question he asked me, is Rhode Island an island?

N: Why did you want to become an American citizen? Did you get benefits from that?

L: No, it's a [rule] and we applied. Maybe for my children, its more easier, if they want to apply [to] some job [and] they require you have to have U.S. citizenship. It was allowed by law, so we just do it.

N: When you passed the test did you feel like more of an American? Did you feel more a part of this country?

L: Yes, because when we came here we had a lot of good friends and good people. That's why we have to do something to pay back to the government, to the American people. That's why I always tell my children, you have to work hard because you have freedom. Around you, the people, they support you, now you have to pay back by yourself. You have to do something to pay back. That means you study to get a degree, get a job, go to work, and you have to become a good citizen, a good employee. You owe your future to them, you have to pay back. It's your responsibility.

N: How did you end up in Gainesville? How did you end up opening this restaurant?

L: When we have seven years in Minnesota, it's too cold and we want to try to find warm weather. My husband's friends, they are here and he want[ed] to come here to work. The first thing [is because of] the warm weather. When he came here he had to take a Florida medical license [test]. He passed, he got a job, and we moved here.

N: What kind of doctor is he?

- L: When he was in Vietnam, he was a surgeon. But, when he came here, the first thing for the doctor, at that time he was about, I don't know how old is he, but take a long time to review for becoming a surgeon and it was not easy. He just became a family doctor.
- N: In your eyes, do you see yourself as a true American, more than Vietnamese? Or do you see yourself as Vietnamese first and American second?
- L: It's hard to say, but I [am] still Vietnamese, but besides that, I still consider [that]. I am an American. I've lived here more than twenty-six years and I think, maybe half and half.
- N: Do you think your kids will continue Vietnamese traditions with their children? Is the Vietnamese tradition very important to them?
- L: Yes, I still try to tell them we are Vietnamese, we cannot change anything about that. But besides that, our lives [are] here. The Vietnamese traditions, we still teach them to keep it because if you want to change or you want to forgot we still cannot. Maybe someday they will forget because it's easy. We always tell them, we [are] still Vietnamese and try to keep the basics. Even, in the future, when you have a wife or you have a husband and you have the children, please keep traditional. Try. Vietnamese have some bad things and good things, and Americans, we have some bad things and we have the good things. Try to balance, take both the good and bad.
- N: What don't you like about American culture?
- L: When you look around the world, a lot of people they don't have anything--food, freedom, education--they don't have like us. A lot of people, they just want to have a little bit. Here we have everything, we have a lot of freedom and we still have people who don't, but most, fifty or seventy percent. We have most of everything here. When you have everything, maybe we just keep thinking, oh, we don't have enough. We want more of everything. Sometimes, to me, here we have more than enough. I don't want to talk a lot about different things, just the basics because maybe I will hurt some people and I don't want do it. With me, because I came from Vietnam and I look around the world. The people, they just need about one bread or maybe one cup of rice a day. Here, we have more than that. Sometime we have but we don't think we have enough and we want more. That is the only thing, it's my idea. I think here, we have more opportunity. If you want to do something and you try the best then you can do it. Maybe not one hundred percent but maybe fifty, seventy percent. You can do it if you have something in your mind and you try to keep, how can I say. . . like

me, all my children, now they [have] grown up. They have a job, they have the family. I have two left, they are still single. So many people ask me, why don't I stay home, enjoy my housewife life. But to me, housewife life is boring. Just cooking, washing, cleaning every day. The life to me means nothing, I want to do something. I want to help my children. I know how hard, how difficult for the student life. You have to work hard, study hard. Besides that I saw a lot of Vietnamese students, they try to do something, like to support the community. To introduce the Vietnamese community with their friends. That's why I told them, I will help you because I want to do something to keep Vietnamese tradition and Vietnamese blood in your body. I told them, because usually, once a year they make a Vietnamese magazine, that talks about our culture, our history, our lives. They introduce [this] to everybody and I told them I'll help you because my goal is to keep and continue. Here, we are Vietnamese and U.S. citizens, the first thing is to have your own life and after that you have to contribute your life to the society because they helped you. You have to [do] something for the country, for this country. They accepted us, they give us a lot of opportunity to do anything. We have freedom, we have human rights, we have everything. We have to pay back everything you owe to them. Like it told to my VSO [Vietnamese Student Organization] students too, first thing for future, second thing for your family, and third thing for the people around you. You learn a lot from them, now you have to do something for them.

N: Do you think, by living here still, you are going to constantly change your views. Do you think you are become more American or do you think you've stopped?

L: More American than Vietnamese. I don't know how much, but we have to change because if we keep going by traditional Vietnamese [ways] than we will lose children, we will get lost. I have to adopt to the life here. But about how many percent I don't know.

N: In the end, are you glad you decided to come to the United States.

L: Yes.

N: Do you have anything else you'd like to say? Any last thoughts?

L: Sometimes I talk with my friends, usually, we have the same thoughts about almost everything. For education we want everybody to have an at least four years. A B.S. degree because it's basic. If after that, you have more chances and more time to go to school, it the best. My eldest daughter, she has a bachelor's in business administration but she went to work about a short time, one or two years. She went to Minnesota for two years, she has a master's degree, [in] occupational therapy. My third son, he has a B.S. and M.I.S.

degree, [in] management information system. My second son, he has a master's degree, [in electrical engineering]. My youngest daughter, she has an M.I.S. degree. Now they have a job and they go to work. You have a job, you are the lucky one. You have to hold in your hand your opportunity. You have to work, you have to respect everybody around you. If we don't respect everybody, it's not easy. I still tell my children about the Vietnamese custom, you have to keep it. When you go to work try to make everything easy, try to respect your boss, respect your co-worker and you have to work hard to help people. If you do good for the people, then you feel good. That is why, when I try to do something, then if its good then I feel good. I always try to tell my children you have to listen to everybody. If you are wrong correct it, if you are right keep it. You have to study, you have learn. In Vietnam we have the idiom they said even if you are seventy years old you still not perfect. You still have to learn every day until you die. If you are wrong, you have to change, if you are right, keep. We always tell our children always try the best you can. Never ever give up. Sometime if we have something difficult, try to correct yourself, calm down and then tomorrow will be okay.

I don't have to go to work, I stay home to enjoy my housewife life. When I make [the] decisions to come and [open] this restaurant, my children, my husband, they [were] against me. They don't want me to go to work because they wanted me to go home. Before I came to Gainesville, I think in my mind someday I have to have a restaurant. Even now in Gainesville we have some Vietnamese restaurants but everybody cooks a different way. I want to introduce my way. When the owners try to sell me this business it took me about two weeks to think about getting in. At first, my husband and my children they against me. They told me, mom please stay home. My husband he told me, if, from now on to the rest of my life, if you love me please stay home with me. He told me something like that. I have no answer because he told me this and I cannot refuse. I love him and I love my family. After a short time he knows I always dream in my mind to have a restaurant. It was only opened for nine months, but I closed and I stayed home. When they sell to me, after a short time my husband said to me if you want to do, do it. He let me do it. I owned this restaurant about seventeen months. Business is not very good but my customers love the way I cook because it's the traditional Vietnamese food. I am happy. My dreams come true, I don't know how long I can handle this kind of business. To me, I always try the best I can, everyday, when I see my customers they enjoy the food.

N: Do you think that if you were still living in Vietnam you would have been able to open your own business?

L: I don't know, we don't live in Vietnam. Over here too many things are different.

In Vietnam, usually the life of the wife, we always stay home. Just a few go to work, but usually they stay home. It's the traditional Vietnamese way, stay home, the wife, the mother, the wife take care of the family, take care of the children. Usually if you have the chance to stay home, they stay home. More than sixty percent, we stay home. My husband he has enough money. I think if I stay in Vietnam I don't think I open a restaurant.

N: Do you think you still would have wanted to open a restaurant if you were still in Vietnam? Would it still would have been your dream?

L: I think if I stay[ed] in Vietnam, I wouldn't have the dream in my mind for the restaurant. I don't have to do it. But here I want to do. The first thing, I don't want to stay home, nothing to do. The second thing, I want to introduce the traditional Vietnamese food. I want my customer to enjoy the food.

N: This ends our interview.

[End of Interview]