



ASIA
IN
LAWRENCE

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ASIA IN LAWRENCE

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Oral History	Mary Armitage - Joan Kelly
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Designer	Joseph Blackburn

THANK YOU

Southeast Asian Community, Lawrence
Sister Helen, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Asian Center
Forest Foundation
Lawrence Cultural Council
Heritage State Park
Gerry Kirk
Catherine Monahan
Chris Cheltowski
Eileen Mele
Ken Skulski
Helen Sapuppo
Marie Leone
Bob Hamel

HISTORY OF IMMIGRATION

1. The Colonial period, during which neither Great Britain nor the American colonies had effective control of immigration and the overwhelming number of all immigrants came from the British Isles and were Protestant.
2. The era of the American Revolution and beyond (1775-1820), when war, both here and in Europe, inhibited immigration.
3. The era of the "old" immigration (1820-ca. 1880), in which most immigrants came from the British Isles, Germany, and Scandinavia and were primarily Protestant Christians (large numbers of Irish and Germans were Roman Catholic.)
4. The era of the "new" immigration (ca. 1880-1924), when most immigrants came from central, southern, and eastern Europe and were largely Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, and Jewish.
5. The era of the national origins quota system (1924-65), in which rigorous regulation reduced the volume of immigration greatly, and most immigrants were from the countries of the "old" immigration or the quota-free new world.
6. The era of liberalized restrictions (1965 to the present), in which most immigrants have come from Asia and Latin America, or, what is often called the "Third World."

THE TWO WAVES OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN REFUGEES

Two waves of refugees are generally identified. Many in the first wave were military personnel, civil servants, teachers, farmers, fishermen, employees of the Americans, and Catholics. They recognized that their middle- and upper-class lifestyles would not be compatible with a communist regime; they feared reprisals and personal harm, so escape was a necessity.

The second wave consisted of refugees who arrived in the United States after 1975. Poor agricultural harvests, the economic drain of continued fighting in Laos and Cambodia, loss of jobs, and generally poor economic conditions contributed to the push. Many also feared being sent to "reeducation" centers and work camps and being forcibly moved away from their urban environment.

In the first wave, 49 percent were under 36 years of age; in the second wave, 58 percent. Family size was four in the first group and four to five in the second. Forty-one percent were Catholic and 40 percent Buddhist in the first wave; 29 percent were Catholic and 47 percent Buddhist in the second. The first wave was generally more familiar with Western ways and culture than the second, although the latter also included members of the intelligentsia who had been unable to leave earlier.

Prior to 1970, there were approximately 20,000 Vietnamese in the United States, and the number of Cambodians and Laotians were too small to be counted. By 1980, there were 415,235 Indochinese, of which 78 percent were Vietnamese, 16 percent Cambodians, and 6 percent Laotians. In 1990, these figures had risen to 614,547 Vietnamese, 149,014 Laotian, 147,411 Cambodians, and 90,082 Hmong.

BUDDHISM IN LAWRENCE

The arrival of the Southeast Asians introduced to the community the philosophy of Buddha. There are eight basic tenets that are central to practicing this philosophy.

Right View means to believe in the law of cause and effect and not to be deceived by appearances.

Right Thought means the resolution not to cherish desires, not to be greedy, not to be angry, and not to do any harmful deed.

Right Speech means the avoidance of lying words, idle words, abusive words and double-tongues.

Right Behavior means not to destroy any life, not to steal, or not to commit adultery.

Right Livelihood means to avoid any life that would bring shame.

Right Effort means to try to do one's best diligently toward the right direction.

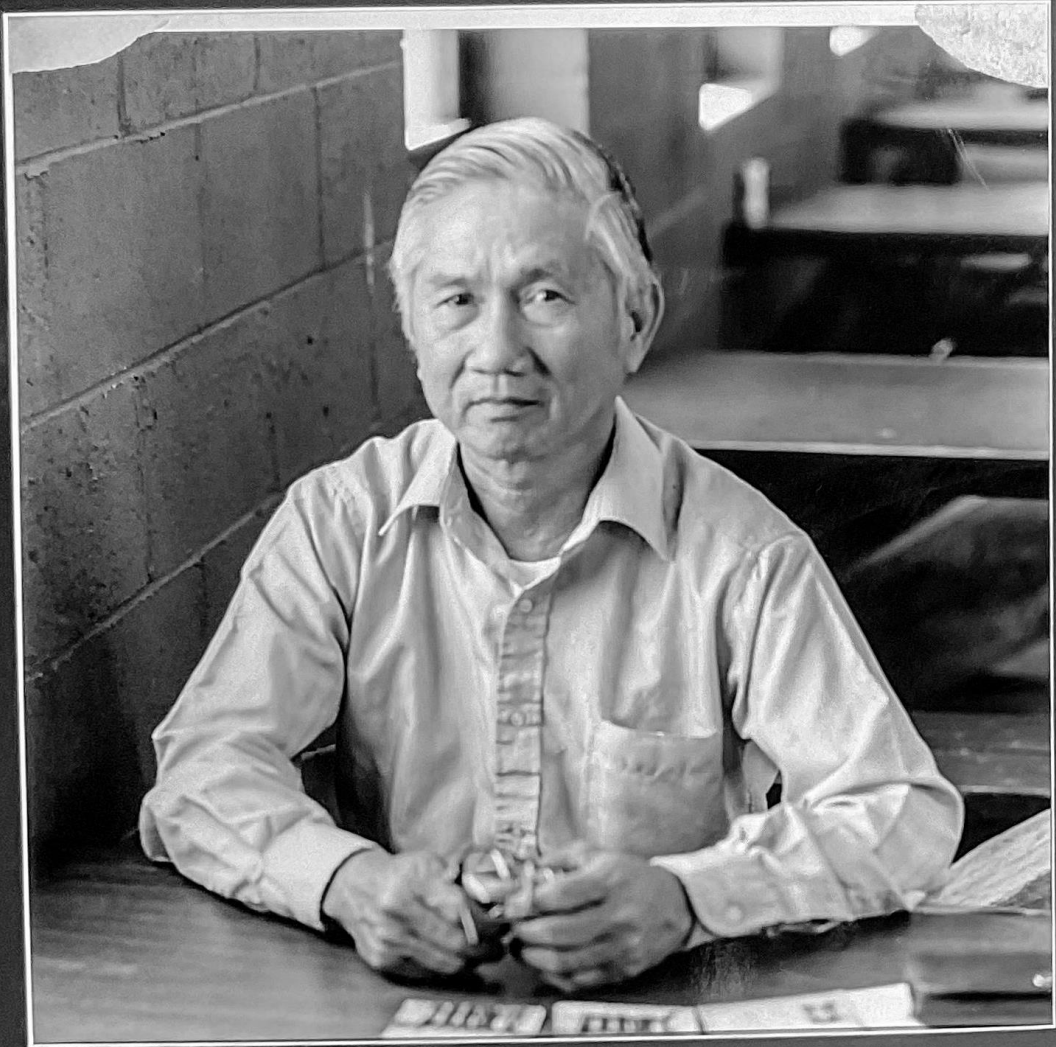
Right Mindfulness means to maintain a pure and thoughtful mind.

Right Concentration means to keep the mind right and tranquil for its concentration, seeking to realize the mind's pure essence.

LOEL A. POOR
PHOTOGRAPHER AND PRINTER

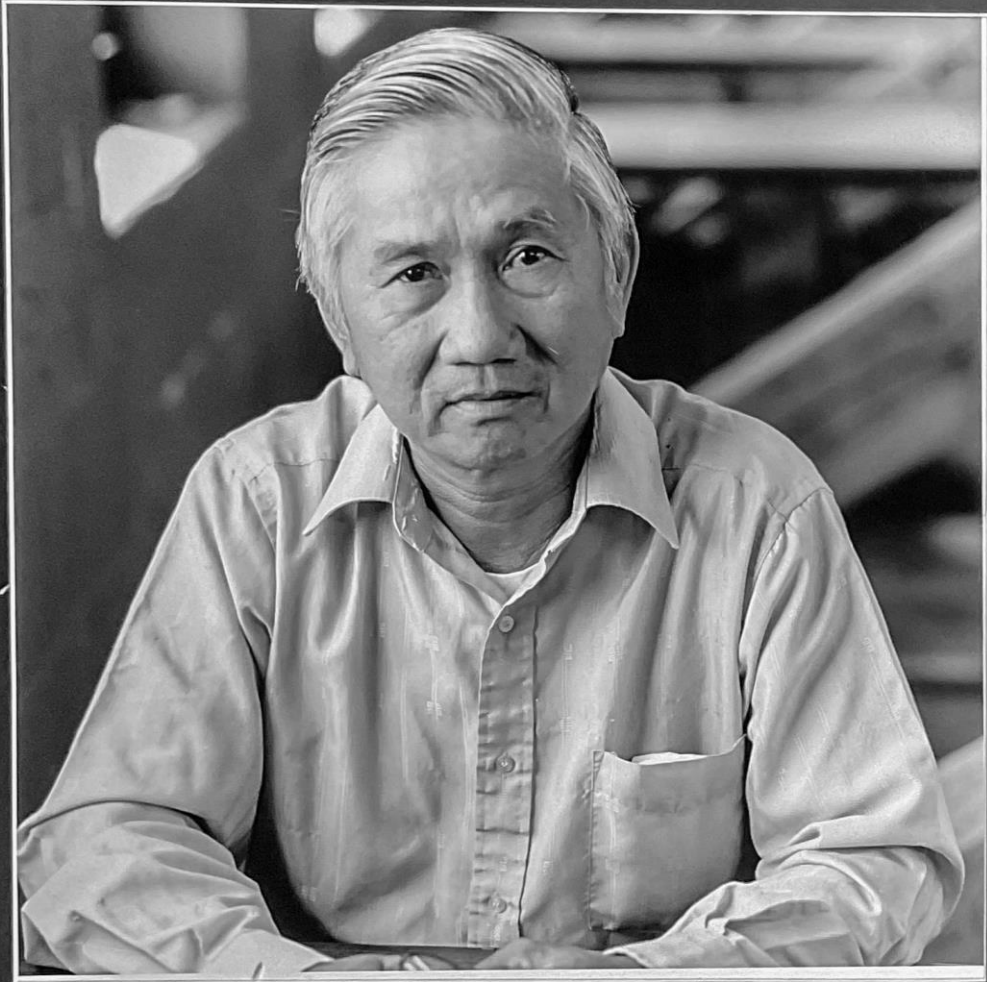
The photographs in this exhibit were taken and printed by Loel A. Poor, photographic artist. Ms. Poor graduated from Lasell College where she majored in advertising. She soon developed her artistry for photography and now has an extensive portfolio.

In addition to the ASIA IN LAWRENCE exhibit, she has shown her work in many places. Most current is her photographic exhibit, AIDS, THE CHALLENGE TO EDUCATE. This collection of images has received critical acclaim and has been widely exhibited throughout New England and the Mid-Atlantic States. This work was selected by the Human Rights Campaign Fund for an exhibit in Washington D.C. at President Clinton's inauguration events.



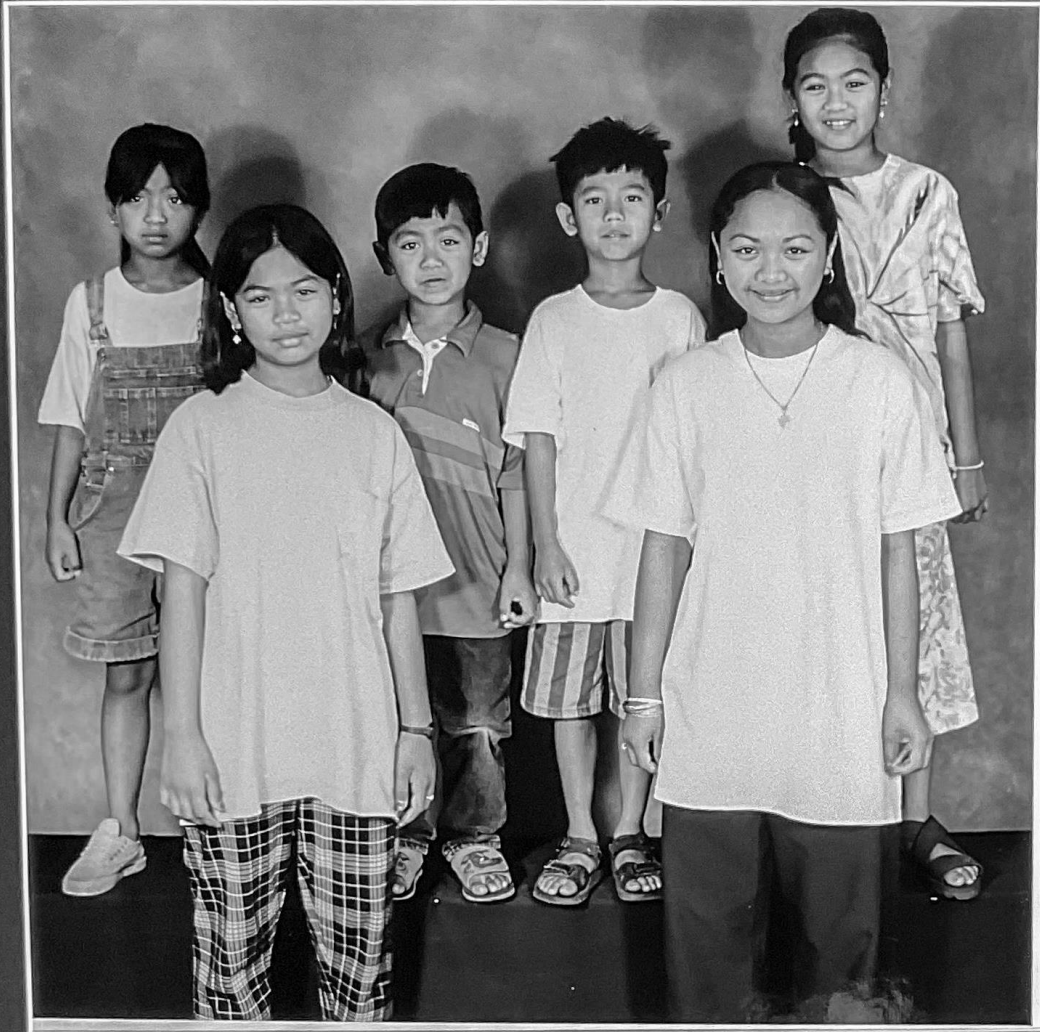
HOANG VO
Vietnam

I was born in Saigon, capital, South Vietnam went to army beginning in 1961 to 1975 when the Communist come South Vietnam, all people about knowledge business, rich man put in jail, Put into jail, thousand people. Five year six month, five year and six months. Two government, United States and Vietnamese sign agreement, free many prisoner, after freedom came United States. Whole family, my children.



HOANG VO
Vietnam

I never think come back because I am
refugee because I am refugee United
States Government take my family here,
have new life and have freedom.



OEUN SOUNG FAMILY
Cambodia
Sokhorn, Sokil
Sophorn, Brian, David Meaf, Sokla

I work so much hours, I work some eight-
five hours, seven days a week. I need
the money. I have five children. We
need food. We need a dress. And we
need a money to go to college. That's
why I want to work and save money.
My children do very well at school.
Teachers say good.



HUE KHUU FAMILY
China/Vietnam

Hard for me just with the language.



RAVY SOK/SAB CHHAT FAMILY
Cambodia
Ravan Sab
Ang Bou, Ravy Sok, Chhat Sab

Yah, we come to the 1979 we come to Thailand to Kaoidang Camp. Yah, my whole family, they come to Thailand. I got my mother, and I got one brother and one younger brother, and me. Four people. Oh my father. He died. The Communists killed him in Pol Pot.



RAVY SOK/SAB CHHAT FAMILY
Cambodia

Scott, Janath, Johnny,
Darana, Ang Bou, Darany, Ravon
Ravy Sok, Chhat Sab, Ravuth

Yah, We scared at first. You know,
some people they say it's a bad
town in Lawrence, but, you know,
that's good place for me to stay. I
come in here that's very nice. I know
nice people. I never got trouble with
some people. I like stay in Lawrence.



RAVY SOK/SAB CHHAT FAMILY
Cambodia

Janath Sok, Scott Sok, Johnny Sok

All my kids are born in the United
States. They all citizens.



HUE KHUU FAMILY
China/Vietnam

My and Lisa Khuu

Think Americans are doing their things.
.....they grow flowers, decorate a lot.



HUE KHUU FAMILY
China/Vietnam
Nghiep - Lee Trung - Hung

Two sons stayed with my mother - I bring
five.



RAVY SOK/SAB CHHAT FAMILY
Cambodia
Darana Sab

I come by myself with my kids. My husband, he don't want to come back. I come in here in 1986 but my husband he just come behind me. The first time I live in 4 Prospect Court, You know up the hill on Lawrence General. I stay here until 1989. I think 1990 I moving to South Lawrence. We just move around in Lawrence but we never moved out. Yah, 1987 I have another girl.



RAVY SOK/SAB CHHAT FAMILY
Cambodia

Johnny Sok and Darany Sab

We just live in the refugee camp and Americans they going to be give some food to everybody. Some people, you know, that doesn't have the meal for the kids. We had to find the meal and get them to feed them, and take care of everyone.



HERESA CHUN
YOON KIM CHOI
Korea

But coming here, I don't know, I faced
two different cultures, two different
country, lot of little complicated things.
All oriental peers people with the same
feeling. They are American but is looking
outside is different.



EH SAY/SOE FAMILY
Burma (Myanmar)
U Than Soe, Benedict Bright Soe, Jean Eh Say

When we were in the university, the final year, we had a very big student strike. And at that time my husband was, you know, put into jail. He was punished for three years. When he came out and everything was clear and he is knowing that he is not really a politician, so they released him and then, we are good citizens, you know, I mean in our country. So we left the country. When I was in Thailand my husband changed his job. He went to the refugee camp and applied for a job as an ESL teacher.



EH SAY/SOE FAMILY
Burma (Myanmar)
Benedict Bright Soe - Jean Eh Say

My son was born in Rangoon, Benedict Bright San Say but when he came to the United States they changed it to Benedict Say because it is too long. So they call him Ben at school, but we call him Bright. You know, he is a child that is giving to us by God, and then he is a blessed child. So that's why I named him Benedict, and Bright because I want him to be bright, not only, you know, with intelligence but also to brighten up the corner where he is.



EH SAY/SOE FAMILY
Burma (Myanmar)
Jean Eh Say

I went to a private beauty school,
and I worked with a very famous
actress in my country. And because
of the actress, people saw the title
and then they know my name.



EH SAY/SOE FAMILY
Burma (Myanmar)
Jean Eh Say

I was born in Pegu of Burma. I love my country and my people very much. Even if I can love other people here in this country - in a foreign country - why can't I love my people in my country. So that is the sad thing. But it's too bad, you know, when people are crazy about power - that is the worst thing. They have power, they have arms. The people in our country they don't have any arms, so they can't do anything.



THERESA CHUN
Korea

So many people never been outside New England. So they don't know another culture. And my children was young/they come home crying. Mom, they teasing me "small eyes" and "slant nose" and "you're Chinese" and I just feel - so many times I was upset.



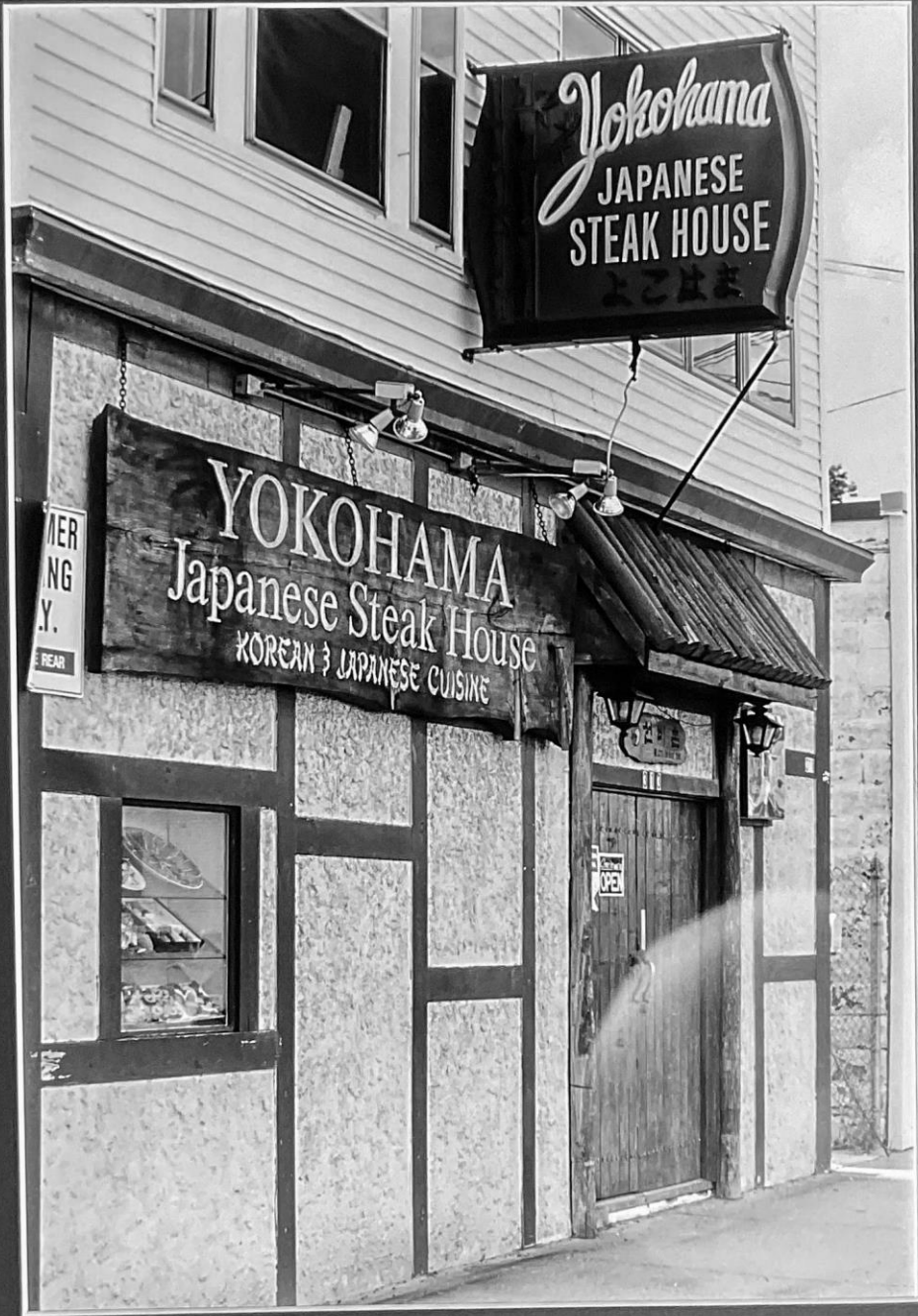
OEUN SOUNG FAMILY
Cambodia
Sophom, David Meaf
Sokhom, Oeun with Brian on lap, Sokia
Chhim Meaf, Soki

Because my country is at war, you know,
and all the people die from the war
that's why, and you know, I run out from
my country. I run out from the Khmer
Rouge. I run out from the Vietnamese.
My sponsor from Bristol, Connecticut. Very
nice to my family, but her doesn't know
that my family eat rice. Give me ham,
fried cheese and milk. I eat but, you
know, if make me so, not strong enough
for them. I ask her give me a rice. She
say, learn to eat ham and cheese. They
told me like that.



HUE KHUU FAMILY
China/Vietnam
Lille & Hung

We think America has good education
and has like good factors. Many
people help our family.






111 So. Broadway

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