

Natalie Hu

Mr. Greco

English 3

9 April 2019

Running Away To Home

Anne Nguyen's dreams as a child were to see the world. "Seeing the eiffel tower, seeing Rome, Michelangelo... Cairo; seeing the tombs, the pyramids..."(Nguyen). She claims that all you need nowadays is a passport to be able to travel the world; however, not everyone is able to experience those freedoms. Anne Nguyen stresses that traveling is one of the many things that people living in first world countries take for granted these days. She elaborates that as a child, she herself was prevented from these rights. Growing up in communist Vietnam, Anne Nguyen reflects on the hindrances of her childhood caused by the her country's situations.

The effects of communism on people's life is indisputable, putting people in unfair situations out of their control, shaping their experiences and opportunities for the rest of their lives. Her story exemplifies how trivial it is to teach the younger generation of their privileges, and how instances of uncontrollable misfortune on one's life's should be studied to prevent atrocities of the future.

Karl Marx, the founder of communism, believed that communism was an ideal solution to the many problems caused by the capitalist system. This included the idea that capitalism inherently causes economic imbalance leading to large wealth gaps, as well as that it lead to a corruption of power dictated by the upper class. Marx believed that the creation of various

classes made it so that the economic and political upper class relied on the exploitation of the lower working class. Communism was the result of an attempt to make a fair system with the idea of unconditional equality at its core. Many people believe that the system was actually an idea forged from the spite of Marx's rough life. After growing up with his wealthy parents, Marx continued on to get married, but remain unemployed, largely using his parents as a source of money. After his parents passed away, Marx, his wife, and his children spent much of their years in complete and utter poverty. According to novel "The Politically Incorrect Guide to Communism" by Paul Kengor, "...four of Marx's six children died before he did" and "two of his daughter committed suicide". The book goes on to explain how rather than bringing liberation to fellow people in poverty, it is often questioned if instead Marx's intent was to make other people experience the same struggles that he did. Rather than for the good of mankind, some historians have concluded that communism was a fantasy brought upon by his insecurities and hardship.

Over time, Marxist beliefs spread to the East, eventually taking control of China, North Korea, Laos, and Vietnam. Vietnam's implementation of communism differs a bit from the other countries. With a history of French Imperialism, Vietnam sought out to find independence. After World War II in September 2, 1945, the Treaty of Versailles provided hope for freedoms for all countries, explicitly stating that all countries should not be under the imperialistic power of another. However, it was implied that the treaty only applied to Western or European nations. As explained in Eric Foner's book titled "Give Me Liberty", in attempt to gain liberation from European control, leader Ho Chi Minh used communist propaganda as means to unify and rile up the country's people. "Inspired by the Bolshevik Revolution, he joined the Communist Party and traveled to the Soviet Union. He helped found the Indochinese Communist Party in 1930 and the League for the Independence of Vietnam, or Viet Minh, in 1941."(History.com editors).

The communist revolution led to the Vietnam War, in which the the US would take effort in aiding Southern Vietnam against the communist revolution in the world. The Vietnam war, which lasted 20 years, was settled on April 30, 1975 as the communists took over the country.

Anne Nguyen, grew up in the midst of the Vietnam war. As a child, Anne grew up with her mother, father, and 3 younger brothers in Saigon, Vietnam. Her mother was a high school chemistry teacher, and her father the principal. Before the fall of Saigon, she and her family lived a fairly carefree life. After her parents divorced, she attended a boarding school and spent her time in the dormitories attending to chores, preparing for school, learning lessons, and playing with the other children around campus.

When the communists took over in 1975, Ann was just 10 years old. She states that as a child, she remembers seeing announcements on TV of what had occurred. Being a child, the adults in her life attempted to shelter her and other children from what was happening. However, she as well as other children knew what was going on, piecing together information from the TV, school news, and other sources. Anne recalls that the very first change put in place was the leveling of wealth. The system involved setting various quotas depending on the number of people in one's family. For instance, each person may account for certain amount of rice or bread. The leveling of the wealth led to extreme poverty. Ann's grandfather and uncles were among the wealthier class, and were sent to reeducation camps as a result. As described in Nghia Vo's book "The Bamboo Gulag", imprisonment upon upper class citizens was common, and the intentions were rather misconstrued. Vo's book explains that at the reeducation camps, it was very common for prisoners to be publicly executed to strike fear into those who do not conform to the communist way. Most targets were among teacher, musicians, celebrities, politicians, and christians. In Anne's Uncle's case, it was because he was wealthier. Although one could be sent to a reeducation camp for their profession or lifestyle as well. Due to

the communist system, Anne claims that people were no longer motivated to do any work. “Why should I work especially hard for the sake of others?...” “ So the people were starving, we don’t have money to buy food, there was no food available to buy. So it was very hard, very hard time.” (Nguyen)

As a result of the hard lifestyle, many people tried to escape the country. One night, Anne’s mother called her in and told her that they were going to the South, where the coastline is, in order to get on a boat and escape. Word had gotten back there there may be refugee camps in Thailand or Malaysia, but nothing was certain. Using an excuse that they needed to see relatives in the South, Anne was pulled out of school and began her escape. Not before saying goodbye to a few close friends. Carrying only 1 small bag per person, she and her family left the country. Most of the people escaped over the ocean and were nicknamed “boat people”. From 1975 to 1995, it was estimated that two million some people fled the country by boat, landing in countries such as the Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, HongKong, Singapore, and the Philippines. There were multiple kinds of boat people. As Anne stated, once there they would you bribe border patrol guards so that one’s boat could head to the refugee camps in the aforementioned countries; Anne was this type. There was also the kind that attempted to sneak out by luck, usually in the middle of the night. Anne says she does not remember how many day they spent on the boat, but when they landed, she recalls that it was a beautiful tourist beach in Malaysia. Shortly after reaching the shore, the Malaysian government came to deal with the immigrants. They were then taken to a refugee camp for 10 days. Fellow Vietnamese escapee Nga Dang who escaped by cargo ship and landed in Hong Kong aid from Danish Fisherman describes the living situation in the refugee camps to be rather difficult. “There was not enough food, and people got sick easily...” (Nguyen). After 10 days, Anne’s group was then pushed back out on the boat and told to go in “that direction”. With no preparation or certainty of

direction, she along with the many other passengers believed that death was near, and that it would be a long time until they reach land. This dangerous journey full of uncertainty was one, unfortunately, many people had to experience, with some not even surviving the trip. Luckily, their boat crossed paths with some local fisherman. "And so the Indonesian fishermen, we asked them, so they speak some Chinese dialect, and so some of the people on our boat could. So then they take us to the camp. And so when we get to the camp, we were staying there for 9 months before our family was fortunate enough that the US sponsor us" (Nguyen)

They would eventually reach Indonesia and be put on a Pan Am flight to the US. "It was night and day, so the first thing was, so when I was in the refugee camp, I was running around barefoot. So by the time someone said 'okay you are going to America, you are going to fly on Panam airline, here you have a new pair of "flip flop".' And so when we get onto the plane, there was a beautiful stewardess, she served me chicken, and I thought it was the best meal in my life."(Nguyen). Although Ann was fortunate enough to come out the other end, her struggles reflect one of the many negative effect that communism had on its people.

The boat people then found themselves in the Los Angeles, United States. Anne remarks that she "...was so amazed because what I see in my mind, what I know about America was the wild west form the TV, and Hawaii 5-O. So when I come here, it was so different. But in LA, the part where I was staying, there was a lot of asians, so I felt like I wasn't the only one. And there were a lot of Vietnamese too, I feel just like I was at home." (Nguyen)

However, the culture differences proved to be one of the plethora of challenges that Vietnamese immigrants faced in the US. Historian Jamaica Kreps, graduate of UC Santa Cruz's' masters' program in History, explains, "There wasn't a lot of Vietnamese immigration during the war. However, as the war was ending, many South Vietnamese left the country as refugees. The United States accepted many refugees and had settlement cities throughout the country.

The Vietnam War was so divisive in the U.S. This of course impacted how refugees were received. Many Americans wanted to forget the war and refugees became a reminder.”(Nguyen). Because most of the South Vietnamese immigrants to the U.S. were refugees, they came with very little money. They faced discrimination because of this, often living in poor neighborhoods. Many first generation immigrants did not speak English, and consequently faced many limitations and discrimination because of this. For instance, many organizations refrained from hiring Vietnamese refugees, which limited job opportunities. Some Vietnamese refugees were sent to states with inhospitable climates, such as Minnesota, and would then ended up relocating to states that had larger Vietnamese communities. “It makes sense that they would want to live in communities that shared language, culture, and means of support. Many moved to San Jose and Los Angeles, California. There, they faced poverty and discrimination. Parents worked hard to ensure their children had access to a better life through education. Many refugees will work in service industries, such as restaurants and nail salons.” Kreps explains. Anne says that by the time they made it to the US, she was placed into 10th grade and in the ESL program, or English as a second language program. “... I had P.E., Math, ESL, and health science. That's the 10th grade class I had. It was really rough. It was really hard.”(Nguyen) However Ann elaborates that due to being in a classroom full of people of a similar situation, it comforted her and she was able to pick up the language fairly quickly. She reminisces one specific testing movement. “The time I translated the question, the test was already over, so the teacher let us take it home. But still it took 2 to 3 hours to complete.” (Nguyen) Nowadays EeSL programs are still a prevalent part of schooling in America, largely catering to the high number of Mexican and Latin American immigrants in the United States.

Immigration is increasingly difficult for people, with the numerous travel bans and quotas being enacted impacted by the US government. Anne Nguyen started dating the “I think we

cannot live in fear and limited our freedom. I think it is narrow minded and alienating the US with others.”(Nguyen). Due to the wars, there had been an influx of immigrants to the US during the late 1990s. Consequently there has been an increased number of Asians in America. In the past, the US government has issued acts to prevent teens from immigrating to the US. A similar thing is now happening with the Mexicans among other races. With the threats from President Trump of the building of a wall to prevent immigration, increased border patrol and an often corrupt visa system, immigrating to the United States is harder than ever. It is vital that we learn from the past, and see that situations such as communism, and other situations which puts people in danger.

Even though a similar outcome persists with each trial, countries continue to try and fail to implement laws and rules to regulate their country. It can be argued whether communism has good intentions or not, but regardless, its methods of implementations have harmed the lives of many, leading to mass poverty in the country ,or the difficulties in attempting to escape from it. Anne Nguyen’s story is one of many. Communism is not just prevalent in Vietnam, but many other countries as well. However, as citizens of a country that does not implement communism, it would be foolish to state that it doesn’t affect us as well. With many communities and refugees of communist countries still around us today, it is vital that we learn from stories like Anne Nguyen, in being courteous, mindful, and most of all grateful of our situations. Ann concludes “This country is not perfect, there are so many social economic problems, a lot of problems in this country. But if your come from a country where I am from, this country is so much far better. So I wanted to remind not only my children, but your younger generation, and that is that do not take this for granted. Because a lot of people in all corners of the world, just dream of doing just one piece of the things that we are able to do to have to day, and they can’t even do it. Let say that they are just as smart, justa s capable, they just... All they need is an opportunity for them.”

Work Cited:

Amer, Ramses. "Vietnam in 2010: Regional Leadership." *Asian Survey*, vol. 51, no. 1, 2011, pp. 196–201. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/as.2011.51.1.196.

Dang, Nga. Personal interview. 1 April 2019.

"Ho Chi Minh." *History.com*, A&E Television Networks, 6 July 2010, www.history.com/topics/vietnam-war/ho-chi-minh-1.

"Vietnam War Timeline." *History.com*, A&E Television Networks, 13 Sept. 2017, www.history.com/topics/vietnam-war/vietnam-war-timeline.

"First Days Story Project." *PBS*, Public Broadcasting Service, www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/lastdays/firstdaysstoryproject/slideshow/refugee-camps
/

Foner, Eric. *Give Me Liberty !: an American History*.

Hersh, Seymour M. "Everyday Life in Communist Vietnam Can Be Surprising." *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 14 Aug. 1979,

www.nytimes.com/1979/08/14/archives/everyday-life-in-communist-vietnam-can-be-surprising-in-ho-chi-minh.html.

Kengor, Paul. *The Politically Incorrect Guide to Communism*. Regnery Publishing, 2017.

Kreps, Jamaica. Personal Interview. 9 April 2019.

Nguyen, Ann. Personal interview. 10 March 2019. you

The New York Times, The New York Times,

movies2.nytimes.com/learning/general/onthisday/big/0430.html.

"Vietnamese Americans : Asian-Nation :: Asian American History, Demographics, & Issues."

Asian, www.asian-nation.org/vietnamese.shtml#sthash.Osbf62UN.dpbs.

Vo, Nghia M. *The Bamboo Gulag: Political Imprisonment in Communist Vietnam*. McFarland, 2004.

"World: THE LEGACY OF HO CHI MINH." *Time*, Time Inc., 12 Sept. 1969,

content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,901394,00.html.

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Focus (Angle and Research) and MLA Format	<p>Writer doesn't use interview transcripts and/or there is no indication of secondary research.</p> <p>No indication of research-backed questioning.</p> <p>In-text citations and works cited page are missing.</p> <p>Honors:</p> <p>Nonfiction book source is not used/cited in the text, and/or two academic database sources are</p>	<p>Writer makes limited use of most but not all of the required interview transcripts and secondary sources, or relies solely on "star" interview transcript. Interview testimony prompted by research-based questions is vague.</p> <p>Not a clear sense of an informed angle, although a view of the subject's character is certainly present.</p> <p>In-text citations and works cited page exist, but they contain many</p>	<p>Writer makes satisfactory use of the required four interview transcripts and five secondary sources, including several database articles, although some interview testimony or secondary source material may be either overused or too limited.</p> <p>Interview testimony prompted by research-based questions is apparent, but could create a</p>	<p>Writer makes intelligent use of the required four interview transcripts and five secondary sources, including several database articles.</p> <p>Effective use of interview testimony prompted by research-based questions gives reader a clear sense of an informed angle.</p> <p>In-text citations and works cited page are perfect by MLA standards.</p> <p>Honors: In addition to the basic research requirements above,</p>

	<p>missing.</p>	<p>errors or inconsistencies.</p> <p>Honors:</p> <p>Nonfiction book source and two academic database sources are cited in the text, but they do not effectively define or deepen the researchable issue. In-text and/or Works Cited citation has multiple flaws.</p>	<p>clearer sense of an informed angle.</p> <p>In-text citations and works cited page are close to MLA standards, but there are some errors.</p> <p>Honors:</p> <p>Nonfiction book source and two academic database sources are used to define and/or develop the researchable issue. These sources are cited in the text and in the Works Cited, although there</p>	<p>at least one nonfiction book source and two academic database sources are used compellingly to define and deepen the researchable issue. These sources are cited accurately in the text and in the Works Cited.</p>
--	------------------------	--	---	---

			are citation flaws.	
Organization and Development	<p>The written sections lack organizational devices, such as paragraphs, sections, chapters, and transitions.</p> <p>Demonstrates little understanding of the topic.</p> <p>Ideas are not expressed clearly or supported by anecdotes, examples, reasons, details, and explanations.</p>	<p>Organizational devices, such as paragraphs, sections, chapters, and transitions are flawed or lacking.</p> <p>Demonstrates some understanding of the topic, but with limited analysis and reflection.</p> <p>Ideas are not expressed clearly, and anecdotes, examples, quotes, reasons, details, and explanations are lacking.</p>	<p>There are some problems with organizational devices, such as paragraphs, sections, chapters, and transitions.</p> <p>Demonstrates a general understanding of the topic.</p> <p>Ideas are generally expressed clearly through adequate use of anecdotes, examples, quotes, reasons, details,</p>	<p>Organizational devices, such as paragraphs, sections, chapters, and transitions have been used effectively.</p> <p>Demonstrates in-depth understanding and insight into the issue(s) under discussion, through careful analysis and reflection.</p> <p>Ideas are developed and expressed fully and clearly, using many appropriate anecdotes, examples,</p>

	No interpretation and analysis of the material.	Examines the issue from a single perspective.	explanations. Examines the issue from multiple perspectives, but these perspectives could be more balanced.	quotes, reasons, details, explanations. Examines the issue from multiple perspectives.
Style	No literary devices or significant details are used. Paper may read like an obituary or a Wikipedia page. Vocabulary is overly simplistic or vague, with no attention to purpose/audience.	Language is fairly plain, with some specific details about the subject, but more/varied details and literary devices needed. Portrait of subject seems incomplete. No visual metaphor present. Vocabulary may reflect a couple instances of	Obvious thought has been put into the use of diction, imagery and detail to portray the subject creatively, although the visual metaphor needs to be more clearly developed to communicate writer's angle. Vocabulary occasionally	Obvious thought has been put into the use of diction, imagery and detail. Visual metaphor is well developed, communicating writer's angle. Overall, stylistic choices give the text a fresh and original creative texture. Vocabulary reaches a level of specificity and

		specificity or sophistication, but it largely lacks attention to purpose/audience.	reflects attention to specificity and sophistication, although it could be improved in consideration to purpose/audience.	sophistication that is appropriate for the purpose and audience of this documentary.
Mechanics	Writing cannot be understood due to many errors of spelling, grammar, and punctuation.	Writing contains some errors. These errors affect the reader's ability to understand the material.	Writing may contain a few errors. These errors do not impact reader's ability to comprehend material.	Writing is free from errors of spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Grade: