

The latehomecomer essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The book, *The Latehomecomer*, is a fascinating story about a Hmong family and their struggle to get out of Laos and come to America as refugees. The Hmong people are a very proud people and they do not want to forget their culture. One can clearly see that the Hmong people hold close their identity and do not want to conform to the Vietnamese way. They take pride in their culture, their society, and the way they view how government should run.

Hmong people did not agree with the Vietnamese communist government and were willing to join forces and help the United States as much as possible so that they could fight for what they believed in. Even though most of the young men and boys that fought in the war died in battle or were tortured and killed after the war they still wanted to fight for their way of life and for the Hmong people. The family's journey to the United States was not an easy one and once the family arrived here they faced much adversity as well. Once the family arrived in the United States they still faced hardships.

Being away from their homeland and in an unfamiliar place was a very tough thing to adjust to. When the family was finally settled they still had to try and conform to the American lifestyle. Even though America has no laws against keeping your religion, values, and identity all people who come to America have to Americanize to a certain extent. This is good and bad. It is tough for groups, such as the Hmong to get used to living as American's do and learning new ways, but it is also a good thing that in America people can keep most of their values and their cultural identity.

I am sure it was tough for the Hmong people that were being sent here, as well as other peoples that were so culturally proud and set in their ways to

have to adjust and conform a bit. The refugees coming to the United States had to learn to get jobs and speak the English Language. Even though it was tough for them to make the journey I think in the long run it was better for her, her family, and the Hmong people that did get sent over because they escaped a land where everyday there was worry of being captured, tortured, and killed.

It was very tough for the Hmong's that were still in Vietnam and Laos after the war. The American armed forces was these people's only protection and after they just picked up and left for their home shores the Hmong people that were still alive faced severe hardships. They had no food and water and most of their homes were all destroyed. Most of the men and young adult boys were killed in the war and the Vietnamese and Laos soldiers were still pursuing the Hmong people because they wanted to terminate the Hmong people.

It was also tough for the Hmong people that were left because the American's had stopped bringing food drops along with medical supplies. I believe family is such an important part in this family's life because they are all that each other has got. They hold close to their family because they have been through so much and they see death all around them, so they see the importance of their family. They also are taught from a very young age to respect their elders in the family because they have seen much more and know much more about all aspects of life.

They are viewed as wise and knowledgeable and the young family members cherish the opportunity to learn from them. In the movie Gran Torino one can

get an idea for the respect most of the young people have for their elders. Tao and his sister show a great deal of respect to their mother and grandmother. It was different in the movie however because Tao was so quiet that his sister actually took the place of his role because she was so overbearing. In most cases I believe that the girls are more quiet and soft-spoken like in *The Latehomecomer*.

Yang's grandmother resisted coming to America because of the pride her and her ancestors had in their homeland. In her homeland, at the camp, she is very well respected. In America though, all of that is gone because American society does not view her the same way the camp's Hmong people view her. She would still be respected and admired by her family in America, but society would not show respect to her for being a healer and shaman. I believe she has too much pride in her accomplishments, her homeland, and the majority of the people that look up to her so much to want to leave there.

I think it would be extremely difficult to leave one's homeland and go to a completely new place. In America people have grown accustomed to a certain way of life. Even if one is of different skin they can get along fine in this country as long as they assimilate to the American way of life while in public. The groups of people that can do this best fit in a lot easier and have less cultural problems. I think all new immigrants to this country had to lay down their own boundaries as to how much of their ideas and culture they would keep and how much they would Americanize.