

My family's immigration

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**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Mountain was the name given to the United States by the people of China looking for new opportunities. The immigration story on my mother's side of the family begins with my great-grandfather's journey to the United States in search for a better life for himself, his wife, and his four children. At this time, the majority of the population in China was living in poverty. Being able to come to America was the dream of many in the hopes they would be able to become wealthy.

However, it was a rough start for my great-grandfather. The language barrier was a major obstacle and job options for foreigners were very limited; the only job available to him was working at a laundromat. 10 years later, my great-grandmother joined him in the United States. Due to the difficulty of getting permission to come to the United States, and the fear of not being able to support them in the US, she was forced to leave her children behind in China: three daughters and one son.

My great-grandmother was a very intelligent woman, and when she was finally able to contact her husband she settled in San Francisco, she was disappointed to discover him irking such a low paying job. At her insistence, together, they decided to open a restaurant, and slowly their dreams of a new future began to emerge. My great-grandparents worked tirelessly to keep their business running. Long hours were necessary to support not only themselves but also their children in China, who received the money they earned shipped overseas.

Not wanting their kids to repeat the hard life they had, they were determined to give their children education. In this way, my grandmother was able to get

college educated, which was very rare for women. In 1906, a major earthquake struck San Francisco. It sparked a series of fires that raged throughout the city for three days which left over half of San Franciscans population homeless but also destroyed office buildings that held the records and birth certificates of many Immigrants. With the loss of these records, officials asked immigrants to report their family's information.

Like many other Chinese, my grandparent's slightly altered their family history. Instead to reporting they had three daughters and one son, they reported they had four sons. In the China, it was usually the men who came to the United States to work for a better living. By having extra birth certificates, my grandparent's were able to sell them to other Immigrants allowing them to come to America, which was very common at the time. Meanwhile, my grandparent's became married in China and using her college education, my grandmother became a professor.

Then came the Cultural Revolution. This was an era in Chinese history where intellectuals were looked down upon and even persecuted. Since both my grandparent's were educated, when they gave birth to my mother and uncle they did want them to grow up being unfairly treated because of their Intellectual background. My grandparent's had hopes of moving to the United S Unnaturally, my great-grandparent's and already sold all to the birth certificates to other Chinese immigrants because they never intended to have their children come to America.

In fact, they never planned to stay in America in the first place because they intended to move back to China after they saved up enough money.

Unfortunately, my great-grandparent's never expected China to become communist country and by moving back they would be stripped of their freedom. At one point, my great-grandparent's missed their children so much that they wanted to see them, but because they were American citizens they could not set foot in China. Instead, my grandmother and my great-grandparent's decided to meet in Hong Kong.

It was a huge risk for my grandmother to take because she was leaving China. During the Cultural Revolution, this was viewed as being unfaithful to Chinese government and the person could be subject to public humiliation. Red Guards Nevertheless, they were reunited for a period of time. Knowing that there was the possibility that they would never see their daughter again after she returned to China, my great-grandparent's pleaded my grandmother to stay in Hong Kong. However, my grandmother knew by doing so she would be regarded as an anti- evolutionist, and her husband would be persecuted for her actions.

Once again she was separated from her parent's. Years later, my mother knowing how much her mother wanted to be reunited with her parent's, studied hard to give her mother the chance to come to America. By succeeding academically, she was able to travel to the United States as a foreign college student at the age of 18. After graduating, she became a US citizen and filed the appropriate papers that allowed my grandmother to immigrate to the United States. At the age of 65, my grandmother's family was complete again.