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## Van Thi-The Huynh interviewed by Ann-Mari Jordens [sound recording]

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**Repository** National Library of Australia, Oral History and Folklore Collection

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**Reference** [ORAL TRC 5817](#)

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**Access** Access open for research, personal copies and public use.

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**Finding Aid** Timed summary (3 p.) and corrected transcript (typescript, 67 leaves)

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### Details

3 sound files (ca. 208 min.)??Van Huynh talks about her early life in Vietnam; her family memories of the Japanese occupation; life in Saigon (1951-66); relations with the French and the Viet Minh (1945-54); her education in the 1950s; her first job; the American economic influence on Saigon; working in the Electricity Authority; harsh living conditions; abandoning her law studies; the Saigon social life under Americans; the Tet Offensive in Binh Duong (1968); her father's death; her marriage; her husband's background; living with husband's family; the fall of Saigon (1975); life under the Viet Cong; restrictions on public servants of former regime; reasons for escaping Vietnam; organising escape; leaving family behind; boat journey to Malaysia with her ill sons; encounters with Thai pirates; swimming ashore to a Malaysian island; being rescued by United Nations (UN) after three days; her ill children treated on UN hospital boat.??Huynh speaks about choosing a country of refugee; what she knew about Australia; the crowded Pilao Bidong camp in Malaysia, health problems; leaving Pulau Bidong; arrival in Australia; Ainslie Church of Christ; their new home; losing contact with other refugee families; early experiences in Canberra; husband's employment; her son Thach's school experiences at Ainslie Primary; support from Department of Social Security; studying at Bruce College; Migrant Resource Centre; her son Kim's English learning; learning Vietnamese as an adult; working at the Mint; contacting family in Vietnam; her sons' Thach an actuarial consultant, and Kim an ANU lecturer; Kim's Ph.D and book on her and his father; preserving family history; Australian citizenship the best thing in their lives.

### Author Details

Nikki Henningham

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