Guide to the Micael Merrifield Files on Southeast Asian Community Resettlement in Orange County MS.SEA.041

Finding aid prepared by Dawn Schmitz; Sara Seltzer
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Date (inclusive): 1945-1997
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Abstract: Micael (Michael) Merrifield (1945- ) is a professor in the Department of Anthropology at Saddleback College in Mission Viejo, California. This collection includes Merrifield's research files for his dissertation project on Southeast Asian resettlement in Orange County, California, and videotapes recording interviews with community leaders and resettlement workers.
Creator: Merrifield, Micael, 1945-
Access
The collection has not been processed but is open for research. Please contact the Department of Special Collections and Archives in advance to request access.
Select items have been reformatted and have digital preservation copies. Access to original videotapes is restricted; researchers may request viewing copies.
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Historical Background
Micael (Michael) Merrifield (1945- ) is a professor in the Department of Anthropology at Saddleback College in Mission Viejo, California. He has also taught at a number of other higher education institutions in Orange County, California, including the University of California, Irvine and California State University, Fullerton.
Merrifield earned a master's degree in linguistics from California State University, Fullerton in the mid-1970s and began teaching English as a second language in the Rancho Santiago Community College district. It was during this time that he became interested in the resettlement of Vietnamese refugees. After a short time he began working at Saddleback College, and in 1977 he created, developed and began directing the Learning Assistance Program, a resource for students including non-native English speakers. Merrifield hired students from diverse backgrounds to work as tutors.
In approximately 1982-1983, while at Saddleback, Merrifield enrolled in the University of California, Riverside, graduate program in anthropology. In approximately 1987 he began a Ph.D. dissertation project on the maintenance and persistence of Vietnamese culture among refugees. He worked on the project until approximately 1989, when he discontinued his Ph.D studies.
As part of his research project, Merrifield worked with a videographer to record interviews with leaders in the Vietnamese, Lao, and Cambodian communities as well as resettlement workers. The goal of the video project was to create a public service documentary, which was never completed. Among the many prominent leaders interviewed were General Vang Pao, a leader in the Lao Hmong campaign against communist insurgents, and Nguyen Cao Ky, who served as prime minister (1965-1967) and vice president (1967-1971) of South Vietnam. A total of 20-30 interviews, in English or translated, were taped over a six-month period, along with some footage of neighborhoods and events.
In approximately 1997, Merrifield began working with the Juaneño Band of Mission Indians, Acjachemen Nation, on federal tribal recognition. He serves as the tribe's official anthropologist.
Collection Scope and Content Summary
Micael (Michael) Merrifield (1945- ) is a professor in the Department of Anthropology at Saddleback College in Mission Viejo, California. In approximately 1987 he began a Ph.D. dissertation project on the maintenance and persistence of Vietnamese culture among refugees. He worked on the project until approximately 1989, when he discontinued his Ph.D studies.
As part of his research project, Merrifield worked with a videographer to record interviews with leaders in the Vietnamese, Lao, and Cambodian communities as well as resettlement workers. This collection includes these videotapes. The collection also includes Merrifield's dissertation research files, government reports, and other publications related to Southeast Asian resettlement, particularly related to Orange County, California.

Video Notes