

Group 8:

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Aidan Gresham: Reading the chapter about Thuynga, the Vietnamese refugee, and listening to Ms. Philips has changed my attitude on life and safety throughout the world. In terms of changing my behavior, it has made me appreciate having lived in the United States for my entire life, where I have never had to struggle due to poverty, war, or violence. I learned a lot from Ms. Philips's talk, as I was able to learn more about each of the women who were interviewed and their cultural backgrounds. It was interesting to hear the women's perspective on American culture and their experiences as immigrants trying to assimilate to American life and culture. For example, the language barrier was difficult as many of them had to learn English for the first time after arriving in the United States. Many of them had to give up their careers back in their home country. Reading Ms. Philips's book and listening to her speak has allowed me to learn more about the immigrant experience in the United States.

Brittney Trinh: Listening to Philips's talk reminded me that I need to be mindful about peoples' backgrounds and upbringings. The United States is a diverse country and hearing the stories that Philips highlighted reminds me of my own family and how they immigrated here from another country. I thought it was interesting how similar some of the women's perspectives on life were to my parents, and yet they were still different from one another. Although no two immigration experiences are the same, there is some comfort in knowing that we are not alien to the country, but rather an integral part of the United States and its rich history. I also found it thoughtful that Philips named her book *In the Heart of Another*—this humanizes our stories and helps immigrants feel less alone in their journeys.

Yaquan Wang: Susan Philip's talk inspired me and gave me a deeper understanding of immigration. Besides reading chapter 5 of her book, *In the Heart of Another*, the talk made me realize what these immigrant women had given up in order to live in the United States. We could see how proud these women were when they mentioned their professions back in their own country: some of them were teachers, one of them was a programmer, another was a doctor, and so on. We can see many of them couldn't get to do what they love. In my opinion, Xidan was successful back in China. However, when she came to the US, she had no capital, no experience, and no access to well-paid jobs so she had to do massage for a living. She had to give up a lot. What impressed me the most about Susan Philip's talk was the two questions that she asked us: What does it mean to be in America(the United States)? What is American culture? In terms of the guest culture and host culture, it is enlightening for me to think about how the United States can be a melting pot of different cultures if many different cultures have such separate values, beliefs, and norms.

Edward Halim: Upon reflecting on Susan Philips' book and her stories, it becomes evident just how fortunate we are. We still enjoy the privilege of having a roof over our heads and warm meals on our tables. In these stories, it's clear that many individuals endured the hardships of war, slavery, and the heart-wrenching act of leaving behind everything they held dear in pursuit of what we often take for granted today. These courageous souls sacrificed their pasts in hopes of a brighter future in the United States. Some were driven by the Cold War, which posed a constant threat to their lives and the safety of their loved ones. Others willingly left behind their

successful careers and wealth to embrace a more modest life in the US. They had it all, but unforeseeable circumstances compelled them to pack their bags and embark on an uncertain journey. From these stories, I learned to recognize and appreciate the privileges I have in my life that often take for granted. Understanding the struggles faced by those who have overcome immense challenges to secure a better future in a new land, I aim to support and welcome newcomers with open arms, fostering an environment of inclusion and understanding. These stories have truly opened my eyes to the importance of kindness, empathy, and solidarity in shaping a diverse society since each individual has their own stories and backgrounds to share.

Min Jung Kim: After reading chapter one and listening to Ms. Philips' talk, I reflected on my life and family. Reading how it was for the Armenians during the Genocide was shocking and made me think about my family. My family is from Korea. I still hear stories from my grandparents about how they had to flee from home to survive the Korean War. My family is fortunate, as we did not experience the heartbreak of being divided between North and South Korea. However, my family did go through the horrors of the Korean War. Furthermore, I also had a time of self-reflection after Ms. Philips' talk. The video that Ms. Philips showed us during the lecture gave me a deeper understanding of each woman's journey. On top of the video, Ms. Philips mentioned during her talk that many women went through a hard time not only because of the language barriers but also because they had to give up their careers and life in their home country. Reading, listening, and viewing all these stories, it was enlightening to see each woman's unique challenges as immigrants adjusting to a new country. I also realized how privileged I am as an international student at UCLA since some give up their everything to live in the United States. The stories of these women have made me realize that each journey is filled with its own unique challenges, and I should not take my privileges for granted.

Maneh Begi: Reading Chapter 1 of Susan Philips' book was heartbreaking for me as an Armenian. Armenians have suffered through over a century of continuous massacre and ethnic cleansing perpetrated by both Turkey and Azerbaijan. It was interesting to read about Nara's personal experience and family background in comparison to mine. During the short film, Nara's mother, speaking in Armenian, explained how she misses and longs for her homeland but does not miss the government. However, that is what the written captions and translation stated. None of the other students in the room were able to understand the Armenian words she spoke, only I was. In reality, she said the government is broken, and the state of the inhabitants of Armenia is devastating and chaotic. While the class giggled reading, "I do not miss the government," I heard her real words and resonated with the pain of my people. After hearing Ms. Philips speak about her book and watching the short introduction film, I became more aware of the privilege we hold living in the United States. Although my people and family underwent genocide and intense maltreatment, I've never experienced such brutality firsthand. I am able to feel their pain and grief but am not able to entirely understand the extent of the tragedies. Hearing the stories of not only my culture, but other cultures as well, reminded me how lucky I am to live the life I do. Immigrants travel to the United States for freedom and opportunity, yet we've never felt the same fear and worry of leaving our homes and have never experienced struggles with the language barrier. The book sheds light on the hardships immigrants go through from the perspective of various women from various cultures. In addition, discussing my experiences as a great-granddaughter of an Armenian Genocide survivor with Ms. Philips herself was cathartic in a way. Being able to educate my classmates about the horrors of the Genocide and the ongoing war in Karabakh filled me with a bittersweet feeling of

a combination of passion and fury. Overall, this experience made me feel extremely grateful and gave me further insight into immigration.