

Bamboo & Butterflies (Immigrants) by Joan Criddle (1992)

Four sisters (Mearadey, Rasmel, Soorsdey & Teeda) & their families were Cambodian refugees in 1979. The book tells of their culture shock & adjustments to America. Mearadey's family was sponsored by a church in Davis, CA while the others were sent back into Cambodia. Soorsdey's family took the first sponsor & immigrated to Canada. Months later Teeda, Rasmel & their families were sponsored by families (including the author) in Davis.

The church provided a small apartment with food & clothes. They received public assistance & went to school to learn English. The mom worked in a cooperative nursery to get to know others. They felt so rich with electricity & a bicycle. They were constantly using a cross dictionary to look up new words. They went to college on grants & learned our culture are taught to analyze how something will affect them, take a course of action & take responsibility for the consequences.

They found out the hard way about such new things as taxes, licensees & unusual laws. These immigrants were the textbook example of how hard work pays off. One was mechanically inclined & joined the air force reserves to be an aircraft mechanic. One got a job as a doughnut shop manager, slept in the back room, saved money & bought their own store & later a house.

Books: To Destroy You Is No Loss (Joan Criddle)