

Hearts of Freedom: *Stories of Southeast Asian Refugees*

by Peter Duschinsky, Colleen Lundy, Michael J. Molloy, Allan Moscovitch, and Stephanie Phetsamay Stobbe

"The Hearts of Freedom project is a huge accomplishment."

MARLENE EPP

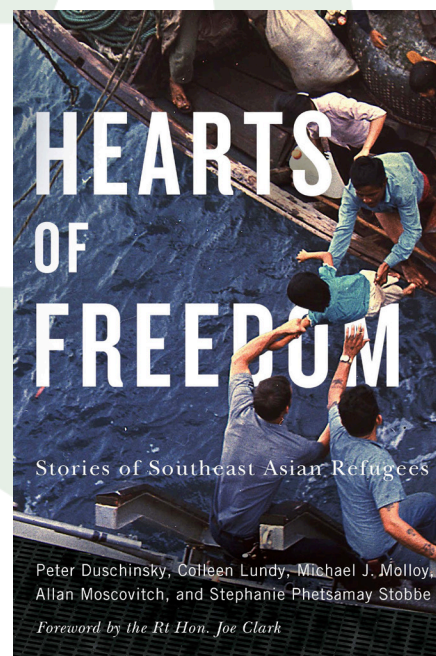
"I rarely have the chance to learn about the journey, experiences, and challenges faced by my parents' generation. *Hearts of Freedom* provides new perspectives on childhood memories, answering many inner questions. It is an immensely valuable resource."

SOM PHOUANGPRASEUTH, former president, Lao Association of Ottawa Valley

"*Hearts of Freedom* recounts the heroic stories of the boat people in heart-wrenching, unimaginable situations as they searched for freedom. Their testimonies – filled with unreal courage, sacrifice, and tenacity – will never leave you." HIEU C. TRUONG, OC

"This book offers a poignant collection of living memories - vital testimonies from survivors of one of Southeast Asia's darkest chapters. This is a powerful act of remembrance and a step toward healing."

PHLOEUN PRIM, executive director, Cambodian Living Arts



Between 1975 and 1997 some three million Vietnamese, Cambodians, and Laotians fled atrocities in their home countries, with over 210,000 resettling in Canada. While this history is partly known to some Canadians, little has been written about it, especially from the perspectives of the refugees themselves.

Hearts of Freedom is a rich oral history based on interviews with 145 former refugees, sharing deeply moving accounts of oppression, concentration camps, genocide, and perilous escapes over land and sea. Survivors reflect on their first impressions of Canada – the unfamiliar snow and cold, the unexpected kindness of neighbours, and occasional encounters with racism. Through their experiences, we come to understand the strengths and weaknesses of Canada's refugee programs. These stories reveal how refugees' attachment to Canada grew over the years and how multiculturalism policies facilitated that.

Ordinary Canadians played a decisive role in the first mass refugee movement through newly created private sponsorship programs – a role for which the United Nations awarded the Nansen Medal to the Canadian people in 1986. Coming at a time when we are assessing the benefits of immigration and refugee policies and programs, *Hearts of Freedom* documents the lives and contributions of people who have suffered the worst excesses of war to rebuild their lives in Canada.

Peter Duschinsky is Immigration Canada's former director of international liaison. Colleen Lundy is professor emeritus of social work at Carleton University. Michael J. Molloy coordinated the resettlement of sixty thousand Indochinese refugees in 1979–80. Allan Moscovitch is professor emeritus of social work at Carleton University. Stephanie Phetsamay Stobbe is associate professor of conflict resolution studies and business at Canadian Mennonite University.

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