

# YANG, SENG

*Seng is a senior in high school. She is married and living happily. Seng enjoys making her family happy. She likes to read and watch Japanese animations on television. Seng is responsible and hopes to make the world happier for all she meets.*

***Please tell me about yourself and your family. Can you elaborate?***

I have one sister, Houa, and three brothers, Nhia, Chee and Chia. Everyone was born in Wausau except for Nhia, the oldest, and me, who were born in Thailand. Both my parents were born in Laos.

***How do you feel about being a Hmong guy/girl? Why? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each?***

I feel that being a Hmong girl living in the United States is kind of hard because of all the responsibilities we have. Along with all our homework we still have to cook and clean. Hmong girls do not have as much freedom as boys and they are limited to the things they are able to do.

***What do you know about your traditions and culture and how do you feel about them?***

The Hmong traditions and culture are very unique and I feel that they reflect who we are. I think the Hmong culture and traditions have changed through the years and have gotten better. For instance, with marriage, it used to be that when the girls were in their teens they are married, but now education is more important. Also, a lot of young Hmong are losing their language or they can not speak Hmong fluently.

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***How do you feel about being Americanized?***

I feel fortunate to be Americanized because I have more opportunities and I can experience more in life.

***How do your parents feel about it? (Being Americanized)***

Although my parents are Americanized they still feel that the Hmong culture should be with us. They are not traditional and our family has lost many of the Hmong traditions, like Shamanism. We do not practice Shamanism in our house so when we get married, we practice any religion we want.

***Do you ever feel torn or trapped between the two? How so?***

No, not really.

***What is it like living with two different cultures?***

I think it is neat living with two different cultures because I can celebrate both the Hmong and American Holidays.

***Which culture do you feel is more beneficial and why?***

The American culture is more beneficial because I am living in America and Hmong are the minority.

***Are your parents more Americanized or stuck in the traditional way of life? And how do you feel about that?***

My parents are neither Americanized or traditional.

***What have your parents taught you and how will you use it?***

My parents taught me many things about the Hmong culture and traditions. I feel that when I start a family, I will teach them everything I know about Hmong culture and traditions.

***Is education important to you? Why or why not?***

Yes, because education is the first step to getting the job you dream of.

***What are your expectations and your parents' expectations for your future?***

My expectations are to finish high school and college and so are my parents.

***Have you ever been discriminated against because of your ethnicity? If yes, how, and how did you feel and react to it?***

No.

***Why do people discriminate because of ethnicity?***

I don't know why. Maybe because they don't feel comfortable with different ethnic backgrounds.

***How do you and your parents feel about interracial dating?***

My parents feel very strongly about interracial dating, but when it comes to Asians, they don't mind.

***A stereotype is that all Hmong are in gangs. How do you feel about that? Have you ever been asked to join and why do people join?***

Many people probably assume that all Hmong are in gangs because of the way many of them dress. I haven't been asked to join any gangs. I think people who join want to have fun and get popular.

***What do you see in the future for the Hmong? What are your hopes for them?***

I think there will be more Hmong in the future and all of the things they do and organize will get better and bigger. For example, Hmong stores, Hmong movies, music... etc. I hope someday we will be known among many people because sometimes when other ethnic backgrounds ask what culture we're from and we say Hmong, they have a questioning look. Then they ask if we're Asian. So, hopefully in the future, Hmong will be known.

***Do you have any advice or words of wisdom to share?***

Don't give up on your dreams and work hard to achieve your goals.