



# Remembering Refuge

## Between Sanctuary and Solidarity

### What are Provocations?

Provocations are the questions that lie at the heart of conversations about migration and borders, but that often are not made explicit. The provocations emerged from the overarching themes that developed out of the team's engagement with the oral histories. They are points of entry that both inform and are informed by the oral histories and are meant to provoke critical thinking and engagement.

### Provocation: Are we only moved by questions of innocence?

We often overlook the expectations that states, communities, and advocates have about people seeking asylum. This provocation prompts you to reflect on why innocence is such a significant concern and what it reveals about who is deemed deserving of assistance.

- How do expectations of *refugeeness* influence how people respond?
- Consider the dynamics of refugee assistance. Are we only moved by questions of innocence when it comes to people crossing borders?
- Can there be empathy without an expectation of gratitude from those being helped?



## From the Remembering Refuge Archive

At [rememberingrefuge.com/oral-histories](https://rememberingrefuge.com/oral-histories), you can explore a collection of oral histories where individuals share their experiences of crossing the Canada-US border to seek refuge, along with accounts from advocates in border communities. The following excerpts have been chosen for their relevance to the provocation “Are we only moved by questions of innocence?” and can be used to reflect on the questions it raises.

### Key moments from the oral histories:

June 00:12:41 - 00:17:04

Pablo 00:02:37 - 00:06:59

Bridges Not Borders 00:20:20 - 00:30:36

Antonio - Text-only, Chapter 3 “Encounters”

Juliana 00:27:51 - 00:34:37

To access the key moments, follow the steps listed below:

1. Go to [rememberingrefuge.com](https://rememberingrefuge.com)
2. Go to “Oral histories”.
3. Scroll to find the oral history you’re looking for, and click on it.
  - a. Note: Some oral histories may include a trigger warning. Click the play button to continue.
4. Inside the story, click “Explore X’s story” located at the top of the page to view a list of Key Moments from the oral history.
  - a. Note: Antonio’s oral history does not have this feature. To explore their story, scroll horizontally through the chapters to find the one you’re looking for, then click on it. Inside the chapter, you can access the transcript and Key Moments.
5. Scroll through the Key Moments to find the timestamp you’re looking for and click on it. This will take you to that moment in the audio.
6. To play the story, click on the play button in the bottom-left corner of the page.



## Education Resources

At [rememberingrefuge.com/education](http://rememberingrefuge.com/education), you can find education resources designed to activate the counter-archive by encouraging learners to engage with the stories meaningfully and consider how the knowledge can be applied beyond the classroom. The following materials were selected for their relevance to the provocation “Are we only moved by questions of innocence?” and can be used to reflect on the questions it raises.

Education Resources:

- Categorization and Migration
- Criminalization of Aid

To access the education resources, follow the steps listed below:

1. Go to [rememberingrefuge.com](http://rememberingrefuge.com)
2. Go to “Education”.
3. Scroll to find the education resource you’re looking for, and click on it.
4. Once inside you can view the online version or download the PDF.



What have other people said about this question?

Miriam Ticktin, *The problem with humanitarian borders: Toward a new framework of justice*, 2015  
<https://publicseminar.org/2015/09/the-problem-with-humanitarian-borders/>

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Mimi Thi Nguyen, “*What strings are attached to the “gift of freedom” that the United States grants refugees?*”  
<https://ideasonfire.net/25-mimi-nguyen/>

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Dina Nayeri, *The Ungrateful Refugee*, 2017  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QxLh-R3gvtM>

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Refugee Hosts Project  
<https://refugeehosts.org/>

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New Books in Sociology podcast: Mireya Loza, “*Defiant Braceros: How Migrant Workers Fought for Racial, Sexual, and Political Freedom*”, 2016  
<https://radiopublic.com/new-books-in-sociology-GENZxr/s1!f11f1>

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Jackie Wang, *Against Innocence*, 2014  
<https://www.liesjournal.net/volume1-10-againstinnoce.html>

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Kristin Wong, *The ideal immigrant worker is a problematic trope, especially for women*, 2018  
<https://www.refinery29.com/en-us/immigrant-myth-work-problems>

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Want to learn more about the project? Visit [rememberingrefuge.com](http://rememberingrefuge.com)