Sanctuary Planet: A Global Sanctuary Movement for the Time of Trump

Authors in alphabetical order
Megan Carney, Ricardo Gomez, Katharyne Mitchell, Sara Vannini
University of Washington

Abstract

What does it mean to be on a sanctuary campus that is in a sanctuary city that is part of a sanctuary state? In this paper, we discuss the origins and contemporary expressions of sanctuary, and call for a Global Sanctuary Collective to harness the moral outrage in the face of the words and actions of President Trump against undocumented immigrants, refugees, and other minorities and vulnerable populations. Moral outrage brought over 5 million protesters to the streets around the world on the weekend of Trump's inauguration, and then to main airports around the country protesting the travel ban against refugees and people from seven predominantly Muslim countries. Moral outrage is leading to rekindling protest and protection of vulnerable populations, and sanctuary is taking different shapes and forms across the US. In addition to exploring the origin of the sanctuary movement in the US and some of its theoretical underpinnings, in this paper we discuss the role of collective action, personal stories, and artistic expressions that are part of the new sanctuary movement. We conclude with a discussion of future directions and a manifesto for a Global Sanctuary Collective to defend the rights of refugees and undocumented immigrants, and immigrants from any nationality, race or religion. The new Global Sanctuary Collective builds on and expands the work of faith-based organizations, where sanctuary began, and calls on the creative forces of all people to turn moral outrage into protection of the vulnerable, protest against injustice, creative expression of human values and dignity, and action for social justice.

Keywords: sanctuary, immigration, refugees, asylum, resistance, solidarity

Introduction

On Feb 10, 2017, Daniel Ramirez Medina was arrested and taken from his home in Washington State as part of an immigration raid. Daniel is one of roughly 750,000 "Dreamers," undocumented youth who applied for and received temporary relief from deportation under President Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). Medina repeatedly told

immigration enforcement agents that he had legal documents with DACA, but they arrested him anyway, claiming he was a gang member on the grounds that he had a tattoo on his hand.

President Trump launched aggressive changes to immigration policy during his first month in office, including an attempt to ban all refugees and people from seven primarily Muslim countries, and to deport some 11 million undocumented migrants estimated to be residing in the US. Trump claims that DACA recipients are not affected, but the BBC reports that the arrest of Daniel Ramirez Medina may signal bigger changes: "The first of the so-called 'dreamers' arrested under the Trump administration now faces deportation. Is this immigration enforcement business as usual or something new?" (Lussenhop 2017).

We contend that it is not business as usual under Trump. But the sweeping changes to immigration policy in relation to refugees and undocumented immigrants may be triggering an unexpected consequence: the rebirth of the Sanctuary movement in the US.

Sanctuary was a powerful movement of resistance against Reagan's policies towards migrants fleeing repressive regimes in Central America who were supported by the US. Originally a faith-based movement, inspired by the peace and justice ethos of churches and synagogues in the US, sanctuary became a powerful grassroots movement fed by moral outrage against egregious government policies toward Central America. Today with Trump we may be witnessing the beginning of a new wave of moral outrage in the face of equally damaging policies against refugees and undocumented migrants, not to mention his harmful remarks and destructive actions against Muslims, women, the environment, and the media, among others.

The rebirth of Sanctuary can be seen in the spontaneous re-emergence of sanctuary churches, campuses, cities, counties, and even states over the last few months. At the University of Washington (UW), where we each work as members of the faculty, the week after Trump's election the Office of the President reiterated the university's commitment to being a

safe and welcoming place for all, addressing all of the elements of a sanctuary campus, without explicitly declaring UW a sanctuary campus:

> The University's policies and commitments are clear and have not changed. We are fully committed to providing a safe, secure and welcoming environment that protects the privacy and human rights of all members of our community. The UWPD [University of Washington Police Department] does not and will not detain, question or arrest individuals solely because they lack documentation. Nor do they or will they inquire about immigration status when they detain, question or otherwise interact with people. Seattle and King County officials have affirmed that local law enforcement will continue their policy barring officers from asking about immigration status. This is the essence of what is meant by "sanctuary" (Office of the President, U. of W. 2016).

Seattle and King County both consider themselves sanctuary jurisdictions, as they do not ask for immigration status or collaborate with federal immigration enforcement (with the exception of criminal activities). Washington was declared a sanctuary state by the governor on February 24, 2017, after president Trump threatened to cut any federal funds to sanctuary cities. By making the whole state a Sanctuary, the governor "prohibited any state agency from detaining an illegal immigrant at the request of federal officials. It also prohibits the use of state resources for the creation of a database or registry for people of a particular religion. The state will, however, continue to honor federal arrest warrants" (Rousselle 2017).

What does it mean to be on a sanctuary campus that is in a sanctuary city that is part of a sanctuary state? Legally, not much, but morally it speaks loud. Moral outrage brought over 5 million protesters to the streets around the world on the weekend of Trump's inauguration, and then to main airports around the country protesting the travel ban against refugees and people from seven predominantly Muslim countries. Moral outrage is leading to rekindling protest and protection of vulnerable populations, and sanctuary is taking different shapes and forms across the US. In this paper we briefly explore the origin of the sanctuary movement in the US and some of its theoretical underpinnings, and we discuss the role of collective action, personal stories, and artistic expressions that are part of the new sanctuary movement. We conclude with a discussion of future directions and a manifesto for a Global Sanctuary Collective to defend the

rights of refugees and undocumented immigrants, and immigrants from any nationality, race or religion. The new Global Sanctuary Collective builds on and expands the work of faith-based organizations, where sanctuary began, and calls on the creative forces of all people to turn moral outrage into protection of the vulnerable, protest against injustice, creative expression of human values and dignity, and action for social justice.

Sanctuary in the US: from the moral outrage of Central America's peace movement in the 1980s to supporting today's Dreamers

The Sanctuary movement in the US was shaped in the 1980s in response to the thousands of Central Americans fleeing violence in their countries, particularly Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala. Since the US was supporting the regimes of those countries as part of the anti-communist rhetoric of President Reagan, accepting as refugees those fleeing repression would be accepting the US role in sponsoring that repression and human rights violations. The situation was exacerbated by the assassination of religious leaders in Central America, which galvanized religious organizations in the US to become increasingly active in protesting the US intervention, and in offering shelter and refuge to those fleeing the violence. The creation of three church-based solidarity organizations in the US paved the way for the sanctuary movement as an expression of moral outrage in the face of human rights violations and the humanitarian plight of Central America: Sanctuary, Witness for Peace, and Pledge of Resistance. Smith (1996) describes the basis for the emergence of the movement in such terms:

> Sanctuary began as a movement of hospitality that aimed to provide for the humanitarian needs of vulnerable refugees. But Sanctuary quickly became more than that. It grew into a political movement that sought to end the human oppression generated by the U.S.-sponsored war in Central America. As more and more churches and synagogues considered declaring sanctuary, they were forced to learn the reasons

> why so many traumatized and anguished Central Americans were flooding northward. And, by choosing to shelter undocumented refugees, Sanctuaries publicly declared their belief that violence and human rights abuses were epidemic in Central America, that the U.S. was guilty of promoting and financing the violence and atrocities, and that open mass civil disobedience was necessary to confront Washington and demand an end to its bloody war. Thus, heightened grassroots political awareness and the spread of Sanctuary fuelled each other (p.69).

The Sanctuary movement capitalized on the spirit of resistance of the civil rights movement in the US, the post-Vietnam critiques of US involvement overseas, and the White House blunders dealing with Central America. Churches and synagogues, rooted in traditions of social ethics of peace and justice, played an important role in channelling the moral outrage into political action. Rather than relying only on the mainstream media as sources of information, the religious organizations used personal stories of their own travels and experiences of the situation on the ground in Central America, and personal stories by the refuge-seekers describing the abuses they suffered. The real-life stories of refugees, told in churches and living rooms across the US, were an important catalyst to make the moral outrage even more intolerable, and to turn it into political action (Smith 1996). In sum, the Sanctuary movement of the 1980s owes much of its existence to Reagan and his egregious policies, and to the moral outrage they caused among people of faith.

Is the Sanctuary movement experiencing a rebirth with President Trump's egregious words and actions against Muslims, immigrants, and refugees? Although geopolitical relations with and human rights violations in Central America are no longer the same as they were in the 1980s, the waves of migrants fleeing gang violence and lack of economic opportunity in this region have not subsided. Starting around 2010, two new movements channelled the moral outrage in relation to Central American migrants and refugees. Waves of unaccompanied minors making the journey from Central America into the US caused new humanitarian and legal challenges, and the Dreamers grew to become a national movement that helped shape proposals for immigration reform. The Dreamers movement emerged from undocumented youth

who were brought to the US as children were reaching adulthood and realizing they had no legal recognition and no rights in the US, the country that they considered their own.

The Dreamer movement "learned how to construct compelling rights claims, identify public arenas, such as campuses and the internet, to express their claims, plan and undertake high risk protests, and lobby public officials to support bills recognizing their rights and the rights of other undocumented immigrants in the country" (Nichols 2013:8). They used personal stories that focused on three main arguments: they are innocent (they were brought to the US as children), they are integrated (they grew up in the US, speak English, they feel "American"), and they are successful (they are successful students, graduated from high school, going to college or serving in the military). Yet Chomsky (2014) critiques the strategies of the Dreamers as divisive: "by emphasizing the innocence of students who were brought to the United States as young children with no choice in the matter, did the campaign tacitly accept the guilt of these student's parents, who made the decision? Were the students being upheld as exceptional, deserving, undocumented individuals, thus implying that other undocumented people were not deserving?" (p. 169).

The Dreamer movement itself started to fracture as students abandoned staying on message around the three main arguments that helped position them as a national movement (they are innocent, integrated, successful). Fractures became particularly salient fuelled by the intersectionality of those who wanted to include gender and racial identities in their stories, and those who refused to blame their parents for bringing them to the US as children. However, the Dreamer movement was successful at positioning the personal stories of undocumented childhood arrivals in order to influence policymaking. When the immigration reform bill died in congress in 2012, President Obama signed executive order DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) to give temporary legal status and reprieve from deportation to Dreamers. While DACA can be eliminated by a new executive order, the holding power of the moral arguments in support of protection to Dreamers, even if limited and temporary, may be enough

to leave it in place. Nonetheless, detention and deportation of DACA holders had already started during the first month of Trump's presidency. Trump's actions against undocumented migrants, and Dreamers in particular, as well as his words and actions against Muslims and refugees, may end up being the driving force to fuel the renewed moral outrage that will revive the Sanctuary movement in the US.

Theoretical underpinnings of sanctuary

The meanings of sanctuary can be conceptualized in a plurality of ways. It is by definition the provision of a safe space in the face of a threat—most generally for migrants, the threat of detention, deportation, or incarceration. But sanctuary is also a symbol, a set of practices, an ethics, a form of resistance, and a mode of governance. It involves relationships between people and between people and institutions. In cases of strong governmental opposition, it can be most effective as a practice when it is left deliberately *unnamed.* Through various forms of refuge and protection sanctuary is provided, but the givers and recipients remain underground and unidentified, defended through the act rather than the label.

Contemporary notions of sanctuary often draw on faith-based themes of welcome and protection for the stranger, as well as the spatial institutionalization of these themes in religious structures (Rabben 2016; Snyder 2012). Assumptions about sacred space and the possibility of refuge are present in all of the major religions and many of the smaller spiritual traditions. For example, churches were built on places considered holy, and for many Christians the area around the altar is considered to be an especially sacred space. The deep-rooted European tradition that those accused of crimes could be offered protection from sovereign forms of power through church asylum began around 600 AD and was recognized in English law for over a thousand years (Shoemaker 2011).

With the growth of liberalism in Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries most sanctuary practices in the West were abolished. They were perceived as impeding the progression from rights based on a religious, tribal, or moral order to those positioned firmly in the rule of law. Nevertheless, even with the expansion of liberal rationalities over time and space, many held onto the practices of sanctuary as an *alternative* form of justice, contending that the ethical values and protection of faith-based actors were necessary in moments of wrongful decisions and/or political expediency (Shoemaker 2011). Thus both the actual provision of sanctuary and the use of the term as a symbolic act of defiance have continued in many parts of the world, often erupting in periods of strong opposition to the perceived wrongs of individual governmental regimes.

Sanctuary practices and symbols have been adopted by and merged with numerous secular institutions and practices as discussed further below, but its religious origins are nevertheless important to continue probing for a number of reasons. First, in the case of migrant support and aid, faith-based actors remain critical partners with large organizations such as the UNHCR, as well as smaller NGOs and government institutions (Miller 2015). Because of their long-term integration in communities, faith-based actors are also frequently the first responders in a crisis, as well as those who remain after an 'emergency' is declared over (Riera and Poiriet 2014). Humanitarians working in FBOs often speak of their faith as providing a support through belief in a sense of "God's time" or a larger "plan" that enables them to continue their work in often extremely difficult circumstances over the long haul (Ager 2011; Barnett and Stein 2012; Mitchell, forthcoming).

Second, while church sanctuary is no longer legal in Europe or North America, the collective memory of it as a religiously-sanctioned form of alternative justice remains strong (Marfleet 2011). Indeed, it is so powerful that most governments try to avoid confrontations in this arena, and usually elect not to remove someone who has been given church asylum. In the cases where the police have entered church spaces and physically removed asylum claimants

or irregular migrants, and/or have arrested ministers and priests and taken them to court, the publicity is generally quite negative (Chinchilla et al. 2009; Neufert 2014; Rabben 2016).

Finally, many faith-based actors show a remarkable readiness to contest governmental policies and laws that they feel abrogate a 'higher' law--one that upholds the human dignity of every individual in the eyes of God (Cunningham 1995; Just 2013; Miller 2015; Raiser 2010). Migrant supporters in particular have shown a great willingness to take a stand against both the inhumane policies that keep potential refugees from obtaining asylum, as well as the debasing conditions in which many claimants are detained. Thus, the ongoing religious underpinning of sanctuary practices for many plays a critical role in their willingness to give care and support for extended periods of time, provide and defend places of refuge within the sacred spaces of religious edifices, and also to contest the political norms, policies and laws that they believe contradict the fundamental dignity and rights of human beings.

Acts of sanctuary that are not directly inspired by faith can and have occurred at just about every scale of governance. In the context of North America and Europe we can point to sanctuary demands and practices at the level of the university campus, city, county, state, province, nation and even planet. Indeed, within days of Trump's Executive Order of January 27, 2017, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau offered up the nation of Canada as a safe haven to refugees banned from entering the United States. In prior eras, agreements such as the Geneva Conventions of 1949, ratified by 196 countries, might be considered a declaration of planetary safety for those fleeing persecution and terror.

City-based sanctuary movements have sprung up in both Europe and the US in response to the perceived deficiencies or illegalities of federal responses to migrants and refugees (Lippert and Rehaag 2013). While the contemporary sanctuary city movement in the US has garnered a lot of recent press because of the vociferous antagonism of Trump and many Republican members of Congress, it is actually part of a global tradition with a much longer history. In the UK, for example, the grassroots initiated City of Sanctuary movement has

been operative since 2005 and now comprises over 90 networked urban initiatives in cities and towns across England, Scotland, and Ireland (Darling 2010; Squire 2011); meanwhile, several metropolitan centres in continental Europe have also been linked together for many years through the EUROCITIES sanctuary network.

What is interesting and important about all of the historical and contemporary declarations of sanctuary, both faith-based and secular, is the ways in which different actors have been able to network successfully across borders in times of danger. Sanctuary is a fundamentally collaborative practice, one that has the capacity to produce connections between individuals and institutions committed to the same values. In the US-based Central American Sanctuary Movement of the 1980s, for example, scores of small-scale networking activities occurred between churches, activists, and non-profit organizations from Tucson to Chicago to Los Angeles (Chinchilla et al. 2009). These 'unlikely' alliances formed and held fast for as long as refugees fleeing the violence in Central America were perceived to be at risk.

Moreover, while these linkages and connections atrophied to some extent in the 1990s and 2000s, they were readily rejuvenated during the Obama era of mass deportations, and to an even greater extent since the advent of the Trump regime. This is evident in the many *New Sanctuary Movements* (NSM) that have formed in recent years (see, e.g. New Sanctuary Movement of Philadelphia; http://sanctuaryphiladelphia.org/), as well as the alliances currently being generated from airport demonstrations to campus lock-downs. The key point here is that, when combined with the fierce and durable commitment to the support of refugees and the undocumented, these ad-hoc, cross-border, multiply-scaled sanctuary networks produce a flexible and highly successful strategy of resistance that expands and contracts as needed.

Creative expressions of Sanctuary as resistance: art, music and stories

In addition to the explicit act of designating certain spaces as safe havens for refugees, asylum-seekers, and migrants of precarious legal status, the expression of sanctuary takes many forms from art, public protest, and squatting to more precise acts of solidarity and community building. Sanctuary is thus one means of performing resistance against a particular *status quo*. The pluralistic nature of resistance through varied expressions of sanctuary subsequently includes actions performed in more secular spaces and by individuals of varying social locations, described by some authors for instance as "mobile enclaves of sanctuary" (Squire and Bagelman 2012). In other words, the agents of sanctuary belong to an expansive, inclusive, and fluid category that defies the historically bifurcated relationship of "saviour and victim," "host and guest," sanctuary "provider and receiver," etc. The "Day Without Immigrants" protests of Feb 16, 2017 involved thousands of immigrants not going to work that day, resulting in many plumbers, carpenters and electricians not showing up to work, numerous closed restaurants, bakeries, bodegas and shops, and it also included creative expressions such as Wellesley College museum covering or removing works of art made by immigrants as a form of protest (https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/16/nyregion/day-without-immigrants-boycott-trump-policy.html)

This broader conceptualization of sanctuary and protest thus gives legitimacy to any social or political action to generate "safe space," thereby widening the realm of possibility for sanctuary as a means of resistance and catalyst for social change. These actions are not fixed in time and space but rather migrate across cities, regions, and continents. In our own empirical work, we have witnessed the "migratory" aspects of sanctuary, specifically as smaller, local acts of resistance connect with and scale up to larger-scale social movements. Solidarity networks for instance, have emerged in recent years throughout the Mediterranean region and much of

Europe in response to the influx of migrant arrivals and a difficult economic climate worsened by reduced social spending through austerity measures (Sparke and Mitchell 2017). These networks provide "local services of care and support to citizens and non-citizens, including immigrants and refugees, cutting out market brokers and provisionally substituting for state welfare" (Rakopoulos 2015:143). Anthropologists in particular have documented cases of solidarity clinics, pharmacies, housing initiatives, food distribution networks, entrepreneurial ventures, art collectives, and job training programs (e.g., Cabot 2016; Carney 2017; Grasseni 2013; Rakopoulos 2016). Meanwhile, cities throughout the US have declared or renewed their commitment to sanctuary in response to the draconian measures outlined in Trump's executive orders against anyone undocumented, Muslim, foreign-born, transgender, etc. Both local solidarity networks and cities of sanctuary are prominent examples of how small-scale and grassroots acts of resistance gain momentum and power across time and space.

Sanctuary has also entailed resisting the boundaries of legality and illegality imposed through state approaches to governing noncitizen populations and rendering visible the contradictions and violences inherent to immigration policy (Mudu and Chattopadhyay 2017). Public protests especially have countered the invisibilizing effects of "illegality" as an imposed subjectivity (Willen 2007) resulting from restrictive immigration policies in the US and Europe by heightening visibility of real people with real human stories, who are effectively citizens of the country in which they reside, who may have US- or European-born children, and who have fled from poverty and violence (Carney 2014). The phrase "No Person Is Illegal" (*ninguna persona es ilegal*; *nessuna persona è illegale*) foregrounds these public demonstrations in support of the undocumented throughout the world and challenges the criminalization of migration as it infringes on basic human rights.

Art as a form of resistance

The idea that art can be a subtle and at the same time powerful form of resistance to oppression is certainly not new. Since the beginning of civilization, art has been the celebration of freedom under subjugation (see: Langer 1998; Chaffee 1993). Art has been widely used as a *scream* of liberty and rightfulness, an act of beauty in horror, of light in the darkness. Migration is no exception. As Bal and Hernández-Navarro (2011) state, "…art can enact small-scale resistances against the status quo in the social domain. These acts […] determine the limited yet potentially powerful political impact of art" (Bal & Hernández-Navarro 2011, p. 9). Furthermore, the spaces where art is performed and displayed quickly become "political spaces" where conflict over migration is debated, to the point that some have asked whether the art world should have gone on strike for President Trump's inauguration day (Bal & Hernández-Navarro 2011, p. 9; Vartanian 2016).

Examples of resistance to recent immigration policy developments in the US gave birth to several art forms and enactments, both inside art galleries and on the streets. In New York, for example, White Box gallery organized a runway performance of fashion garments made by undocumented migrants, as a way to highlight the precarious conditions of undocumented migrants and to protest Trump's actions to deport them (http://theartnewspaper.com/news/illegal-immigrant-artists-take-their-protest-fashions-to-the-streets/). In Philadelphia, Philly Children's March organized artistic activities with children that included video storytelling, collaborative music, watercolour painting and poetry "so that families and children could declare their intentions to serve as protectors" of immigrants and of the sanctuary movement (http://phillychildrensmarch.org/2017/01/sanctuary-project-speaking-through-art/).

Poetry has a prominent role in voicing migrants' resistance, from Juan Felipe Herrera, recently nominated as the first Latino US Poet Laureate by the U.S. Library of Congress…

everyday we get more illegal

yet the peach tree
still rises
and falls with fruits and without
birds eat it the sparrows fight our desert burns with trash and drugs
(Herrera 2011)

…to numerous young poets and activists, Hispanic migrants have been producing an overwhelming amount of art, voicing their questions and concerns:

One day
We will truly be the land of the Free.
But that fight,
That Battle
That War,
Is up to you and me.
(Oault 2017)

The enormous growth in popularity, since 2009, of music and dances of the Afro-Caribbean and Afro-Lusophone worlds (Tee 2016), that attracts both US citizens and migrants of all origins and ethnicity, has vividly fed political debates and created a sense of resistance through cultural openings and appreciation, feeding political debates and a sense of community among members in major cities of the country and abroad (participant observation by Gomez and Vannini).

Visual arts are also at the frontline of advocating for a more humane immigration debate. Favianna Rodriguez, for example, created a visual campaign using the Monarch Butterfly as a symbol of the beauty and dignity of migrants (see: http://favianna.tumblr.com/post/95103935320/burning-man-butterfly-2014-this-butterfly), and numerous initiatives have been promoted to collect and give visibility to a number of works. The Alto Arizona Art campaign for peaceful resistance (http://www.altoarizona.com/creative-resistance.html) included the works of Ernesto Yerena, César Maxit, Melanie Cervantes and Chandra L. Narcia, highlighting different moments of "the struggle" (Baksh 2011) – for dignity, for integration, for non-discrimination, for peace, for roots, for rights. The same way, so called

“border artists” – artists of a neomuralist movement – have been rebelling against the physical presence of the wall at the border between Mexico and the US (Kirchoff 2016).

Stories as a form of resistance

“Minority cultures have a history of voicelessness,” (Sabiescu 2013, p. vii). Stories are powerful tools for political action and mobilization. Dominating majority groups and discriminating social structures have always been concerned with keeping minority or controversial groups as unseen and unheard as possible. Having a voice has always been related to inclusion and participation in political processes and decision-making (Sabiescu 2013; Tacchi 2009; Tacchi 2012). The same way, being voiceless has firmly been related to resource scarcity, underdevelopment, disempowerment, so that “the reconstitution of voice has nearly become synonymous with the emancipation of the racial, gendered, and ethnic other” (Mitra and Watts 2002, p. 482; see also UNESCO 1996).

The power of voices builds on the uniquely human characteristic of telling, consuming, and enacting stories (Mayer 2014). Couldry (2010) defines voice as fundamentally characteristic of the human condition, because it is related to the capacity to narrate. According to the author, having a voice is connected to having agency, positionality, ability, and resources to communicate a story and, at times, to countering “voice-denying rationalities,” produced by society to perpetuate oppression (Idem: 7-11). In a study of stories of migration among Latinos in the US, Baron and Gomez (2017) discuss how these stories help uncover trustworthy spaces and sources of information (sanctuary), which are especially important given the transience and vulnerability of migrants who live in a constant state of “in-betweenness.” Stories contribute to research and mobilization for sanctuary in at least three important ways: 1) they help elicit rich and complex understanding of individual experiences, opinions, and feelings 2) they help address sensitive topics, and 3) they can empower participants with multiple and diverse perspectives (Baron and Gomez 2017).

Albert Hirschman (1970) proposes the concept of voice as referring to taking action when meeting unsatisfactory conditions. Actions take the form of expression of dissatisfaction, corrective steps, or open opposition – up to rebellion – to the systems that perpetuate them (Hirschman 1970). Similarly, Arjun Appadurai (2004) maintains that voice plays a vital role in bringing change across the social, economic, and political spheres. According to Appadurai (2004), when disadvantaged groups claim their voice, they challenge the status quo's values and ideologies that serve to keep them in their disempowered conditions. In this frame, the various stories that migrants have continuously been voicing make storytelling, indeed, a powerful means of resistance, and, simultaneously an instrument to re-humanize migration by adding details and giving depth to concepts and ideologies that tend to consider people as static, uniform "blocks."

Recent examples of resistance through telling stories have taken different forms, going from photo-books reporting different experiences of migration by the voices of migrants' themselves – an initiative of the authors (see: Gomez and Vannini 2015) – as well as public speeches, which the media have loudly echoed. Undocumented immigrants in Seattle describe, in photos and stories, the role of churches and the public library as safe spaces of sanctuary. Servando, for example, took a picture of a church and explained it as follows:

> This church is a shelter that represents a sanctuary for us immigrants. From here, they cannot kick you out. They can kick you out from many places but not from here. It does not matter whether you go or believe in God. However, you always have to bear in mind the commandments and not to sin, or at least sin as little as possible. I go to this church from time to time, but not always. On that day, I went and decided to take the picture (Servando, in Gomez & Vannini 2015:212).

The same participant later went to the Seattle Public Library and took a picture there, too. He explained the library as sanctuary with the following story:

> I've always wanted to see the aurora borealis, but I've never seen them. And I like to go to the library and learn about all those things. I read the newspapers in the library. The library is really like a shelter for everybody who is on the street. Like a church, they cannot kick you out of there. If you go to the central library, the majority of the people

> there are homeless, and the other 20% is normal people, people who live in their homes and those who work there (Servando, in Gomez & Vannini 2015:239).

We are still struck by the recent stories of Daniela Vargas and Daniel Ramirez Medina. Daniela, an Argentinian undocumented student, arrived in the US when she was 7 and has been protected by DACA. After speaking out against deportation at a press conference hosted by local immigration attorneys, churches and the Mississippi Immigrants Rights Alliance, Daniela was detained in Louisiana and is now facing deportation without a hearing (Fowler 2017). Daniel (with whose story we opened this paper), who was also brought to the US when he was a child and protected under DACA, was arrested in Seattle and allegedly accused of being affiliated with a gang and representing a risk to society (Baumann 2017; Levine and Cooke 2017). Even though neither of them had criminal records, they represent just the tip of the iceberg. Dreamers under DACA have gained the aura of deserving special status because they are innocent, integrated and successful. What about their parents, friends and neighbours, and the other ten million undocumented migrants without the (now questionable) protection of DACA? Trump's policies are only exacerbating the criminalization of migration and building racial and religious discrimination into the treatment of refugees; massive deportations and Muslim travel bans are just another name for ethnic cleansing. This is the bigger challenge that the Global Sanctuary Collective needs to confront.

Mobilizing the Global Sanctuary Collective: A Manifesto

The current political moment begs us to rethink our intellectual commitments as scholars of varying disciplines and to reconsider whether or not they align with our ultimate vision(s) for the world. In other words, is what we write and teach serving or moving us toward this vision?

Compared for instance to the communities in which we conduct our research, are we connecting our work in meaningful and socially transformative ways with our disciplinary and institutional neighbours? Are we scaling up or "migrating" the ideals that we identify through our empirical work across a broader collective?

The danger of any oppressive political regime to a community of scholars is intellectual isolation and paralysis. As in the time of McCarthyism, already we have heard of colleagues or friends of friends who have been "blacklisted" or targeted for promoting research as well as political and social ideals that are considered outside the increasingly far-right mainstream. It is thus more important now than ever that we strengthen our professional networks and invite opportunities for collaboration. Undocumented students cried out "we are undocumented and unafraid" and the resulting Dreamer movement changed the political landscape. Immigration policies and actions enacted by Trump are shaking the ground and a chill is going through the Dreamers and many others, who are rightfully terrified. The rest of us need to offer a safe space of sanctuary and protection, and we need to be crying out loud, protesting on the streets to defend the rights of the vulnerable, making our voices heard through all forms of creative and artistic expression.

In the spirit of resistance and solidarity that has swept many of our communities, and pre-empting attacks on academic freedom, we seek to launch the Global Sanctuary Collective: an intellectual haven for scholars, activists, and artists to pursue transdisciplinary work that centres on and advances the plural, multi-scaled expressions of sanctuary. We invite you to join the Global Sanctuary Collective, a collaborative and decentralized initiative to promote human values of inclusion, respect, and social justice in the face of the moral outrage caused by current policies and actions against undocumented immigrants, refugees and other minorities and vulnerable populations. We build on the moral compass offered by the faith-based origins of sanctuary, and extend the scope to include all motives and all expressions. What is emerging is a secular, global, inclusive sanctuary movement, one made up by individuals, each with their

own personal stories, all coming together into a single, diverse and rich collective. Academics and researchers play an important role, with research and engaged scholarship helping to offer a principled, intellectually sound backbone to the sanctuary movement. Spaces of sanctuary need to be protected and promoted. Protests help enact the people's voices in the public space. Finally, artistic expressions of sanctuary demonstrate the diversity of voices in the protection of the vulnerable.

Whether it takes place in churches or on campuses or in the digital sphere it remains vital that we take, share, and defend the spaces of sanctuary together. Moreover, these practices and alliances must be perceived as both flexible and enduring; acts of the moment yet involving collaborations over the long haul. This sense of the elastic and mobile nature of sanctuary space enables us to conceptualize partnerships that can extend across scales as well as across faiths and non-faith. We are united in place, but both the "we" and the "place" are plural, a moving venture that remains coherent by the shared values of equity and justice.

This broad conceptualization of sanctuary space *and time* requires finding alliances that make sense to us personally as well as politically. For scholars, the long-term (lifetime) commitment that is called for might mean addressing questions of sanctuary that resonate in our own fields of knowledge, as one aspect of our roles as academics is to augment the empirical data needed to refute the post-truth sceptics of our era.

As geography, anthropology, and information scholars we ourselves are concerned with the everyday lived experiences, interactions, and forms of communication among human beings in specific spatial and temporal moments. We recognize that we are living in an interconnected world, and that internet and digital technologies have been playing a substantial role in propagating ideologies of migration; these are both negative--feeding the flames of intolerance and bigotry, and positive--giving resonance to voices and artistic works of resistance, connecting like-minded people to discuss facts and possible responses.

With the multiple threats being waged against our communities, we must not be intimidated or discouraged from engaging in nonviolent protest in visible, public spaces and capitalize on strength in numbers. The Global Women's March on January 21, 2017 was deemed the largest public protest in US history, eliciting more than 1 million participants within the US alone and close to 5 million including cities around the globe. The march represented both resistance to the ostensible values of the new US presidential administration, as well as support for reproductive rights, equal pay, affordable health care, [and] action on climate change" (The Washington Post Editorial Board 2017). The demonstrations were peaceful, inclusive, and memorialized in images and art from around the world with the hashtag #womensmarchglobal.

It is undeniable that some of us are more privileged than others in speaking out against tyranny at multiple scales. At our own institution for instance, we have listened to colleagues who express their fears about being in any spotlight for reasons of becoming a target of bigotry and hate or jeopardizing their employment within the university (or even within higher education). Each has a role to play in making our demands heard, but the degree to which we expose ourselves to a broader public will vary. Ensuring that we are all able to participate will also require that we think outside the box in terms of decolonizing space; since Trump's election for instance, protests have ventured off the streets onto freeways (Roth 2016) and into airports (Doubek 2017). In addition to expressing our solidarity, these protests and demonstrations have proven essential to preserving our democracy by holding our elected officials accountable in representing our interests when it comes to refuting policies that we find reproachable, inhumane, and unjust.

Artistic expressions should be encouraged as a form of sanctuary, as affirmations of freedom, as channels of ideas, as grounds for dialogue and debate, and as sublimation of migrants' voices. Most certainly, music, poetry, performances, visual and plastic art *will* continue

to be created, and *will* continue to convey migrants' very own voices – empowering them with an active and influential role in the socio-political debates.

Humour and sarcasm will also offer spaces and often irreverent grounds of reflection, discussion, and human compassion, leading to social change. Digital reproductions and diffusion online of these artistic pieces – poetry, pictures, music, satire – will give resonance to these artistic works of resistance, connecting and mobilizing people to discuss facts and possible responses. Sanctuary takes the form of the ability to express – no matter what or where.

After embodying the role of a black goddess of fertility during the 2017 Grammy awards, singer Beyoncé accepted an award with the following words: "It's important to me to show images to my children that reflect their beauty, so they can grow up in a world where they look in the mirror, first through their own families, as well as the news, the Super Bowl, the Olympics, the White House and the Grammys, and see themselves and have no doubt that they're beautiful, intelligent and capable." Every person on this planet has a right to those same aspirations, including all undocumented immigrants, and refugees from all countries and religions. The Global Sanctuary Collective is helping make sure these words can be a reality for all.

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