

BOOK CLUB IN A BOX

INSTRUCTIONS FOR HOST

BEFORE YOUR DISCUSSION

- Email an invitation to your book group members
- *King's English Bookshop in Salt Lake City is offering a 10% discount on this book.*
- **Finding Home: Utah's Refugee Story** (30 min)
is available to stream at pbsutah.org/findinghome
- Join the Facebook Group "Book Club in a Box Discussion Group" to find ideas, helpful links, etc.
- During your discussion:
 - Make PBS Utah materials in the box available to the group
 - Show clips from the film
 - Take photos to share with PBS Utah and Facebook group

AFTER YOUR DISCUSSION

- Please have members fill out feedback forms and mail back to PBS Utah
- Share your photos and ideas with others on the Facebook Group
- Invite your book club members to join the Facebook Group via email
- Complete host survey
(Link will be emailed to you after your discussion)



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GET INVOLVED!

You chose this box because you are interested in these stories and issues. Learn more by visiting these organizations:

- **Utah Department of Workforce Services / Refugee Services**
jobs.utah.gov/refugee
- **International Rescue Committee**
rescue.org
- **Refugee & Immigrant Center – Asian Association of Utah**
aau-slc.org
- **Utah Refugee Connection**
serverefugees.org
- **Catholic Community Services**
ccsutah.org
- **Spice Kitchen Incubator**
spicekitchenincubator.org





FINDING HOME: UTAH'S REFUGEE STORY

By exploring stories of exodus, stunning immersion, new lifestyles, and a determination to claim an earned seat at the table of freedom, **Finding Home: Utah's Refugee Story** illustrates the attributes of our nation that still serve as a magnet for the frightened and dispossessed throughout the world. Each year about 70,000 political, economic and otherwise endangered refugees are legally admitted to the United States. Separated from home and personal history they often possess little more than their names. They step onto an airplane and step off in a foreign world; a world comparatively rich with opportunity, wealth and stability. Immediately, a new chapter of survival begins.

Utah receives 1,000-1,100 refugees each year. Each is unique, but all have fled dire circumstance. In the distinctive cultural and geographic landscape of Utah, refugees are greeted by a caseworker, taken to housing, and immediately submerged in fast-paced society far removed from their homeland. The humbling journeys and discovery of a new definition of freedom as the heart of Finding Home: Utah's Refugee Story serve as powerful reminders for each of us of inherent qualities in our American experience.



PAIGE KEITER Filmmaker, Producer

Paige Keiter found her love for film making while a student in Park City High School's film department. She graduated from the University of Utah with Bachelor of Arts degrees in Film Studies and Mass Communication. Her journalism experiences there gave her an appreciation of the documentary format, as she chronicled the impact people can have on their communities. Paige has traveled and filmed in places such as Costa Rica, Kenya, and all along the Wasatch front. She worked for the National Geographic Channel before finding a home in public television. Her career ambition is to continue to tell the stories of people making a difference in the world, thus making a difference herself.



THE BEST WE COULD DO: AN ILLUSTRATED MEMOIR

This graphic novel is an evocative memoir about the search for a better future and a longing for the past. Exploring the anguish of immigration and the lasting effects that displacement has on a child and her family, Bui documents the story of her family's daring escape after the fall of South Vietnam in the 1970s, and the difficulties they faced building new lives for themselves.

At the heart of Bui's story is a universal struggle: While adjusting to life as a first-time mother, she ultimately discovers what it means to be a parent—the endless sacrifices, the unnoticed gestures, and the depths of unspoken love. Despite how impossible it seems to take on the simultaneous roles of both parent and child, Bui pushes through. With haunting, poetic writing and breathtaking art, she examines the strength of family, the importance of identity, and the meaning of home.

In what Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Viet Thanh Nguyen calls “a book to break your heart and heal it,” *The Best We Could Do* brings to life Thi Bui's journey of understanding, and provides inspiration to all of those who search for a better future while longing for a simpler past.



THI BUI Author & Illustrator

Thi Bui was born in Vietnam three months before the end of the Vietnam War, and came to the United States in 1978 as part of the “boat people” wave of refugees from Southeast Asia. Her debut graphic memoir has been selected as UCLA's Common Book for 2017, a National Book Critics Circle finalist in autobiography, an Eisner Award finalist in Reality Based Comics, and made several Best of 2017 book lists, including Bill Gates's top five picks. She is currently researching and drawing a work of graphic nonfiction about how Asian American Pacific Islanders are impacted by detention and deportation, to be published by One World, Random House. Bui taught high school in New York City and was a founding teacher of Oakland International High School, the first public high school in California for recent immigrants and English learners. Since 2015, she has been a faculty member of the MFA in Comics program at the California College of the Arts. Thi Bui lives in the Bay Area.

Refugees are a special category of immigrants. They have fled their home country and cannot return because of a well-founded fear of persecution based on religion, race, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. Separated from homeland and personal history, they often possess little more than their names. After many months if not years in refugee camps, they step onto an airplane and step off in a foreign world.

1. What are the initial challenges and barriers for Thi Bui and her family in *The Best We Could Do* upon arriving to America? How is it similar and/or different to the struggles faced by individuals in **Finding Home: Utah's Refugee Story**? As Americans, what do we take for granted as basic knowledge and daily routine tasks in a fast-paced industrialized society which might be foreign to newly arrived refugees far removed from their homeland?
2. While each of these refugees arrived at different times in American history, what were the terrors which they fled from? Beginning a new life in a foreign land is daunting. There are so many barriers one has to endure. What are the factors that you noticed which made their lives successful in America from Thi Bui to individuals like Tara Acharya and the Bilals?
3. How does the story of Thi Bui's family's survival from poverty, war, escape and resettlement in the US inform our understanding of the refugee experience in the U.S.? How does this narrative challenge the model minority myth that assumes Asian Americans have attained social and economic success and do not experience racism?
4. The trauma of war and politics shapes Thi Bui's connection to Vietnam as her homeland. Why did many Vietnamese people support the communist revolution, but many others were against it? What were the driving forces throughout the centuries old conflict, and how does nationalism and independence for Vietnam shape the ideals and hopes for the Vietnamese people throughout the country? What are the realities of war and trauma that we see unfold in the graphic memoir? How did war and revolution affect individual Vietnamese and their relationships with their loved ones?
5. In **Finding Home: Utah's Refugee Story**, we see the process of becoming a U.S. citizen can be difficult to navigate. Yet, each year, hundreds of these refugees in Utah who came empty handed, many without any career accreditations, who have been working for years in multiple low-income jobs in America raise their hands in the oath of citizenship. What were their struggles in becoming a citizen? What does it mean to be a U.S. citizen for these people? Why is it the dream of most refugees living in America? What does it mean for these people to belong to a country and to be able to vote in America?
6. What insights have you gained from reading *The Best We Could Do* and viewing the documentary, **Finding Home: Utah's Refugee Story**? What would you do differently now upon seeing an individual refugee or a refugee family in your neighborhood? Has the book and the film changed you?
7. Remember a time when you had to flee from a personal conflict, a relationship or from any form of oppression? How did you feel? What were your struggles, trauma and anxieties? How did you manage to move beyond being a victim to a survivor? What skills and coping mechanisms did you develop to help you survive? As you look at your own personal conflict, do you recognize generational trauma (as depicted by Thi Bui) Did your parent's past trauma(s) affect you as a child throughout your life?
8. How do the experiences of immigrants in these stories compare to the immigrant experience today? How do you feel on the issues of detention, deportation and separation? What are the lasting effects as children of immigrants flee from their home country only to be separated from their families at the US border? How have the visual narratives of children being detained in subpar facilities, children repre-

senting themselves in court, and the physical separation of families which have permeated both mainstream and social media channels affected you? Do modern day immigration policies replicate a tainted, white supremacist past as some historians and cultural activists claim?

9. What are the challenges facing refugees amidst COVID-19 in refugee camps and in communities across America? How does COVID-19 impact refugee resettlement, access for medical care, good hygiene and sanitation, employment opportunities amidst rising unemployment and access for accurate

information to protect themselves and their family members? Additionally, this pandemic has created operational and logistical constraints on immigration services across the globe. Border closures and temporary halts on administering asylum claims have made it impossible for those fleeing conflict areas to evacuate and seek asylum. The pandemic has also been used as a justification for countries to advance anti-migrant policies. How does this effect individual rights and the physical safety of refugees and asylum seekers? What is our call to action as Americans amidst this worldwide crisis if any?



NAJA PHAM LOCKWOOD

An investor, patron and collaborator of social change through film and the arts, Naja is the Founder of RYSE Media which supports stories of diverse voices. Her independent executive producing and philanthropic credits include academy nominated *Last Days in Vietnam*, PBS Asian Americans film series, Toronto International Film Festival premiere of *Coming Home Again*, *Gook*, *Cries from Syria* and *First Days* with StoryCorp. The *First Days* Project is a collaboration between StoryCorps and PBS which aimed to collect, preserve and celebrate the stories of Vietnamese American refugees and Vietnam veterans throughout America. She is an associate instructor and lecturer at the University of Utah teaching the Power of Storytelling: Asia and the Global Cinema.

Born in Vietnam, Naja immigrated to Massachusetts during the Fall of Saigon. She graduated with a BA from Boston University. She then returned to Vietnam under the sponsorship of Georgetown University, from 1991 to 1993, as one of the first Vietnamese Americans to study at Hanoi University after the war. After returning from Vietnam, Naja earned an MBA from Harvard Business School and worked in investment banking and media in New York, Singapore and London.

Naja is an investor in Impact Partner Films, which supports documentaries that enrich and ignite social change. She was part of Silicon Valley's campaign to fund and support *Crazy Rich Asians* that have blazed a pathway for greater Asian-American representation. She served on the Sundance Utah Advisory Board, working with Utah legislators and leaders to support the initiatives of Sundance. She partnered with Sundance Institute to help build and fund the Sundance Screenwriters Fellowships for Asian Americans filmmakers. She currently serves on the Board of Utah Film Commission and Center for Asian America Media (CAAM). As a refugee, she continues to advocate for immigrants from her undergraduate years to her current work with the Governor's Workforce Services and Catholic Community Services in Utah. She is the Founder and CEO of www.najalockwooddesigns.com to support female artisans of Southeast Asia. Throughout Naja's life, there has always been a commitment to social justice and making sure the voices of the under-represented, the minority and the oppressed are heard.



This recipe was provided in partnership with Spice Kitchen Incubator.

Spice Kitchen Incubator, a program of the International Rescue Committee in Salt Lake City, strives to help low-to-moderate income entrepreneurs develop and grow successful food businesses, preserve their culinary traditions and add spice to Salt Lake County. Learn more at SpiceKitchenIncubator.org

Prep Time: 45 minutes • Cook Time: 15 minutes

Yields 10 bolani that will keep refrigerated for 3-5 days. Cilantro chutney may be refrigerated up to 1-2 weeks in an airtight container

INGREDIENTS

Cilantro Chutney

- 1 Bunch cilantro
- 2- 4 Jalapenos (use more for spicy chutney)
- 4 Cloves garlic
- 1 cup white vinegar
- ½ cup Raisins
- 1 tsp. Salt

Bolani

- 3 Russet potatoes
- 10 Uncooked flour tortillas
- 1 Bunch green onions
- ½ Bunch cilantro
- ½ tsp. Cayenne pepper
- 1 tsp. Fresh ground coriander seeds
- 1 tsp. Fresh ground cumin seeds
- ½ tsp. Black pepper
- 1 tbsp. Vegetable oil

INSTRUCTIONS

Combine all ingredients in blender and blend until smooth.

For the Bolani:

Boil whole potatoes with the skin on for 30 minutes or until soft. Once potatoes are cooked, peel off and discard the skin, then smash the potato with a masher.

Set potatoes aside to cool for about 5 minutes. Next, finely chop the cilantro leaves and green onions, add to the smashed potatoes along with the spices. Mix until combined.

To fill the bolani, spread 2 or 3 spoonfuls of the potato mixture onto half of the tortilla. Wet one edge of the tortilla with a dab of water, fold and pinch the edges together.

Heat oil on griddle (or stove top pan) at medium heat, and cook the bolani until golden brown on each side. Repeat cooking instructions as desired. Serve hot with cilantro chutney and enjoy!