NOTE: our dataset is multiple times too large to store in github (the smallest CSV is ~125MiB), so for now we will be storing the files in drive: [ICE DATA](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1tC1GmXV51mEeywB6ZN0hkrYtJ38owuLB?usp=sharing)

It is clear to us (Ian, Claire, Em) that Immigrations & Customs Enforcement (ICE) is a particularly intense form of policing that, under the current presidential administration, has become increasingly explicit in its cruelty. Amid recent rulings that ever-lessen its restraints (*Noem v. Vasquez Perdomo*, 2025) the deportation of legal citizens who are political figures (Shah, 2024), and the continued cleavage of families across borders (UCLA School of Law, 2024), calling for anything short of abolition seems unsatisfactory. Having grounded ourselves, our goals: With this project, we intend to investigate (1) if the data released by ICE under FOIA under-reports encounters for this year, compared to records of previous years; (2) whether or how ICE data correlates with different presidential administrations & policy decisions (3) what do these prior points indicate about the role of data in political discourse, and what implications do they have about modes of recourse?  
 Our standpoint on this issue, after much deliberation, has been agreed upon: “Fuck ICE”. What next follows is: what direction is ICE moving in at present, and what does this imply for political action in the modern day?

The dataset we intend to use is the Deportation Data Project’s publishing of ICE’s arrest, detention, deportation, and encounter records (Center for Immigration Law & Policy, 2025). They acquired this data through the use of the Freedom of Information Act, following a lawsuit (*Center for Immigration Law & Policy v. United States ICE*, 2024) after ICE’s initial refusal to comply. The data has been updated twice since its initial release, and presently contains information ranging from October 2011 to July 2025. The significant span of this dataset allows us to compare the data between the past three US presidential administrations, as well as partial data from the current Trump term.

Regarding the recent July 2025 release, the Project questioned the reliability of the data due to discrepancies not present within earlier years when comparing against other sources, though (as of the day we are writing this) this has changed. This analysis of ICE data from the most recent Trump term speaks to a greater issue about data transparency. We believe that there are discrepancies between the reported arrests and the actual arrests and deportations.

The datasets contain demographic information about the person arrested, how they were arrested, where they were arrested, when they were arrested, the status of their case, and where they were deported. This allows us to compare discrepancies between, for example, the birth country of the person arrested and where they were deported (they do not always match). They also allow us to observe the timing of each case and how it aligns with the policies of the time. Using the datasets from past years, we are also able to analyze how all of this changes during each presidential administration.

We expect to specifically check three claims: (1) ICE policing and individual treatment is worse under republican administrations; (2) ICE has been more active under democratic administrations; (3) ICE activity has generally increased in proportion to budget. We expect that the first claim will differ in evaluation between CBP and ICE, & that the second & third claims will be true. Ultimately we expect to observe that damaging ICE activity is both bipartisan and worsening.

References

Center for Immigration Law & Policy. (2025). *Arrests, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 2011-2025* [Data set]. <https://deportationdata.org/data/ice.html>

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UCLA School of Law: Center for Immigration Law and Policy. (2024, June). *Cruel indifference: Family separation at the U.S.-Mexico border before and after zero tolerance*. <https://law.ucla.edu/sites/default/files/PDFs/Center_for_Immigration_Law_and_Policy/Cruel_Indifference.pdf>

Noem v. Vasquez Perdomo, 25A169. (2025). <https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/24pdf/25a169_5h25.pdf>

Shah, N. (2024, October 31). *How Trump is using the Alien Enemies Act to deport millions*. ACLU. <https://www.aclu.org/news/immigrants-rights/anti-immigrant-extremists-want-to-use-this-226-year-old-law-to-implement-a-mass-deportation-program>

Labour Contract (proposed by em, seconded by claire, ian approved)

Generally, work on this project should operate by a means-based distribution. What this means is that the expected labour input of all members should not exceed the capacity they are able to healthily give, within the context of their own circumstances. If the scope of the labour for any individual at any time exceeds their capabilities, they will request the group to meet or otherwise converse, and the group will discuss distribution such that the stress on all members is as low as possible. This requires good-faith acknowledgement of reasonable levels of work and stress, where all members are expected to evaluate their capacities to work and prioritize as they see fit.

Within the group, different members have different capabilities: labour such as github management, script writing, report writing, and research will **not** be entrusted into the sole purview of any one member, but instead should be undertaken alternately by all members at certain points. That being said, given that we all have different skills and interests, neither shall this labour be **equally** distributed. Instead, practices such as pair programming & collaborative writing shall be undertaken by all, but deference to or guidance by one member on an area of specialty *may* also occur.