

HAITIAN IMMIGRATION ABUSES IN THE U.S.

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Haitians are seeking asylum in the United States after years of poverty and suppression from their government. Media coverage surrounding the event has depicted the horrific treatment and cruel unwelcoming they are receiving by U.S. authority. According to NPR, “More than 9,000 migrants were being held in a temporary staging area under the Del Rio International Bridge on Thursday as agents worked to process them all, according to the news outlets.” The large influx of people signifies an urgent need for safety, however the U.S.’s processes to provide shelter are far too inefficient. Putting the issue into perspective, we know that granting immigration has been terribly slow regardless of reasoning for years, and has caused harm to many groups of people seeking asylum. If this has been an ongoing issue dating back even before the precedent of the 1924 Chinese Exclusion Act, and the U.S. has not yet attempted to rectify it, there must be something that they fear losing or gaining. The government has made it clear that they fear allowing harmful people into the U.S. without a thorough investigation, and, according to Law Enforcement Today, “As Border Patrol agents struggled to regain control of the bus, a few of the illegal immigrants escaped and fled across the highway.” The article allows readers to assume that the U.S. government is rightfully closing borders, as their fear of harm-causing immigrants was validated by Haitian's actions. Without any context, American citizens view these border patrol agents in an unequivocally guiltless light, they are simply “eliminating a threat.” However, the videos embedded in NPR and the Huffington Post’s articles regarding the situation prove a very different aggressor. The videos depict the Haitians struggling to walk and move forward as they are being attacked and whipped by Border Patrol agents on horses. All of a sudden, it is apparent that the border patrol agents are not protecting, but

provoking. The narrative now comes together: the U.S. is not aiming to defend their people, they are attempting to preserve homogeneity when it comes to race, class, and ethnicity.

The racial dynamics are particularly interesting when it comes to the treatment of these individuals in comparison to immigrants who are not a majority Black and Brown. Haitians, in particular, are granted asylum at the lowest rate of any nationality with consistently high numbers of asylum seekers, according to an analysis of data by The Associated Press. White immigrants, although also having to go through difficult citizenship, green card, and Visa procedures, are granted stays at a much higher rate than those of color. According to NPR, "As of Sept. 2, officers had arrested nearly 6,000 migrants crossing the U.S.-Mexico border." The prison industrial complex disproportionately affects Black, and we see that the policing begins the second they enter the country. In addition to the difficult immigration process to begin with, the added attribute of racial dynamics may be what has allowed the physical assault of Haitians. The bigotry embedded in the fabrications of society are attenuated through situations including those of immigration.

A statement released by the White House states "Individuals and families are subject to border restrictions, including expulsion. Irregular migration poses a significant threat to the health and welfare of border communities and to the lives of migrants themselves, and should not be attempted." Immigrating to the U.S. is not a new occurrence, people attempting to seek asylum know how dangerous circumstances will be, however their situation at home is worse than the constant harassment they will face by American authority so they attempt the journey anyways. Policies set in place have and will always hold an ethical framework, and making morally unjust decisions will cause harm to people and their lives. In this particular case, we

must recognize the brutalization these people are facing due to unjust immigration policies and the added racial discrimination on top of the already traumatizing process.