

Trauma and Terror at the U.S Border

By Alex Cueto

At only 4 months old, Constantin Mutu was taken away from his parents at the U.S.–Mexican Border. Constantin was sent to live with a foster family in Michigan where he stayed for 5 months. As the NY Times states: “Constantin was ultimately the youngest of thousands of children taken from their parents under a policy that was meant to deter families hoping to immigrate to the United States.” This family separation policy is one of the United States’ most important and shameful issues.

Created by the Trump administration, the family separation policy at the United States border tears families apart. As of October, 2019, over 5,400 children had been separated from their families. According to the American Civil Liberties Union, 1,033 of these children were under the age of 10 years old. Not only is separating these families cruel, but it violates an executive order claiming family separation is only allowed under circumstances involving child endangerment. Separating these families is wrong and dehumanizing.

In June of 2018, after mounting public pressure, the Trump administration ended the policy; but that did not stop the separations. In December, 2019, over 1,100 more children had been separated from their parents after the policy ended. These traumatic events have caused scarring memories for young children and families creating fear and terror of the United States and its government. A former officer at the El Paso Border Union in Texas said separating families was “the most horrible thing I have ever done.”

Now you may be asking yourself, how do I help? As mentioned earlier, the American Civil Liberties Union is a group created to end unjust actions like being arrested and charged without “warrants and constitutional protections”. Currently, on their website, you can sign a petition to help end family separation. You can also volunteer and support people who might have been or have been separated. Keep marching against this dehumanizing action. Imagine how would you feel if you were ripped apart from the ones you loved and left in custody in a new, strange country for months with no idea of when you were to return home. Use the pain you feel imagining this to fuel action on behalf of separated families.

Source Cited:
New York Times

Vahora, Sweta. “The Youngest Known Child Separated From His Family at the U.S. Border Under Trump.” *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 14 June 2019,
www.nytimes.com/2019/06/14/the-weekly/trump-immigration-border-separatio

n-family.html.

NBC News

Press, Associated. "More than 5,400 Children Split at Border, According to New Count." *NBCNews.com*, NBCUniversal News Group, 25 Oct. 2019, www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/more-5-400-children-split-border-according-new-count-n1071791.

Time

Aguilera, Jasmine. "Everything To Know About The Status of Family Separation." *Time*, Time, 25 Oct. 2019, time.com/5678313/trump-administration-family-separation-lawsuits/.

ACLU

Aclu. "Family Separation by the Numbers." *American Civil Liberties Union*, American Civil Liberties Union, 2 Oct. 2018, www.aclu.org/issues/immigrants-rights/immigrants-rights-and-detention/family-separation.

"ACLU History." *American Civil Liberties Union*, www.aclu.org/about/aclu-history.

NPR

"Looking At Lasting Effects Of Trump's Family Separation Policy At The Southern Border." *NPR*, NPR, 1 Jan. 2020, www.npr.org/2020/01/01/792916538/looking-at-lasting-effects-of-trumps-family-separation-policy-at-the-southern-bo.

The Intercept

Washington, John. "The Government Has Taken At Least 1,100 Children From Their Parents Since Family Separations Officially Ended." *The Intercept*, 9 Dec. 2019, theintercept.com/2019/12/09/family-separation-policy-lawsuit/.

