In the Fight for Racial Equity, Don't Forget About Immigrants

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What does it look like for racism to impact the lives of immigrants? In the United States, immigration policy has a long history of reflecting the structural racism that exists in society. This history includes the Immigration Act of 1924, which placed strict national origin quotas on nonwhite immigrants. Under this Act, immigrants from African, Latin American, and Asian countries faced greater restrictions than those from European countries.

More recently, the past four years have seen a concerted attack on immigrants, primarily affecting immigrants from marginalized racial or ethnic backgrounds. Among other efforts, the Trump Administration rescinded Temporary Protected Status for immigrants fleeing countries impacted by war and natural disasters, issued travel and refugee bans that target people from Muslim countries, and separated children from their parents at the U.S.-Mexico border. Further, deportation rates are higher for immigrants from black and brown countries despite the fact that the vast majority of unauthorized immigrants are not criminals.