

Before You Apply, Ask Yourself These Questions:

Would you be comfortable working for an organization with a long, ongoing history of racist and sexual violence?

Would you wear a uniform that evokes fear & distrust in your neighbors?

Would you leave home to move to an isolated city with scarce resources?

Would you be comfortable working with people who joke about the deaths of migrants?

Would you be comfortable taking water away from a dying person?

Would you be comfortable taking a crying child away from the arms of their parents?

Are you committed to enforcing borders at the expense of communities of color?

Are there other ways you can build safety, beyond joining CBP, in your community?

Alternatives to Careers in Border Patrol:

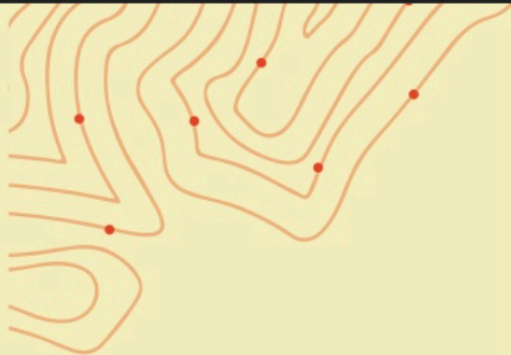
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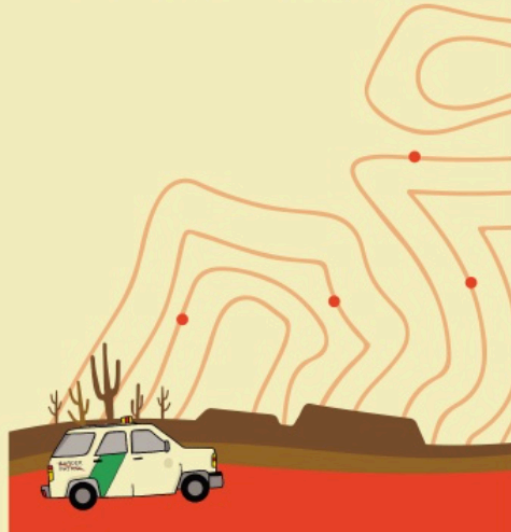


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WAR RESISTERS LEAGUE BEYOND BORDER PATROL



Remembering the People Killed by Border Patrol

Since September 2018, 11 people have died in Border Patrol custody, and 6 were children - including:

Jakelin Caal Maquin, 7 years old

Jakelin was an Indigenous girl from the Raxruha community in Alta Verapaz, Guatemala. She died from sepsis in December 2018. Her autopsy report suggests that earlier medical intervention would have improved her chances at surviving.

Felipe Gómez Alonzo, 8 years old

Felipe was an Indigenous boy from the Chuj-speaking community of Yalambojoch, Guatemala. He died from influenza. He was the second Indigenous Guatemalan child to die in U.S. custody in December 2018.

Since 2010, at least 37 people have been shot and killed by Border Patrol agents - including:

José Antonio Elena Rodríguez, 16 years old

On Oct. 10, 2012, Agent Lonnie Swartz shot José Antonio Elena Rodríguez, who was walking along a sidewalk in Nogales, Sonora, from behind the fence in Nogales, AZ. Swartz shot Jose 16 times in 34 seconds, from three different positions - almost all shots hit him in the back. The agent claims he acted in self-defense against rock-throwers on the other side.

Claudia Patricia Gómez Gonzáles, 20 years old

Claudia was an Indigenous woman from the Maya Mam community of San Juan Ostuncalco, Guatemala. In 2018, Claudia was shot in the head by a still-unnamed agent in Rio Bravo, TX just minutes after crossing the border.

It is no coincidence that many people who have died are Indigenous migrants, who are forced to leave their home countries because of poverty, and military and gang violence.

"We've had no news from the American authorities, no visits, no phone calls. It's a year since my daughter was killed and I want the same thing now as I did then: justice."

- Mr. Gómez, Claudia's father

"Border security is an attempt to stifle the natural migration patterns of tribal people indigenous to the land... the river that divides us from Mexico today was once the river that connected us instead. The idea of it as a partition is a false narrative enforced by the constant presence of Border Patrol."

- Ava Leal, Carrizo/Comecruco Tribe of Texas



Citations:
17. Amy Kim, "Autopsy determines 7-year-old Guatemalan girl died from sepsis while in US custody," CNN News, last modified March 30, 2019.
18. Lucia Prensa D., "Guatemalan village woman's child who died in U.S. Border Patrol custody," PBS News Hour, last modified Dec 31, 2018.
19. "Deaths by Border Patrol," southern Border Communities Coalition, last modified Nov 6, 2019.
20. Nina Lubart, "'I want justice' a year on, family of Guatemalan woman shot dead in Texas still agonizes," The Guardian, last modified May 23, 2019.

The History of Border Patrol: A Century of Violence

1924: Border Patrol is established. Many of the first U.S. border and customs agents are KKK members, who are angry that Mexican immigration is not restricted.

They beat, shot, and hung migrants.¹ Some agents also transfer from border-town police departments and the Texas Rangers. Both agencies are infamous for committing some of the worst atrocities along the border against Indigenous people and migrants.

1946: Congress passes legislation giving border agents the "power without warrant to arrest any alien who in his presence or view is entering or attempting to enter the United States."²

1954: Border Patrol leads Operation Wetback, which is a mass deportation drive that uses military-style tactics to deport Mexican immigrants. The name of the operation is a racial slur commonly used against Mexicans.

Many deportees are crammed onto cargo ships that are later compared to "18th century slave ship[s]" in a congressional investigation. About 300,000 people are deported, including U.S. citizens.³

1970s: Though separating families is not government policy at this time, agents take children from their parents and threaten permanent separation. The children are often left in foster care or federal jails, or released into Mexico alone with no money or way to contact their families.

In 1977, local border patrol agents also show significant support for the KKK setting up a "Klan Border Watch" at the San Ysidro port of entry.⁴

1980s-1990s: Agents start putting detained migrants in extremely cold rooms called hieleras ("ice boxes"), which they still do today.

Other abuses during this time include handcuffing migrants being sent back to Mexico onto cars and forcing them to run, and trading young women detained at the border for football tickets. Local police also partake in this abuse, beating migrants and videotaping it to rewatch for their enjoyment.

2003: The Bush administration merges Customs Service and Border Patrol into one agency called US Customs and Border Protection (CBP). Since 2003, the violence of CBP has killed at least 97 people.⁵

Endnotes:

1. Greg Grandin, "The Border Patrol has Been a Cult of Brutality Since 1924," *The Intercept*, last modified Jan 12, 2019.
2. "Process of Immigration Officers and Employees," 8 U.S. Code § 1327 (2006).
3. Kelly Lytle Hernandez, "Largest deportation campaign in U.S. history is no match for 'Bring a gun,'" *USA Newsweek*, last modified Nov 12, 2017.
4. Greg Grandin, "The Militarization of the Southern Border is a Long-Standing American Tradition," *The Nation*, last modified Jan 14, 2019.
5. Sarah Mersmann, "FBI investigators: 97 deaths point to pattern of border agent violence across America," *The Guardian*, last modified May 2, 2018.

What Border Patrol Recruiters Won't Tell You

Being from the communities that are targeted by Border Patrol doesn't make you a more humane, "better" agent. It will be your job to detain people and separate families in your own community.

"We provide a high starting salary, benefits, and stability and you don't need a college degree to join. It's a great job for supporting your family."

Many people turn to Border Patrol positions for a living wage and fewer application requirements, compared to other jobs in their region. However, not everyone chooses this path. **Your survival does not have to come at someone else's expense. Your survival does not have to cost lives.**

"You'll be protecting our country and its people, and providing aid to those in need. You'll be doing a noble service."

Since the 90s, about 8,000 migrants have died in the Sonoran Desert from the heat, dehydration, or hypothermia. Volunteers with a group called No More Deaths (NMD) have provided food, water, and shelter for migrants in this region for years.

As a Border Patrol agent, you are required to deny migrants the support they need and deserve. You will be working with people who destroy the life-saving water jugs NMD volunteers leave behind.

After a video of agents slashing jugs was released in 2018, patrolers retaliated by arresting NMD volunteer Scott Warren on felony harboring charges - for providing food, water, shelter, and clean clothes to migrants at the group's camp. **Is this noble?**⁶

Instead of providing aid to those in need, your job will be to detain migrants in cramped, disease-ridden cells. Your peers have taken children away from their parents, hit them, verbally abused them, and forced them to sleep on hard concrete. **Is this noble?**⁷

"It's a job filled with excitement and adventure."

Border Patrol morale is extremely low. Border Patrol has the highest turnover rate across all federal law enforcement agencies, and CBP ranks near the bottom of an annual federal survey of employee satisfaction.⁸

It is a job that isolates you from community. From 2007 to 2018, more than 100 CBP employees, many of whom had worked as Border Patrol agents, died by suicide. Ross Davidson, who retired in 2017 after 21 years with the agency, said he was certain that stress from the job has been a factor.⁹

Endnotes:

6. Ryan Dovesneaux, "New Documents Bolster Case that Border Patrol Retaliated Against Humanitarian Group," *The Intercept*, last modified October 18, 2018.
7. Jacob Soboroff and Jella Amesty, "Migrant kids in overcrowded Arizona border station allege sex assault, retaliation from U.S. agents," *NBC News*, last modified July 9, 2019.
8. Ted Hesson, "The Border Patrol's Recruiting Crisis," *Publicus*, last modified Feb 10, 2019.
9. Maury Fernandez, Miriam Jordan, Zolan Kanno-Youngs, and Caitlin Dickerson, "People Actively Hate Us": Inside the Border Patrol's Morale Crisis, *The New York Times*, last modified Sept 24, 2019.

*"Caging people for a nonviolent activity started to eat away at me."
- Anonymous, ex-agent*

CBP has had so much trouble recruiting they hired Accenture, a private firm, to recruit for them on a \$297 million contract in 2017. By a year's time in 2018, Accenture had only completed 2 new hires.

"Many people and the media paint border patrol agents with broad strokes - there are just a few bad apples. We are good people and we are just enforcing our nation's laws."

Abuse of power is rampant in Border Patrol. Since 2004, more than 200 agents have been arrested on corruption charges, including weapons trafficking and collaborating with Mexican drug cartels.¹⁰

"Roving patrols" are border units that police people outside of checkpoints and ports of entry. There are many accounts of these patrols **threatening residents** with assault rifles, tasers, and knives, and **illegally interfering** with efforts to video-record agents.¹¹

From 2007-2012, over 1,000 complaints of **excessive force** were issued against CBP agents.

CBP does not follow its own rules. On at least 14 occasions, CBP agents in California and Texas gave asylum seekers, who had already concluded their court cases, **fraudulent documents** with future court dates they made up in Mexico.¹² These agents sent migrants back to Mexico even when they were not being deported.

Roughly 9,500 former and current Border Patrol agents were in a secret Facebook group posting **jokes about the deaths of migrants**, and memes fantasizing about physical and sexual violence against migrants and congresswomen.¹³

Border Patrol Chief Carla Provost was a member of the group. CBP and Border Patrol leadership knew about this secret group for up to three years and **did nothing**.

*"The postings [reflect] what seems to be a pervasive culture of cruelty aimed at immigrants within CBP. This isn't just a few rogue agents..."
- Daniel Martinez, sociologist at the University of Arizona*

Endnotes:

10. A.C. Thompson, "Border Patrol Has a Long History of Agent Misconduct. Why Hasn't It Been Addressed?" *Pacific Standard*, last modified Jan 24, 2019.
11. James Lyall and Daniela Martinez, "Welcome to the Border Region Where the Border Patrol Has Implemented its Own Southwest 'Strip and Frisk' Policy," *American Civil Liberties Union*, last modified October 16, 2018.
12. Gustavo Salas, "CBP agents wrote fake court dates on paperwork to send migrants back to Mexico, records show," *The San Diego Union Tribune*, last modified Nov 7, 2019.
13. A.C. Thompson, "Inside the Secret Border Patrol Facebook Group Where Agents Joke About Migrant Deaths and Post Sexist Memes," *ProPublica*, last modified July 1, 2019.

This culture of cruelty applies to every level of CBP leadership.

The National Border Patrol Council, which is the union that represents Border Patrol agents, endorsed and is featured in a **white nationalist video** titled "Killing Free Speech."

Nearly 47% of thousands of lower-ranking CBP employees who were surveyed in a federal audit said they had **personally witnessed 4 or more acts of misconduct at CBP over the past 3 years.**

More than 32% said they **didn't trust their supervisors to "take appropriate action to correct misconduct in the workplace."** Nearly 25% said that they feared retaliation for reporting misconduct.

"We are committed to diversity and inclusion. There is no one better to serve in border patrol than the people who come from immigrant and border communities."

Border Patrol agents are known to use **racial slurs** against migrants. An especially common one is "tonk," or "the sound a flashlight makes when you hit someone over the head."

*"The racist, anti-immigrant words the [El Paso] shooter wrote can also be found on Border Patrol and union websites. I heard them when I was an agent, toward the end of my career, and I still hear them today."
- Jenn Budd, ex-agent*

Border Patrol agents commit **sexual assault against migrants**, especially children and women, at rates that are higher than those of any other federal law enforcement agency.¹⁴

From 2014-2018, at least 10 people in South Texas have been victims of **murder, attempted murder, kidnapping, or rape** by Border Patrol agents.¹⁵

There is also rampant **sexual harassment and assault within ranks.** Ex-agent Jenn Budd reported that it is common for women in Border Patrol to be forced to perform oral sex on fellow agents, and that male agents retaliated against women who filed complaints.¹⁶

Endnotes:

14. Anna Warner and Laura Strickler, "Disturbing" sex abuse within agency that patrols U.S. border, says former top official," *CBP News*, last modified May 4, 2018.
15. Maury Fernandez, "They Were Stopped at the Texas Border: Their Nightmares Had Only Just Began," *The New York Times*, last modified Nov 12, 2018.
16. Charalid De Silva, "Former Border Patrol Agent Says She Was Raped at Training Academy By Colleague Who Went On To Have Lifelong Career," *Newsweek*, last modified Nov 21, 2019.