

THE U.S. OCCUPATION OF HAITI: LEGACY

More than 100 years after the start of the occupation, the legacy of foreign intervention in Haiti is still strong. Overall, Haiti benefited very little from U.S. occupation, but what remained were systems of disrepair. Immediately after the American 1934 exit, new Haitian leaders were primed by the Gendarmerie to continue the use of U.S. systems, including exploitation of rural farmers, silencing activists, and selling land to foreigners.

The U.S. has continued the precedents set and changed by President Wilson's administration during the occupation. With over 450 Naval bases around the world, the U.S. has continued to employ gunboat diplomacy; U.S. power is rooted in an overwhelming military that has mobility across the sea; each president since Wilson has used this large naval presence to influence the actions of a foreign government.



The U.S. occupation of Haiti was a major event that is not significantly talked about globally. Haiti's long history is full of foreign intervention, with practically no gaps in time when Haitians were allowed to hold agency over their own nation. From the Germans, to the French, to the Americans, and many more - Haiti continuously had to hold on to its own values in the wake of foreign ideals.

The 2015 ceremony for the 100-year anniversary of the invasion brought both pain for what the country has lost due to imperialism and joy for what the country has created. Haitian-American writer Edwidge Danticat fittingly remarked, "Our desocupacion has yet to come."

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