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### Black Migration

Jacob Lawrence own story is a story of migration. Jacob Lawrence was born in Atlantic City then moved with his mother after his parents's divorce to Philadelphia. Lawrence mother migrated to New York for economic opportunities. Lawrence and his sibling were left in a foster home until his mother was able to save enough money to reunite with them. At a young age Lawrence started to develop his artistic skills thanks to the influence of Harlem. Lawrence was not a stranger to the social issues of his time and it helped shaped his artistic style.

Lawrence used his own experience, the struggle and story of the African American community to create his Migration Series, Harriet Tubman Series, and Toussaint L'Ouverture Series. The Migration Series is Lawrence's epic story about the African American community struggle and success to make a life in the United States. The Migration Series transcends into various communities of immigrants in the United States and repeats the history of many immigrants from Ireland, Germany, Italy and Russia in the United States, and remains relevant with the ongoing issues that are prevalent in the black community and different marginalized communities in the United States in the 21st century. From the 60 panels that create the epic story of black migration in the United States Lawrence's panel 14,48, and 58 are the most influential pieces that speaks to current issues and experiences that are still shaping the social and political landscape of the United States of America.

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Panel 14 from Lawrence's Black Migration Series is about the court system in the United States towards the treatment of African Americans. The use of brown created a dim atmosphere that seems to suck up the air of court and highlights the white figure who is a judge that is looking down. In the court there are two black figures whose posture indicate seriousness and defeat. The light in the image is supposed to show the lack of light that existed in the South's court system. The lack of light, the posture of defeat by the two black defendants, and the brown create an impression of injustice or a dim justice in the court. The lack of justice is heightened by three panels that are used right next to panel 14, which magnifies the unfair treatment black communities endured in the South and their motivation to migrate for better opportunities to the North.

To better understand the injustice of the court system in panel 14 the audience have to connect it with panel 15, 16, and 17. Each panel hold symbols of injustice, defeat, violence, hopelessness, and injustice. Panel 15 is a image of lynching that was common in the south, which was a symbol of white supremacy, violence towards African Americans, and hopelessness. Panel 16 is a picture of a women without food with a desolate posture on a empty table showing the lack of opportunities in the South. And Panel 17 is a white figure weighing two bags with two black characters who are unhappy with the results of the weight, which represents the lack of justice in the court and in the workplace. Both panel 15 and 17 have white figures dictating the future of black people in Lawrence drawing. When placed side to side panel 14, 15, 16, and 17 conjure the theme of injustice, lack of opportunities and hopelessness for the black community in the South.

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The sense of injustice, the lack of sympathy in the white judge, and the defeated defendants was a common event in the 1930s for the black community. Jacob Lawrence perhaps hoped that his audience to connect his images to the historical events of his time. The Scottsboro Boys Trials was about nine African Americans boys who were riding a train in Alabama who quarrel with white boys and defeated them to ride in the train. The boys who were embarrassed with their defeat by black boys told the sheriff about being punched by black boys and after the sheriff stopped the train two white women claimed that the nine boys had raped them. Through the Scottsboro Boys trial in the 1930s Alabama was the example of the miscarriage of justice in the legal system, the violence of white mob lynching and the unfair trial that most blacks faced in a white court system that lack representation from black jurors who were disenfranchised by Jim Crow laws. The boys trial lasted for nearly eight years and it was the United States highest court that saved the life of the nine boys. Even after the trial it took more than twenty years to finally free the last African American boy from prison. The Scottsboro Boys trial exemplifies the unjust system that Lawrence depicts in panel 14 and the violence and injustice of the United States legal system.

Panel 14 remains relevant and fresh in the audience mind because today the US legal system is still unfair when it comes to minorities, especially African Americans in the United States. The new Jim Crow is an idea by Michelle Alexander that demonstrates that by targeting black men through the War on Drugs and disseminating community of colors, the US justice system functions as a contemporary system of racial control. Today in the United States' prison population people of color are overrepresented making up to 60 percent of the people behind bars. Furthermore one in three black men will go to prison in some point in their life. This is a

systemic problem that goes back from slavery, the Jim Crow era, and the Civil Right era and it is still a common occurrence in the 21st century. It is a battle that is going on and Lawrence panel 14 is lasting image of the injustice found in the US legal system against people of color, especially African American male.

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