

## Skittles for Trump

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So, like many social science majors throughout the United States, I have been spending a lot of time recently studying for the September administration of the LSAT. Accordingly, hours and hours of logical reasoning games have made my brain hypersensitive to a bad argument—which is why, I think, that I have been so intrigued by the recent developments surrounding an ill-conceived tweet by Donald Trump, Jr. in which he compared the process of selecting Syrian refugees to grabbing a handful of Skittles.

Earlier this week, Donald Trump's oldest son tweeted a photo of an innocuous bowl of unbranded colored candies with a caption that read, "If I had a bowl of Skittles and I told you just three would kill you, would you take a handful? That's our Syrian refugee problem." Trump, Jr.'s tweet also featured a call to "end the politically correct agenda that doesn't put America first."

And of course, in classic Trump fashion, the controversial tweet sparked immediate anger—from humanitarians and political rivals to musicians and even the makers of Skittles themselves.

As I first saw this story in the news headlines, my LSAT-prep brain nearly had a conniption. What a terrible analogy! The most salient issue with the comparison, obviously, is that Donald Trump, Jr. likens Syrian refugees (human beings) to pieces of candy—but that lack of human compassion notwithstanding, what really bothers me about the tweet is that such a claim is empirically false.

Like very, very false. Immigration and refugee policy are two hot-button political issues that are of great interest and importance to me. And while I strongly support policy that facilitates immigrants and refugees coming to the United States, I can respect a well-founded argument to the contrary—however, there are very few out there.

The threat of Syrian refugees turning to violent crime once they have arrived in the United States is profoundly overstated. Simple as that—the facts support it. Philip Bump proved such was the case as he responded to Trump, Jr. with an article in *The Washington Post* titled "Donald Trump Jr. inadvertently encourages America to scoop up refugees by the handful."

The article points out that the odds of an American actually dying at the hands of a refugee in a terror attack are approximately 1 in 3.64 billion. Or, in terms of the aforementioned Skittles analogy, that would mean that there would have to be one and a half full-sized Olympic swimming pools filled with Skittles in order to hold “3 bad ones”—quite a different serving size from Trump, Jr.’s bowl.

And herein lies one of my many issues with the Trump campaign’s xenophobic stances—there simply isn’t evidence to support that refugees are dangerous. Evidence that down plays the threat that refugees pose to society is not made up, and it is not done by institutions that seek to push a liberal agenda— the statistics behind Bump’s article are confirmed by the Cato Institute and the U.S. National Safety Council.

While I understand why some are uneasy after seeing the violent episodes in Paris, Brussels and elsewhere, the United States has thus far done an excellent job in screening refugees before granting them admission and will continue to do so even if we decide to admit more. We needn’t be afraid to accept refugees with such measures in place.

Hopefully, the rest of the nation has the wherewithal to identify Donald Trump, Jr.’s argument as flawed without having gone throughout the grueling LSAT prep process. If not, I am very nervous for November.