



Notes: Collective Learning Part 1 – Dec 21, 2021

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Also in the room, Tongva elder Grandma Gloria who helped guide parts of the report.

Automating Banishment Study Guide: <https://stoplapdspying.org/study-guide-automating-banishment-1/>

Report: <https://automatingbanishment.org/section/0-automating-banishment-introduction/>

How do we want to share with those that are not here?

- Summaries can be easier to deal with
- Chance for people to remove things that shouldn't be circulated beyond the mutually accountable space
- These notes can be shared with others and posted publicly

Intro: Why the Automating Banishment report?

- Not a moment in time: conquest of settler colonialism, removal, and lessons from resistance histories for organizing today

Stop LAPD Spying

- 2010: Counterinsurgency tactics, intel gathering from Iraq and Afghanistan incorporated into local policing (e.g. predictive policing from predicting insurgency abroad; stingray, alpr, hd cams, face rec)
- War abroad is war at home

How does policing and surveillance relate to gentrification and displacement?

Data driven doesn't start with 9/11, social media etc. Data has always been present and central to social control. Which, what, how people are allowed to move or get criminalized?

- computing speeds up data analysis and integration activities of policing (e.g. Palantir)

Policing: Not just the police, but policing of the body

- Impacting section 8 vouchers, Child Protective Services
- Using data to criminalize
- Tracing how those practices are connected to companies, to academia

Sometimes the purpose is **banishment**: removing us from our homes and communities.

Sometimes it's **containment**: restricting us from the areas police want to secure for

gentrification. Sometimes it's **blight**: targeting areas for neglect in order to maintain racial and class hierarchies. Sometimes it's **extraction**: exploiting our wealth, labor, or resources.

Abolishing data

LAPD Operation LASER

- Goal to acquire tons of data (e.g. through stop and frisk)

Gloria:

- Since 1960s, tech and intelligence have grown sophisticated
- Hearing phones tapped; you could hear the clicking on
- Technology enables working around laws
- Being followed in my car, having my car broken into and having photographs stolen because I ran a newspaper
- Facebook, finances, credit card data
- Even getting into Zoom, they were requesting to access photos and recording
- The feeling of having numbers all over my body
- Automated predictions on my phone, recommended products: feels like they know everything
- We are living in a world where everything is documented
- When law enforcement stops you, they run a make on you to find their records and they treat individual based on that
- Growing up as first nation people, we were raised to respect each other but didn't have law enforcement watching everything everyone did. If they did something wrong, they had to address the community and be addressed by the elders. Didn't have police and jail.
- Lessons of knowing how to listen, not always asking

Colonizers as original sex traffickers, taking women to provide services elsewhere

Carrying the trauma of being put to labor in the mission, civilizing mission

Now being afraid to have your life ended because of your skin color, how you act towards law enforcement not making eye contact

Data is about power, control, and a commodity; about who wields it over whom

Process of the report:

- 26 people contributed to writing
- Twice weekly meetings to draft exec summary
- Then took it to elders in communities to get thoughts, feedback, direction
- Took over a year
- Took longer, it grew! People brought pieces, conversations, and paragraphs

To understand real estate, you have to understand history of settler colonialism

Why is the state willing to spend so much more money criminalizing people living on the street than the money required to provide land and shelter?

State has a historical role of removing people for property owners, logic, and ideology of settler colonialism

Displacement: when you have somewhere else to go

Banishment: when there is nowhere to go except for jail or death

Is talking about the link between settler colonialism and gentrification a stretch?

Gloria:

- You get it. You carry the trauma of this happening within you. Governor of CA got approval to exterminate native people. Payment for heads of "Indians." Shooting men, banging the heads of women and children to save bullets. Taking children away from parents and putting them into boarding schools: "kill the Indian, save the man." Changing dress, haircut, daily practices like prayer and languages. We see what happened to kids as torture. Families can't be with their kids anymore. Some kids murdered by nuns, left out in the forest. Culturally, we said don't reveal yourself to the colonizers. This was taken by colonizers that "they're not showing emotion, they don't want the kid." That's not what it is. I'm not over it. Do not forgive, do not forget.
- The pain of dealing with sacred lands, stopping bulldozers and tactics, seeing the remains of ancestors put into black plastic bags, universities taking our ancestors (how much can you learn by studying a bone?)

"While the Tongva people struggle for land rights and resist their physical and cultural destruction, the settler colonial apparatus that forcibly severed them from their land has continued to target the Black and Indigenous peoples who have come to L.A. The Tongva village where downtown L.A. now stands was forced to relocate, and the Indigenous and Mexican people who came to the city in search of work were criminalized and incarcerated by police. Any discussion of neocolonialism and the continuation of conquest and land theft must be grounded in an understanding of Tongva history and ongoing resistance, and a commitment to Tongva sovereignty and land rights." ([report, page 3](#))

Gloria: Los Angeles was an important Tongva village

Important burials around the church on Olvera St, Placita de Cultura y Artes is built on a cemetery

100 coffins not removed from there, but gov told them no Indians buried there

How do you define Indian?

If there are little strings of beads

That's not right

Trickle of water down through cobblestones by Olvera St, Hazard Park water. Tongva had to live next to water for daily cleansing ceremonies in sweat lodges, plunging.

City wanted to close off that water, Tongva fought it and said no.

"While the manifestations of colonialism and conquest faced and resisted by the Gabrielino and Tongva communities (as well as other indigenous people who have called this area home) have

been diverse, what guides the state's relationship to these communities is the "logic of elimination." This logic includes not only "summary liquidation of Indigenous people" but also the construction of a "colonial society on the expropriated land base," thus turning invasion into a political structure, which is then fiercely guarded by police. In fact, the Tongva scholar Charles Sepulveda urges us to recognize the connectedness between the struggles for police abolition and decolonization, considering them part of the same vision of "creative re-imagining of human relationships to place, beyond the structures of white supremacy." (report, page 3).

Gloria:

- Native people went out and hunted, shared food with community. Did people do bad things? Probably, but we didn't have punishment in that way. When we killed a rabbit, we had to hit it in the neck, so it died quickly and use all of it for food, pelts.
- Bennett, first gov of CA: 18 treaties and none of them ceded land. They took it. People tortured, put into missions. I depend on the books for these histories because we didn't write histories. If men ran away, their foot would be cut off and put on a pole to scare others. Women and children were put to work in the mission.
- Tatami Temple, city founder, stole land.
- A wooden stick, "here's thousands of Indians who died of measles." we didn't even get an individual plot.
- CA has rivers, mountains, deserts. The coast is where we all lived, we had maritime cultures. We traveled with Polynesian people, S America. Our artifacts have been found down there. The land is so valuable, you have to be rich to live on the coast. We can't even enjoy our natural resources.
- The government pits us against each other. Take what's happening with Bruce's Beach. They are trying to get that land back, but they can't find heirs. Do you think Indians are happy with that? Why can't we get our land back? That's pitting us against each other. I'm sure family is entitled to it, but they can't find heirs. So why don't they give the land back. There's a land back movement. We've been fighting for 22 acres of land that university UCLA wanted to build on, sacred sites and burial lands. It's always a battle. Thousands of years ago, we're battling still.
- Anti-poverty programs: throwing a crumb out so we fight over it.
- I'm starting to see that we're winning some battles, we're getting lands returned. In So Cal I don't think we're going to get it because it is too valuable. Look at what is happening with gentrification, forcing people out and remodeling. Closing down a lot of stuff and building ugliest condos.
- I have a garden with native plants and medicine (e.g. white sage). The city wants to cut it down. I told them to try and I'll have 100 people there. I'm protected by Native religious freedom acts. They call dandelions weeds and say there are too many of them. Dandelions have medicine.

"The history of colonized Los Angeles also cannot be understood without a focus on the Black freedom struggle. At the same time Los Angeles was being imagined as a haven for white settlers, Black people also looked to the city as a place where they could seek upward mobility through industrial work and land ownership. As Black people fleeing the racial terror of Jim Crow

came here for opportunity and survival, the settler city responded with housing policies like redlining and racially restrictive covenants, barring Black communities from owning land outside of specifically designated areas like the one along Central Avenue in South Central. White settlers along the perimeter of these areas feared that nearby Black neighborhoods would threaten property values. As a result, policing was concentrated along the Central Avenue corridor to violently constrict the autonomy of Black people even in their own communities.” (report, page 4)

Gloria:

- Two summers ago, a group took 45 homes that had been empty for so many years. Asked me to do a morning ceremony...3 people were arrested. One for trespassing, they were just on the sidewalk even though that is city land.
- Now there are organized groups to try to get these houses legally, have lawyers. The homes have been kept empty for a freeway project that never got built.
- Caltrans eminent domained houses for 710 freeway, white rich Pasadena people blocked the project but there are 200 vacant homes sitting there. March and Dec mobilization to take over the homes.
- Unhoused people should have first dibs on those houses.
- Now housed communities work to exclude unhoused people from their neighborhoods.

How does location based or place based policing work?

What is the role of Business Improvement Districts?

- In SF, they're called Community Benefit Districts!
- Authorized under statute.
- Allow property owners to have control over districts. Can plan to evict people, police neighborhoods to make them more savory for propertied folks. Have political power.
- In SD, called Community Planning Groups e.g. <https://www.sandiego.gov/planning/community-plans/barrio-logan/planning-group>
- SF: SROs, buildings in disrepair. Mayor said she'll declare an emergency and flood the tenderloin with more police. Tenderloin already hyperpoliced. The press release was made in coordination with BIDs
- “We're infested with crime and drugs and overdoses” or “Need to clear the streets because of health and environment” is the excuse given
- Western Regional Advocacy Project has done tremendous work on BIDS: <https://wraphome.org/>

How are property rights related to conquest?

- Breaking up native relations to land each other through trying to give individualized land plots
- Black people have lacked access to property through redlining
- Enslaved people and stolen land are the bedrock of property law; aspects of American law that are unique compared to Europe were about conquest and colonialism

What role does private property law play in systemic policing?

- Policing not only protecting but also valorizing property
- We talk about increasing property value as a “community good” “economic growth”
- Libertarians talk about property as a natural right of man, but property is a fiction based on policing and rule of force
- Policing makes property and individual to land relationship because it enforces a kind of enclosure
- Taxi worker organizing: drivers feel like they own their taxis, but they are driving for the medallion owners who are really the finance companies through the big families. Immigrant communities see it as a pathway to advancing. There’s a difference between how property is perceived and how it actually operates.
- When all else fails, eminent domain allows for the seizure of property (property is a fictional relationship between land and people made possible or taken away by the state)

What are some examples of displacement?

- At a sweep, sometimes people buy into the idea that it is their own fault. They assist in the throwing away of their property/stuff. How do we help people see their own value? People identify their own value with the value of things that they own?
- Assertion that people cannot simply exist in public space, the hammer of this comes down hardest on the unhoused

What about data ownership?

- Data trusts, platform ownership
- OCAP (Ownership, Control, Access, Possession) for Indigenous communities
- What does it mean to own data that we can’t produce anything with on our own so we can just sell it and legitimate its circulation, or data produced for purpose of social control
- Commodification of privacy
- Selling our recreated digital beings into so many ways
- Our lived experience is our truth: basis of our organizing
- What is data abolition and what does it mean for our lives?

Neighborhood watch:

- Gets federal funding
- People can be put on list
- Stop LAPD Spying did some work on deputization, idea of eyes and ears, citizen app, nextdoor

Part 2 will be on Tuesday January 11, 2022 at 6 PM PST. Please check the website:

www.stoplapdspying.org for details.
