



OBTAINING, ORGANIZING, AND OPENING POLICE MISCONDUCT DATA

Hosted by WITNESS, Invisible Institute &
National Association of Criminal Defense
Lawyers Full Disclosure Project

FEBRUARY 2023

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarizes presentations, discussions, and recommendations from a fall 2021 convening on obtaining, organizing and opening policing data. Convening participants represented a range of individuals, organizations and projects (listed in Appendix B) engaged in collection, analysis, and dissemination of data regarding policing and police practices.

As access to data about policing has become the subject of increased advocacy and police data has become increasingly available, a growing cottage industry has arisen around collecting, analyzing, and publicizing information about policing. Unfortunately, these efforts are often disconnected from organizing aimed at effecting change by reducing and eliminating police profiling, violence and criminalization.

Individuals and organizations who obtain, organize, and open data about policing are motivated by factors ranging from surfacing and validating community experiences, to attracting resources, attention or action to efforts to address the violence of policing, to individual

curiosity or professional advancement. Nevertheless, generally speaking, police data collectors want to have a positive impact on the issues they document.

Thus, the overall objective of the convening was to discuss the potential benefits and harms of police data collection and dissemination, and to surface and develop best practices in an accountable and reciprocal relationship with individuals and communities directly targeted by policing and the people and organizations representing and working directly with them.

The convening opened with a series of conversations focused on understanding why various stakeholders are engaged in data collection, analysis, and dissemination of data about policing, as well as how their purpose shapes their practices and priorities.



Specifically, the goals of the convening were to:

- **Bridge new and existing communities of police data collectors**, incorporating new practitioners into the network, identifying duplicative efforts, and grounding the field in shared principles and ethical standards;
- **Clarify the purposes and impacts of collection, analysis and dissemination** of information on policing practices;
- **Share best practices** for data collection, aggregation and analysis;
- **Create spaces for groups to collectively wrestle with challenges and tensions**, including data collection and scalability, causality, privacy, and sustainability;
- **Build alignment around the importance of engagement, involvement, and accountability** to communities directly impacted by policing in data collection processes and framing policing data in broader public discourse.

For instance, **COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS** largely engaged in collection and dissemination of data for the purposes of:

- **surfacing the everyday violence of policing in their communities beyond single, shocking incidents;**
- **shifting public narratives and discourse on policing and public safety to reflect the humanity and perspectives of people targeted for police violence; and**

→ **shifting conditions in which they organize to limit and end the violence of policing.**

GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATIONS made up of or directly accountable to individuals targeted for policing prioritized individual agency over data about their experiences, as well as remaining in relationship with and meeting the immediate needs of the people whose experiences inform the data. They are also clear that while obtaining, organizing and opening quantitative and qualitative data about policing can play



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an important role in efforts to reduce the harms of policing, data collection efforts can simply document a problem without having any impact on it, have adverse impacts on individuals and communities harmed by policing, or even enable individuals and organizations to profit from police violence.

LITIGATORS prioritized data collection and aggregation around individual officers and departments for purposes of:

- **impeachment in civil and criminal cases;**
- **establishing a pattern and practice of police violence.**

JOURNALISTS tend to prioritize approaches to gathering data and information about policing that:

- **tell a compelling story, that can be illustrated by individuals recounting first hand experiences;**
- **contribute to being perceived as “objective” and independent from advocates, while preserving relationships with police departments as sources of information.**

RESEARCHERS AND DATA SCIENTISTS are interested in prioritizing:

- **scaling up data collection and amassing greater volumes of data;**
- **integrating data across multiple sources to compare jurisdictions;**

- **tracking officers who engage in violence who transfer to different departments.**

POLICYMAKERS tend to gravitate toward collecting and disseminating data about policing to:

- **investigate and obtain “objective” information to verify policing problems;**
- **Support policy and legislative efforts to reduce and eliminate police profiling, violence, and criminalization;**
- **Support or defuse organizing demands.**

Participants were presented with questions and examples of what “data justice” – a framework developed by the Anti-Eviction and Mapping Project – might look like. **Data justice places data collection efforts squarely within larger efforts to disrupt existing relations of power, and support organizing efforts of people directly impacted by the issues that are the subject of data collection.** Data justice can manifest through juxtaposition of “official” and community data, storytelling, horizontal structures of data collection shifting relations of power between researchers and communities, and through mutual aid and support to individuals who make up the “data.”



A number of key themes emerged from conversations among and between these different groups of data collectors:

- It is essential to focus on **supporting and protecting the privacy, agency, interests, and humanity of people whose experiences of policing are reflected in the data**, and to offer them prevention tools and material support. This can slow down data collection and sharing, but should not be sacrificed for the sake of expediency;
- **Individuals who are part of, directly communicating with, and accountable to communities directly targeted by policing must be involved in data collection, analysis and dissemination projects throughout the process**, including in decision-making and governance roles, and their participation must be compensated;
- **Data scientists, journalists, and attorneys collecting policing data need to re-examine and think creatively about principles of “objectivity” and professionalism** that keep them from building deeper connections with and accountability to people harmed by police and movements to address police violence;
- **There is no “objective” data.** “Government data” is often collected, analyzed and publicized by police, who have a stake in how the data is seen and used. Data collected by community members and from directly impacted individuals is incorrectly discounted as less “credible” than police data. Information collected from communities through videos, complaints, surveys, story collection and testimony, as well as litigation documents and judicial decisions, must be understood and validated as “data” about policing.
- **Decisions about which data to collect and how to describe and publicize it are subjective and political.**
- **Institutions and organizations with greater access to data** – whether through negotiations, litigation, or greater financial and other resources – **must commit to making the information available to directly impacted communities.**



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Convening participants grappled with what beneficial and accountable policing data collection, analysis and dissemination requires in terms of:

- **Consent;**
- **Data aggregation;**
- **How police data is used;**
- **If, when, and how demands for police data are made.**

Participants engaged and left the convening with questions including:

- **Why do we “need” data about policing?**
- **Does data collection simply legitimize policing and police violence?**
- **What is the cost of data collection?**
- **What harmful narratives can data on police violence perpetuate?**
- **Who are the target audiences for data on policing? What do we want them to do with the data? What don’t we want them to do? How do we plan to get them to do it?**
- **Are we letting the government off the hook by collecting data it should be gathering and making public?**
- **Are we collecting data on solutions to our communities’ problems in addition to data on the harms of police responses?**

- **How do we protect the safety, privacy and dignity of people sharing their stories about police violence?**
- **How do we avoid retraumatizing individuals and communities when sharing police data?**
- **What does collaboration between academic and large non-profit institutions with community organizations as genuine partners require? What principles, agreements, accountability structures need to be in place up front?**

The report draws on the rich discussion of these questions to make a series of recommendations for participants, for the field, and for philanthropic partners.

This report does not represent a comprehensive assessment of the wisdom, purposes, and range of practices with respect to the collection, analysis and publication of policing data. Our goal is simply to share key questions, debates, and points of alignment surfaced during the convening to inform continuing practices and funding in the field.



INTRODUCTION

The collection and publication of data on policing is increasingly expanding, particularly through city, county, state and federal “open data” initiatives. At the same time, a growing number of organizations are working to obtain, organize, and open information and data about police activity to the public to inform and transform debates around public safety in the United States.

Data about policing practices began to attract increased attention in the late 1990s, when data demonstrating racial profiling in traffic stops and at airports came to light through litigation and U.S. Department of Justice investigations. **Since then, a variety of organizations have focused on seeking, analyzing and publicizing information on policing. Today, a number of groups host websites publishing data about police killings and other forms of police violence, traffic stops, illegal searches, arrests, and civilian complaints.** Additionally, legal organizations are increasingly digitizing disclosures concerning police misconduct in civil and criminal cases. Some investigative journalists are exposing problems with routine police practices, deceptive public relations strategies, and the costs to cities of maintaining ineffective internal oversight agencies. This work takes

place with varying degrees of connection and accountability to individuals and communities directly impacted by policing.

Increased availability of data on police practices has significantly impacted public safety discourse in major cities, like Chicago, New Orleans, New York City, San Francisco, and others, and in individual and impact litigation. People directly impacted by police violence, advocates, attorneys, journalists, and policymakers have used aggregated information about the impacts and costs of policing to fight for changes both big and small, supported by data that contextualizes and affirms the stories they seek to tell. Increased availability of data about policing has also enhanced our collective ability to recognize patterns, identify root causes, and generate creative solutions to address many public safety issues, including police violence. Funders



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are increasingly interested in resourcing data collection projects, and legislators and policymakers are increasingly supportive of such initiatives. For instance, several states, including New York, California, Maryland, Colorado, and Virginia have enacted transparency laws making police complaints public. While these laws represent a first step toward ensuring increased public access to information about policing and police accountability systems, they have yet to make a significant material impact on day-to-day policing practices.

Despite increased availability of data through legislation and open data initiatives, police departments continue to cherry-pick the information they agree to proactively disclose, and to resist public information demands. Information obtained through litigation is consistently subject to protective orders keeping it from the public. Police complaint mechanisms continue to be inadequate to the task of documenting the scope and harms of police activity, and to pose risks and barriers to complainants. There are already attempts to rollback aspects of public access through these laws. As a result, ongoing independent data collection and advocacy remains necessary.

Many organizations, policy makers, and academics engaged in police data

collection and analysis rely entirely on information created by police and have minimal connections to organizers and communities targeted for policing. Very few also draw on information collected by and for communities, and even fewer offer direct support to the people and communities whose experiences are the subject of the data they use. However, a growing number of grassroots groups from communities targeted by police and accountable to those communities are conducting their own review and analyses of police data, and generating their own data about peoples' lived experiences of policing by collecting videos and stories documenting police encounters, and using that information as part of broader organizing efforts.¹

In November 2021, a diverse group of people engaged in police data work joined a convening to connect efforts across areas of expertise. This report documents the presentations of work by participants, discussions and disagreements over strategy, and ultimately the focusing questions that align this work and will propel it forward. What emerged, especially from the community-based organizers who lead this work, is that our shared goal must be the immediate interruption of policing as it exists, and the end of police violence.

[1] For more information on these efforts, please visit defundpolice.org, managed by the Community Resource Hub.



WHY COLLECT, AGGREGATE, AND PUBLICIZE DATA ABOUT POLICING?

Data on police activity can serve a number of purposes:

- to gain a greater understanding of the full scope and reach of police violence, and to arrive at responses that address its root causes.
- to highlight patterns and practices of racial or other forms of discrimination in policing such as racial disparities in traffic stops, street stops, “frisks” or searches. For instance, data about traffic stops along the New Jersey Turnpike and searches at airports in the late 1990s sparked a national conversation about racial profiling in policing, and served as the basis for legislative and policy change. In New York City, it was used in litigation to secure collection and regular publication of data on the race of people stopped and reasons for stops and searches by the police department. This data in turn prompted further litigation, organizing, public debate, and policy change about the NYPD’s “stop and frisk” practices. In spite of extensive data collection, analysis, documentation, policies and legislation, patterns of racial profiling persist.
- to surface specific forms, contexts, and sites of police violence. For example, policing data can highlight the use of deadly chokeholds, “no knock” warrants, police sexual violence in the context of vice enforcement, or TASER use on children in schools.
- to identify violent or corrupt police officers, units, or departments – which can be helpful in obtaining relief for individuals targeted by policing in civil and criminal litigation, and to organizers and policymakers seeking to address the violence of policing.
- to shift mainstream narratives around policing practices, tactics and outcomes. For example, community policing has been advanced as a tactic for reducing crime and creating trust between officers and community members. Analysis of data indicates that this approach neither decreases crime nor increases trust. It also increases opportunities for police violence – yet data around police use of force in the context of community policing is often not available.



WHY COLLECT, AGGREGATE, AND PUBLICIZE DATA ABOUT POLICING?

“Data just opens your eyes in a way that anecdotal reporting does not.”

– MATTHEW SPINA, BUFFALO NEWS

“Many of us believe in the inherent validity of data collection and analysis as features of our modern reality that can improve our lives. We may associate “data” with things that are scientific, measurable, and objective.

But data collection methodologies and categories as they exist today inherit and wield the weight of centuries of state strategies and justification for identifying, managing and controlling populations ... There is nothing neutral about data...differentially exposing some of us to state violence, even as it disguises and naturalizes the process of doing so.”

– PUCK LO, FROM DATA CRIMINALIZATION TO PRISON ABOLITION, COMMUNITY JUSTICE EXCHANGE (2022)

However, data collection, analysis and dissemination can also unfold in harmful ways.

Some ways in which policing data framed as “neutral” or “objective” can be harmful to targeted individuals and communities include:

→ **LABELING COMMUNITIES AS “HIGH CRIME AREAS” (which are really areas of high police activity, reflecting police priorities and targeting).** This can, in turn, be used to justify increased police presence, activity, profiling, intrusive actions, criminalization, and violence; individual exclusion from neighborhoods as a condition of pretrial

supervision, probation, or parole; and reduced investments and property values.

→ **MINIMIZING POLICE VIOLENCE WHERE DATA DOES NOT EXIST OR IS NOT PUBLICIZED** – for instance, failure to analyze police data by gender and race simultaneously, or to collect data on policing in particular contexts (such as policing of pregnant and parenting people) can hide the racial disparities and police violence in stops, searches, arrests, and criminalization targeting Black women.² The absence of official data on police sexual violence obscures the systemic nature of the problem.³ Similarly, inaccurate police data

[2] Andrea J. Ritchie, *Invisible No More: Police Violence Against Black Women and Women of Color* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2017).

[3] Andrea J. Ritchie, *Shrouded in Silence: Police Sexual Violence – What We Know & What We Can Do About It*, Interrupting Criminalization 2021, bit.ly/PSVCurriculum.

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“There are limitations on what you can do with the data that is available - databases document how many people are killed, but there is a broader universe of people harmed by police that don’t die.”

– SAM SINYANGWE, MAPPINGPOLICEVIOLENCE.COM

obscures high rates of police violence against Indigenous people.

→ **LEGITIMIZING POLICE DEPARTMENTS EXPERIENCING LOW LEVELS OF CIVILIAN COMPLAINTS** – which may be the result of ineffective or high barrier complaint intake mechanisms;

→ **JUSTIFYING ADDITIONAL INTRUSION** – for instance, efforts to collect data on the sexual orientation or gender identity of people police interact with can create opportunities for discriminatory and abusive questioning and investigation, and create a government record of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity that can serve as a legally permissible basis for discrimination in housing, employment, health care and family matters in

the majority of states. Similarly, documenting immigration status, disability, housing status, pregnancy status, and other characteristics of people targeted by police in an effort to prove patterns of police violence can have harmful impacts.

→ **UNDERMINE INDIVIDUALS’ CLAIMS OR INTERESTS.** For instance, public information about individual police complaints might expose people to police, state, or community violence. The narratives contained in complaints might hinder someone’s ability to file a civil rights lawsuit or present a strong defense against criminal prosecution. The absence of complaints or data can have similar effects, potentially delegitimizing someone’s experience.

“When they see 31,000 deaths they think it’s a complete record, but it’s not. We think we can know because there is so much reporting on police violence, but we don’t know all of it. But data shows the government is lying about the scope of police violence.” – D. BRIAN BURGHART, FATALENCOUNTERS.ORG



WHY COLLECT, AGGREGATE, AND PUBLICIZE DATA ABOUT POLICING?

Regardless of whether data collection, analysis and dissemination ultimately proves to be helpful or harmful, we need to do more than document the violence and harms of policing. There is a danger that a focus on increasing public access to data on policing leads to simply “admiring the problem,” as Margaret Ringle of the National Association of Criminal Defense puts it, rather than preventing police violence and increasing public safety. We need to guard against what criminologist Tamara Nopper describes as “data entrepreneurship,” referring to a growing cottage industry that has arisen around collecting, analyzing, and publicizing information about policing that is disconnected from organizing aimed at effecting change. We also need to remember that each “data point” - each stop, search, beating, sexual assault, arrest - documented in police and complaint data represents a real person whose life has likely been irrevocably changed by their interaction with police. We have a responsibility to people whose traumatic experiences are reflected in police data.

Increased availability of data about police practices, complaints, and litigation is not sufficient, in and of itself, to reduce police violence and misconduct - and can in some instances be a distraction and divert funds from efforts to increase public safety.

Additionally, increased “datafication” of discourse around policing can in fact have a negative effect by normalizing the violence of policing and contributing to the sense that, without “proof” in the form of data, nothing can be done to address the problem beyond efforts to secure accountability for individual officers.

Our goals in collecting, advocating for public access to, analyzing, and disseminating data on policing must be to make material changes to the experiences of people currently targeted for police violence. Police data collection and dissemination is most effective when it is connected and accountable to larger organizing efforts and movements, is strategically focused on preventing and reducing police violence, and is led, informed by, and deeply connected and accountable to communities directly impacted by policing. It is critical to keep in mind that the ultimate goal is prevention, interruption, and reparations for individual and structural police violence, and ultimately, an end to the violence of policing.



WHERE DOES DATA ABOUT POLICING COME FROM?

Data on policing is obtained from:

POLICE DEPARTMENTS (including public data portals regarding stops, arrests, and calls for assistance, as well as information about complaints lodged with and investigated by internal affairs departments)

CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT AGENCIES (including information about individual complaints and aggregate data)

INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM (including databases of incidents of police killings, sexual assaults, complaints and settlements)

COURTS (including lawsuits filed against police, findings of unconstitutional behavior, and testimony)

COMMUNITY DOCUMENTATION (including video, storytelling, survey, and other methods)

Often, data created and analyzed by police departments is considered most credible, even though police are far from objective when it comes to recording and sharing data about their activities.

WHY THIS REPORT?

This report reflects the conversations and learnings gleaned from the 2021 Convening of Police Data Collectors. We produced this report to:

- **share key principles, tensions, and practices** discussed at the convening more broadly;
- **help guide conversations and development of best practices** among police data collectors;

→ **inform future project planning and funding decisions** so that data collection work can be more strategically focused on preventing and reducing police violence, and is led, informed by and deeply connected and accountable to communities directly impacted by policing.



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Convening Police Data Collectors

In 2018, the Invisible Institute, a Chicago-based non-profit journalism production company, and international human rights organization WITNESS co-hosted one of the first convenings of organizations engaged in data collection relating to police violence to explore challenges and opportunities around tracking data about policing. The goal was to start a conversation about how to better collaborate and support initiatives working to build databases of policing data in cities across the country. The gathering, supported by the MacArthur Foundation, brought together 45 journalists, data analysts, legal experts, archivists, and grassroots organizers for a series of discussions focused on safe and ethical data collection, data journalism, legal strategies for greater transparency and accountability, and the role of civil society in collecting information about policing. Participating organizations learned about each other's work, identified common challenges and opportunities for collaborations, and imagined potential partnerships and skill and resource sharing opportunities.

Some of the specific questions addressed at the 2018 convening included:

- How police data can support litigation and legislative strategies;
- How freedom of information requests have been successfully used to obtain police data;
- Accessing information on police complaints, budgets, salaries, officers previously found by courts to be unreliable witnesses, and other hidden datasets;
- Potential limitations and pitfalls of datasets;
- Challenges of using video as a source of data;
- Privacy and consent for individuals whose information is in police datasets;
- Protection for data collectors;
- Surfacing experiences of policing not captured by existing data;
- Anticipating and responding to police resistance to data transparency;
- Challenges and opportunities for partnerships between data collection projects and grassroots organizations.

From the gathering, two major collaborative initiatives emerged: 1) Beneath the Surface, which analyzes police complaint narratives for patterns of gender-based violence; 2) the People's Database for Community-Based Accountability, a new set of resources and a database template for copwatch or other grassroots police

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monitoring groups; and 3) the website CAPSTAT.nyc, a demonstration project to show how transparency can inform policy debates, improve public discourse, and be a resource for people harmed by police misconduct.

In November 2021, WITNESS, the Invisible Institute, and the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers' Full Disclosure Project hosted a follow-up convening, bringing together over 60 data scientists, litigators, journalists, grassroots organizers and philanthropic partners for *Obtaining, Organizing, and Opening Police Data*, a virtual convening held over three sessions to continue these conversations. The goals for 2021 convening included:

- Bridging new and existing communities of police data collectors, incorporating new practitioners into the network, identifying duplicative efforts, and grounding the field in shared principles and ethical standards;
- Clarifying the purposes and impacts of collection, analysis, and dissemination of information on policing practices;
- Sharing best practices for data collection, aggregation and analysis;
- Creating spaces for groups to collectively wrestle with challenges and tensions including data collection and scalability, causality, privacy, and

sustainability;

- Building alignment around the importance of engagement, involvement, and accountability to communities directly impacted by policing in data collection processes and framing policing data in broader public discourse.

Participants also shared information about several projects and partnerships that emerged from the 2018 convening.

The convening planning team, made up of Jackie Zammuto (WITNESS), Margaret Ringler (NACDL), Julie Ciccolini (NACDL), Chaclyn Hunt (Invisible Institute), and Maira Khwaja (Invisible Institute), prioritized participation from individuals and grassroots groups led by and accountable to communities directly impacted by policing, many of whom collect information about the impacts of policing through qualitative methods, video documentation, storytelling, and surveys. Participant bios and information about police data collection projects can be found in Appendix B.

The convening agenda, reproduced in Appendix A, created opportunities to explore how the purpose of data collection can shape the process, the potential harms to communities impacted by policing of data collection and dissemination, the roles and responsibilities of academic,



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legal, and media data collectors, and the development of shared practices and values to guide the work going forward.

Through panel discussions, roundtables, and small group thematic discussions, participants identified a number of principles that can guide this work going forward, as well as recommendations for funders and the field.

Current Data Collection and Dissemination Projects

Convening participants' purposes in collecting, analyzing and disseminating data and information about policing varied based on their relationship to the issue. Their purpose in turn shaped and informed their methodology and decisions about how to use and publicize the information, and the degree to which they support and

respect the privacy of complainants. While many of the groups generally shared the goals outlined below, how groups prioritize them influences how they approach complex questions around data collection, organization, storage, and decisions they make about how to present the data publicly.

For instance, grassroots groups prioritized the following goals for collecting and publicizing information about policing:

DOCUMENTING AND CREATING A PUBLIC ARCHIVE OF THE VIOLENCE

experienced by communities subjected to oppressive policing practices in the name of “public safety.” Often the point of data collection is to “prove” what community members already know is happening to legislators, policymakers, and the general public.

“We knew in our bones the problem was real because of our lived experience, but needed to collect this data to be taken seriously...This is a foundational tool to prove the problem, beyond dispute, that trans people are being hurt across the country, and that this is a crisis.”

– RODRIGO HENG-LEHTINEN, NATIONAL CENTER FOR TRANSGENDER EQUALITY

“The Erase the Database report directly supported lobbying for the ordinance designed to regulate the gang database. The knowledge from research was also the foundation for class action litigation against the police department.”

– JANA E BONSU, SPEAKING ABOUT RESEARCH ON THE USES AND IMPACTS OF THE CHICAGO POLICE GANG DATABASE THROUGH FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS, ARCHIVAL MATERIALS, AND INTERVIEWS WITH AFFECTED COMMUNITY MEMBERS.

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SHIFTING AND SHAPING THE NARRATIVE OF POLICE VIOLENCE.

This includes:

- creating information and knowledge about policing from individual and community perspectives versus “official” government-generated data;
- encouraging the public to look beyond singular spectacular incidents of violence such as police killings to the often less visible everyday violence of policing;
- exposing what community policing and co-response teams look like from the community’s perspective;
- tracking harm the government is not tracking – such as data on police sexual violence or the names of cops whose testimony has been deemed untrustworthy;
- capturing experiences of particular communities often left out of data and discourse about policing (such as women, queer, trans people, migrants, people in the sex trades, disabled people) and documenting how they experience policing;
- resistance to projection of public safety narratives onto particular populations (such as people in the sex trades, disabled people, trans people, houseless people) and creating narratives rooted in communities instead.

“The data collected and published in *Evidencia la Violencia* is revolutionary because it reconstructs the narratives about police violence...If you’re able to read in the first person the story from a person who was a victim of police violence, there is an extra layer going beyond the numbers and data...So the story and the data are public, and now we can identify the patterns being denied by the police and the government and understand the aftermath of these violent police interventions.” – **MARI-MARI NARVAÈZ, KILOMETRO CÉRO**

“We are collecting data and using it to create counternarratives...We’ve collected a lot of footage about how police respond to mental health calls. People don’t believe the violence or non-response to most situations...the spit hoods, the brutality of how they do it...They can’t see it any other way.”

– **ANDREA PRITCHETT, BERKELEY COPWATCH**



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SHIFTING ORGANIZING CONDITIONS.

Data collection can be used to:

- build community engagement and skills;
- shift power and public opinion by illuminating the degree, form, or scope of police violence - for instance, through publication of “stop and frisk” data in New York City, or data capturing racial disparities in stops, arrests, and use of force;
- demonstrate that police violence is not the result of individual wrongdoing, but a systemic issue requiring systemic interventions in addition to individual accountability;
- shape, validate and monitor implementation of movement demands - for instance, increased availability of information about police sexual violence in “Explorer” and police “cadet” programs could lead to

demands to shut these programs down. Data about police violence can also support calls to divest from policing and invest instead in programs that increase safety.

SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS’ AGENCY OVER DATA ABOUT POLICING, AND PRIORITIZING THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE WHOSE EXPERIENCES INFORM THE DATA.

- Giving people options and power around if and how their data can be used and by whom;
- Supporting people with mutual aid and after-care to navigate the trauma they experienced during police interactions and any subsequent interactions with police and courts;
- Thinking critically about the extractive nature of massive data collection projects that do not encourage engagement or direction from local community-based organizations.

“We are engaged in data collection through the lens of building power toward a liberated future. We see data collection as a base building project: what are the needs of the people in Phoenix? Our intention is to use the survey to develop our demands, and use it as a way to bring people into the campaign and fight. It’s fundamentally different to think about data collection as a powerbuilding tool.” – ISABEL GARCIA, PODER IN ACTION

“Our data collection has an effect on the environment in which we organize – we’ve experienced growth in volunteers, we’ve gotten a temporary restraining order against confiscation of property during homeless sweeps.” – ANDREA PRITCHETT, BERKELEY COPWATCH

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“The stories create a database that resists those powers. This is not designed to be a museum tool.” –MARI-MARI NARVAÈZ, KILOMETRO CÉRO

“Our goals were not to shape policy and create reform but to build our community resilience and find direct ways to hold institutions accountable to our constituency’s needs, including the ways in which they are complicit in policing.” – SHIRA HASSAN, YOUNG WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT PROJECT

DATA IS THE BEGINNING AND NOT THE END.

Grassroots groups are clear that while obtaining, organizing, and opening quantitative and qualitative data about policing can play an important role in efforts to reduce the harms of policing, gathering and publicizing data is only part of understanding the problem, not the totality of the work. Without meaningful involvement and direction from communities directly impacted by policing, data collection efforts can simply document a problem without having any impact on it, have adverse impacts on individuals and communities harmed by policing, or even profit from police violence.

Litigators approached collection and dissemination of data on policing from a perspective that focuses on potential uses in individual criminal and civil cases, such as:

DISCREDITING OR IMPEACHING INDIVIDUAL OFFICER TESTIMONY:

For example, litigators generally seek to create complete profiles of officers’ histories of potentially impeachable conduct for the

purpose of preparing criminal defenses and civil rights claims. Groups engaged in projects aimed at making information about individual police officers and police departments obtained through the course of litigation, freedom of information requests, and complaints available to criminal defense attorneys and litigators cited the importance of using the information to reduce the harms of policing by reducing false arrests, wrongful convictions, and sentences. These groups generally prioritized having all available sources of information integrated into one system, even if that led to complexities in coordinating data points across different sources.

ESTABLISHING A PATTERN AND PRACTICE OF POLICE BEHAVIOR:

Data on individual police officers and departments can be helpful to establishing a claim in civil litigation that a department knew about a pattern of police violence but failed to meaningfully address it.



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“Our goal is to lift the veil of secrecy mostly for internal affairs files and changing mindsets that cops are ‘super witnesses.’ Their credibility is fairly up for grabs and this is information we are supposed to and should have access to.” – **DEBORAH LEVI, MARYLAND OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER**

“Our analysis of publicly available police data allowed us to disprove arguments made by a district attorney in response to our call for release of people prosecuted based on faulty drug analysis information. They claimed that this would result in release of the ‘worst of the worst.’ Our analysis showed that 62% of the convictions were for simple possession, and that 90% of allegations were not serious.” – **KADE CROCKFORD, ACLU MASSACHUSETTS**

“A great deal of police misconduct is revealed through litigation that the government fails to document. A Judge can determine an officer lied in their testimony and nothing happens. The department never finds out, the officer faces no consequences, and prosecutors still call that officer to testify as a credible witness in other cases. We are trying to document these occurrences to interject some accountability into the system.”

– **JULIE CICCOLINI, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CRIMINAL DEFENSE ATTORNEYS**

Journalists tend to prioritize approaches to gathering data and information about policing that:

TELL A STORY, OR TO ANALYZE OR MAKE A CASE FOR A PARTICULAR POLICY APPROACH.

As a result, they tend to be more interested in having multiple examples of similar types of misconduct to demonstrate patterns across officers, squads, departments, and jurisdictions, and to draw upon direct sources for stories.

BEING PERCEIVED AS “OBJECTIVE” AND INDEPENDENT FROM ADVOCATES,

while preserving relationships with police departments as sources of information. In

some cases, data journalists publish stories that contradict organizing efforts.

Researchers and data scientists are interested in prioritizing:

INTEGRATING DATA ACROSS MULTIPLE SOURCES TO COMPARE JURISDICTIONS.

If police data from different jurisdictions does not align such that it can be merged into a multi-jurisdiction database, these efforts then risk obscuring local and qualitative data, such as police sexual violence. Without the granularity of local data, the work can be disconnected from the individuals and communities whose data it collects.

TRACKING OFFICERS WHO TRANSFER TO DIFFERENT DEPARTMENTS.

WHY COLLECT, AGGREGATE, AND PUBLICIZE DATA ABOUT POLICING?



“Our primary purpose is to impact individual cases, our intended audience is courts and clients. But we can also use the information obtained through the course of representation - a Brady letter that may list prior misconduct, or something our clients tell us, or a judicial decision deeming that an officer is not credible - to identify patterns of police misconduct”

– JULIE CICCOLINI, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CRIMINAL DEFENSE ATTORNEYS

Policy makers tend to gravitate toward collecting and disseminating data about policing to:

INVESTIGATE AND OBTAIN “OBJECTIVE” INFORMATION TO VERIFY POLICING PROBLEMS.

For example, international NGO Human Rights Watch released a 99-page report documenting human rights abuses at the hands of police during a protest in New York City based on 155 videos and accounts from 81 people at the protest.

Former New York City Mayor Bill De Blasio, instead insisted on funding his own investigation into the incident, on the grounds that the report lacked the perspective of law enforcement.⁴

DEFUSE ORGANIZING DEMANDS.

Policymakers are generally more amenable to reforms regarding government data transparency than efforts to prevent, redress, and eliminate the problems the data documents.

“The word “data” is alienating. For a lawyer, it needs to be understood as testimony, a question of probable cause, findings of non-credibility. We need to change the way we define data - when we say we are collecting data we mean shoot us a text telling us when you win something where the cop is discredited. A sticky note, a transcript, an internal affairs file.”

– DEBORAH LEVI, MARYLAND OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

“Historically there has been a social science push to claim the most legitimate knowledge is universal and objective. We know this isn’t true and doesn’t exist. All knowers are legitimate.” – MARY SHI, UC BERKELEY

[4] <https://www.hrw.org/report/2020/09/30/kettling-protesters-bronx/systemic-police-brutality-and-its-costs-united-states#>
<https://gothamist.com/news/despite-documented-human-rights-abuses-de-blasio-refuses-denounce-nypds-mott-haven-beatdown>



KEY THEMES

A number of key themes emerged from convening discussions:

- It is important to **focus on supporting and protecting the privacy, agency, interests, and humanity of people whose experiences of policing are reflected in data about policing, and to offer them prevention tools and material support.** This can slow down data collection and sharing, but should not be sacrificed for the sake of expediency.
- **It is critical that individuals who are part of, directly communicating with, and accountable to communities directly targeted by policing be involved in data collection, analysis and dissemination projects throughout the process,** including in decision-making and governance roles, and that their participation be compensated;
- **There is no “objective” data.** “Government data” is often collected, analyzed, and publicized by police, who have a stake in how the data is seen and used. **Data collected by community members and from directly impacted individuals is no less “credible” than police data.**
 - Information collected from communities through videos, complaints, surveys, story collection and testimony, as well as litigation documents and judicial decisions, must be understood and validated as “data” about policing.
 - Data scientists, journalists, and attorneys collecting policing data need to re-examine and think creatively about principles of “objectivity” and professionalism that keep them from building deeper connections with and accountability to people harmed by police and movements to address police violence.

“I’ve seen large institutions gatekeep police data from community organizations and residents.”

– BULMARO VICENTE, CHISPA, IN ORANGE COUNTY



- **Decisions about which data to collect and how to describe and publicize it are subjective and political** – for instance, deciding to distinguish between police killings of “armed” and “unarmed” people, or substantiated and unsubstantiated complaints, or whether to make individual officers’ names public or not, or what information is collected or reported about the people who come into contact with police, etc.
- **Institutions and organizations with greater access to data** – whether through negotiations, litigation, or greater financial and other resources – **must commit to making the information publicly available and to sharing with directly impacted communities.**



KEY QUESTIONS

Key questions raised during convening discussions included:



Why do we “need” data about policing?

We often assume “the more data we have, the better.” Yet a focus on data collection can distract and divert efforts and resources from actually addressing the problem. Does expending considerable resources to know exactly how many people police harm a year actually further the goal of stopping police violence? Or could these resources go toward meeting community needs and increasing safety through non-police strategies?

Data collection, aggregation, and transparency does not, in and of itself, correct the harm. While sunlight may be “the best disinfectant,” shining a light on the full scope and breadth of police violence is not enough to put an end to it. A focus on data collection, analysis, and aggregation alone can give the illusion of doing something about the harms of policing without actually preventing or addressing them. This is one reason legislators are more likely to support data bills than legislation that would reduce police power and resources to perpetrate violence.

In some cases, increased data collection can increase harm by requiring police to gather more information about people. For instance, when police collect data about sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, pregnancy, immigration, or housing status, an encounter can become an opportunity for the very kinds of criminalization, profiling based on sexual orientation or gender identity, intrusive questioning, discrimination, harassment and ableist, anti-migrant, homophobic and transphobic or otherwise discriminatory and harmful police violence the data would ostensibly be gathered to address.

A focus on data collection can also fuel the illusion that if there is no data (as is often the case when it comes to police sexual violence, or homophobia and transphobia in police interactions, or police interactions with parents, people in the sex trades, migrants, disabled people, and other marginalized groups) then the problem doesn’t exist.

Lastly, studying a problem can be a means of normalizing it while erasing the real-life impacts on individuals: in fact, people in power often prefer to use and debate statistics affecting the lives of people they don’t know, and often don’t care to know, as people.⁵



? Does data collection simply legitimize policing and police violence?

Is it just tallying up the costs of policing without problematizing them? Does it give the illusion that the problems can or can't be fixed? Does it give us information we can act on, organize around, or use to shift conversations?

“We don’t want to support bad apple narratives. We are abolitionists. We have all the data we need to make the case. And we do use data sometimes in support of our organizing - for instance to identify cops with the worst records to prioritize for layoffs as we defund departments.”

– ANGÉLICA CHÁZARO, SEATTLE SOLIDARITY BUDGET

? What is the cost of data collection?

Do data collection efforts funnel more funding and resources to police to report on the harms of policing, rather than redirecting funds to violence prevention and meeting community needs? How are we counting the costs of collecting data on police activity as part of the cost of policing?

? What harmful narratives can data on police violence perpetuate?

Presentation of data can contribute to “predictive policing” of communities already disproportionately targeted by police, or perceptions that Black people are inherently “criminal” or more dangerous – rather than the reality that police are more dangerous to communities they target.

? Who are the target audiences for data on policing? What do we want them to do with the data? What don’t we want them to do? How do we plan to get them to do it?

[5] Theodore M. Porter, “The Political Philosophy of Quantification,” in *Trust in Numbers: The Pursuit of Objectivity in Science and Public Life*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995)



KEY QUESTIONS

? Are we letting the government off the hook by collecting data it should be gathering and making public?

In other words, are we doing the government’s job– at a cost to communities, including by diverting philanthropic resources from movements to data collection projects? Do we want the state to collect information about police violence? How? The FBI’s indication that it will not publish national information on deaths in police custody because not enough police departments have voluntarily provided data to be statistically reliable⁶ is just one illustration of the limits of relying on governments and police departments to produce information about policing.

? Are we collecting data on solutions to our communities’ problems in addition to data on the harms of police responses?

Data tends to document moments where things went wrong – how are we documenting when things go right, like when a fight breaks out and community members trained in conflict mediation successfully de-escalate it to everyone’s satisfaction without harming anyone? Or when meeting basic needs and offering widely available accessible housing or mental health care prevents crises from happening in the first place?

? How do we protect the safety, privacy and dignity of people sharing their stories about police violence?

? How do we avoid retraumatizing individuals and communities when sharing police data?

Ida B. Wells notably pointed out that publication of information about lynchings by white media served more as a warning to Black communities than an impartial account of events.

“People who are survivors of trauma are not excited to tell the world what police did to them. People don’t necessarily want to share that vulnerability. But with complaint data, we can see if there’s a shared experience.”

– TRINA REYNOLDS-TYLER, BENEATH THE SURFACE, INVISIBLE INSTITUTE

[6] <https://www.washingtonpost.com/crime-law/2021/12/09/fbi-police-shooting-data/>



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“Researchers often cause violence. Data can be produced for harm in a surveilling way. We use double consent, people volunteer to tell their stories.” — SHIRA HASSAN, YOUNG WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT PROJECT

WHAT DOES DATA FOR JUSTICE LOOK LIKE?

The Anti-Eviction Mapping Project, a San Francisco Bay-Area community mapping project collecting data on evictions, foreclosures, development and policing, was invited to share their approach to gathering and disseminating data for justice in a presentation to convening participants.

Noting that the idea of “objective” data can serve to obscure the power relations, two members of AEMP described **data for justice as “data that can disrupt the unequal and oppressive power relations**

embedded in structures of traditional... knowledge.” Data justice requires that “the perspectives of the historically marginalized...be privileged and used as the basis for building new forms of collective power...centering the agency of the dispossessed, both in their loss and their resistance”⁸

AEMP’s data for justice methodology involves several key elements:

COUNTERMAPPING – Approaching issues from decolonial, feminist, anti-neoliberal and anti-racist perspectives,

[7] Terra Graziani and Mary Shi, “Data for Justice: Tensions and Lessons from the Anti-Eviction Mapping Project’s Work Between Academia and Activism,” *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, 2020, 19(1):397-412.

[8] Terra Graziani and Mary Shi, “Data for Justice: Tensions and Lessons from the Anti-Eviction Mapping Project’s Work Between Academia and Activism,” *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, 2020, 19(1):397-412.



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data collection and analysis through countermapping focuses not on the questions and information prioritized by academics, policymakers, and philanthropists, but those prioritized by community partners. This information is then superimposed on data created by government agencies, banks and corporations.

- For instance, one map created by AEMP in partnership with communities directly impacted by policing superimposes information about police calls and police violence on maps illustrating historical redlining practices to illuminate the context and driving forces of police violence and community neglect.
- In another example, the Stop LAPD Spying Coalition tracked surveillance-driven displacement using information from predictive policing and real estate values and transactions.⁹
- *Epicenter Chicago: Reclaiming a City from Neoliberalism*, published by Public Research Associates in partnership with Black Lives Matter Chicago, mapped indicators of social, political, and economic abandonment in communities police data suggested experienced the highest levels of violence in the city.¹⁰

STORYTELLING TO BUILD COMMUNITY POWER –

Inviting and collecting individual stories of violence, policing and safety can take place in multiple ways. AEMP emphasizes that their approach to storytelling and collection “intertwines a participatory oral history format with the work of direct-action community organizing and placemaking to empower and activate participants to collectively fight for their homes.”¹¹ Storytelling techniques are also tailored to meet the needs of the community, including video, murals, zines, power maps and narrative maps.

Organizers emphasize that not all forms of storytelling empower or mobilize people to action. In fact, without multiple forms of support for storytellers, including therapeutic, legal, and financial support, as well as power and opportunity to change underlying conditions, sharing stories of policing and other forms of violence can be harmful and retraumatizing. Additionally, people directly impacted by policing should not only be engaged in data collection projects to tell their stories - they should also have the opportunity to engage in analysis of individual and collective experiences, and to shape the narrative and recommendations.

[9] Stop LAPD Spying Coalition: Automated Banishment: Surveillance on Stolen Land, <https://automatingbanishment.org/index.html>

[10] Andrea J. Ritchie and Black Lives Matter Chicago, *Epicenter Chicago: Reclaiming a City from Neoliberalism*.

[11] Terra Graziani and Mary Shi, “Data for Justice: Tensions and Lessons from the Anti-Eviction Mapping Project’s Work Between Academia and Activism,” *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, 2020, 19(1):397-412.

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OPEN AND HORIZONTAL ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE –

“For AEMP, data for justice has always meant both expanding access to and radically re-envisioning what counts as authoritative knowledge production,” including through organizational structures such as making all of the information it collects available for free on its website and welcoming any person, regardless of official credentials, to participate in its efforts.”¹²

As a partnership between university researchers and community-based organizations, AEMP’s work also intentionally names and navigates tensions, differing interests and power imbalances between academic institutions and actors and members of communities directly impacted by the issues they work on. It acknowledges that even when data relevant to community needs and organizing is technically publicly available, “in practice accessing and analyzing these data still requires amounts of labor, time and money.”¹³

Convening participant Andrea Pritchett of Berkeley Copwatch, which launched a database collecting video and testimony about policing and police violence in partnership with WITNESS following the 2018 convening, emphasized that while

community members may have access to a large volume of information, additional capacity from academic institutions with resources is needed to process and supplement this information in order to make it useful for meeting community needs and supporting organizing. Similarly, Poder in Action collected 10,000 surveys on experiences with police. Ben Laughlin from Poder recounts, “We sat on the data for a year because we didn’t know what to do with it or how to work with that much data. It’s important for us to find and collaborate with people with the skill sets to help us work with the data.” According to AEMP, academic actors and institutions can help to bridge this gap but must do so in a way that doesn’t privilege one form of knowledge or access over another, and that recognizes that all information is partial, and never “objective” or “total.”

MUTUAL AID – Pritchett also emphasized the need to offer multiple forms of support to individuals from whom data about police violence is collected – including material assistance, court accompaniment support, legal referrals, and more. A commitment to provide this support to everyone whose information they gather – a recognition that “data points have faces,” as Pritchett put it, can limit organizational capacity to collect, process and analyze data, again requiring support from more resourced institutions.

[12] Id.

[13] Id.



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AEMP acknowledges that providing support to people whose experiences are documented by data collectors is an essential aspect of creating data for justice – including by participating in canvassing, producing videos, and “standing with community partners and supporting them in whatever multiplicity of strategies they choose rather than imposing theoretically abstracted frameworks...”¹⁴ This approach can be challenging to sustainably resource because it departs from traditional research methodologies focused on producing quantitative results and measurable impacts.

EMBEDDEDNESS – Data for justice requires that data collectors be sufficiently embedded with communities to apply local contexts and adjust to shifting conditions, remaining flexible and responsive, “leaving room for adjustments as situations, collaborators, and communities evolve, and moving at the speed, scale, and pace of community collaborators,” instead of according to expectations of the academy, policy makers, or grant makers.

ACCOUNTABILITY – AEMP emphasizes that “even well-intentioned projects go astray,” particularly when acts of translating community data slip into cooptation of the information, power and voice of the community. Data for justice requires that data collectors must continually ask themselves “who is our work serving?”¹⁵ As AEMP puts it, ethical considerations when collecting, analyzing, or publicizing data “must extend beyond the traditionally narrow concerns of participant confidentiality, deception and harm.”

What does accountability look like in the context of police data collection, analysis, and dissemination?

Throughout the convening, participants asked themselves and each other: What does collaboration between academic and large non-profit institutions with community organizations as genuine partners require? What principles, agreements, accountability structures need to be in place up front?

“As we discuss the balance of engaging community members on every single front, I think the most important front is including the voices of survivors whose stories we have. They let us know what’s missing. No matter how well intentioned you are, your perspective is limited. Having survivors involved taught us a lot and literally shaped the algorithm we used, by working with and honoring survivors.”

– TRINA REYNOLDS-TYLER, INVISIBLE INSTITUTE

[14] Id.

[15] Id.



“I think it’s possible for organizers to collaborate with large institutions. It’s valuable when organizers want and need the support - their capacity is super limited and it’s usually unpaid labor. When offering support, it’s important to make sure that the process is not extractive, that expectations are clear about credit, etc.” – **JANAÉ BONSU, NATIONAL BLACK WOMEN’S JUSTICE INSTITUTE**

“It’s critical for larger institutions collaborating with community organizations to listen to and defer to the organizers from the beginning of projects. Community-led involvement will give a project more targeted outreach strategies and credibility, but the potential will not be reached if community organizations are only involved in the outreach stage.”

– **RODRIGO HENG-LEHTINEN, NATIONAL CENTER FOR TRANSGENDER EQUALITY**

“It’s important that the relationships in partnership with community organizations are long and deep.” – **MARI-MARI NARVAÈZ, KILOMETRO CÉRO**

“I often feel like the dead are in the room with me when I am documenting their cases. I feel accountable to them. And making their names public allows family members to add what is missing from the police story, to say ‘that story doesn’t do justice to my relative or my son or daughter’ and send additional documentation that we include in these stories. We are pushing back against a system that doesn’t want this information to be tallied in any comprehensive way - what’s available are police reports and media reports that act as stenographers for the police narrative.”

– **D. BRIAN BURGHART, FATALENCOUNTERS.ORG**

“California Families United for Justice involves relatives of people killed by police in the process of design of data collection and department scorecards, and in thinking about how data is being interpreted.”

– **BULMARO VICENTE**



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“Where mainstream media is discussing how a Black man is shot in the street we are not thinking about all the other ways women and children are living with police violence and not being interpreted as worthy or credible enough to be up in arms about it. What we learned is some of what we already knew - and our review revealed not just patterns of repeat officers, but patterns of repeat behavior across the department.”

– TRINA REYNOLDS-TYLER, INVISIBLE INSTITUTE

Beneath the Surface

The Invisible Institute launched the *Beneath the Surface* project in 2021 to uncover the ways in which complaint records obtained through litigation obscure sexual and gender-based police violence. Partnering with community researchers and HRDAG, the project created an algorithm used to review narratives in over 27,000 complaint records and tag information for weekly review by community members to identify patterns of police violence that could be the subject of community organizing.

Review revealed that primary complaint categories often obscured sexual and gender-based police violence. As *Beneath the Surface* director Trina Reynolds-Tyler put it, “so many things can happen within the span of an encounter and that primary category doesn’t always shed light on it. Community members reading the complaints recognized what they were reading, because they know what those encounters look like.”

“We had evidence of crimes against young people in our office - we had to figure out how to be careful about how to engage with criminal evidence against police and social workers.”

– SHIRA HASSAN, YOUNG WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT PROJECT



DEEP DIVES

On the final day of the convening, participants broke into small groups to dive deeper into the questions of accountability, shifting power, reducing harm and increasing benefits of obtaining, organizing, and opening police data.

Consent and Privacy

Participants discussed strategies for:

- Protecting data from hackers, police, and subpoenas – including strategies and workflows for quickly removing video and other information from individual devices to a more secure location, storage and protection of hard drives and encrypted servers, and documentation of chain of custody and attorney client privilege where applicable.
- Redaction of personal/identifying information from litigation and complaint records
- Obtaining consent to publication from all parties, including bystanders and witnesses, when information comes from witnesses, police sources such as

body cameras and investigations, or records that are nominally public (like arrest records) where publication will bring greater attention, scrutiny, and potential for retaliation.

- Greater clarity on the scope of consent, including purpose and timeline – for instance, is consent to data disclosure limited to use in litigation, research reports, media publications, or is it given for all uses for all eternity?
- Greater clarity on what is required for consent to truly be informed: For instance, does it require consultation with both an experienced criminal and civil attorney first to explain and prepare for all possible ramifications and impacts of disclosure of information about individual policing experiences for future litigation, safety, employment, immigration, child welfare, benefit eligibility, etc.?
- Addressing power imbalance when litigators obtain consent from clients to share litigation documents/information.

“How do you think about getting clients’ consent, even for aggregated data? How are we mindful of the power dynamics between attorneys and clients in representation?”

– MARGARET RINGLER, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CRIMINAL DEFENSE ATTORNEYS



DO NO HARM: ACCOUNTABILITY AND ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMUNITIES DIRECTLY IMPACTED BY POLICING

KEY TAKEAWAYS

It is essential to have strong measures in place to protect the private personal information of the people complaining about police misconduct, carefully review documents for proper redactions, and ensure truly informed consent, with clarity about the scope and intended impact.

It is essential to recognize the impact power imbalances may have on consent: for instance, a client may give an attorney consent to share information because they believe refusal of consent will affect the quality of representation.

Attorneys may address this in a number of ways, including by:

- not asking for consent to share information until the attorney-client relationship has ended,
- providing information on the scope and purpose of disclosure in writing,
- creating opportunities and mechanisms to withdraw or limit the scope consent to certain purposes or time periods, and
- offering options around how they are identified (anonymously, initials only, first name only, limiting information about demographics, locations, circumstances, etc.)

“One of the ways in which we explore integrating care in data collection from victims of traumatic experiences is to really consider our client’s consent in those situations. I do think there are thorny issues in these cases, and so we try to ensure that we have conversations with our clients prior to including the information about their specific cases. We also try to screen that at least on a first level with their criminal defense lawyers beforehand. We also tried to brainstorm whether there are other ways we could hold officers accountable by looking to publicly available data as well.”

– JENNVINE WONG, LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF NEW YORK

“Something we’ve noticed is that police make mistakes with redaction all the time- we want to share information as quickly as possible but we also want to scrutinize the content carefully to avoid putting people at risk.”

– CHACLYN HUNT, INVISIBLE INSTITUTE

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“It’s hard to get a picture of the whole system - from stop and frisk to parole and everything in between. How do you trace a person without compromising their privacy along the way?”

– DEBORAH LEVI, MARYLAND OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

Data Aggregation

Participants discussed the feasibility, desirability, mechanics and power relations implicated by projects aimed at consolidating data about police stops, use of force, complaints, and individual officers at state, regional, and national levels. Key questions included:

- What is the purpose of creating large consolidated or federated databases of information about policing? How will they produce change beyond counting violence?
- How would such projects account for local specificities, conditions and campaign goals? How do we tell local stories?
- How do we synthesize data from disparate sources? What is lost in attempting to standardize data across different sources?
- How do we deal with limitations of data from police and government sources – including how complaints and police practices are categorized, how gender

and race are captured and recorded, police control and manipulation of data, data quality, etc.

- How do we put consolidated data in one place and get it to tell a compelling story in an ongoing urgent conversation? How do we tell data stories visually?

AEMP cautions against creating nationwide databases without input, expertise or perspective of local organizers, noting that “This mode of birds-eye-view research privileges national coverage over local nuance, ignoring the fact that the actual processes [contributing to the problem] are locally varied and therefore require a local scale of analysis...In addition to producing more accurate knowledge, properly emplaced work also produces more politically actionable knowledge.” Noting that what has been described as the “god trick of seeing everything from nowhere” **has the effect of depoliticizing data, AEMP reminds us that the purpose of data for justice is “not for recognition from academics and other institutional actors, but rather...for the movement to use.”**



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Efforts to build national databases of police violence should first engage in rigorous scrutiny of their theory of change – who are they collecting data for, how do they imagine the information being used by

movements to change conditions that produce police violence, and how will they engage and be accountable to local organizers to ensure that their perspectives and needs are reflected and addressed?

“We’re a hyperlocal group. National data about police misconduct is interesting but it doesn’t have a big impact on us locally in terms of influencing members of the community or local authorities. What would be more helpful is if we could get help interpreting our data.”

– ANDREA PRITCHETT, BERKELEY COPWATCH

“What does the lifecycle look like when we are trying to move from data collection toward local impact? What are the common elements and chokepoints? Which individuals, institutions, or roles need to be involved?”

– DARRELL MALONE, NATIONAL POLICE DATA COALITION

“We see a real benefit to collecting data as a base to be used across domains for many purposes, from journalism to advocacy and policy change. So collaborating on the underlying data ingestion and structures can support all types of work.” – CHERYL PHILLIPS, STANFORD OPEN POLICING PROJECT

“Lack of standardization across data is a big problem - not just the quality, but the data structure: everything from hand copied documents to scattered spreadsheets. We need to tell the story about how abysmal police data collection structure is - and that if the disparities are this bad and the data is defective, imagine the real story.”

– BREE SPENCER, LAWYERS’ COMMITTEE FOR CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Public database projects that consolidate datasets need to broadcast that no matter how much data their project holds, the data is always incomplete and subjective;

Comparing datasets can be useful if used primarily to probe/audit government reports on policing for incompleteness/inaccuracy, for tracking officers across jurisdictions, and to compare whether interventions in certain localities have meaningfully reduced reports of police violence.

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Efforts to standardize and aggregate data collection in the interests of merging data from multiple sources must take into account and make provisions for the multiple forms data may take, including community collected videos, complaints, stories and testimony, litigation documents, as well as media stories, and make every effort to ensure that data standardization does not result in decreased accessibility, granularity or three-dimensional aspects of data.

To the extent that organizations are creating infrastructure for national data, documenting the differences best protects projects from losing local context. Rather than mandating standardized language and terms across jurisdictions when local context would be sacrificed, documenting differences allows parties to weigh the significance of comparisons (i.e. counter mapping, discussed above).

Consider having community members' test and vet whether your data completely captures the violations and harms that occurred – for instance, through the community-member review of complaint data used by the Beneath the Surface project described on page 34.

Using Police Data

Participants explored how data on policing can be collected and used to advance

movements to reduce and eliminate the harms of policing and criminalization, with the goal of changing conditions, rather than simply collecting information for the sake of more information, including:

- Informing community demands and policy and legislative change, and monitoring effectiveness of implementation;
- Auditing current accountability systems and empowering communities to check academic and government research and data;
- Supporting campaigns for budget justice and guiding community investments;
- Shifting public support and perception of police as public safety;
- Defending individuals accused of crimes and prevent further miscarriages of justice;
- Holding police accountable for abuse through litigation;
- Organizing campaigns around departments who harbor officers with histories of repeated misconduct and tracking officers' movement through departmental ranks, departments, and municipalities;
- Documenting and validating community experiences



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KEY TAKEAWAYS

Being in control of data can shift power to the people;

Creative approaches to collecting police data can help communities fight for budget reallocations, curb the use of surveillance technologies, and reduce the power of police and the industries that profit from policing;

Data can fact check and counter police narratives;

Data can expose systemic problems and failures, and demonstrate that police violence is not an exception to the norm;

Data can alter public support and perception of police and delegitimize policing as a path to public safety.

Making Demands for Police Data

Participants discussed the following questions when thinking about whether demanding data about policing will advance goals of disrupting power relations and preventing and providing redress for the harms of policing.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- Is it necessary or useful to standardize data?
- Does asking for better data inadvertently justify giving more funding to police departments?
- Police exercise considerable discretion when creating and reporting data. How do we acknowledge this when demanding and using police data, and remember it's never the full picture?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Data can legitimize, illustrate, and contextualize anecdotes.

We do want better data quality - poor data quality is a barrier to data being inaccessible to the community. However, we are wary of it becoming a justification for more funding to police.

Consult with community groups about where to find & how to use data.

Engage journalists and gather community support. Ex: Invisible Institute data gathering & journalistic function

“The narrative about public FOIA is inaccurate and offers a false sense of security regarding access to data. Both the complications and cost of this information prevent unhindered public access.”

– BREE SPENCER, LAWYERS COMMITTEE FOR CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS



CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FIELD

“The problem is believing that the data is the truth, or that the problem is solved once we have the data.” – **BOCAR BA, DUKE UNIVERSITY**

“Transparency isn’t change itself. It can be legislated in one way or another, policymakers get a pat on the back, but it’s not enough. It’s a tool for movement building. Data helps paint a picture of what the city is funding when it puts all this money in police.” – **YUL-SAN LIEM, JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

“Data is generally created without public access or advocacy in mind. We need to go beyond rows and columns to make it meaningful.”

– **RAJIV SINCLAIR, PUBLIC DATA WORKS**

- **Be clear on your theory of change** – it is not enough to assume that “someone” will do “something” with data about policing. It is critical to have a clear idea of who will use the data, how, and to what end in order to make the data accessible and helpful. Develop objectives for data projects in collaboration with people directly impacted by the violence of policing.
- **Be responsible and structurally accountable to individuals directly impacted by policing.**
 - Start by exploring whether anyone in the community is already collecting data, avoiding duplication, supporting and sharing resources with groups currently collecting data;
 - Ensure that communities are credited and compensated for data they produce in ways that are meaningful to them, determined through open conversations about the expectations of partnership;



CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Engage in more effective outreach to members of directly impacted communities and create decision-making structures for and resourcing their participation in data collection projects;
- Make research tools legible to community members and develop them with equal community participation, including the development of machine learning tools (tools that help computers analyze large quantities of data) and access to definitions of terms;
- Avoid extractive, exploitative approaches that put people directly impacted by issues in passive positions to only provide information about direct experiences and receive information, such as by only involving community members in disseminating research instruments and results or sharing their stories without input on research process and analysis;
- Shape data collection strategies to the greatest benefit of the community, to get at root causes of the issues rather than telling individualized stories;
- Clarify the project's responsibility to provide support for individuals whose stories are reflected in the data collected, including when survivors are unidentified survivors. For instance, the Buffalo News developed a database of over 700 incidents of police sexual violence based on media reports, which generally do not identify survivors. How might media outlets engaged in such projects still offer support and be accountable to the people whose stories they tell?
- Protect the privacy and security of people who experience police violence, and prioritize informed consent or informed refusal¹⁶ for data collection and sharing;
- Carefully assess and ensure that data collection, analysis and presentation is empowering to people directly impacted by policing rather than harmful and disempowering.
- **Know the source of data** – be transparent about who generated the data, and engage critically with the inherent biases of police data. Fact-check police narratives and take measures to protect people's private information. Assume you will not be able to publish this data forever and develop a sustainability strategy to ensure the data and evidence survive.

[16] Benjamin R. Informed Refusal: Toward a Justice-based Bioethics. *Science, Technology, & Human Values*. 2016;41(6):967-990. doi:10.1177/0162243916656059.



- **Know the strengths and limits of data** – be transparent about how the data are generated, and whether they tell you a direct story or if they can only tell you part of it. Some data are valuable for giving early insight into a phenomenon, but there will always be an opportunity to dig deeper for the full perspective.
- **Value data diversity** – think critically about your own biases on what data you value as more objective or truthful. Seek varied data sources and feedback on whether your data is reflecting people’s realities.
- **Engage and support the community** – Don’t just take data without providing support. Put your expertise and skill set in service of community members who want to collect and analyze their own data. Respect the true experts - data alone cannot tell a complete story. Look to community members who can guide your inquiries, and contextualize the information you are receiving. Some people interact with the police every day. They know the context and nuances of local policing, and their expertise cannot be forced into a dataset standardized across jurisdictions.
- **Be in constant conversation with the community** – the needs of data collection projects may change over time. Maintain open conversations and communication with the communities your data is about and seeks to empower. Be willing to adapt to their changing strategies and needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUNDERS

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“National projects lack credibility when they are not deeply connected to and informed by local efforts. We need 500 new local data gathering projects instead of one big one.”

- **Ask questions** – When considering projects that include extracting data from people who have experienced harms of policing, ask questions about what kind of connection, compensation, assistance and accountability there is to the individuals and communities whose experiences are reflected in the data. Encourage projects to support referral, accompaniment, and mutual aid services to the people they are collecting data about and to incorporate them into the



CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

conception, landscaping, data collection protocols, processes, analysis, as well as final recommendations stemming from the analysis.

- **Foster collaboration** – Create spaces for the groups you fund to collaborate and share knowledge, experiences, and accountability mechanisms. Encourage larger institutions and universities to support the work of community-based organizations and offer increased capacity for data collection and analysis.
- **Prioritize data collection for power building** – Support organizations that are collecting, analyzing, and using data to build power and engagement in communities, advocate for policy or legislative changes, engage in budget advocacy, over those simply documenting the problem. Prioritize groups with clear connections to, communication with, and accountability to community organizations.
- **Deconstruct gatekeeping** – Support projects that prioritize broad accessibility of their work and do not require legal, academic, research, etc. resources to access data that impacts people’s daily lives.



APPENDIX A

CONVENING AGENDA

DAY ONE: TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2021

1:00 – 5:00 PM ET

The first session will consist of panels of practitioners speaking about their work, the impact it has had, the perspective they bring, the challenges with sustaining it, and how they see the role of their work within the broader movement for public safety reform. These panels will demonstrate the spectrum of work being done in this area by everyone from local community-based organizations to journalists to lawyers and technologists.

1:00 – 1:15 PM **Welcome + Introductions**

1:15 – 2:15 PM **PANEL ONE:**
Data Collection for, by, and with Community Organizers

FACILITATOR:

Jackie Zammuto, WITNESS

PANELISTS:

Mari-Mari Narváez, Kilometro Céro

Dennis Flores, El Grito/Copwatch Media

Andrea Pritchett, Berkeley Copwatch

Janaé Bonsu, National Black Women's Justice Initiative

Shira Hassan, Young Women's Empowerment Project, Street Youth Rise UP

Rodrigo Heng-Lehtinen, National Center for Transgender Equality

Ben Laughlin and Isabel Garcia, Poder in Action

2:15 – 2:20 PM **Break (5 MIN)**



CONVENING AGENDA

2:20 – 3:20 PM

PANEL TWO:

Data Collection for the Public Record

FACILITATOR:

Chaclyn Hunt, Invisible Institute

PANELISTS:

Julie Tate, Washington Post (Invited)

Oliver Laughland, The Guardian (Invited)

Matthew Spina, Buffalo News

Sam Sinyangwe, mappingpoliceviolence.com

D. Brian Burghart, Fatalencounters.org

Nadav Savio, Raheem (invited)

3:20 – 3:30 PM

Break

3:30 – 4:30 PM

PANEL THREE:

Data Collection by, with, and for Litigators

FACILITATOR:

Margaret Ringler, National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers

PANELISTS:

Julie Ciccolini, Full Disclosure Project

Kade Crockford, ACLU Massachusetts

Debbie Levi, Maryland State Defender

Bree Spencer, Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

4:30 – 4:45 PM

Closing



DAY TWO: TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2021

1:00 – 3:30 PM ET

1:00 – 1:05 PM **Welcome and agenda/goal-setting/
explainer for the day**

1:05 – 1:35 PM **Tensions and Lessons from the Anti-Eviction
Mapping Project’s Work between Academia
and Activism**

PANELISTS:

Terra Graziani, Anti-Eviction Mapping Project
Mary Shi, UC Berkeley

1:35 – 1:45 PM **Break**

1:45 – 2:30 PM **Roundtable: Using the Data**

FACILITATOR:

Julie Ciccolini, Full Disclosure Project

PANELISTS:

Jennvine Wong, Legal Aid Society of New York
George Joseph, Gothamist
Maira Khwaja, Invisible Institute
Angelica Cházaro, Decrim Seattle
Bocar Ba, Duke University
Roman Rivera, Columbia University

2:30 – 2:35 PM **Break**



CONVENING AGENDA

2:35 – 3:25 PM Panel Four: Big Data Collection

FACILITATOR:

Cynthia Conti-Cook, Ford Foundation

PANELISTS:

Darrell Malone, National Police Data Collaborative

Steven Silverman, Open Police Complaints

Adam Pah, SCALES

Barry Scheck, CLEAN

Aditya Parameswaran, CLEAN

Cheryl Phillips, Stanford Open Policing Project

Rajiv Sinclair, Public Data Works

DAY THREE: TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30 2021 1:00 – 4:00 PM ET

1:00 – 1:10 PM Welcome

1:10 – 1:50 PM Breakouts

1:50 – 2:00 PM Break

2:00 – 2:50 PM Breakouts

2:50 – 3:00 PM Break

3:00 – 3:50 PM Reflection + Collective Alignment



APPENDIX B

DESCRIPTIONS OF DATA COLLECTION PROJECTS

What follows are descriptions of data and databases created by presenting organizations. **Please familiarize yourself with this information in advance of the convening as we will not be asking speakers to introduce themselves or their projects during panels and roundtables so that we can get to the meat of the conversation quickly.**

ACLU-Massachusetts

LINK: [The Data for Justice Project | ACLU of Massachusetts – Data \(aclum.org\)](#)

DATA COLLECTED: Boston police Incidents.

DATA SOURCE: Police incident reports from publicly available data hosted on Analyze Boston. The reports posted there go back to June 2015, and are (usually) updated daily by the Boston Police.

DATA SHARED: The data sourced for all visualizations on this site are available for download. Track the activity of the Boston Police Department over time, including the frequency and location of specific incident types. Year to year comparisons are available as well as incidents by type, over time, incident locations, and major and minor incidents comparisons.

DATA VERIFICATION: In order to insulate data visualizations from inconsistencies in the AnalyzeBoston database, ACLU-MA maintains a separate database of all Boston Police incidents since 2015. This database is updated daily, adding new incidents and at times updating old incidents if BPD provided updated location data for that incident since the previous query. The database differs from the BPD database in context, not content – that is to say, the ACLU-MA does not alter incident details or metadata except to compile entries cumulatively. This accumulated database is the source of all visualizations on the site.



DESCRIPTIONS OF DATA COLLECTION PROJECTS

Anti-Eviction Mapping Project

LINK: antievictionmap.com/killings-by-police-oakland

DATA COLLECTED: The Anti-Eviction Mapping Project created a collection of interactive maps illustrating deaths by police in Oakland (1968-2020) and San Francisco (1985-2020). Data collected includes: date of murder, age and name of person killed, a description of the event, race of the victim, and links to media coverage and other sites of interest.

DATA SOURCE: Our narrative oral history and video work centers the displacement of people and complex social worlds, and modes of resistance.

DATA SHARED: The Anti-Eviction Mapping Project is a data-visualization, critical cartography, and multimedia storytelling collective documenting dispossession and resistance upon gentrifying landscapes. Primarily working in the San Francisco Bay Area, Los Angeles, and New York City, we are all volunteers producing digital maps, software and tools, narrative multimedia work, murals, reports, and community events. Working with a number of community partners and in solidarity with housing movements globally, we study and visualize entanglements of racial capitalism, technocapitalism, and political economy, while providing tools for resistance.

DATA USES: Maintaining antiracist and feminist analyses as well as decolonial methodology, the project creates tools and disseminates data contributing to collective resistance and movement building.

Berkeley Copwatch

LINK: berkeleycopwatch.org/people-s-database

DATA COLLECTED: Data collected includes details and footage about individual incidents as well as histories of the police officers involved.

DATA SOURCE: Our approach relies exclusively on local, volunteer participation to directly monitor and report on police activity and police encounters with the public. Over time, our approach has become less dependent on individual on-site resistance to police misconduct beyond documentation, and more reliant on our ability to access evidence that we can produce quickly and use strategically after the incident is “over.”

DATA USES: Holding police accountable and fostering alternatives to police. As Copwatch matured, it was clear that we needed to raise the standard of information that we gathered and our ability



to use it in support of various policy campaigns. We needed to be able to find the footage and aggregate incidents in order to demonstrate patterns of abuse. In addition, we were moving away from the idea that we could shame or change a police department by finding one high profile, outrageous incident that would somehow cause the transformation of the department. We realized that people in our city also suffered from the less dramatic, but still impactful daily abuses such as illegal searches, punitive destruction of property, racial profiling, illegal towing, as well as instances of unnecessary force and more. These patterns of enforcement required that we be able to substantiate our concerns with aggregated footage/data and be able to gather all of this information together in an organized and comprehensive way, sometimes quickly.

Buffalo News

LINK: s3.amazonaws.com/bncore/projects/abusing-the-law/data.html#

DATA COLLECTED: The Buffalo News collected more than 700 credible cases of sexual misconduct from law enforcement personnel over a 10-year period. The data was updated monthly through December 2016 and includes: name of officer, rank/title, Department, County, State, description of the incident(s) of sexual violence, status of employment and/or prosecution of the officer as result of the incident, sentence officer was given (if any), sources of information (links to sources provided).

DATA SOURCE: Local media reports, court documents and press releases were used to identify cases or allegations in which sexual misconduct was linked to police work or the use of police resources.

DATA VERIFICATION: Cases include only those in which some action lends credibility to the accusation. In most cases, that includes termination, indictment, conviction, the officer's statements, resignation while an investigation was under way or internal affairs conclusions regarding departmental charges. This data does not include misconduct cases that occurred inside jails or prisons. Convicted officers may have pleaded to charges less serious than those originally placed.



DESCRIPTIONS OF DATA COLLECTION PROJECTS

El Grito/COPWATCH Media

LINKS: copwatch.media | elgrito.org | elgrito.witness.org

DATA COLLECTED: El Grito de Sunset Park is a community organization in Sunset Park, Brooklyn – working to find new ways to use eyewitness video and open source data to expose abuses by some NYPD and begin to illustrate how police abuse is part of a larger systemic problem.

DATA VERIFICATION: Verifying the content is a three part process. This project helps address a glaring information gap and can strengthen advocacy efforts around transparency and accountability.

DATA USES: El Grito and Copwatch Media rely on video and open source data gathered by local groups to help corroborate incidents of abuse, help communities tell their own stories, and strengthen advocacy efforts for greater accountability and transparency. Copwatch Media is a community-based journalism project publishing articles and multimedia about law enforcement's effects on hyper-policed Black, Latinx and non-white communities, and serves as a media watchdog for local and national news reporting that is deferential to law enforcement (copaganda) and will soon host a database that catalogues police and police misconduct.

Fatal Encounters

LINK: fatalencounters.org

DATA COLLECTED: We try to document all deaths that happen when police are present or that are caused by police: on-duty, off-duty, criminal, line-of-duty, local, federal, intentional, accidental—all of them. Fatal Encounters intends to help create a database of all deaths through police interaction in the United States since Jan. 1, 2000. We are not a finished product. We're just the first step toward creating an impartial, comprehensive and searchable national database of people killed during interactions with police. We expect other media organizations, law enforcement, universities, artists and activist groups will advance our work, and that's why we let anyone use the data for any reason for free.

DATA SHARED: We enable people to filter out the deaths that they aren't interested in examining. There is at least one team that is only analyzing the police-related suicides. There's another group that only studies teenagers who die during police pursuits. The website is primarily a delivery method for the data on the Google Spreadsheet, available for [download right here](#). At over 30,000 records, it's tempting to consider this a comprehensive dataset. It's not. While we completed the



systematic states-by-year searches of the United States on November 3, 2017, we know we've missed some. This set was never intended to do anything except identify the names, demographic information, dates and locales of the dead and to give us direction for categories that needed further research. It is our intention to go deeper in areas we've identified, but this is still a first draft. The next upgrade will include "threat assessment" columns, including Armed/Unarmed, Alleged weapon, Physical movement, Fleeing/Not fleeing.

DATA USES: The idea is that the data is here for anyone who needs it for whatever reason they want it. This site is founded upon the premise that Americans should have the ability to track loss of life due to police.

The Guardian/The Counted

LINKS: theguardian.com/us-news/series/counted-us-police-killings

CONTACT: thecounted@theguardian.com

DATA COLLECTED: Demographic information about people killed by police and other law enforcement agencies in the United States throughout 2015 and 2016, including name, age, race, ethnicity, date of murder, street address, city and state of murder, classification (ie. gunshot), law enforcement agency involved in the murder, reported data on armed or unarmed circumstances.

DATA SOURCE: The database combines Guardian reporting with verified crowdsourced information to build a more comprehensive record of such fatalities. The database is made up of data sourced from traditional reporting on police reports and witness statements, by monitoring regional news outlets, research groups and open-source reporting projects such as the websites Fatal Encounters and Killed by Police. The intention was to progress and develop into a verified crowdsourced system.

DATA VERIFICATION: This information is difficult to verify because often the only information available comes directly from law enforcement officials. In some cases, friends and relatives of people killed will dispute this official account. For The Counted, we use the term "armed" to express the nature of the threat perceived by law enforcement. This means, for example, that "vehicle" will appear under the category of "armed" if the person was trying to use it as a weapon.

DATA SHARED: This data is provided in downloadable excel spreadsheets, available to the public at: theguardian.com/us-news/ng-interactive/2015/jun/01/about-the-counted



DESCRIPTIONS OF DATA COLLECTION PROJECTS

Invisible Institute/Human Rights Data Analysis Group

DATA COLLECTED: [Citizens Police Data Project \(CPDP\)](#) takes records of police interactions with the public – records that would otherwise be buried in internal databases – and opens them up to make the data useful to the public, creating a permanent record for every CPD police officer.

DATA SOURCE: In 2014 and again in 2020, a Chicago grassroots organization, the Invisible Institute, won lawsuits that granted them access to decades of complaints of misconduct by Chicago police officers. Hundreds of thousands of complaints were suddenly made available in a variety of formats, from written summaries of allegations (unstructured data) to tables listing names, rank, dates, offense, and more (structured data).

DATA SHARED: CPDP was built with a focus on making data both accessible and useful by collaborating closely with the people who can best make use of it. The Invisible Institute made scanned images of the documents available online, and HRDAG stepped in to help the Institute bridge the gap between raw data and analyzable data. Users can search for complaints using dozens of filters such as police beat, type of offense, demographics, or police officers' names. The goal is to make the records easy to find and identify for investigations that might explore, for example, officers targeting people based on their perceived sexual identity or disability status. Importantly, the coders are tagging records with all the violations described in the report, which enables a single record to serve as evidence in different types of investigations. This is a departure from how the police department administration currently handles the complaints, which is to categorize each complaint into a single category, usually the “most serious” offense, which essentially buries the other allegations described in the report.

DATA USES: The goal is to make police data more useful to the public through transparency, investigation, and accountability.

Kilometro 0

LINK: kilometro0.org

DATA COLLECTED: The Evidence of Violence website is a documentation tool to collect testimonies and stories in which police or public security agents intervene in a violent, discriminatory or irregular way with citizens. We include interventions with the use of force, deaths of people, violations of civil rights, negligence to deal with complaints, use of threats, intimidation, repression of protests or demonstrations, interventions by COVID-19 executive orders and many more.



DATA SOURCE: Data is collected through documentation forms filled out by witnesses online, followed by interviews by the documentation team. The information we post is primarily obtained from individuals affected by these events, who voluntarily wish to share their experiences with us. We also include information we collect from the press and social media. We cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information, we prefer to commit to being honest about any errors, transparent in the publication process and open to suggestions.

DATA SHARED: Data is shared in a [searchable online database](#). Data shared for each case documented is organized in the following categories: 1. Person Intervened (person directly impacted) 2. Event 3. Story 4. Details of the Intervention 5. Agents 6. Place 7. Sources

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

LINK: accountablenow.com

DATA COLLECTED: Use of force data from 14 cities.

DATA SOURCE: Pen data portals, data repositories like Muckrock, and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

DATA VERIFICATION: Researchers are still learning how best to analyze and harmonize such disparate data sets.

DATA SHARED: Members of the public are welcome to explore the analyzed data as well as the raw data.

DATA USES: Our goal is collecting, analyzing and making use of force data available to the public. We do this to measure the full scope of police use of force and to better equip advocates with the information they need to build safer communities.



Lucy Parsons Lab

LINK: lucyparsonslabs.com

DATA COLLECTED: OpenOversight is an interactive web tool that makes it easier for Chicago residents to file complaints against police officers.

DATA SOURCE: OpenOversight uses publicly available data from Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, Chicago police department social media accounts, and Flickr. Currently, the OpenOversight database has demographic data on every Chicago police officer and photos of about one percent of officers. OpenOversight uses data related to officers' performances of their duties as public servants employed by the City of Chicago; it does not include private information such as driver's license records, home addresses, or criminal records.

DATA SHARED: OpenOversight is released as free and open source software so others can launch similar police accountability projects in their own cities. The software is available for download on GitHub.

DATA USES: Using OpenOversight, members of the public can search for the names and badge numbers of those officers with whom they have negative interactions based on estimated age, race, and gender. Using this information, the OpenOversight web application returns a digital gallery of potential matches and, when possible, includes pictures of officers in uniform to assist in identification. Due to language in the Chicago Police Department's contract, officers who kill on the job are shielded from public disclosure, which is not the case in other major cities like Oakland. Since City Hall and CPD won't identify killer officers, this guide should serve as a skeleton resource for victim's families, journalists, and others to identify the officers.

Mapping Police Violence

LINK: mappingpoliceviolence.org

DATA COLLECTED: information on over 9,000 killings by police nationwide since 2013.

DATA SOURCE: This information has been meticulously sourced from official police use of force data collection programs in states like California, Texas and Virginia, combined with nationwide data from the Fatal Encounters database, an impartial crowdsourced database on police killings.

DATA VERIFICATION: We've also done extensive original research to further improve the quality and completeness of the data; searching social media, obituaries, criminal records databases, police reports and other sources to identify the race of 90 percent of all victims in the database.



Full Disclosure Project at the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers

LINK: nacdl.org/Landing/FullDisclosureProject

The Full Disclosure Project (FDP) maintains an open-source web application to track, aggregate, and analyze data about law enforcement misconduct. The project provides defense entities with direct support, training, and technical assistance in implementing the application. The project also works with state and local partners to repeal secrecy laws and promote efforts to decertify officers who engage in serious misconduct. In addition, FDP is part of the Community Law Enforcement Accountability Network which focuses on building tools to automate the collection, processing, and sharing of police misconduct data across stakeholders and with the public.

DATA COLLECTED: FDP does not collect any data themselves but sets up federated databases at defender offices. Those databases are designed to track any information on police misconduct available in the jurisdiction, which may range from publicly-sourced materials like lawsuits to information disclosed during litigation.

DATA SOURCES: Civil rights lawsuits filed against police officers obtained through PACER, state court websites, and courthouses; Media reports about police misconduct tracked through news alerts, web scraping of local newspapers, and relationships with local reporters; FOIA requests for overtime data, decertification data, declined prosecutions, civil rights notices of claims and lawsuits, civilian complaints, use-of-force reports, and other jurisdiction-dependent public data; Civilian complaint data made through public sources or oversight boards; judicial decisions available in legal databases like Westlaw and Bloomberg; info obtained from lawyers and clients about police officers & actions of prosecutors; info obtained by investigators, including social media posts of police officers that are potentially useful as impeachment material; court disclosures made about officer misconduct under protective orders; internal disciplinary data obtained via a subpoena; judicial findings that are not publicly reported; case dismissals as a result of other types of police misconduct or inaccuracies; arrest data analyzed to identify suspicious patterns of arrests/dismissals.

DATA SHARED: Data is currently shared regionally among trusted networks of defenders.

DATA USES: The federated Full Disclosure Project databases are used by defenders to ensure officer conduct is scrutinized in every case, starting from the first appearance. The data is also used to identify patterns of police abuse and to advocate for transparency and accountability.



DESCRIPTIONS OF DATA COLLECTION PROJECTS

National Black Women's Justice Institute

LINK: nbwji.org

DATA COLLECTED: The National Black Women's Justice Institute is conducting a mixed-methods research project examining the experiences and interactions that cis- and transgender Black women and girls have with police.

DATA SOURCE: Through self-reported data via an annual online survey and in-depth interviews, NBWJI will explore the reasons for Black cis- and trans women and girls, transmasculine, and gender nonconforming people's encounters with police. This exploration will include the nature and quality of their interactions, whether force was used during any encounters they had, their perceptions of how police treated them, and examine the impacts of police encounters on health and wellbeing.

DATA USES: A key outcome of this research is to build a national database of police violence against Black women, girls, trans, and GNC people. The aim of the research is to elevate and amplify the voices and narratives of Black women and girls, filling critical gaps in our collective understanding of how police encounters affect the entirety of the Black community. We intend to challenge our collective understanding of police violence, showing how even interactions that are considered mundane can cause great harm and threaten our perceptions of safety in our communities.

National Center for Transgender Equality

LINK: transequality.org/issues/police-jails-prisons

DATA COLLECTED: The 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey (USTS) is the largest survey examining the experiences of transgender people in the United States, with 27,715 respondents from all fifty states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, and U.S. military bases overseas.

DATA SOURCE: Conducted in the summer of 2015 by the National Center for Transgender Equality, the USTS was an anonymous, online survey for transgender adults (18 and older) in the United States, available in English and Spanish.

DATA SHARED: The report of the 2015 USTS provides a detailed look at the experiences of transgender people across a wide range of categories, such as education, employment, family life, health, housing, and interactions with the criminal justice system. Key findings, statistics, and testimonies of individuals surveyed are provided in the full report, including data related to trans experiences with police and incarceration.

DATA USES: has been used as a means to influence policy at the governmental and institutional levels.



Open Police Complaints

LINK: openpolice.org

DATA COLLECTED: Open Police Complaints collects information about incidents of police conduct from those who experience it by inviting people to upload photos, documents, videos, and other evidence to build the report, file a report with the right police investigative agency, publish it online, and get matched with appropriate legal help.

DATA USES: Our tools are designed to serve the needs of police accountability activists, investigators, attorneys, police chiefs, and others working to advance police oversight and accountability through better, more open data.

DATA SHARED: Depending on the unique circumstances, OpenPolice.org helps individuals prepare and save a professional-grade misconduct report, including a detailed narrative or story about the incidents reported, a timeline of the investigative responses to each case, a list of allegations filed for each case, uploads of pictures, videos, and other evidence collected by the victims, demographic data about the victims and police officers involved, police vehicular info, information about the complainant's feelings, and a glossary of terms for user accessibility. Victims can publish their complaint with full transparency, no names made public, or complete anonymity.

Poder in Action

LINK: poderinaction.org

DATA COLLECTED: Information about experiences of policing and safety in Phoenix, AZ

DATA SOURCE: Throughout 2018 - 2019 Poder in Action staff and community volunteers surveyed over 10,000 people, mostly in South Phoenix and Maryvale, about their experiences and perceptions of police. The survey asked residents about safety, police interactions, and perceptions of the Phoenix Police Department. The process began with collaboratively designing a survey with community members to better understand their experiences with police. After a few iterations, our final survey was bilingual in Spanish and English and featured 25 items, consisting of Likert-scale items (in which the available responses are on a scale), dichotomous (yes/ no) items, multiple choice items, and open-ended items, allowing the respondents to use their own words. Most of the items focused on people's experiences with the police, but we also included items asking for demographic data, such as age, race/ethnicity, gender, and sexuality. All were collected through face-to-face data collection, at events, businesses, or by going door-to-door. By the end



DESCRIPTIONS OF DATA COLLECTION PROJECTS

of the data collection period, we had gathered more than 10,000 surveys, which we decreased to 9,066 during the data entry process.

DATA VERIFICATION: Surveys with large quantities of missing data were removed from the data set.

DATA SHARING: A report outlines the methods and findings that must inform needed policy and budget changes to keep all Phoenix residents safe.

DATA USES: The goal of the study was to better understand the complex relationship communities of color in Phoenix have with policing in our neighborhoods.

Public Data Works

LINK: publicdata.works

Rajiv, Sukari, and the PDW team have worked together on CPDP.co and numerous investigations of Chicago police at the Invisible Institute over the past 7 years. PDW has also been working with the New Orleans Independent Police Monitor to support more proactive publication of police misconduct data and, now with the Innocence Project New Orleans, PDW is building a statewide database of police+prosecutorial misconduct and pursuing an investigation of patterns amongst wrongful convictions in Louisiana.

Public Data Works is a data+design workshop. We build tools that help make data useful to the public, using transparency to transfer power and radically rethink the dynamics of accountability. Projects include Citizens Police Data Project (CPDP), CPDP Pinboards, Network Mapping Investigation, Police Data Manager, Raheem Network, Louisiana Law Enforcement Database (LEAD).



Raheem

LINK: raheem.org

DATA COLLECTED: Raheem was launched in 2017 as an independent police reporting service and advocacy organization. Raheem’s embeddable reporting service helps people report police and connect to resources for justice and healing.

DATA COLLECTED AND SHARED INCLUDES: location and date of incident, gender and race/ethnicity, how encounter/incident made the person feel. We classify police violence into four major themes: physical abuse, economic exploitation, patterns of neglect, and psychological & verbal abuse.

DATA USES: The data and insights from these reports inform all work we do, and help Raheem and its partners push for policy towards a world without police.

SCALES

LINK: scales-okn.org

SUMMARY: The Northwestern Open Access to Court Records Initiative (NOACRI) expanded into SCALES (Systematic Content Analysis of Litigation Events) and we continue working to build a platform that will empower anyone who has a question to ask about federal court records to easily find their answer. Currently most of the workings of the federal judiciary, whether that be how judges differ in managing cases, how plaintiffs and defendants maneuver in run-of-the-mill lawsuits, or how cases involving corporations differ from those with individuals, are hidden from the public and researchers. This isn’t because data about the workings of the court is unavailable. It’s because the data is locked behind a paywall with an interface that prevents users from assessing systematic patterns about court activity. Our group of 17 professors, from Data Science, Computer Science, Social Science, Journalism, and the Law, is focused on building a community and equipping it with the tools it needs to understand and engage with the workings of the federal judiciary from the beginning to the end of every single case. To illuminate the full picture, we are linking court data to a significant amount of other public data about the litigants, judges, lawyers, and courts.

We currently have six working groups that are focused on exploring issues in Criminal Justice, Complex Litigation, Environmental Law and Policy, Intellectual Property, Journalism and Public Policy, and Judicial Administration.



Stanford (Open Policing Project)

LINK: openpolicing.stanford.edu

DATA COLLECTED: The Stanford Open Policing Project is collecting and standardizing data on vehicle and pedestrian stops from law enforcement departments across the country. We've already gathered over 200 million records from dozens of state and local police departments across the country.

DATA SHARED: Standardized stop data are available to download (by location). We provide these data in both CSV and RDS formats. In addition, shapefiles are available for select locations. The table includes a subset of common fields for each location, and indicates whether data are available for at least 70% of records in that location. Some locations have more fields. The original, unprocessed data we collected contain even more information. We do not document the raw data, but we do provide any documentation we received. Please contact us to access the original records. The Stanford Open Policing Project data are made available under the Open Data Commons Attribution License.

The Tubman Project

LINK: tubmanproject.com

SUMMARY: A public defender is an attorney appointed to represent people who cannot afford to hire one and just like Harriet Tubman, we want to create support for those that are in need through engaging with technology like artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning.

The Tubman Project is inspired by the belief that our justice system has a problem because it has been used to create an effectively slave labor force within the US, resulting in a country that has 5% of the world's population but 25% of the world's incarcerated. Moreover, most of these people have never been given a fair trial. Instead, they're scooped up by heavily armed police forces, thrown in front of a public defender for 3 minutes, told to plead guilty, and subjected to an all too common retort: that they were too poor to afford legal defense. This happens regardless of whether or not they've done anything wrong.

The mission of The Tubman Project is to ease and improve this arduous process by making legal defense available to the masses. The primary goal of Project Tubman is to create a Public defender AI; an open sourced tool that can be used by public defenders to help them defend their clients.



This tool will be designed to take some of the load off of the public defenders who are often tasked with more cases than it is humanly possible to take on. Rather than try to build this all at once, we're breaking the project into modules. These modules are proposed and developed by the crowd and will become part of the Main Project. Modules are free to open sourced and can be used even beyond the scope of Project Tubman.

Last year, the Tubman Project was featured at a legal hackathon promoted by Suffolk Law School in Boston and it led to the creation of several open source legal projects aimed at helping federal public defenders review large quantities of videos and using Google maps to allow potential criminal defendants to create digital alibis.

The Washington Post

LINK: [washingtonpost.com/graphics/investigations/police-shootings-database](https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/investigations/police-shootings-database)

DATA COLLECTED: In 2015, The Washington Post began to log every fatal shooting by an on-duty police officer in the United States. Since that time, The Post has reported more than 5,000 such shootings.

DATA SOURCE: The Post's data relies primarily on news accounts, social media postings and police reports. The Post's database is updated regularly as fatal shootings are reported and as facts emerge about individual cases. The Post seeks to make the database as comprehensive as possible.

WITNESS

LINKS: [Witness.org](https://www.witness.org) | lab.witness.org/berkeley-copwatch-database | elgrito.witness.org

WITNESS believes that “with the right tools, networks and guidance, anyone, anywhere, can use video and technology to defend human rights. Anyone can be a witness.” Their work ranges from supporting activists, lawyers and journalists to use video and technology more safely, ethically and effectively, to partnering with large tech companies to inform the development and implementation of new techniques and technological innovations for human rights defenders. Their online resource library provides resources (available in 24 languages) and instruction for documenting, editing, and circulating video for maximum exposure and impact (library.witness.org).



DESCRIPTIONS OF DATA COLLECTION PROJECTS

Since 2017, WITNESS has partnered with grassroots organizations in the United States, like Berkeley Copwatch and El Grito, to develop archives and databases of police abuse documentation that help expose patterns of misconduct, support local advocacy and legal processes and preserve important local histories. The learnings and resources created from this work has helped inform other projects across the country and around the globe.

YWEP/Street Youth Rise Up – Bad Encounters

LINK: youarepriceless.org

SUMMARY: The Bad Encounter Line (BEL) is conducted and created by the Young Women’s Empowerment Project. The BEL is for youth involved in trading sex for money, gifts, drugs, or survival needs, like food or a place to stay for the night. Some examples are exotic dancing, escorting, or street based sex trade. The sex trade can also mean that someone is forced into it. Some examples are trafficking, or being forced by parents or pimps. A bad encounter is a negative experience with institution or system, such as DCFS, health care, police, hospitals, schools, or any other institution. Violence can look like verbal, physical harm, emotional harm, or threats- or just being told that they “cant help you” because you are homeless, trading sex for money, lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender- or another reason.

DATA COLLECTED: basic demographic info of survivors of violence, names of institutions where violence occurred, descriptors like the police car number, badge number, names or description of what perpetrators of violence look like, etc., geographic info about location of violence, time of day of incident(s), description of the event, data about if the survivor fought back or defended themselves. A Google form is used to collect the data.

DATA SHARING: The information was published in a zine 4 times per year. We use parts of stories collected in the zine so that other people can learn from these experiences.

DATA USES: The Bad encounter Line is a way to warn youth about the bad encounters experienced by others. It can also be a way to tell other youth how to fight back and have successful experiences with service proviers. Talking about how you fought back is important, it shows that youth in the sex trade can and do fight back! It also gives other youth ideas on how to fight back. We are our own best resources. The Bad Encounter Line is ANONYMOUS!



APPENDIX C

PARTICIPANT + SPEAKER BIOS

BOCAR BA is an assistant professor in economics at Duke University. His research is focused on economics of crime and labor economics, and has always been interested in learning more about how the two intersect.

LAUREN BONDS is the Legal Director of the National Police Accountability Project. In her role at NPAP, she works to remove legal barriers to police accountability through legislative advocacy, impact litigation, and amicus support in cases of impact. She also provides legal and policy support to community groups working on police reform initiatives.

DR. JANAÉ BONSU (she/her) is an activist researcher committed to Black women, trans and nonbinary people through research, policy, and practice. Janaé found a passion in providing strategic research support for grassroots campaigns concerned with gendered and racialized policing. Janaé completed a Ph.D. in social work at the University of Illinois-Chicago, an M.A. from the Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy,

and Practice, and a B.A. in experimental psychology and criminal justice from the University of South Carolina. She currently works as the Senior Research Associate at the National Black Women's Justice Institute.

D. BRIAN BURGHART is a former newspaper editor and investigative reporter who started tracking police violence in 2012.

TAISHONA CARPENTER develops year-round community programming with Don't Shoot Portland, and is also taking part in many upcoming projects taking place within the intersections of art, music, social justice and archivism. Taishona would love to connect on these topics!

JULIE CICCOLINI directs NACDL's Full Disclosure Project which supports defenders across the nation with implementing and managing databases to track law enforcement misconduct and challenge police secrecy laws. In her previous role at The Legal Aid Society, Julie developed a web application to



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track police misconduct that NACDL now implements in other offices. She also designed and managed their Cop Accountability Project database used by twelve organizations across New York City to investigate NYPD misconduct. Most recently, Julie was a Research Technologist at Human Rights Watch where, using a range of technical skills, she supported remote and digital investigations into human rights abuses.

KADE CROCKFORD directs the Technology for Liberty Program at the ACLU of Massachusetts, where they work to advance core civil rights and civil liberties by ensuring the law keeps pace with technology, and by using data science to advance the ACLU's racial justice and criminal law reform goals. Kade's team built and maintains the Data for Justice website, which aims to make data actionable for activists, attorneys, lawmakers, journalists, and members of the public.

ANGÉLICA CHÁZARO is an organizer with Decriminalize Seattle and Seattle Solidarity Budget, a law professor at the University of Washington School of Law, and a member of Mijente. She is active in local and national movements to dismantle all forms of policing and imprisonment.

FAHEEMAH DOWNS is the Chief of Investigations at the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia

JEFFREY FAGAN is the Isidor and Seville Sulzbacher Professor of Law at Columbia Law School and Professor of Epidemiology at the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University. His research focuses on fairness and accuracy in the administration of criminal justice and public policy, including race and criminal procedure, policing and police reform, capital punishment, firearm violence and regulation, drug policy, and juvenile crime and punishment. He served on the Committee on Law and Justice of the National Academy of Science from 2000-2006. He was a member of the 2004 National Research Council panel that examined policing in the U.S., an expert to the USDOJ in its investigation of the Ferguson (Missouri) Police Department, the lead expert for plaintiffs in the civil rights trial on the NYPD Stop and Frisk program, and an expert for the defendants in the Chicago Stash House case. He is a Fellow of the American Society of Criminology.

DENNIS FLORES is a Nuyorican multimedia artist, and activist born and raised in Sunset Park, Brooklyn. He is the founder of El Grito, a grassroots community-based organization that advocates around issues



of discriminatory policing. One of the pioneers of the modern day cop watch movement in New York, Dennis began to organize patrols of everyday people to film and document police misconduct beginning in 1995. The use of video to not only expose police brutality, but to help exonerate those who were arrested and criminally charged, laid the foundation for the growing police accountability movement seen across the country today.

JOANNA GALASKA has a background in Economics and has been working at PDS for almost one year.

ISABEL DIAZ GARCIA is a social worker from south Phoenix, Arizona. For the last 10 years, Isabel has worked alongside low-income, immigrant families navigating the healthcare, child welfare, criminal, and education systems. In addition to direct practice social work, Isabel has engaged in community-level work addressing chronic health disparities in south Phoenix. She supported the development of a 19-acre vacant lot into a hyper-local food system, and collaborated with community health workers of color to disseminate culturally-sensitive health education and skill-building. She is currently serving as a policy researcher using research on the health impacts of policing to guide organizing and campaign planning.

TERRA GRAZIANI is a researcher and tenants' rights organizer based in Brooklyn, NY. She is a doctoral student in American Studies at NYU and a researcher with the UCLA Institute on Inequality and Democracy. She founded the Los Angeles chapter of the Anti-Eviction Mapping Project (AEMP), a digital storytelling collective documenting dispossession and resistance in solidarity with the tenant movement through research, oral history, and data work. Before this, she organized with AEMP in the San Francisco Bay Area and worked for several tenants' rights organizations including The Los Angeles Center for Community Law and Action, The Eviction Defense Collaborative and Tenants Together. Terra earned her Master's in Urban and Regional Planning at UCLA and her Bachelor's degree in Social and Cultural Geography at UC Berkeley.

FOREST GREGG is a Partner at DataMade, a Chicago web and data consultancy for civil society. DataMade is a founding partner of the Chicago Data Collaborative, a collaborative of news rooms and research organizations to collect, maintain, and analyze records from the Cook County criminal justice systems.

SHIRA HASSAN began working as an activist and with non-profits as a young person in 1992. She has focused on the



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experiences of girls, boys, transgender and queer youth involved in the sex trade and street economy. As the Director of Young Women's Empowerment Project from 2006-2011, Shira transitioned the organization to become a youth run member based social justice organizing project led by and for young women, girls and transgender youth of color with current or former experience in the sex trade and street economy.

Currently working as a consultant and coach, Shira offers program development & design, grassroots fundraising, participatory evaluation/ action research and creating sustainable, healing centered and trauma-informed environments for staff through intensive partnering with organizational leaders.

CRAIG HICKEIN is staff attorney in the special litigation division at the Public Defender Service with an eye toward litigating police misconduct issues and using data for success in individual cases.

TERI HIMEBAUGH has a law degree and a legal masters degree in civil rights law. She only handles homicide appeals including multiple wrongly convicted defendants on appeals. She is also the Executive Director of the non profit Police Transparency Project which maintains a database of Philadelphia Homicide

Detective misconduct and will expand to include other divisions and cities forces.

CHACLYN HUNT is an attorney and the director of the Invisible Institute Youth/Police Project, which interviews black youth about their experiences with Chicago police. She coordinated a Youth/Police Conference at the University of Chicago Law School last year to report on youth experience with police.

GEORGE JOSEPH is a criminal justice reporter at WNYC New York Public Radio and Gothamist.com.

BERGIS JULES is an archivist and public historian. He is interested in developing solutions that can grow capacity and achieve long term sustainability in community-based cultural memory organizations that focus on documenting the lives of marginalized and oppressed people. He is passionate about incorporating ethics and care into our practices for collecting and preserving digital content from the web and social media. Jules is a co-founder, along with Ed Summers, of Documenting the Now, a project that promotes the development of tools and best practices for the ethical collection, preservation, and use of web and social media content.

BEN LAUGHLIN is the Policy and Research Coordinator for Poder In Action, located



in Phoenix, Arizona. They were born and raised in rural Iowa and moved to Arizona in 2009. They began tracking police violence and misconduct in 2014 as a part of a larger effort to reduce contact between community members and local law enforcement. Soon after, they began analyzing city spending on the Phoenix Police Department. In 2018, they joined Poder In Action, where they've been using the skills and knowledge developed over the past 7 years to work towards the abolition of police.

DEBORAH LEVI began her career as a public defender with the Salt Lake Legal Defenders in 2008. In 2012, she joined the Maryland Office of the Public Defender, and has been with the Baltimore City Felony Trial division since 2013. She became the Director of Special Litigation in 2017, where she aggressively litigates access to internal affairs files and specializes her practice in exposing police misconduct and curing discovery abuses. In 2013, she successfully challenged the Baltimore Police Department's practice of tracking a cellphone without a warrant, which led to one of the first appellate reported opinion on the issue in *State v. Andrews*. She received her law degree from the University of Utah and is a graduate of the National Criminal Defense College in Macon, Georgia. She has presented nationally on cellphone

tracking and police misconduct for NACDL, NORML, Forensics College, and state public defender offices. Ms. Levi is also the 2018 recipient of the American Bar Association's Charles H. Dorsey award, recognizing exceptional work by a public defender or legal aid worker.

RODRIGO HENG-LEHTINEN is the Executive Director of the National Center for Transgender Equality. NCTE is dedicated to changing policy to save transgender lives. Rodrigo is a transgender policy, advocacy, and messaging expert. As an openly transgender man, his wide-ranging experience in the LGBTQ movement has covered field organizing, leadership development, fundraising, and media advocacy. In past roles, he trained thousands of volunteers to canvass and phone bank on groundbreaking nondiscrimination and marriage equality campaigns, and organized leadership development programs in transgender communities and LGBTQ communities of color, honing new strategies for social change.

DARRELL MALONE JR. is a fintech engineer and technology activist from Houston, Texas. In 2017, Darrell founded the Tubman Project; an effort to develop advanced technology for public defenders. He organized a series of hackathon and worked to inspire



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others to support various initiatives. The involved projects and challenges ranged from leveraging computer vision in paralegal work to providing secure alibis using a client's digital footprint. In the process, joined a community of civic hackers and activists. This year Darrell is launching the National Police Data Collaborative, an organization devoted to monitoring the conduct of law enforcement officers nationwide. Through open-source technology, shared data standards, and a decentralized method of distribution, he hopes the NPDC will be able to unite police accountability activists into a singular force for transparency and justice.

FREDDY MARTINEZ is director of Lucy Parsons Labs. His work focuses on police accountability and transparency, and digital rights for marginalized communities and activists.

MICHAEL MELLON has been a public defender for 10 years. In 2016, he founded the Police Accountability Unit at Defender Association of Philadelphia. The unit consists of two attorneys, a policy analyst, and two data analysts. They focus on cases with systemic police misconduct issues, collect police misconduct information, and train their attorneys on utilizing police misconduct information in court.

KAVYA NAINI has been a staff attorney with Public Defender Services for the last 3 years.

MARI NARVÁEZ is founder and Executive Director of Kilómetro Cero, a non-profit organization that aspires to a Puerto Rico in which the State protects human life, freedoms and dignity in the pursuit of public safety, for a more democratic and just society. The organization develops projects that promote citizen power in the areas of state use of force, repression of dissent and gender violence. She was recently a fellow at the Annenberg Innovation Lab of the University of Southern California in 2019-2020 and is currently a Justice Fellow at the Open Society Foundations (2020-2022). Mari has a master's degree in Investigative Journalism and Latin American Studies as well as doctoral courses in History and Gender Studies. She is also a writer and columnist and has co-authored the books 'No pasa nada' (Callejón, 2020); Hablan sobre Juan (Fundación JMB, 2018); Del desorden habitual de las cosas (Capicúa, 2015); Fuera del quicio (Editorial Santillana, 2008); and Palabras en libertad: entrevistas a los ex prisioneros políticos puertorriqueños (Editorial Claridad, 2000).

YVONNE NG is the Archives Program Manager at WITNESS, where she trains and supports partners on collecting,



managing, and preserving video documentation for human rights advocacy and evidence. She also develops training resources related to archiving and preservation.

ADAM PAH is a Clinical Assistant Professor at the Kellogg School of Management and Organizations at Northwestern University. He received his BS from Arizona State University, PhD from Northwestern University, and has worked industrially as a Data Scientist. His primary research focuses on building language models to understand how litigation proceeds, disambiguating entities, and quantifying the extent that legal outcomes vary within and between court districts. He is also interested in understanding social phenomena that evolve over time and quantifying individual and group decision-making and performance.

ADITYA PARAMESWARAN is an Associate Professor at UC Berkeley (<https://people.eecs.berkeley.edu/~adityagp/>). His research is on developing usable tools for data work, with a special emphasis on spreadsheets and data visualization. He has been recently collaborating with the NACDL's Full Disclosure Project (along with Prof. Sarah Chasins) as well as the California Reporting Project as part of CLEAN (Community Law Enforcement

Accountability Network) on the myriad data-related challenges for police misconduct data.

EMMA PEREZ is currently a second-year law student at Yale Law School. She graduated from the University of Chicago with a degree in Comparative Race and Ethnic Studies and was at the Invisible Institute, a journalism non-profit based in the South Side of Chicago, from 2017-2020 working on the youth/police project and Invisible Institute's FOIA practice. Emma has spent her time in law school representing incarcerated folks and those facing incarceration at public defenders' offices.

CHERYL PHILLIPS teaches journalism at Stanford University. She is the director of Big Local News, a data-sharing collaborative effort for journalists. Big Local News is a founding member of the Community Law Enforcement Accountability Network and a part of the related California Reporting Project, both efforts to collect, process and share information on police misconduct. She also is co-founder of the Stanford Open Policing Project, a cross-departmental effort to collect police interaction data and evaluate racial disparities and is the director of the Stanford Computational Policy Lab.

Previously, Phillips worked at *The Seattle Times* for 12 years in a variety of roles



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with the investigations team and across the newsroom. In 2014, she was involved in coverage of a landslide that killed 43 people, which received a Pulitzer Prize for breaking news. In 2009, she was the lone editor in the newsroom when four police officers were shot at a coffee shop and was integrally involved in the subsequent coverage, which received a Pulitzer Prize for breaking news. She has twice been on teams that were Pulitzer finalists.

Phillips has worked at *USA Today* and at newspapers in Michigan, Montana and Texas. She served for 10 years on the board of Investigative Reporters and Editors and is a former board president.

TWITTER: [@ccephillips](https://twitter.com/ccephillips)

RACHEL PICKENS is the Executive Director of the National Police Accountability Project. In this role, she continues to expand programming and membership while identifying new ways NPAP can lead the discussion of police accountability. She joined the organization in 2019.

ANDREA PRITCHETT is a co-founder and 32 year member of Berkeley Copwatch and a US History teacher. I established Copwatch for Credit at UC Berkeley and helped to develop the People's Database software. Former Police Review Commissioner and currently on Mental

Health Commission. Currently serving on Special Care Unit (SCU) Task Force to establish mental health crisis alternative to police.

ISRA RAHMAN is a freelance journalist working with the Invisible Institute on a police misconduct database for the Champaign-Urbana community. She is also a reporting fellow at City Bureau working on a project about city investment and community engagement on the south and west side of Chicago.

BERNARD F. REILLY is president emeritus of the Center for Research Libraries (CRL). At CRL Reilly led several major studies and projects focused on the preservation of digital evidence and documentation, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the National Science Foundation, Library of Congress Office of Strategic Initiatives, and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. Prior to his time at CRL Reilly was Director of Research and Access at the Chicago History Museum (1997-2001) with responsibility for library and archives departments, administering and developing the Museum's holdings of architecture, print and manuscript, broadcast, and pictorial collections. From 1987 to 1997 Reilly headed the Curatorial Section of the Prints and Photographs Division of the Library of Congress, where



he directed curatorial and policy support for the Library's visual collections and the early development of the National Digital Library.

PETER MEYER REIMER is a data analyst who has worked in public health and legal defense for the last 4 years, after having studied environmental social sciences at the University of Chicago. Peter is a fervent abolitionist and is excited to hold law enforcement accountable.

MARGARET RINGLER is NACDL's Project Coordinator for the Full Disclosure Project. She is responsible for engaging, preparing, and supporting defense organizations in setting up databases to track police misconduct as well as creating a resource library and building collaborations with universities. She joined NACDL in 2020 after building grassroots organizing power at Community Change, advancing campaigns to end money bail at the Pretrial Justice Institute, and investigating at the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia.

BARRY SCHECK began his legal career as a Legal Aid lawyer in the Bronx and joined the Cardozo faculty in 1978 where he oversaw the creation of clinical programs for 20 years including the Innocence Project, which has become

an independent non-profit affiliated with Cardozo and the headquarters to an Innocence Network of 63 innocence organizations in the US and 13 abroad. He was a President of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers and helped create the National Forensic Science College, a joint venture between Cardozo, the Federal Defender Service, and the NACDL that focuses on complex forensic evidence including the use of databases in the criminal legal system.

TARAK SHAH is a data scientist at the Human Rights Data Analysis Group. He helps partner groups in the U.S to organize and extract information from collections of documents acquired through lawsuits, in order to identify evidence of impunity and human rights abuses.

MARY SHI is a PhD candidate in Sociology at UC Berkeley and has been working with the Anti-Eviction Mapping Project (AEMP) since 2015. Mary's work focuses on the intersection of society and space and questions about the power dynamics of knowledge. Through AEMP, Mary explores these themes in the context of San Francisco Bay Area's transformation as a knowledge economy hub, and via direct engagement with Bay Area housing struggles as long term residents make claims to space through data, stories, and political action.



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RAJIV SINCLAIR co-founded Public Data Works (PDW) with Sukari Stone as a workshop focused on building tools that help make data useful to the public, using transparency to transfer power. In 2014, together with Chaclyn Hunt and Jamie Kalven, Rajiv co-founded the Invisible Institute, where he first worked with Sukari and the rest of the PDW team building CPDP.co, as well as numerous investigations of the Chicago Police Dept over the past 7 years. PDW has also been working with the New Orleans Independent Police Monitor to support more proactive publication of police misconduct data and, now with the Innocence Project New Orleans, PDW is building a statewide database of police+prosecutorial misconduct and pursuing an investigation of patterns amongst wrongful convictions in Louisiana (in collaboration with HRDAG). Rajiv also helped organize the 2018 Data & Policing Convening at the Experimental Station in Chicago.

SAM SINYANGWE is a data scientist and policy analyst working to end police violence in America.

STEVE SILVERMAN is the executive director of Flex Your Rights (Flex), an educational nonprofit he founded in 2002 to provide constitutional literacy training to help people prepare for

challenging police encounters. In this role, he created a series of popular know-your-rights videos – including 10 Rules for Dealing with Police – reaching 47 million views through the organization’s YouTube channel. His work is regularly screened in hundreds of college and high school classrooms and embraced by numerous professional and civic groups – including police instructors, civil rights attorneys, racial justice organizations, and concerned parents.

MICHAEL SISITZKY is senior policy counsel with the New York Civil Liberties Union, where he leads the organization’s legislative and policy campaigns on police accountability. In that capacity, he has worked on state and local efforts to make records of police misconduct publicly available, mandate disclosure of police use of surveillance technologies, and enhance the effectiveness of independent oversight agencies. He also represents the NYCLU on the leadership of Communities United for Police Reform and is an adjunct professor at New York Law School, where he teaches a clinic on legislative advocacy.

SYLVIA SMITH is a Supervising Attorney with PDS in the Trial Division.



GABRIEL SOLIS is the Executive Director of the Texas After Violence Project. Previously he worked as a post-conviction mitigation specialist for the Office of Capital and Forensic Writs, criminal justice research associate at the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law, and coordinator of the Guantánamo Bay Oral History Project at Columbia University. Gabriel's writings have appeared in the Texas Observer, Oxford American, Scalawag, Cultural Dynamics: Insurgent Scholarship on Culture, Politics, and Power, and Kula: Knowledge Creation, Dissemination, and Preservation Studies. Gabriel is the recipient of the 2018 Pushcart Prize for Nonfiction.

BREE SPENCER serves as the Manager of the Policing Program at The Leadership Conference where she supports efforts to increase police accountability and transform the criminal-legal system in the United States. Before joining The Leadership Conference, Bree was the Director of Evaluation and Technical Assistance at Safe & Sound, where she created and managed a technical assistance program for community-engaged public safety solutions; she also served as the Director of Community Programs and Neighborhood Safety Coordinator at Safe & Sound. Bree is a lecturer at University of Wisconsin-

Milwaukee, where she teaches program evaluation to first year Masters students. Bree has her MPA from the Maxwell School at Syracuse University.

MATT SPINA has been working in daily newspaper journalism for about 40 years, serving as a reporter and editor. He joined The Buffalo News, upstate New York's largest newspaper, in 2004. In recent years he has focused on criminal justice issues and has written a number of articles about the power, and sometimes the abuse of power, that police wield in society.

DAN STAPLES is co-founder and Lead Technologist at Open Justice Baltimore and the Director of IT & Cybersecurity at the National Network of Abortion Funds. His background is in software development and cybersecurity, where he has worked in both private industry and the non-profit world.

SAM STECKLOW is a journalist with the Invisible Institute focusing on police and public accountability; have also worked recently with the Salt Lake Tribune and PBS Frontline on reporting on police shootings in Utah.

SEMA TAHERI is the Director of Research & Strategic Initiatives at Measures for Justice. She develops MFJ's data collection protocol, co-manages the



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development and implementation of a rigorous methodology for data management, and directs the operations of the Strategic Initiatives team. She also collaborates closely with MFJ's leadership to advance the organization's research agenda. Sema has worked closely with practitioners across the system on projects related to data standards, performance measure development, and evaluation. Her research has focused on the gap between research and practice and the development of partnerships to guide data-led policy and programming within criminal justice agencies.

ZAY THOMPSON has been involved in Public Defense work over 20 years. Zay has been with the KS Federal Public Defender since 2009 and also worked for both a state public defender agency and a private law firm. Zay is interested in finding new ways to reveal police misconduct and use that information in defense of clients who live in communities that bear the brunt of police misconduct.

TRINA REYNOLDS-TYLER, MPP'20, is director of data with the Invisible Institute, a journalism production company on the South Side of Chicago that works to enhance the capacity of citizens to hold public institutions accountable. She is also active as a community organizer in Chicago.

While at Harris Public Policy, Reynolds-Tyler worked as a data science researcher with TM Productions, a multimedia production team that makes political and legal information accessible to Black and Brown communities in Chicago. Throughout her time at Harris, she also continued her data analysis work with the Invisible Institute. Reynolds-Tyler spent the summer of 2019 as a human rights intern with the Human Rights Data Analysis Group, supporting projects such as the modeling of the locations of hidden graves in Mexico, the enumeration of people who died in the Sri Lanka civil war, and an estimation model of deaths to aid in El Salvador war crime trials. Reynolds-Tyler graduated from Colorado College with a degree in Hispanic studies and a minor in feminist and gender studies, spending a semester abroad in Salamanca, Spain. Upon graduation, she was awarded the Outstanding Student Leader Award, granted to one student in the college each year, for her work mentoring incoming students of color.

LISA PICKOFF-WHITE is an award winning data journalist working with the California Reporting Project and CLEAN. She leads the work to build and manage a data entry system for use of force and misconduct data in California obtained through record requests.



JENNVINE WONG is an attorney with the Cop Accountability Project (CAP) with the Special Litigation Unit at the Legal Aid Society. CAP engages in advocacy and impact litigation in various challenges related to police accountability for misconduct. Prior to joining CAP, Jennvine was a legal fellow with the Sex Workers Project at the Urban Justice Center advocating for survivors of human trafficking and sex workers rights. She later joined the Legal Aid Society as a trial attorney with the Parole Revocation Defense Unit and Manhattan Criminal Defense office. Jennvine received her JD from Brooklyn Law School and B.A. from New York University. She is admitted to practice in the State of New York, Southern District of New York, State of New Jersey and District of New Jersey.

ED VOGEL is a researcher and organizer with Lucy Parsons Labs and the Peoples Archive & Research Collective.

JACKIE ZAMMUTO leads WITNESS' programmatic work in the United States, focusing on the use of video for advocacy and evidentiary purposes in the thematic areas of police accountability, decarceration, immigrant rights, and Indigenous rights. Jackie also helps coordinate the development and distribution of WITNESS' training resources and online platforms.

She has over eight years of experience training and collaborating with grassroots activists, legal experts, educators and organizers on issues related to forced evictions, militarized policing, gender-based violence, climate justice, and more.



APPENDIX D

DATA JUSTICE CHECKLIST

Before you begin – get clear on your intentions:

- Why do you want to demand, collect, organize, analyze or publicize data on policing?
 - What purpose do you think the information will serve?
- What do you hope people will do with the information? Get concrete – not just “take action” – what specific actions do you want them to take? (i.e. decrease police budgets and build non-police responses to crises, decriminalize poverty-related offenses, reduce police contact and power, pass and enforce new laws and policies – and if so, what material impacts do you expect the laws and policies to have on everyday policing practices?)
- What are your main and secondary priorities and goals in relation to this work? (i.e. recognition, grants, awards, etc. versus building a foundation for movement work)
- Who do you want to be in this space?
- How will you benefit from increased access to data on policing?
- How do you want people directly impacted by the violence of policing to benefit from increased access to data on policing? How do you know what will benefit them?
 - How are you connected to the people in your community who experience the violence of policing every day? Are you actively in regular conversation and community organizing efforts with them? How do you plan to be accountable to them?



→ How are you connected to people who directly represent people who are targeted by police in criminal and civil matters? How are you consulting them as part of this project?

How do you plan to share the information you gather/analyze/call for?

→ How might the ways in which you share the information be harmful?

What would it look like if everything went well? What would it look like if everything went wrong?

Who will the end result impact, support and connect to?

What part of the conversation does your project speak to?

Protect the privacy and security of people who experience police violence, and prioritize informed consent or informed refusal for data collection and sharing.

Get clear on who else is doing the work:

If your work enters this area, will it compete for resources from organizations that have already been in this space for some time?

What organizations are engaged with policing issues in your community? Are they made up of or directly accountable to the people targeted by police? How?

What kinds of information are the organizations already working on policing issues gathering? Calling for? Why?

What kinds of information, data, and narratives do they think are helpful? Harmful?

Is collaboration with existing organizations possible?



DATA JUSTICE CHECKLIST

Get clear on what you are offering:

- What resources do you/your organization/university/collaborators have to contribute? (how much time, dollars, labor, equipment, etc)
- What are the driving forces making those resources available for this project? Is it individual academic achievement? Professional reputation? Seeking research grants? Collaboration with the government?
- What resources are already being spent in this area by others?

Get clear on partnership and accountability:

- Who could you partner with (organizations OR individuals)?
- What values and practices reflecting those values are you willing to commit to in partnership?
- What types of agreements and expectations would you want to set with your partners?
- What kinds of structures are you willing to create to engage partners and people directly impacted by policing through each stage of the project? How do they create pathways for you to remain and be held accountable to them?
- How will you compensate partners and participants for their time?
- How will you support and meet the material needs of people whose information/data is involved in the project?
- How do you decide when to agree to take meetings with police, politicians or policy makers, send information, attend press conferences, and take positions on reform?
- Who are the spokespeople?
- How are people credited for their participation?



Get clear on your impact:

- Consider how your work has been received by other actors in this area – what intentions have been met or not met?
- What role have you played in relationships with others?
- How has your work materially changed everyday policing?

