Organizational Summary:


Anti-surveillance advocacy has largely targeted federal agencies since Edward Snowden’s revelations about U.S. data-collection, frequently ignoring the alarming growth in local and state surveillance. Sadly, while things are bleak at the federal level, they are far worse here in New York State. The NYPD and other police departments purchase the same cutting-edge surveillance tools deployed by the federal government, with a small fraction of the oversight. These systems potentially provide large volumes of information to federal agencies, endangering immigrant New Yorkers, and violating the promise that New York will be a “sanctuary city.”

These tools also harm communities of color, irrespective of immigration status. For years, Muslim New Yorkers have endured unjust and unconstitutional NYPD surveillance. Specifically, the NYPD’s Intelligence Division engaged in extensive warrantless, suspicionless surveillance of Muslim-majority neighborhoods and Muslim families. Similarly, the NYPD’s gang database includes more than 17,000 New Yorkers, overwhelmingly New Yorkers of color, while systematically omitting white supremacist and right-wing nationalist organizations.

S.T.O.P. is headed by Albert Fox Cahn, a public interest lawyer and interfaith advocate most recently of CAIR NY. Mr. Cahn—a graduate of Harvard Law School and former Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP associate—helped to lead CAIR-NY beginning in 2016, at a moment when Muslim New Yorkers faced historic challenges from the Trump administration and surges in hate crimes. Mr. Cahn oversees policy coalitions, develops strategic messaging, has written numerous op-eds, and has appeared in hundreds of interviews with international media outlets.

S.T.O.P.’s Resident Technologist Liz O’Sullivan has spent ten years in tech, most recently as the head of image annotations for the computer vision startup, Clarifai. She oversaw customer delivery, support, sales, and solutions architecture at a variety of firms. Her passion for ethics springs from her Philosophy education at UNC-Chapel Hill.

S.T.O.P. is overseen by a Board of Directors and Community Advisory Board (“CAB”). The CAB includes advocates, activists, attorneys, and technologists from communities historically targeted by warrantless surveillance.

S.T.O.P.’s flagship litigation is a putative federal class action against New York City for forcing Muslim women to remove the hijab. Initial legislative priorities include New York City’s passage of the Public Oversight of Surveillance Technology Act and New York State’s passage of the Electronic Communications Privacy Act.

Contact: Executive Director Albert Fox Cahn, Esq. info@stopspying.org.
2019 Op-Eds and Columns

- 10/10/2019 Gotham Gazette - Surveillance and the City: Facing Up to Facial Recognition
- 10/7/2019 BoingBoing - Identity theft's newest target: your face
- 10/2/2019 Gotham Gazette - Surveillance and the City: IDNYC's Not-So-Smart Future
- 10/1/2019 The Daily Beast - Smart Cities Are Creating a Mass Surveillance Nightmare
- 9/16/2019 The Daily Beast - Phone Tracking Data Is Notoriously Unreliable. So Why Are We Still Using It in Court?
- 9/11/2019 NY Daily News - The irony behind de Blasio’s proposed robot tax
- 8/13/2019 The Daily Beast - Manhattan DA Made Google Give Up Information on Everyone in Area as They Hunted for Antifa
- 8/8/2019 NY Times - How Bodycams Distort Real Life
- 8/2/2019 BoingBoing - You have the right to remain encrypted
- 7/26/2019 NY Daily News - Make big tech, and cops, stop tracking us surreptitiously
- 7/22/2019 Medium - Prison Time Is the Answer to Tech’s Privacy Crisis
- 7/7/2019 NBC - Surveillance by sanctuary cities is helping ICE track undocumented immigrants.
- 7/2/2019 NBC - The killer robots are coming. Here's our best shot at stopping them.
- 6/18/2019 Gotham Gazette - Smells Like Teen Surveillance
- 4/17/2019 NY Daily News - Face it: Recognition technology isn’t close to ready for prime-time
- 4/16/2019 Gotham Gazette - Take Down Cuomo’s Creeping Cameras
- 3/21/2019 Gotham Gazette - De Blasio Backs NYPD Harassment of Muslim New Yorkers
- 3/12/2019 BoingBoing: Rise of the Surveillance Scooters?
- 3/4/2019 Kings County Politics: Court Right To Say NYPD Can’t Police Its Own Sexual Misconduct
- 2/11/2019 BoingBoing: New York City’s new rideshare regs put Big Brother in backseat, give GPS tracking a whole new meaning
- 1/22/2019 Slate: The NYPD’s new fleet of drones requires stronger privacy regulations.

2019 Research

- 10/8/2019 New York City’s Food Cart Surveillance
- 10/1/2019 OMNY Surveillance Oh My Report
- 9/26/2019 Domain Awareness System
- 9/21/2019 Civilian Complaint Review Board
- 7/23/2019 The NYPD's Gang Database: A New Age of Stop and Frisk
- 7/5/2019 NYPD Bias
- 7/5/2019 The Handschu agreement & NYPD Surveillance
- 7/5/2019 Automated License Plate Readers & Law Enforcement

2019 Government submissions and sign-on letters

- 10/7/2019 Public Testimony on Regulation of Biometric Surveillance Systems, Watch The Video.
- 10/2/2019 Public Testimony on Intro 1706 - Prohibiting an IDNYC Payment Chip.
- 7/23/2019 The NYPD's Gang Database: A New Age of Stop and Frisk
- 7/5/2019 NYPD Bias
- 7/5/2019 The Handschu agreement & NYPD Surveillance
- 7/5/2019 Automated License Plate Readers & Law Enforcement
- 9/12/2019 Letter to Mayor de Blasio on ID NYC privacy.
• 6/27/2019 City Council Testimony re NYPD Gang Database and “perp-walks” Watch The Video.


• 6/14/2019 Letter In Opposition to Residential Facial Recognition in Atlantic Plaza Towers.


• 5/30/2018 Testimony Before the NYC Automated Decision Systems Task Force. - Watch The Video (beginning 1:47).


• 5/1/2019 Coalition Letter To Department Of Homeland Security re Surveillance.

2019 Quotes and Profiles

• 10/8/2019 GovTech - NY City Council Considers New Rules for Facial Recognition

• 10/8/2019 City & State - New York City Council contemplates banning biometric tech

• 10/7/2019 N.Y. Daily News - Bashing Big Brother: NY City Council tries to rein in facial recognition tech

• 10/6/2019 Law360 - As Biometric Screening Spreads, The Law Isn't Keeping Up

• 10/3/2019 Curbed - A new report outlines privacy risks for the MTA's contactless payment system

• 10/2/2019 City & State - Privacy group raises OMNY security concerns

• 9/26/2019 C/Net - Amazon’s plan for facial recognition laws faces skeptics

• 9/24/2019 Tech News World - Art Project Uncovers Bias in AI Training Models

• 9/21/2019 Buzzfeed - It's Scarily Easy To Track Someone Around A City Via Their Instagram Stories


• 9/14/2019 Essex News Daily - Community discusses pros and cons of police’s MOU with Ring.

• 9/3/2019 The Peter Collins Show - In-Depth Interview: Surveillance Critic Albert Fox Cahn Sounds Alarm on ‘Reverse Search Warrants.

• 8/25/2019 AP - US tech industry becomes hotbed for employee activism

• 8/22/2019 WNYC - S.T.O.P. condemns expansion of automated license plate readers.

• 8/13/2019 Reason - If You’re Near the Scene of a Crime, Authorities Can Demand That Google Hand Over Your Data