

MILITARIZED POLICING AND RESISTANCE IN THE SOCIAL FACTORY:
THE BATTLE FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY IN THE SILICON VALLEY

by

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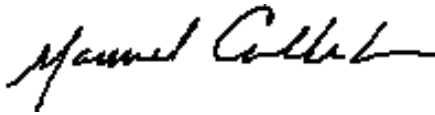
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1. Analytics of Violence
2. Border War Convergence



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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the struggles around community safety and the circulation of these struggles as part of a larger battle for autonomy by demilitarizing our communities and establishing radical democratic spaces of community renewal. Community safety challenges the epistemological foundations on which the policing power rests by making observable the multi-faceted resistances to state practices and discursive formations of “security” that support capital accumulation, expropriation, and a variety of interconnected enclosures. This includes the articulation of racial regimes through violence as a strategy of composition and decomposition aimed at disaggregating working class power that advances what W.E.B. Dubois theorizes as the “white working class bargain.”¹ By focusing on the “social factory” this dissertation will make visible the impact of a low intensity war directed at women, the household, and the community. In addition, this work will chronicle policing strategies and practices in the current conjuncture as a low intensity war that draws on earlier repressive and disciplinary forms of an ongoing colonial occupation working in conjunction

¹ Here I draw on Callahan’s use of Du Bois, and in particular Du Bois’ essay from 1915,

with forms of biopower. Reading a proliferation of local struggles and self-organized activities through the state and capital's "prose of counter insurgency" allows for a research approach that takes seriously the community and the activities of women and families targeted by violence as a key site of struggle. Using a convivial research method that approaches these spaces as critical sites for the co-generation of knowledge, this work engages a series of interconnected struggles across the San Francisco Bay Area. These are struggles that seek to demilitarize targeted micro-regions and that at the same time exhibit a strategic set of investments organized around a "politics of care." As grassroots oppositions, they challenge the racialized systems of violence organized through the prison industrial complex and its growing reliance on militarized policing. I argue that the convivial space of community regeneration survives against the onslaught of America's investment in "democratic despotism" by reclaiming the social relations vital to community regeneration in order to provoke new understandings of resistance, autonomy and movement building both against and beyond the state.

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This work would not have been possible without the unwavering presence of my family, comrades, and my committee, and alongside the many communities of vibrant insurgency and ongoing struggles across the Bay Area and beyond.

DEDICATION

To my family:

Ann Forester McGee and Harry K. Sopp,
Albertine Rancourt and William John Paradise,
Donne Lynn “Zip” Sopp and Beren Harrington,
Billie Kay Sopp and Garry Paradise,
and
Farah Paradise,

caretakers of the collective and of the wild roots.

And to the families whose loved ones have been taken,
bound through struggle.

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PREFACE: COLLECTIVE ETHNOGRAPHY AND CONVIVIAL RESEARCH

This work emerges from a community of struggle. It reflects the ongoing, militant, and interconnected efforts of families, comrades, neighborhoods, and those whose lives are entwined around common bonds to confront the violent imposition of capital. It unfolds across the greater San Francisco Bay Area in the spaces of parks, plazas, and streets; living rooms and court rooms; on the steps of city halls and the sidewalks in front of police stations; in community rooms, school auditoriums, theaters and churches; funeral homes and prisons; fields and hillsides; and in kitchens, *tacquerias*, and bars. These are common spaces, occupied spaces, contested spaces, lived spaces—spaces where information, memories, stories, and questions are circulated, exchanged, and collectively reformulated, where relations are forged, sustained, renegotiated, and strengthened, and where the collective work of regenerating community is continuously taking place.²

Organized around the concept of “community safety” as a way of conceiving a collective confrontation against increasing militarization and securitization and the management of lives and populations in the present, this

² For the purposes of this study, “across the San Francisco Bay Area” or “the Bay Area” refers generally to the South Bay, Peninsula, North Bay (San Francisco), and the East Bay. The larger Bay Area encompasses other outlier zones, explored here as peripheries that exist in relation to the more central urban zones of San Jose and Silicon Valley, San Francisco and Oakland. These include Stockton, Vallejo, Santa Rosa, Salinas, Fresno and other surrounding areas.

work takes as its premise that all struggles contain strands of struggles for autonomy.³ While these struggles are neither homogenous or monolithic, nor is it possible to narrate them in a unified or complete way, together they reflect a desire to live dignified lives without violence and to retain control of the conditions of our existence. This includes the capacity to protect and care for each other and our collective future in contexts of mutual aid. These are vibrant struggles, comprised of a range of creative rebellions and a vast imagination in movement.

Collective Ethnography

This work, as a collective ethnography, documents a few moments in a much broader struggle in movement across numerous spaces in the present. By focusing on community safety as an autonomous initiative underway in a number of interconnected spaces and articulated in ongoing direct actions, as a collective ethnography, it does not claim a particular reading so much as provide a way of seeing, theorizing, and mobilizing, in short, a way of engaging, that can support a more complete disengagement from capital, stimulating possibilities for new ways of being together in the present. In this way, both the struggles and the ethnography itself can be understood as prefigurative. They are generated through the relations that give form and meaning to a community of struggle. The narratives, details, insights, and reflections emerge from the many spaces of convergence and encounter where we gather to understand the conditions that

³ “Community safety” as a strategic concept, a convivial tool, and an interconnected set of autonomous projects will be elaborated more fully over the course of this dissertation, including its genealogy in the context of an urban Zapatismo.

produce us, and determine collectively how to shape those conditions moving forward. Thus, the knowledges engendered through this shared work and process become an ethnographic account, collectively produced, of a community of struggle. As an account, it attests to the presence—amorphous, shifting, and infinitely nascent—of a collective subject. And while a document collectively produced through struggle can serve a critical space of reflection and as a community archive, it is not only an ethnographic account, but is a practice and process of shared research and learning. It engages the commons, including knowledge commons. These commons support the ongoing formation of a community of struggle as a collective subject, aware of itself and the possibilities it contains for harboring and generating different worlds. This process itself is one of de-subjectification and decolonization.

As a practice and a process, collective ethnography serves to elucidate ways that knowledge is produced, shared, and remembered collectively. An important aspect of this is refusing the valorization of capital in relation to truth and justice, as well as reimagining how we understand political actors and political processes, and the value that we place on fostering and listening to epistemologies from below—ways of knowing that reflect and give shape to ways of being; story-telling that is heuristic, relational, communal, ancestral, pedagogical, and so on; images and language that emerge from within communities of struggle, and so on. As a practice and process, collective ethnography reflects a commitment to a shared listening. It also reflects an archive of statements that circulate and bind together a particular community or

group of people. It points to a series of strategies that a community develops to make itself recognizable to itself, to establish historical continuity as a practice of collective learning, to expose social antagonisms, and to formulate collective propositions. As a text, collective ethnography is comprised of the many discourses, histories, events, and ongoing inquiries that give shape to a particular community or collective of people. Most importantly, collective ethnography bears within it the memory of ethnography's complicity with an ongoing colonial project—its regimes of representation, strategies of accumulation, forms of governance, and policies and practices of enclosure, both social and material. The crisis of representation within ethnography provoked by anti-colonial and feminist struggles reflects a recognition of the role of ethnography and anthropology in advancing the colonial project, materially and as epistemic violence.

In this way, an effort to collectively engage in an ethnographic process participates in a decolonial imaginary. Rather than simply celebrating a multi-vocal or multi-perspectival account, a collective ethnography imposes a fracture on singular authority and hierarchical ways of knowing that serve a dominant epistemology, condoning and justifying violence and exclusion. It recognizes the presence and celebrates the possibility of multiple epistemologies. A collective ethnography, as it is claimed here, is never only the “text” that is produced. It points to a research approach that is organized around collective ways of knowing, and knowing through action. This particular work advances a series of claims about the role of research, learning, and archiving in relation to a community of struggle.

Collective ethnography in this approach takes as its premise that communities are already self-active and organized around their own safety, learning, and regeneration. Thus collective ethnography emerges from a community of struggle already constituted to some degree as a collective subject actively engaging the conditions of its own existence, namely, the struggle against, within and beyond capital.⁴ This premise provides a way of recognizing and listening to the ways of knowing and sharing information that are critical to the life of the community, and acknowledges systemic ways of documenting and analyzing information. This information circulates through various texts and forms—as reports and maps, songs and storytelling, images and fragments, “artifacts” and things, movements and gestures, *chisme* and warnings—to build a rich archive of collectively produced knowledge relevant to a community’s survival.⁵

This collective ethnography of community safety emerges first and foremost from the struggles of families, and in particular women, around issues of reproduction, both in the home and in the larger spaces of community as collective reproduction. It engages a convivial research approach developed by Manuel Callahan and through the work of the Center for Convivial Research and Autonomy (CCRA) in San Jose and through a research strategy that engages a series of open research spaces, including spaces of direct action, across the greater

⁴ Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*.

⁵ *Chisme* is translated variously from the Spanish as “gossip” or “rumor” but often has an explicitly strategic function in surfacing and circulating information that is critical to individual, collective, and/or community interests.

San Francisco Bay Area.⁶ As will be elaborated over the course of the dissertation, a “convivial research approach” is based on four central commitments: it refuses to objectify communities of struggle; it is not limited to “giving back” to the community as in the case of participatory action research but rather involves the community at every step of the process; it insists on the co-generation of knowledge to advance community interests; and it reflects an agreement to organize as a community through horizontal spaces of learning, reflection, and direct action.⁷

Through this research approach, I engaged a community, in particular a network of women within a particular community (i.e. the Bay Area), and their pursuit of community safety through interconnected movement spaces. Specifically, this means a focus on the struggles of women and families as they confront the violences of the policing-prison complex and regenerate their communities. From 2010–2015, I engaged several “networked sites” of community struggle across the Bay Area as “temporary autonomous zones of

⁶ The Center for Convivial Research and Autonomy (CCRA) facilitates a number of workshops (*talleres*) and projects, including the Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning (CRIL) *taller*, a web infrastructure containing a range of open source readings, study guides, research tools, and a modular pedagogical strategy for conducting grassroots investigations and community-based research projects. Both CCRA and Uni Tierra Califas claim a commitment to advancing an urban Zapatismo and both projects will be elaborated more fully over the course of this work. For a description of CCRA, see Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Center for Convivial Research and Autonomy;” para. 1. For a cartography of CCRA’s work that includes the project of Uni Tierra Califas, see Center for Convivial Research and Autonomy, “CCRA.” See also Center for Convivial Research and Autonomy, “About Us.”

⁷ For an introduction to the CRIL *taller*, see Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning.”

knowledge production.”⁸ These interconnected sites served as spaces where diverse community safety and care projects are shared and reflected on as a community, and where a collective understanding and analysis of struggles and efforts against militarization, mass incarceration, deportations and detentions and surveillance continues to develop.

The networked sites of the ethnography served as “spaces of encounter” to co-generate information, arrive at a shared analysis, collectively narrate the community’s own struggles, and support a series of actions.⁹ When successful, this strategy made possible moments in a collective ethnography that reimagines more traditional research strategies that tend to start with academically defined “problems” or trace the already defined projects of specific organizations. The project’s design was organized around “spaces of encounter” and moments of convergence where knowledge is shared across groups and generated in specific contexts of struggle. Thus, while this work is closely aligned with several local social justice organizations, the collective ethnography is based primarily on a series of gatherings, workshops, trainings, performances, and conversations across

⁸ Callahan, “In Defense of Conviviality and the Collective Subject,” 14. The term “temporary autonomous zones of knowledge production” or TAZKP was developed by Callahan and will be further elaborated over the course of this work. Rather than cite or define each of these terms here, as many have multiple histories and emerge genealogically from multiple sources and struggles, each of the categories and terms introduced will be elaborated more fully in relation to their context and source(s) as they appear in the context of the larger work.

⁹ Callahan, “Why Not Share a Dream?,” 12. The concept of “open spaces of encounter” or “spaces of encounter” is advanced in relation to an urban Zapatismo by Callahan and will remain in quotes throughout the remainder of the work as a strategic concept.

the Bay Area as spaces where different positions of the community convene around shared issues including community safety.¹⁰

Situated within this network of spaces across the Bay Area are the deliberately structured spaces of horizontal research and learning advanced through the autonomous learning project of Universidad de la Tierra Califas. Universidad de la Tierra, or Uni Tierra Califas, literally “university of the land” in the area of Califas (which roughly corresponds to the territorial state of California), is an autonomous, horizontal learning and research initiative and networked space that brings together community members from across a range of investigations, actions, and situated struggles to advance an urban Zapatismo as a means of fostering greater autonomy. Uni Tierra Califas is not an institution or a formal academic space, but rather exists in the relations when community members gather in “open spaces of encounter.” Loosely based in San Jose, Uni Tierra Califas involves an extended network of collaborators from across the Bay

¹⁰ I am indebted to efforts of collective ethnography that include Gloria Muñoz Ramírez’s remarkable history of the Zapatista struggle, *The Fire and the Word*, as well as a range of grassroots efforts to document a collective experience of struggle, many moments of which appear in this dissertation. I am indebted as well to numerous recent ethnographies that have engaged similar populations and struggles, notably, Bouvard, *Revolutionizing Motherhood*; Silber, *Everyday Revolutionaries*; and Aretxaga, *Shattering Silence*, each of which explores women’s struggles for justice in response to contexts of state violence directed at them, their families, and their communities, including through enforced disappearances, torture, and tactics of both high and low intensity war. See also Maier and LeBon, *Women’s Activism in Latin America and the Caribbean*, and Enloe, *Nimo’s War, Emma’s War*. For ethnographic writing emerging from the struggles of incarcerated women, see Waldman and Levi, *Inside This Place, Not of It* and Law, *Resistance Behind Bars*. Additionally, a number of auto-ethnographic works have informed this writing, including Shakur, *Assata*; Block, *Arm the Spirit*; Dunbar-Ortiz, *Outlaw Woman*; and Rosenberg, *An American Radical*. I also am indebted to more traditional ethnographic accounts that have prioritized the lives and work of women while engaging critical questions around race, difference, gender, including Ruth Landes’ work, in particular her *City of Women*, and the work of Lila Abu-Lughod, *Writing Women’s Worlds*.

Area and beyond, and is connected to other Uni Tierra projects in Southern California (Uni Tierra Califas El Sur), as well as two larger projects in Mexico, Uni Tierra Oaxaca, and Uni Tierra Chiapas. Uni Tierra Califas exists completely outside of capital; no money ever passes through Uni Tierra Califas. As a project of CCRA, Uni Tierra Califas advances a commitment to “organize without organizing” through a series of deliberate and consistent spaces that place convivial research and insurgent learning at the center of their efforts.¹¹

Alongside the many self-organized spaces emanating from within diverse communities, the spaces of Uni Tierra Califas offer possibilities for engaging community safety struggles as autonomous, prefigurative moments and practices. As strategic spaces that recognize the importance of reflection and connection across struggles, these spaces are among the institutions of the commons that serve as a bulwark against material and social enclosures. Gustavo Esteva warns that “both the market and the state are continually invading, attacking, or destroying the social commons” in a process that “economizes the commons”—“transmogrify[ing] their relationships and transform[ing] material and immaterial elements existing in them into waste or private or public resources or commodities.”¹² In this way, Esteva continues, modern colonization transforms

¹¹ The notion of “organizing without organizing” is a commitment of Uni Tierra Califas and urban Zapatismo, and draws on a collectively produced orientation to struggle. The phrase “organizing without organizing” is one that is heard in many Uni Tierra Califas spaces, including *ateneo* spaces, which will be discussed further on. For an elaboration on Zapatismo and urban Zapatismo, see Callahan, “Why Not Share a Dream?”

¹² Gustavo Esteva, *Commoning in the New Society*, i155.

the commons “into economic goods, commodities, imposing on them a regime of public or private property and the corresponding norms.”¹³

Struggles in the present are marked by the effort to protect and regenerate commons from this onslaught. With an emphasis on “creating a whole new world,” in the word of the Zapatistas, rather than changing the current world, for Esteva, “communing, communism, reclaiming, and regenerating our commons, and creating new commons, beyond the dominant economic and political system define the limits of the current era.”¹⁴ Thus the institutions of the commons are the relations and spaces where we encounter and engage each other that foster this creative and sustain process of collective reproduction.

Among these spaces are the Uni Tierra *ateneos* that convene regularly to bring together scholars, grassroots intellectuals, community organizers, and engaged learners, to gather “as a diverse situated community.”¹⁵ As an open and public site of convergence, the *ateneo* meets consistently, is organized around particular questions, and exists alongside social movement spaces as a site for producing new knowledges and shared reflections and strategies for struggle. It can be conceived of as “a de-territorialized space,” one which “recognizes the long-standing, vexed relationship historically under represented communities have with the formal institutions of higher education,” and which, “as a space of convivial research...navigates between long standing achievements in

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid, i156.

¹⁵ Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Ateneo,” para. 1.

participatory action research (PAR) as well as more recent innovations in militant and convivial research by exploring transdisciplinary investigations.”¹⁶ The *ateneo* produces three sites of reflection as a modality for the circulation of struggle—an invitation is crafted and sent out in advance of the gathering; at the gathering itself and following a review of agreements that govern the space, questions are generated among those present that guide the discussion as it unfolds; and a collective summary is produced and archived in service of our ongoing struggles across the communities we claim and towards a collective ethnography. The collective ethnography continuously generated by a community of struggle in the spaces convened by Uni Tierra Califas forms a critical research strategy for the work produced here. In particular, the *ateneos* continue to serve as spaces where a collective analysis can be generated across communities. As an autonomous learning and research initiative in the Bay Area through which this

¹⁶ Ibid. Recent methodological advances in participatory action research and militant research underscore the importance of putting the community at the center of the study. See, especially Hale, *Engaging Contradictions* and Juris and Khasnabish, *Insurgent Encounters*. These texts examine the exploitative nature of many research methodologies and emphasize the importance of cooperative, collaborative research as a way of addressing objectifying methodologies. Also of note here is the elaboration of co-research and militant research strategies as advanced in the work of Colectivo Situaciones, see *19 & 20: Notes for a New Social* and Roggero, *The Production of Living Knowledge*. Much of this builds on early critical studies in participatory action research strategies that was often directed specifically at policy and conceived of community involvement in the initial stages of the study only. In many of these models, the research “product” when completed, would be “brought back” to the community. While co-research and convivial research methodologies emerge out of a different set of commitments, they draw on the innovations made by participatory action methodologies that themselves attempted to address the discipline of anthropology’s emergence in relation to, and imbrication with colonialism. See for example, Fals-Borda and Rahman, *Action and Knowledge*. See, also, Holland, *Whose Voice?*. On convivial research, see Universidad de la Tierra Califas *folleto* (pamphlet) V2.0, and Convivial Research and Learning “Ateneo.”

collective ethnography emerged, Uni Tierra Califas will be elaborated more fully over the course of this dissertation.

The sites that form the basis of this research project reflect a number of ongoing projects that can be understood in the context of community safety as struggles for safety and also for autonomy and for the commons. As a collective ethnography, it weaves together numerous interconnected sites across the Bay Area. These include the Democracy Ateneo (San Jose) and Social Factory Ateneo (Oakland); a series of ongoing People's Investigations (San Francisco, Berkeley and Oakland); a collective justice project in the form of living theater and community workshops, The Love Balm Project (Bay Area) including the accompanying series of performances, *Love Balm for My SpiritChild*, and site specific performances, *Our Hallowed Ground* (Bay Area); a series of community barbecues organized by families as networked spaces of research and direct action in relation to justice struggles (Stockton, Oakland, San Francisco, San Jose); a series of convivial mapping projects that were critical to a collective effort to produce a cartography of struggle around community safety, including tactical cartography workshops that were part of an effort to build larger spaces of assembly across the Bay Area; an autonomous community health project advanced through numerous trainings by The People's Community Medics (Oakland); as well as other moments and spaces of community regeneration and care across the greater Bay Area and its peripheries that included Know Your Rights trainings, talking circles, community speak outs, rallies, protests, marches, vigils, funerals, direct actions, workshops, skill shares, assemblies, free market

spaces, spaces of relational *testimonio* in people's homes and in community spaces, multiple judicial trials, performances, and celebrations and commemorative gatherings including birthday parties, a *posada*, and spaces of indigenous ceremony.¹⁷ What unfolds here offers a glimpse of many trajectories of resistance, survival, rebellion, direct actions, campaigns, collectives, and so on underway and in movement across the greater Bay Area beyond. Many vectors of struggle pass through this work, and it exists in relation to these—some named throughout, others not, some present through contested relations and histories, and undoubtedly many unknown but part of a larger wave of insurgency of which these spaces are a part. This is a collective commoning.

The multiple, dispersed ethnographic sites that form the basis of this work also form the basis for a convivial research strategy. Central to the research strategy of this work, as well as the research strategy in place to produce a collective ethnography of community safety struggles are two *ateneos* convened by Universidad de la Tierra Califas as community gathering spaces that meet once a month in local *taquerias* in San Jose and Oakland (on the third and fourth Saturday, respectively) and are always open to everyone. Both spaces regularly include participants from across diverse community projects, including many of the projects narrated throughout the dissertation. They included community members, activists, artists, organizers, researchers, and scholars and are multi-generational spaces reflecting a range of communities of struggle. A significant ethnographic component of this dissertation is drawn from an active “observant-

¹⁷ All of the sites above are presented in greater depth in subsequent sections.

participation” approach as well as my own contribution to the writing and revision of collectively produced announcements and summaries that emerged from these spaces as a collective ethnography.¹⁸ João Costa Vargas highlights the engaged participation of the researcher over the more passive stance of the observer as part of political research commitment and methodology, thus inverting the more traditional “participant observation” of anthropological and ethnographic research with the active involvement of “participation.”¹⁹ Observant-participation as a research approach acknowledges the political involvement of the researcher as opposed to relying on the fiction of a disinterested observing “lone ethnographer” in the “field.” Observant-participation has been central to elaborating new forms of ethnography in the discipline of anthropology that have in turn become central to community-based research and social justice scholarship.²⁰

The investigations were collectively organized to advance specific aspects of community safety by bringing community members together to document and share their struggles. People’s Investigations are central to a larger emergent collective community safety project, the Community Safety Database, an open source web-infrastructure for documenting forms of state violence and

¹⁸ In the Democracy Ateneo (San Jose) and Social Factory Ateneo (San Francisco), I engaged the community associated with Uni Tierra Califas, whose work as a project of CCRA is both dedicated to a convivial research approach and engaged in a larger community safety effort across the Bay Area.

¹⁹ See Costa Vargas, “Activist Scholarship.”

²⁰ See for example, Costa Vargas, “Activist Scholarship;” Gupta and Ferguson, *Anthropological Locations*; Clifford and Marcus, *Writing Culture*; Marcus and Fischer, *Anthropology as Cultural Critique*; Behar and Gordon, *Women Writing Culture*; and Visweswaran, *Fictions of Feminist Ethnography*.

misconduct to hold police accountable and challenge militarization, while at the same time serving as a convivial tool to strengthen connections among families and across communities. People's Investigations, and the range of other community safety projects explored through this ethnography, exist in relation to ongoing efforts to document and challenge state violence. While beyond the scope of this dissertation to address, the Community Safety Database, linking various efforts in this regard, forms a backdrop to these efforts and connects them. In addition to documenting violence, as a convivial tool, its architecture is designed to facilitate a number of convergences that bring together community members, organizers, witnesses, families, and scholars, providing support for community-based and academic research projects. Linked to emergent processes of assembly which this work also charts, it is facilitated by a collective comprised of groups across California and includes CCRA.²¹

A key "site" of this research are People's Investigations—grassroots, community-based inquiries to address a range of violations and violence, specifically around police brutality, excess, and corruption. People's Investigations involve obtaining and analyzing state documents and archives, interviewing witnesses, organizing a range of community gatherings, attending civic meetings, formulating policy documents, holding press conferences, and working collaboratively across diverse groups in public strategy meetings. This dissertation reflects several loosely connected People's Investigations underway

²¹ To navigate the web infrastructure of this project, see Community Safety Database, "CSDbase."

across Berkeley, Oakland, and San Francisco. People's Investigations are constructed in relation to spaces where the community convenes to share information and develop a collective analysis around issues in community safety. I engaged these investigative sites through observant-participation to better understand the terrain of community responses to violence across the Bay Area.²²

Both the People's Community Medics and The Love Balm Project are performance-based sites that regularly provide trainings, workshops, and productions that are open to the public and occur across communities in the Bay Area, in theatres, in public parks, in community centers, and on sidewalks. The People's Community Medics, a grassroots first-responder initiative, emerged in response to people being left to "bleed out" across the Bay Area, specifically, the

²² In the People's Investigations and other community safety convivial research projects, I worked with several organizations involved in monitoring state violence and human rights abuses and advancing the health of their communities. CCRA is a community-based research and learning center that regularly hosts workshops, skill shares, and community gatherings and has organized investigations across the Bay. Berkeley Copwatch is a police accountability and transparency group that hosts Know Your Rights Trainings and community workshops as well as street patrols. The Inter Council for Mothers of Murdered Children (ICMMC) networks families who are victims of state and street violence and regularly organizes community speak outs and gatherings.

killing of Oscar Grant in 2009.²³ They provide community trainings in basic emergency first aid, specifically focusing on gunshot wounds and blood loss. The People's Community Medics regularly host first aid trainings and community speak-outs around violence and care. These occur across Oakland, Berkeley, San Francisco, San Jose, and beyond. The trainings also provide free basic emergency first aid kits to participants.

The Love Balm Project was created by Oakland artist Arielle Brown and is comprised of a series workshops and theatrical performances structured according to monologues based on the *testimonios* of mothers and grandmothers who have lost children to street and police violence across the Bay in recent years. The Love Balm Project is primarily based on two performance models: *Love Balm For My SpiritChild* is a more traditional theatre production that includes a community talk-back at the end and holds performances in theaters locally; and in its disaggregated form as *Our Hallowed Ground* produced on sidewalks and urban spaces through site-specific performances that mark the place where a

²³ “Bleeding out” refers to way that people die due to extreme blood loss. The term usually implies intentional negligence or marks, for example, an absence of life-saving services available in disenfranchised communities. Oscar Grant was shot by the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) police in 2009 and was left without medical attention for thirty – forty minutes while detained on the Fruitvale BART platform in Oakland, and was later pronounced dead at Highland Hospital. On Grant being left to bleed out, see Redmond and Everest, “The Cold-Blooded Murder of Oscar Grant,” para. 16. For details on the length of time Grant was left on the platform, see, Chastang, “Oscar Grant Execution by BART Cop,” para. 2. For details on Grant being pronounced dead, see Oscar Grant Foundation, “The Shooting Death of Oscar Grant,” para. 1. A similar community space, Kenny’s Community Feed, initiated by Kenneth Harding Jr.’s mother, Denika Chatman, and maintained by the Kenneth Harding Foundation, and in particular community member Al Osorio, is a consistent common space in Bayview- Hunters Point where food and clothing are shared and distributed to the community on the site of the San Francisco police killing of Kenneth Harding, Jr. in 2011.

young person was murdered. *Love Balm for My SpiritChild*, or The Love Balm Project describes itself as “a theatre of testimony workshop series and performance for and about mothers who have lost children to systemic violence,” and elaborate that the work of the project is designed to be “a healing performance series that celebrates the spirit of commemorative justice in mothers. [The project] was inspired by the revolutionary acts of mothers fighting for justice for their children living and dead,” noting that the project was “specifically inspired by how mothers’ memory has served as a vehicle for justice in the cases of the Rwandan Tutsi Genocide, Oscar Grant III, Amadou Diallo, and Emmett Till.”²⁴

In each of these sites, I participated in public trainings, performances, and other practices of commoning and shared learning and research over the course of the past several years, engaging these ethnographic sites as both a participant-observer and observing participant. These sites are critical community safety projects that are militant and prefigurative. As “spaces of encounter” and shared practices of commoning, they function as autonomous alternatives and sites where the community is both producing and sharing knowledge about its struggles, and where these struggles are being reflected back to the community.

Throughout this work, I draw on autonomous Marxism and feminist scholarship to situate the “social factory” as a category of analysis further developed into a strategic concept in order to illuminate “community safety” as a

²⁴ See, “Friendraiser for the Love Balm Project,” para. 2, under “More About the Love Balm Project.”

collective, networked project to demilitarize and decriminalize our communities. Through this, I weave together four primary theoretical realms: 1) reading “war” as a continuous state of class antagonisms organized through several intersecting racial strategies of capital including “social death” (drawing on Lisa Marie Cacho), I rely on an “inversion of class perspective” (Harry Cleaver) to “destabilize security” (Heidi Rimke) and interrogate militarization broadly as an aspect of counterinsurgency in response to class struggle (more specifically, drawing on Ranajit Guha, I read counterinsurgency as a response to insurgency and specifically drawing on Angela Davis, as a strategy to destabilize the home as a site of social reproduction); 2) reading “community safety” against “security” through an urban Zapatismo as advanced by Callahan, and specifically drawing on Gustavo Esteva’s notion of regeneration and John Holloway’s elaboration of dignity, I situate community safety struggles as moments of dignified revolt and prefigurative, organized self-activity; 3) reading “biopower” through a theory of value where, value is a relation (of hierarchies, of violence, etc.), and primitive accumulation, I read a series of intersecting racial strategies in the context of dynamic relations of an economic enclave, and including a “politics of care” as both a site of capital imposition on the relations of a community and as a site of resistance; in so doing, 4) through a convivial research approach, I read struggle in relation to knowledge production to address questions of epistemology and support the claim that knowledge production and the collective co-generation of knowledges are critical to struggles in the present.

A Convivial Research Approach

Through a convivial research approach to community safety that reads collective well being against “security” I situate community safety struggles as moments of dignified revolt (Holloway) and prefigurative regeneration (Esteva). Drawing on the work of Manuel Callahan and CCRA to claim a convivial research approach, I advance four central components: the refusal to objectify communities of struggle; the obligation to include the community at every step of the process, from formulating the research question to engaging spaces of direct action; the commitment to claiming our own processes of knowledge production and at the same time making this process transparent, accessible, and accountable; and the agreement to organize ourselves as a community around horizontal spaces of reflection, action, and decision-making.²⁵ Feminist ethnography in the 1990s offered a critical intervention in the field through its emphasis on reflection, sometimes as ethical hesitation, in engaging methodological approaches where the research relation of subject–object are inscribed. The emphasis of convivial research that refuses to objectify communities of struggle is best understood not as a particular self-reflexive ethical commitment or interrogation to which the researcher holds herself and positions herself ethically in the text, but rather it is a commitment to a collective process through which new knowledges, new convivial tools, new relations, and community obligations emerge. In other words,

²⁵ This follows the convivial research approach developed by Manuel Callahan and advanced through CCRA. For an elaboration of convivial research and insurgent learning through CCRA’s interactive web *taller*, see, Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning.”

it is a commitment to a collective process, not an ethical position that produces and coheres a Western subject.²⁶

As a collective ethnography of community safety rooted in a series of interrelated projects confronting “security” and reclaiming community autonomy and regeneration, these efforts are understood as moments of confrontation against the myriad mechanisms and forces of biopower that seek to impose a particular class composition. Often drawing on and in many ways reflecting a community of struggle’s own moments of collective ethnography, the ethnographic focus of this dissertation is based on interconnected sites of organized self-activity and anti-capitalist, prefigurative praxis. This convivial approach stands as an intervention against more traditional Left politics and orthodox Marxisms that continue to dominate much current literature and circumscribe the realm of the “political” according to Western epistemological frames that privilege specific class subjects and revolutionary programs.²⁷ While many excellent studies reflect this more traditional Marxist approach to

²⁶ A seminal text of feminist ethnography remains Visweswaran’s *Fictions of Feminist Ethnography*. See also Behar and Gordon, *Women Writing Culture*. Postcolonial theory has emphasized the Western production of the colonial “Other” as a process that in fact produced the West—as “human,” “civilized,” and “modern.” Ethnography that prioritizes the ethical interrogation of the ethnographer risks a reproduction of the Other as a vehicle for the production of Western subjectivity. A convivial research approach interrupts this as an ethnographic orientation through a series of deliberate commitments and refusals that prioritize collectively determined research questions in service of a community of struggle, horizontal spaces of knowledge production, and community involvement at all stages of the research, in addition to insuring research is linked to direct action.

²⁷ Madrid-based feminist collective Precarias a la Deriva offers an excellent intervention in “A Very Careful Strike.” Raul Zibechi situates the role of the community and neighborhood councils as long term, rooted anti-state projects offering ways to theorize resistance beyond the summit hopping of the 1990s and more traditional readings and practices of resistance historically dominated by orthodox Marxism. See Precarias a la Deriva, “A Very Careful Strike,” and Zibechi, *Dispersing Power*.

revolutionary subjects and spaces, these studies nonetheless frequently remain centered around the means of production thus highlighting (and reinscribing) an industrial, Western proletariat. Recent work emerging from feminist and Indigenous struggles have expanded the field of the political by highlighting the presence of, for example in the work of *Precarias a la Deriva*, precarious workers participating in solidarity with workers' strikes in the streets of Spain, or Indigenous struggles confronting extractivism, as in regular editorials appearing across Latin America and Mexico by Gustavo Esteva and Raul Zibechi. Rather than replacing the revolutionary subject of an earlier period, this work has sought to invigorate and extend the realm of the political and understandings of revolutionary subjects and indeed, class itself, while working collaboratively across workers' struggles to research, confront, and disengage from capital.

In other recent scholarship, the street also retains a privileged status as the primary space of revolutionary possibility, continuously re-inscribed as the site where social antagonisms are most glaringly exposed and social change occurs, even if scholars do not identify this with specific modes of production or Leftist programs. This has been true of ethnographic studies and scholarship on social movements coming out of the academy, which, while often advancing a more anarchist position vis-à-vis the state, nonetheless often centers the presence and experience of the activist scholar in relation to public space to articulate theories of rebellion and insurgency—the deep roots and networks of which, across multiple communities and connections and relations of care, are often less visible and less accessible given these roots and networks lie outside the discursive

framework through which social change is “read.”²⁸ Of course, there is movement in the street, and these struggles are there too—but the street is always connected to other spaces of rebellion and regeneration, also as collective experiences that challenge and refuse capital. Through a convivial research approach that highlights “spaces of encounter” as temporary autonomous zones of knowledge production, I am able to focus on the role of knowledge production as a site of class recomposition and community regeneration.²⁹ This provides a basis for a collective ethnography that is at the same time recognition and imagination of collective subject—temporary, shifting, strategic, militant, and creative.

Convivial research highlights the collaborative construction of convivial tools. For Ivan Illich, convivial tools are central to a community’s efforts to pursue their own regeneration creatively and sustainably. The construction of

²⁸ Throughout, references to “the academy” refer to the Western university and college system as an institution, including the traditions that this institution upholds, and the scholarship that is produced through, and continues to preserve, the institution.

²⁹ This marks a merger of two strands of theory emerging from different struggles but often overlapping in the present in particularly through the work of Uni Tierra Califas. In highlighting recomposition I draw on autonomous Marxism in the tradition of Harry Cleaver, Guido Baldi, George Caffentzis, the Midnight Notes Collective, and others while in highlighting community regeneration I draw on Zapatismo and urban Zapatismo, in particular the work of Gustavo Esteva, John Holloway, and Manuel Callahan, as well as the writing of Subcomandante Marcos and the Zapatista communiqués, many of which have recently been reissued in small volumes by El Rebozo Press. There are many texts in this tradition, but some seminal examples that are highlighted throughout this text include Cleaver, *Reading Capital Politically* and “The Inversion of Class Perspective in Marxian Theory;” Baldi, “Theses on Mass Worker and Social Capital;” Caffentzis, “From Capitalist Crisis to Proletarian Slavery;” and Midnight Notes, *Midnight Oil*. On Zapatismo and urban Zapatismo, see Esteva, “Regenerating People’s Space,” and Esteva and Prakash, *Grassroots Post-Modernism*. See also Holloway and Peláez, *Zapatista! Holloway, Change the World Without Taking Power*; Callahan, “Why Not Share a Dream?; Marcos, *Conversations with Durito*; and El Kilombo Intergalactico, *Beyond Resistance: Everything*.

new, convivial tools is central to a convivial research approach.³⁰ The spaces of this research relied on a number of tools reworked from other methodological approaches and situations, and also produced new tools. This involved collectively constructing a cartography of struggle around community safety. This cartography included space, narratives, timelines, and analysis.

As part of this research approach to construct a cartography of struggle, I was part of a collective that convened several relational *testimonio* spaces over the course of the last few years to bring together grassroots researchers, scholars, and community members to engage in shared dialogue around community safety struggles. The Latina Feminist Group theorizes relational *testimonio* through the process of coming together as women to tell life stories as a form of “collective bearing witness.”³¹ In the introduction to their anthology, *Telling to Live*, this collective describes the “importance of *testimonio* as a crucial means of bearing witness and inscribing into history those lived realities that would otherwise succumb to the alchemy of erasure” and in this, reflect on the methodological approach of *testimonio* as central to movements for liberation across Latin America.³² Further, “*testimonios* can reflect processes of self-organization in

³⁰ See Callahan, “In Defense of Conviviality,” 9–11.

³¹ Latina Feminist Group, “Introduction: *Papelitos Guardados*,” 20.

³² Latina Feminist Group, “Introduction: *Papelitos Guardados*,” 2, 3.

communities, and can be used as a research tool applicable to diverse community and academic projects.”³³

For the Latina Feminist Group, there are similarities between the telling of oral histories and the sharing of *testimonios*, yet they draw attention to the process of *testimonio* as a collective act among people who share experiences and community. This resonates with the work of Teresa Barnett and Chon Noriega who theorize oral history as a methodological approach that can be collective as in the case of the Indigenous “talking circle.” The research approach for the collective ethnography of this study relies on a similar form to advance a space of facilitated relational *testimonios* or collective conversations among people who claim a common community. These spaces are convened around key concepts or questions that serve to guide a conversation that unfolds as people are gathered together in a space with the explicit commitment to share and produce knowledge. Unlike a group interview, the relational *testimonio* emerges from a community of struggle who share situated experiences. Thus, it progresses in such a way as to appear informal given it is a conversation that is not directly in response to a

³³ Callahan, “UT Califas Theses clinic announcement, 11-2-13,” para. 2. For further elaboration on Uni Tierra’s approach and use of relational *testimonio*, see also Callahan, “UT Theses Clinic, Saturday, May 3, 2014” (announcement); and Callahan, “UT Califas Theses clinic summary, 5-3-14,” (summary). While the announcements and summaries for Uni Tierra spaces are sent to the Uni Tierra and Acción Zapatista(AZ) listserves from a single email address, in all cases the announcements and summaries are collectively written by a diverse group of participants in Uni Tierra spaces, and circulate under various collective names, including “South Bay Crew,” “North Bay Crew,” but often also unsigned and are simply the collective effort of Uni Tierra Califas. I was among the writers that produced these announcement and summaries, yet, these writings all reflect the collective author/subject that is Uni Tierra Califas. To conform to academic protocols in the case of this work, I have listed the sender of the email as the author in cases where I use direct quotes from an email. The author remains however, Uni Tierra Califas, a collective subject.

central interviewer. These provide open spaces of exchange where stories are shared across community members. As “spaces of encounter” guided by a series of questions, these serve as ethnographic sites that offer a new approach to narrating the lived experience of communities of struggle. Rather than being organized around an anthropological “object” and researcher “subject,” the pedagogy of the space emphasizes collective knowledge production, one where various situated knowledges inform the process and the struggle. These are the shared stories of struggle that bind a community together, coordinate direct actions, and advance possibilities for autonomy. The spaces of relational *testimonio* are open spaces, where those present can generate their own questions and engage each other across lived experiences of community struggles. These spaces were regularly convened across networks of women already engaged in movement spaces and theorizing forms of liberation and justice.³⁴

In addition, I conducted a series of oral history interviews with community members, particularly women, who have been engaged in these community struggles for an extended duration. As oral history interviews, they recognize and place value on the lived experiences of struggles for justice and safer communities over time and that seek to understand and reflect on these struggles in the context of a larger community. For oral historians Noriega and Barnett committed to working in communities of color, oral history is also a “story of how the historical

³⁴ See Latina Feminist Group, *Telling to Live*, and Barnett and Noriega, *Oral History and Communities of Color*.

plays out in an individual life.”³⁵ In this instance, oral histories contest dominant historical narratives, including those advanced by the state and “official” history, and narrated through discourses that privilege neoliberal security over community safety. For Noriega and Barnett, an oral history approach is based on three central features—“a focus on history, an emphasis on narrator-driven accounts, [and] a life history approach.”³⁶ This approach also takes seriously the experiences of women and communities of color as sites of knowledge production. Further, as part of a critical ethnographic approach emerging from academic spaces, they are key in bridging gaps between the university and local communities, and in weaving together history and anthropology. In the oral history interview, questions are open and are organized around a deliberate commitment to a certain silence on the part of the interviewer to allow for a more complex story to unfold in relation to a specific lived history of the interview participant.³⁷ The insights generated from the oral histories served to enrich an understanding of the reflection and action spaces that form the basis of the ethnographic sites of this

³⁵ Noriega and Barnett, *Oral Histories and Communities of Color*, 3.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Throughout this section, I am indebted to the scholarship of Noriega and Barnett, particularly in the introduction to their edited volume, *Oral History and Communities of Color*. For an elaboration on oral histories as a means of constructing memory, meaning, and community, see Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli*; see also Passerini’s work exploring oral history, gender, community, and struggle, for example in *Autobiography of a Generation: Italy, 1968*, as well as more recent research based on oral history interviews, in Passerini et al., *Women Migrants from East to West*.

project.³⁸ Through the collective research spaces and spaces of relational *testimonio* and oral history narratives, a number of research questions emerged that became part of a larger collective research effort.

Collaboratively generated timelines served as a convivial tool that drew on a history of struggles to archive violence and serve as a basis for a collective analysis of the state as an instrument in a diffuse counterinsurgency strategy. For example, the Ferguson rebellions in response to the police killing of Michael Brown in the late summer of 2014 brought heightened attention on the lack of reliable numbers of police and other law enforcement killings of people. In some instances this absence of figures can be traced to lacunae present in law enforcement policies, for example, many departments maintain records specific to officer involved shootings (OIS) that do not include other deaths, such as fatal beatings, or deaths in custody as a result of abuse or neglect (often following abuse), vehicular deaths, and other causes. However, the problems around accurate record keeping for police killings and other deaths cannot be solely attributed to “policy gaps.” In some cases they have to do with where the state determines the responsibility for the death rests. Police killings are sometimes ascribed to the person themselves, as in the highly publicized fatal beating of Aaron Williams by SFPD San Francisco in 1995, discussed at greater length in a following section. Thus some deaths, whether because of the way the person died at the hands of the police or because the responsibility for the death has been

³⁸ Barnett and Noriega, *Oral History and Communities of Color*. Some of the differences between oral history and *testimonio* will also be elaborated more fully over the course of the dissertation.

placed into question by the state, are not counted in state records as police killings. The refusal on the part of the state to take responsibility for its own violence includes a vast number of features that this dissertation explores. In comparing multiple records retrieved from departments across the Bay Area in response to my own Public Record Act (PRA) requests as part of this ongoing research regarding police murders, departments produced results that were internally inconsistent across department records. It is not unusual, for example, for a death to be listed in one document produced by a police department through a particular PRA request, but to be missing from another document.³⁹

As the SFPD trial for the murder of Asa Sullivan approached in late summer 2014, I worked with CCRA and several local families who had lost loved ones to state and state-manufactured violence to construct a timeline mapping all law enforcement killings and deaths in custody over the past twenty-five years in San Francisco.⁴⁰ The numbers were culled from community research; investigative and documentation projects including the work of the Idriss Stelley Foundation and in particular the painstaking research, on the ground investigations, and family and community engagement of Mesha Monge-Irizarry; the Stolen Lives Project; *SF BayView* newspaper; San Francisco Bay Area Independent Media Center (commonly referred to by its http address, as

³⁹ The PRA Request was signed into law in California in 1968 at the height of struggles for greater transparency into government policies and actions.

⁴⁰ Asa Sullivan was killed by San Francisco police officers Michelle Alvis and John Keesor on June 6, 2006. His story and family's struggle is explored in depth in chapter 4 of this dissertation.

“IndyBay”), an open source community news site; Bay Area Policewatch and the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights; various other media sources, as well as PRA requests, including my own PRA requests, as well as those publicized as part of the Petrelis Files Project.⁴¹ Thus, the details on the number of deaths were all based on the records kept across multiple community groups, often through public contestations following an act of state violence.

These names (and in some cases, no names, simply “John Doe”) were read against the SFPD’s responses to PRA requests that included lists of names of people killed either in an Officer Involved Shooting (OIS) as well as the department’s catalogued summaries of OIS organized by date and incident but which included neither the name of the victim or the officer involved. These summarized incidents were then read against other reports released by the department, community reports, and media stories. In many cases, they were read through the investigations and writings produced by the families themselves. In some instances, the mothers wrote articles or archived shared conversations and published them in local papers and sites, notably the *SF BayView* and the San Francisco Bay Area Independent Media Center.

To produce the timelines, each killing was then mapped by year horizontally and by month vertically, and coded as either as an OIS or a death in custody case. This methodology revealed incomplete and inconsistent documentation across multiple offices of the state, including several cases where

⁴¹ For the Petrelis Files Project, including links to PRA requests filed in April of 2014, see Petrelis Files Project, “SFPD: 83 Names of OIS Deaths Since 1980.”

victims of police violence are omitted from the OIS lists even while the details of the shooting may be recognizable but listed anonymously in the OIS summary lists. This is the case with Asa Sullivan as well as Oliver “Big O” Lefiti, both of whom were killed by SFPD in June of 2006. Suprisingly, some OIS victims are not listed in the final recorded numbers of annual killings even though the cases have been filed against officers in courts. This was true for the murder of Asa Sullivan: PRA requests filed with the SFPD in 2014 omit the death of Sullivan in several documents, even as the City and County of San Francisco had since 2006 worked to delay and obstruct the case from reaching trial and it was unquestionably a case of OIS. This case is discussed at length in a subsequent chapter of this work.

In addition to incomplete and inconsistent documentation, the timeline methodology also revealed inaccurate documentation. For example, some OIS reports list a subject as fatally wounded when there is compelling evidence to the contrary. In one instance, there is evidence that the same person listed as deceased as a result of police shooting later filed a suit against the department, and so on. Much more could be said, some of which will continue to emerge over the course of this work, regarding the inaccuracies and practices of record keeping in relation to, for example, SFPD violence. While the particular details of a given police department may be unique, the situation is certainly not in relation to other state projects, including across police and sheriff departments throughout California, of archiving their own violence.

Once all of the law enforcement killings had been graphed onto a particular timeline, other information about the department was then also mapped onto these same timelines—including the department’s succession of chiefs, the manifestation of new strategies targeting particular areas, including no-knock raids and gang injunctions, as well as significant moments of corruption, impunity, and brutality. This created a way of seeing the department in relation to the population and urban landscape that also served as a foundation to read the violence against.

In addition to the timelines that mapped state violence, we produced parallel timelines that mapped community responses to incidents of state violence over time, with a particular emphasis on the work of Mesha Monge-Irizarry and the Idriss Stelley Foundation whose work spanning many years exists as a powerful presence in weaving a network of support among families through the Bay Area. In addition to connecting families immediately following a killing by police, since 2001 following the police killing of her own son, Idriss Stelley, Mesha Monge-Irizarry has been a critical force organizing spaces of grassroots investigation and direct action across the Bay. We created a taxonomy of responses that included vigils and protests immediately following a killing by police or other law enforcement; community presence at town hall meetings organized by police where community members challenged state efforts to disseminate their version of the story to the media; interviews with family members and witness and other practices of grassroots investigations following a killing in the community; as well as a graphing a series of gatherings, street

parties and barbecues, radio segments and media publications, community speak-outs, and longer related campaigns, including against the death penalty and repeated campaigns against the SFPD's acquisition of Tasers. This provided a way of seeing how the community mobilized over time to respond to each act of violence by the state. Simultaneously, and relying on an inversion analysis, the timelines also functioned to make visible the state's response to the community over time.⁴² One instance where this was evident was in the torrent of police raids directed at the Bayview-Hunters Point community following the death of SFPD officer Victor Espinoza who was fatally shot in Bayview-Hunters Point on April 10, 2004.⁴³ Thus the timelines facilitated a taxonomy graphed over time that archived a particular history, made possible new ways of seeing relations of social antagonism, and also provided a historical view of struggle that gave shape to the unfolding of oral history interviews, prompting new connections and recollections, sifted through experience and detail. Also among the stories that emerged were the often less visible moments of a community of struggle organized around its own survival and care—resources quietly circulated to aid in burial costs or to stave off evictions that many families face following the sudden

⁴² Inversion analysis is a mode of methodological inquiry that takes as its starting point working class power and reads capitalist crisis as produced by workers. I will elaborate this more fully throughout the work, including in relation to composition, decomposition, and recomposition and “cycles of struggle.” I rely on Cleaver’s work on “Inversion of Class Perspective” to expand on this theorization. Cleaver, “Inversion of Class Perspective.”

⁴³ Community members understood the series of brutal and unprecedented raids following the killing of Espinoza as a punishment and a warning directed at them collectively by the police. There was also a shared acknowledgement at the time that scant effort was made by SFPD leadership to recognize or curb the attacks. Mesha Monge-Irizarry, oral history interview, January 2015.

death of a family member, or beds offered in homes when families were required to travel to the city to make funeral arrangements or attend trials years after the killing and other moments of care and mutual aid.⁴⁴

A number of grassroots investigations have emerged across the Bay Area in response to state violence, many of them seeking to draw connections between forms of state violence and state-manufactured violence. There is significant circulation across various investigations and spaces of direct action. As part of a collective convivial research project initiated by CCRA and organized around community safety, a series of tools emerged in service of a collectively determined research question. To analyze cases in Oakland and San Francisco, Uni Tierra Califas facilitated a series of investigations working in conjunction with families impacted by state violence. Through investigations focused in Oakland, we collectively generated timelines to map policing strategies in relation to homicide rates, crime reduction strategies, and militarized responses to community mobilizations emerged. These collective research efforts created several related cartographies against which to situate specific cases that then became part of a series of community workshops organized to develop a shared analysis around militarization.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ These include gatherings like the “Tactical Cartography *taller*” held in San Jose on March 15th in advance of a People’s Movement Assembly on militarization as part of the process of “rolling assemblies” leading up to the US Social Forum in San Jose in June 2015.

These timelines formed a backdrop against which to read stories that emerged through community spaces of relational *testimonio* and other spaces where stories, details, and updates on investigations and cases were circulated. New details could be added to the timelines. The timelines were also used in the investigation to create a cartography of the police department through a series of officer profiles. Each profile could then be linked to the timeline through biographic details that included information on whether the officer had killed anyone and if so, when, a list of special task forces or teams of which the officer was a member, dates when the officer was promoted or received an award, any lawsuits or documented misconduct, and any stories circulated in the community about particular officers or clusters of officers. These became critical maps for advancing a collective research project on community safety. They were used in tandem with spaces that prioritized community knowledges, and formed a critical aspect of the process of building a shared analysis. The timelines and related department cartographies formed a map that facilitated the exposure and archiving of moments of state-manufactured violence. Community members shared histories where officers had fabricated stories or circulated misleading information about events within a community, for example, naming a perpetrator falsifying a related crime and then circulating a home addresses among those who had been harmed or stood to be harmed. These could be both read against the timelines and further linked with other systems of information already in place.

One cartography that emerged from these spaces of convivial research focused on Oakland was comprised of a series of timelines that graphed the

Oakland Police Department through a succession of chiefs and department practices that emerged in the public eye as scandals often through major cases brought by the community against the police, as well emerging policing strategies both locally and in the context of the state, including Los Angeles. Through this cartography, a specific narrative emerged to address current policing practices and convictions in relation to corrupt and brutal policing practices that led to the Negotiated Settlement Agreement that was put into place with the OPD as a surveillance and monitoring system following the infamous Riders' scandal that broke in 2001. From here, a number of convictions, homicides, and police murders could then be juxtaposed onto the collective timelines.

These timelines expose the ways that counterinsurgency tactics are present in the overt policing strategies advanced through Bratton-style policing and paramilitary formations like the Crime Reduction Teams (CRTs) and at the time had less obvious manifestations in the legislative and juridical realm.

The timelines as a tool also remained in organic circulation across other spaces of convergence. In the spring of 2015, CCRA was part of a collective that convened a People's Movement Assembly against militarization. Organized as a "rolling assembly", the People's Movement Assembly against militarization resulted in several meetings leading up to, and beyond, the US Social Forum held in June in San Jose. Together with a number of other collectively generated maps, we enlarged both the San Francisco and Oakland timelines to the size of a large banner and hung them on the walls for the series of gatherings that formed the rolling assembly. The timelines formed both a new research strategy and a

moment of engagement and narration, as those gathered, including families and groups from across the state engaged the timelines. They noted where they saw their own experiences reflected in the timelines and also participated in a shared archiving project by noting other killings, violences, and strategies that were missing from the emergent cartography.⁴⁶ In this way, the timelines also facilitated a “drift.” The drift is best understood as an ethnographic tool that is similar to an informal and unwritten survey where those asking the questions are also part of the community. Researchers and community members proceed in a given area connecting with an open prompt that unfolds through mutual connections around shared experiences. As such, the drift poses a radical critique of the traditional “data” at the base of quantitative and qualitative social science approaches and deconstructs the dominant epistemology that determines those “problems” in need of “solutions” (and the funding that accompanies such problem-naming and solving) that motors much current social science and policy research.⁴⁷ Analyzing the timelines as a tool is informed by the innovations of the drift as a particular research approach advanced by feminist community researchers from the Madrid-based feminist collective Precarias a la Deriva. Precarias a la Deriva rely on the Situationist practice of moving through space without a particular direction as a kind of moving research approach, but they

⁴⁶ For more details on the rolling assembly, including the larger space of the People’s Movement Assembly against Militarization held during the US Social Forum in San Jose on June 26, 2015, see Center for Convivial Research and Autonomy, “PMA against Militarization.”

⁴⁷ See Scheurich, “Policy Archaeology.”

supplement the strategy by deliberately engaging others in informal conversation. From here, recent methodological innovations by Maria Isabel Casas-Cortes and Sebastian Cobarrubias advanced a research strategy where the moving inquiry can include elements that are stationary. Casas-Cortes and Cobarrubias' recent militant investigation details the instituting of a stationary drift to establish a site of inquiry at a specific strategic location where relations between workers and capital could be explored through encounter. In their approach, the drift was combined with a cartography project to map these relations across the space of the university as a site of knowledge production and precarity in the current conjuncture of cognitive capital. Here, the movement and inquiry unfolds through informal conversations at one specific location but remain situated within an ethnographic strategy of observant-participation. As a research strategy, it involves direct engagement that asks questions and makes observations of people's everyday lives and histories in specific spaces and struggles.⁴⁸

From these convivial research moments, a collective analysis and moments of collective ethnography emerged that exposed the impact of militarized policing, illuminated strategies of counterinsurgency aimed at the

⁴⁸ Precarias a la Deriva develops "the drift" in two recent articles, "A Very Careful Strike" and "Adrift Through the Circuits." Casas-Cortes and Cobarrubias' recent militant investigation details the instituting of a stationary drift to establish a site of inquiry at a particular location where relations between workers and capital could be explored through encounter. In their approach, the drift was combined with a cartography project to map these relations across the space of the university as a site of knowledge production and precarity in the current conjuncture of cognitive capital. See Casas-Cortes and Cobarrubias, "Drifting through the Knowledge Machine."

social factory, and contributed to the circulation of struggle across networked community safety projects. This is what this project attempts to narrate.

In the introduction, I establish war as a category of analysis, where “security” as an epistemological obstacle and its function as *dispostif* can be made observable as communities of struggle surface and engage a number of “knowleges”—subjugated, insurrectionary, poetic, situated and so on. This provides a way to read “community safety” against “security.”

In the chapter following the introduction, I explore low intensity war as a strategy of counterinsurgency aimed at the social factory. While many approaches to counterinsurgency focus on the control of population, I argue that the category of the social factory exposes a war organized through a *dispostif* of security that relies on multiple operations of power—sovereign, disciplinary and biopolitical. Policing strategies and practices that target particular communities, populations, and bodies through forms of racial violence and terror make use of spatial regimes, forming a “security” based on violence, control and restriction. However, the counterinsurgency aimed at the social factory is one that disrupts relations, community bonds, and the sites of community reproduction. I argue that as a strategic concept, the social factory illuminates sites of collective struggle and can advance community efforts at autonomy.

In the next chapter, I rely on the geographic “territory” of 14th and Broadway in Oakland to examine struggles against militarization and racial violence across the Bay Area and its connected periphery areas. This intersection and its adjacent “Oscar Grant Plaza,” renamed following the BART police

execution of Grant in 2009, functions as a space of convergence of multiple struggles. Through this space and the various forces that intersect there, we can read the cycles of struggle and collective moments of recomposition situated within the current conjuncture of capital. Geographically, it also provides a center point for an elaboration of the greater Bay Area as an economic enclave organized through both capital and competing race projects.

The focus in chapter 4 is on the struggles of families to connect across violence, respond to state violence and the subsequent criminalization of the family and community as the state attempts to justify its own “official violence” through a deployed “social death.” The focus on the work of Mesha Monge-Irizarry, mother of Idriss Stelley and Kat Espinosa, mother of Asa Sullivan, provides two points of struggle over a fifteen-year period of Bay Area justice struggles centered in San Francisco. This chapter illuminates community efforts across the Bay to reclaim justice from the state, organize in defense of their communities, and turn spaces of criminalization, like the courts, into direct action spaces in services of community struggles.

In chapter 5, the focus is on the 2013 police killing in Berkeley of a Kayla Xavier Moore, a transgender woman who was killed in custody when police responded to a mental crisis call in her Berkeley apartment. Occurring at the intersection of “vulnerable bodies” and an emergent militarization of care, the killing of Kayla Moore can be read against capitalist restructuring and militarized policing. This chapter advances a number of diverse community safety projects organized through an enduring grassroots investigation that included creative and

militant insurgencies, collective spaces of research and assembly, and shaped vital moments of community regeneration in the aftermath of violence.

Chapter 6 explores the justice campaigns of families as sites of research and learning taking place across community barbecues, and elaborates on a series of convivial research projects and collective investigations based on incidents in Oakland that give shape to a collective analysis of the relations between state violence and forms of state-manufactured violence. These convivial research projects have exposed a series of policing strategies as forms of counterinsurgency directed at families and relations across communities, in particular, through “social network analysis.” The rise of mass incarceration in California can also be read through these investigations.

Chapter 7 engages a series of community safety projects emerging from the current context of “security” and racialized violence across the greater Bay Area. The chapter focuses on several interconnected spaces and projects including the Social Factory Ateneo and the Love Balm Project, and the People’s Community Medics. Each of these projects exposes attacks on the social factory while claiming sites of struggle. Organized through a “politics of care,” these are projects that take on the obligation of a collective remembering, negotiate “commons” in relation to urban space, and share systems of information across regions, linking communities through space and time.

Throughout, the project remains community to a convivial research strategy that refuses to objectify communities of struggle and that emerges from struggles already being waged from within communities. The hope is that this

work will contribute to a collective analysis and collective research project already underway and strengthen the many insurgencies, dignified revolts and spaces of regeneration that are alive across diverse communities, in the Bay Area and beyond.

INTRODUCTION: COMMUNITY SAFETY, SECURITIZATION, WAR

What did you hear in silence?
-Universidad de la Tierra Califas, collective ethnography⁴⁹

“We want names!” The call that was issued in front of the San Francisco Federal Building was for Alex Nieto, a life taken on March 21, 2014. It was December 3, 2014; the first court date of the civil suit, *Refugio & Elvira Nieto v City and County of San Francisco*. Under the name “Justice for Alex Nieto,” (J4AN) a collective of community members and friends of Nieto with the Nieto family at the center had been organizing since the San Francisco Police Department (SFPD) shooting in Bernal Heights Park that took Nieto’s life earlier in the spring of 2014. Through marches, rallies, speak outs, ceremonial gatherings and other direct action spaces, including “burritos on Bernal,” a monthly evening vigil walk up the hill where Nieto had been killed, the family and community had continued to come together to remember, grieve collectively, and seek justice.⁵⁰

The mobilizations pressured the city to disclose more details about the

⁴⁹ Callahan, “UT Califas Theses clinic summary, 5-3-14,” (summary), para. 5. The articulation of this question emerged from the collective ethnography produced through a series of “spaces of encounter,” convened by Universidad de la Tierra Califas, and organized through a collective process that includes collectively produced announcements, collectively generated questions, collective agreements, and collectively produced summaries for the spaces convened. Specifically, this question was articulated in the collectively produced summary following the Uni Tierra Califas Thesis Clinic on relational *testimonio*, held in San Jose on May 3, 2014, with members of The Love Balm Institute, Radio Autonomía, ICMC, Freedom Speaks Radio, People's Investigations, CCRA, The California Coalition for Women Prisoners (CCWP), and The Hutto Visitation Program of Austin, Texas.

⁵⁰ The community mobilization, Justice and Love for Alex Nieto, emerged as a powerful justice campaign in response to the shooting in March of 2015. See Justice for Alex Nieto website, including Justice for Alex Nieto, “Burritos on Bernal.”

circumstances of the killing. On this day eight months later, the family and community gathered in the plaza with their demands and offered coffee and flyers to people crossing the plaza and entering the building, informing them of the status of the case.⁵¹ Department of Homeland Security agents watched the plaza action from inside the building's securitized lobby. At the center of the direct action the parents of Alex Nieto stood straight under black umbrellas sheltering them from the cold rain. They addressed those gathered in Spanish and a few words in an English largely unfamiliar to them. Between them they held a banner with the words, Justice and Love for Alex Nieto.

A little over eight months prior, on March 21, 2014, Alex Nieto had been shot at least fifteen times by San Francisco police while sitting on a hill overlooking the city at sunset. He had been eating dinner before going to work his evening job as a security guard at El Toro nightclub in the Mission District. Police arrived in response to a 911 call placed by a man walking his dog who indicated that Nieto looked suspicious while eating his burrito. Nieto, the caller had noted, had a Taser holstered on his hip.⁵² Within minutes after police arrived, they shot Nieto dead. At the time of the shooting, Alex Nieto was twenty-eight years old.

He was the first person killed by San Francisco police in 2014, the eleventh killed

⁵¹ Among the groups gathered was a collective based at an anarchist house in the Mission District, Station 40, that had organized to bring hot coffee to give out at the rally. This was loosely connected to a monthly "Coffee Not Cops" effort also initiated by Station 40 that met at the entry to the 24th Street and Mission Street BART subway station in San Francisco to share coffee while copwatching and encouraging others to copwatch. On December 3, 2014, they handed out paper cups of coffee with anti-cop phrases written in markers on them to those at the rally and those passing through.

⁵² Tasers are legal in California and was a required implement for Nieto's job as a security guard.

since Chief Greg Suhr became Chief of the SFPD in April of 2011, and the eighty-third person killed by law enforcement in San Francisco in twenty-five years.

In the town hall meeting organized by the SFPD five days after the shooting, SFPD Chief Greg Suhr announced that four officers fired shots that killed Nieto but Suhr refused to make public the officers' names. Eight months later, the officers' names still had not been released. Speaking to this delay and lack of disclosure, Deputy Chief Attorney Baumgartner asserted that the city was unable to release the officers' names on the grounds that a threat had been made against the Department as a result of the deadly incident. After eight months of community pressure and under order of the Magistrate Judge, the Deputy Chief Attorney was forced to reveal more information about the police presence at the time of the incident. While she claimed to not have an exact count of all those involved in the incident, in addition to the four officers who fired the deadly shots there were approximately eight to ten other officers present at the time Nieto was killed. Beyond this there were approximately twenty more officers who arrived on the scene to secure the homicide scene following the shooting.

George Ciccariello-Maher argues that “a key pillar of police power is their demand for privacy, enshrined nationwide to the detriment of the public and of the victims of their violence, with several cities and states making it difficult to make public the names of those who kill in the name of the state.”⁵³ Since the California Supreme Court decision in *Copley Press vs. The City of San Diego* in

⁵³ Ciccariello-Maher, “We Must Disband the Police,” para. 17.

2006, together with the Police Officers' Bill of Rights in 1977, the records of police actions have been essentially sealed from public view.⁵⁴ Obstacles to transparency and accountability point to a condition of ongoing impunity in the present, as the state refuses to release information about its own acts of violence. As this introduction and subsequent chapters will explore, these moments of secrecy, silence, and enclosure are key instruments in both the perpetuation and domestication of war.⁵⁵

The series of rallies that had culminated in this particular moment in front of the federal building drew attention to the absence of police department transparency following the killing of Nieto. Exposed was a department, backed by the city, relying on a distant threat against officer safety to justify shielding its officers in the aftermath of a killing.⁵⁶ Further, the rally made clear how the protection of the officers simultaneously interfered with the legal process. How could the lawyers bringing the civil suit against the city on behalf of the Nieto family begin their depositions when no information had been released about who

⁵⁴ According to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) the Copley Press ruling “held that records of an administrative appeal of sustained misconduct charges are confidential and may not be disclosed to the public. The decision prevents the public from learning the extent to which police officers have been disciplined as a result of misconduct.” American Civil Liberties Union, “Frequently Asked Questions about Copley Press and SB 1019,” para. 1. Ciccariello-Maher further states that it is the Police Bill of Rights that insures that California is essentially “at the vanguard” of a trend towards police privacy, arguing that it is this piece of legislation that “effectively shields public servants with guns from even the most basic level of public oversight.” Ciccariello-Maher, “We must disband the police,” para. 17.

⁵⁵ War as a category of analysis is the focus of this introduction and will be explored more fully over the following pages and work as a whole.

⁵⁶ Informed community knowledge circulated at the rallies that the threat had been placed from a person in another country via an online post in the comment section of Facebook.

from the department to depose? The long delay meant that the department itself, together with the District Attorney, managed all details, records, interviews, and statements over the course of the weeks and months following the incident.⁵⁷ Any statements from the officers and witnesses who had been at the scene of the SFPD killing in response to the questions by the plaintiff's legal team would be uttered at a considerable distance from the unfolding of the incident itself—at the moment of the December rally, eight months had gone by without a formal recorded statement on the violence to anyone outside the official structure of the state. In this way, the city effectively filtered from the immediate moment of the

⁵⁷ In the case of an officer involved shooting (OIS), the police department initiates a series of investigations. According to the SFPD General Orders, these include: interviewing and submitting police reports immediately following the incident from all those present as well as commencing an investigation with internal affairs. The department is also required to issue eleven separate notifications of the incident across offices and departments. In all OIS cases, the District Attorney's office also begins their own investigation of the incident. The complete policies are outlined in the SFPD General Orders, "Investigation of Officer Involved Shootings and Discharges," 1–7. At the time that Nieto was killed, the San Francisco District Attorney was George Gascon, who had served as Chief of Police for the San Francisco Police Department from 2009–2011, and prior to that, as Chief of Police in Mesa, Arizona from 2006–2009. Gascon replaced Kamala Harris as San Francisco District Attorney when she became Attorney General of California. When Gascon accepted the position of District Attorney in 2011, he was replaced by Greg Suhr, who was Chief of Police at the time that Nieto was murdered. Thus while there are multiple investigations that are initiated, these investigations are not without ties and relations over many years with the police. As the investigative structure in place at the time that Nieto was killed demonstrates, the city's District Attorney emerged from a career of policing and direct ties to the SFPD. In another example, within a few years following her departure from the SFPD Chief Heather Fong was hired by the Department of Homeland Security as assistant secretary in the Office for State and Local Law Enforcement to serve as a liaison between law enforcement agencies across the state—local, state, tribal, and territorial. In short, in addition to contracted mutual aid agreements, coordinated trainings, and other inter-agency cooperations, there is a significant level of coordination across agencies that draws on histories, relations, and an accumulation of intelligence gathered from local populations and situations, and that circulates through departments and agencies at all levels as people circulate through these same departments and agencies. Thus, claims to independent investigations, both at the level of the District Attorney's office and through departments like the Department of Justice, should be understood in this context.

incident all of the statements of those present on the scene. At the same time, the city's maneuvers to conceal information insured that if the case made it to court it would likely occur years distant from the moment of the killing. Like many justice struggles surrounding incidents of state violence such obstacles insured the Nieto family's struggle would be a protracted one.

The pressure following the SFPD shooting marked a strategic effort on the part of the community to surface details critical to their own grassroots investigation and the family's struggle for truth. Already, these efforts had forced the city to reveal that there were an estimated thirty-four officers present to manage the incident. From here, the community mobilized to learn which officers were on scene the day of the killing and what role they had played. As the Nieto family bore testimony at the rally, spoken mostly in Spanish: they were still waiting to learn what happened to their son.

Relying on details as they became available, a community comprised of Nieto's family and friends, lawyers, and concerned civilians embarked on the process of assembling and archiving the state's actions and statements as a way of advancing the investigation of the incident, mapping the strategies in place that led to the killing, and cataloguing the steps the state took to construct Nieto as a threat. The family made public that following the shooting, the police had come into their home without a warrant and searched Nieto's room, without sharing with the family that Nieto was already dead. Through direct actions supported by a community organized web and social media presence, the family also shared the

autopsy report, which contradicted the original narrative released by police to the public.⁵⁸

A community's efforts to learn details about the violence that has targeted it and to share experiences surrounding this violence works in service of their own

⁵⁸ The details of the process and the experience of the family come from a number of rallies and protests where information was shared publicly on numerous occasions as well as the Justice for Alex Nieto website, maintained and updated following the killing of Nieto. The autopsy report revealed that Nieto had been shot several times in the back, with several shots fired from an angle below him—as if he been moving away from the attack up the hill. While in some case the autopsy report can expose inconsistencies in the police narratives, increasingly, families and community members are calling for independent autopsies to be conducted following a police killing, as the Chief Medical Examiner's office is seen as supporting state narratives and justifying police violence through physical, scientific evidence. For example, in the case of San Francisco, the Chief Medical Examiner's Office is situated within the Forensic Pathology Department of the city and works closely with the police department following a killing. Further, it is not uncommon for the police to restrict the release of an autopsy report for many months on the basis that the case remains under open investigation. The role of the Chief Medical Examiner's office in both justifying violence and interfering with accurate record keeping regarding incidents of state violence can be elucidated through the previously mentioned case of Aaron Williams, killed by the SFPD in June of 1996. Aaron Williams was attacked by twelve police officers who repeatedly kicked him, "hog-tied" him (a position where a person's wrists and ankles are bound together behind their back), pepper sprayed him repeatedly in the face and then put a mask over his face and mouth and left him for an extended period in the back of a police van in high temperatures where he died. The twelve-officer team that attacked Williams was led by SFPD Officer Marc Andaya who under his previous tenure with the Oakland Police Department, according to the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights, had "37 prior complaints of police brutality, five lawsuits alleging racism and abuse, and one other death of an unarmed man of color" prior to being hired by the SFPD. Van Jones, "Lessons from a Killing," para. 5. Williams' death following this beating and abandonment was attributed by San Francisco Medical Examiner Boyd Stephens to "excited delirium" also known as "acute excited delirium" or "sudden in custody death syndrome" and other similar names. See Gaura, "Clues to Police Custody Deaths," para. 4. This "syndrome" that emerged in the mid 1990s frames the person killed by police as responsible for their own death following the encounter, and is attributed to such factors—usually following a beating or other incident of excessive force—as the person's weight, breathing capacity, heart functioning, or supposed drug or alcohol use. Cast as an emergent "syndrome" it served to weave the Medical Examiner's office into the justification of police murders. For information on inconsistencies in the Nieto autopsy report, see Justice for Alex Nieto, "Drawing and Analysis of Autopsy Report." For reporting on the incident involving Aaron Williams based on extensive community investigation including into the records of Marc Andaya, see Van Jones, "Lessons from a Killing." On "excited delirium" as an emergent syndrome and evidence of the role of dominant media in promoting the syndrome, see Gaura, "Clues to Police Custody Deaths."

and larger struggles for justice. The concrete details edge the family and community closer to an understanding of the incident that took a life—an act which in all cases, severs relationships and bonds that form a community and hold it together across space and time. These details are also critical in challenging the state’s attempts to devalue the life that was taken and by extension, the attempt by the state to devalue families and communities through multiple forms of criminalization following an incident of state violence. Theorized by Ruth Wilson Gilmore and Manuel Callahan as “ideological surplus value” and critical to an understanding of racialization processes historically and in the present, criminalization functions to produce subjects as dangerous, threatening, and placing the rest of the population “at risk.”⁵⁹ As this ethnographic study will explore, “ideological surplus value” becomes a key instrument at the intersection of the state and capital for managing social antagonisms and masking a war directed at specific populations and the relations that bind them. For Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos, the new war is a “war from above,” one that “imposes a new geography” as the “attacking force destroys and depopulates its own territory...and reconstructs and reorders it according to its plan for conquest or request.”⁶⁰

Moments of resistance like the Nieto rally in December often have as their most prominent and legible strategy the call for specific information to be

⁵⁹ See Gilmore, “Globalisation and US prison growth,” 178; Callahan, “In Defense of Conviviality,” 6.

⁶⁰ See Marcos, *Notes on Wars*, 14.

disclosed. Yet even when these actions are aimed at the institutions of the state the resistances are never encompassed entirely by the demands they call out. On one level the demands function as a tool and site of engagement with the state.⁶¹ They contribute to a moment of collective affirmation that such knowledge exists and that the state is actively protecting this information from disclosure. However, neither the demands nor the spaces constructed to voice them are focused exclusively on the state, as the series of other actions in the J4AN make evident: as direct action spaces they exceed the liberal frames of “accountability” and “transparency.” These spaces are constructed from within a diffuse relation of power, and the demand that the state relinquish its secrets is a challenge. Such spaces and the demands put forward through them expose a “security” apparatus that protects police who kill. Organized from within the community, they reveal the functioning of the police department, and by extension the state, as it manages

⁶¹ A community’s construction of tools is used here in the sense of Ivan Illich’s convivial tools, and is theorized through a larger convivial research approach highlighting the collective generation of new tools in service of community struggles.

its own violence against the community in the name of security.⁶² Beyond this, these are spaces of research and interrogation where knowledges are exposed and generated that are critical to a community's resilience and survival against the onslaught of militarization. These knowledges hold the capacity to shape collective refusals and acknowledgements. As such, they are sites of self-valorization—as a collective practice outside the valorizing apparatus of the state—and key sites in a community's struggles for autonomy.⁶³

⁶² Jorge Gonzalez's methodology of constructing observables provides a methodology for delineating "security" versus "community safety," reflecting two contradictory epistemological positions and accompanying practices. See Gonzalez, "The Willingness to Weave;" and Gonzalez, "Cultural Fronts;" and Varela, "Whence Perceptual Meaning?" See, also, Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, "Constructing Observables." This analysis of the neoliberal security state provides an opportunity to map the militarization of the police in relation to strategies of differential policing that occur, in the case of this dissertation within the economic contours of the Bay Area as an enclave economy shaped in the present through cognitive capital. As I will further elaborate, this provides the basis for the conjunctural analysis based on "cycles of struggle" underlying the dissertation. I am grateful to Manuel Callahan for his analysis of the Bay Area in the current conjuncture as an enclave economy. It is important to note that the emergence of new forms of capitalist organization of accumulation and imposition do not displace the old forms, and numerous layers of these process can exist simultaneously, targeting different populations, territories, types of work, socialization processes, and so on. For a discussion of this "overlapping" see, for example, Caffentzis and Federici, "Notes on the Edu-Factory;" R. Williams, "Dominant, Residual, and Emergent;" Rolph-Trouillot, "Culture on the Edges." For a discussion of cycles of struggle, see Bell and Cleaver, "Marx's Theory of Crisis as a Theory of Class Struggle;" on neoliberal violence see in particular Acción Zapatista's six-part pamphlet series prepared for the Zapatista intercontinental, Acción Zapatista, "Neoliberalism." On cognitive capitalism see Boutang, *Cognitive Capitalism*; Roggero, *The Production of Living Knowledge*, ix; Marazzi, *The Violence of Financial Capitalism*.

⁶³ For Cleaver and Esteva self-valorization, or valorization outside the state and capital, remain central to a community's struggles for regeneration and justice, another point I will elaborate further over the course of the dissertation. See Cleaver, "The Inversion of Class Perspective;" Esteva, "Regenerating People's Space."

From Ferguson to the Bay Area

A few weeks prior to the Nieto rally on the other side of the Bay in downtown Oakland, the ICMMC hosted a gathering that brought together families targeted by state violence from the North Bay, East Bay, Peninsula, and Central Valley.⁶⁴ Following the prominent police killings earlier in the summer of Eric Garner in Staten Island in July and Michael Brown in Ferguson in August, ICMMC founders Anita Wills and Dionne Smith-Downes had travelled to Ferguson and joined in the rebellions, sharing stories with community members there of the violence and struggles unfolding in the Bay Area. ICMMC framed the November gathering as Fighting Jim Crow from Ferguson to the Bay Area, marking an effort to more fully draw connections between local struggles and the late summer insurrections in Ferguson.

At the November gathering organized by the ICMMC, a woman from each of seven families across the Bay Area retold an incident that brutally ended or incarcerated the life of a loved one. Joined together on a raised stage at the front of the hall to tell their stories were Cadine Evans, sister of O'Shaine Evans of Oakland, killed while sitting in his car by plainclothes San Francisco police on October 7, 2014; Mesha Monge-Irizzary, mother of Idriss Stelley, killed by a tactical team of San Francisco police while standing alone in a movie theater on June 12, 2001; Dolores Piper, great aunt of Derrick Gaines, killed while lying on his back in a gas station parking lot by South San Francisco police on June 5,

⁶⁴ The ICMMC event took place at Humanist Hall in Oakland on Friday, November 14, 2014.

2012; Cynthia Mitchell, sister of Mario Romero, killed while sitting in his car talking with a friend outside his home by Vallejo Police on September 2, 2012; Dionne Smith-Downes, mother of James Earl Rivera Jr., killed while pinned in a crashed van by Stockton Police and a San Joaquin Sheriff Deputy, on July 22, 2012; Anita Wills, mother of Kerry Baxter Sr., imprisoned on a sixty-six year sentence under questionable policing practices and court procedures in September of 2003; and grandmother of Kerry Baxter, Jr., murdered on the streets of Oakland in an unresolved homicide on January 16, 2011. Kathleen Espinosa, who had since moved from San Francisco to Spokane, Washington, remained present in the Bay Area struggle by sharing a statement that was presented to those gathered about her son, Asa Sullivan, killed while cornered in an attic crawlspace by San Francisco police on June 6, 2006. Her statement reflected on Asa, their family's struggle, and the recent civil trial against the SFPD in Oakland from September through October of 2014.⁶⁵ All of those killed or imprisoned were young men—Black, Brown, indigenous, mixed race.

Even before the highly visible killings in Ferguson and Staten Island over the summer of 2014, and later in Baltimore in the Spring of 2015 with the killing of Freddie Gray, the rallies, marches and vigils across the greater Bay Area in response to police killings of Black and Brown people had been growing in frequency and intensity over the course of recent years—from the murders of

⁶⁵ The SFPD officers named in the suit include Chief Heather Fong and officers John Keesor, Michelle Alvis, and Paul Morgado. With the work of Colectivo Situaciones, this work remains committed to the practice of naming those officers responsible for the killings. See Colectivo Situaciones, *Genocide in the Neighborhood*.

Oscar Grant shot by BART police while face down on a subway platform; to Kenneth Harding, Jr. shot by San Francisco police and then cordoned by police and left to bleed out on a Bayview open plaza; to Raheim Brown shot by Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) police while sitting in a car outside a school dance; to Alan Blueford shot in a driveway by Oakland police; to Kayla Moore, crushed under the weight of at least five Berkeley police officers in her own apartment; to Anthony Lopez shot by Santa Rosa police while walking down an afternoon street.⁶⁶

Against this onslaught of violence, families and community members continued to respond by holding vigils and making banners and flyers naming the family member killed. They connected with other families to speak about their losses in common spaces and at rallies. They led marches that filled streets and sidewalks across the Bay. They took over freeways, and congregated in front of city halls, court buildings, police stations, campuses, and in local parks. The November event hosted by the ICMHC reflected this sustained moment, marking one of the larger convergences where families came together in a shared

⁶⁶ Oscar Grant was killed on January 1, 2009, by BART police officer Johannes Mehserle. Kenneth Harding Jr. was killed on July 16, 2011, while the SFPD has issued a number of contradictory accounts of what happened, the officers on the scene at the time that Harding was shot were SFPD officers Richard Hastings and Matt Lopez. Chatman, “Cop who Murdered Kenneth Harding,” para. 2; Kearn, “Mom Claims Cops Killed Son,” para. 2. Raheim Brown was killed on January 22, 2011, by Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) police officer Barhin Bhatt; OUSD officer John Bellusa was also on the scene and later deposed against Officer Bhatt. Alan Blueford was killed on May 6, 2012, by Oakland police officer Miguel Masso, and Kayla Moore stopped breathing on February 13, 2013, after a group of Berkeley police officers entered her home. Those officers on the scene included Gwendolyn Brown, Kenneth Tu, Brandon Smith, Brian Mathias, Tim Gardner, Nikos Kastmiller, and Sergeant Benjamin Cardoza. See Berkeley Police Department, “Police Report.” Anthony Lopez was killed on October 22, 2013, by Sonoma County Sheriff’s Deputy Erick Gelhaus.

community space to speak about the violence that had targeted their family and the ensuing struggle for safer communities and for justice—the meaning of which, as several families spoke about, became central to the struggle itself. As families came together from across regions—urban and periphery—stories overlapped in the space, weaving together disparate geographies and experiences of racial violence reflected across many years.⁶⁷ In speaking, women remembered through *testimonio* the life lived and the dreams of the person taken, the others left behind.⁶⁸ Almost all recalled the precise details of violence—including the number of bullets that had destroyed that life. They spoke of the aftermath of violence as well, and the struggle to hold a family together while grappling with the loss at the same time embarking on justice struggles organized around the loss.

Each woman’s story unfolded with a violent death and a gaping hole at the center of a web of policing practices and strategies surrounding the moment of violence. They spoke to the state’s efforts to devalue the life of the person taken. Speaking directly to the circulation of disinformation and misinformation, families retold the damaging impact of police departments working in tandem with a dominant media to criminalize those killed after the shooting. One of the

⁶⁷ Further on, this dissertation will elaborate the role of these spaces in fostering a “living archive” as critical to the “circulation of struggle.” For living archive, I am grateful to the theorizations of Manuel Callahan and CCRA. For circulation of struggle, Cleaver is the point of original reference. See, for example, Cleaver, “The Zapatistas and the International Circulation of Struggle.”

⁶⁸ For more on *testimonio*, see Latina Feminist Group, *Telling to Live*. See also Callahan, “UT Califas Theses clinic announcement, 11-2-13;” “UT Theses Clinic, Saturday, May 3, 2014;” and “UT Califas Theses clinic summary, 5-3-14.”

women recalled the death of her brother, “It’s like they killed him twice—once with bullets and again in the news.” Other families nodded to affirm this.⁶⁹

The stories revealed resonances across racialized geographies.⁷⁰ Details reverberated as shared experiences in the stories recounted. Families testified to homes being searched by police immediately following a killing. In most cases, the search occurred before the family learned that a loved one had been killed. In many cases, details that were offered by the state at the time of the search were deliberately misleading regarding the incident of violence that provoked the search, often functioning to draw the family in to the state’s process of

⁶⁹ This statement was made by Cynthia Mitchell at the ICMC gathering at Humanist Hall, November 2014. See Mitchell, “Fighting Jim Crow.” Author’s notes. This assertion, “they killed him twice” exposes the state’s attempt to erase its own acts of violence by constructing a narrative that catalyzes what Lisa Marie Cacho has elaborated more fully as “social death” for the individual target of violence as well as the larger community. See Cacho, *Social Death*. My use of the terms “misinformation” and “disinformation” specifically call attention to strategies of low intensity war, a framing that I will revisit through the work of Timothy Dunn and Manuel Callahan. This moment of discursive criminalization is one that recurs throughout family narratives and evidences the state’s attempt to allocate social death to individual and communities. Yet, as the *testimonios* and actions from the community make observable, this social death is always an incomplete, frayed strategy which communities resist and confront across multiple sites and at multiple levels. In short, this statement by the sister of Mario Romero following the killing in Vallejo marks the unequivocal refusal of this social death by his family and larger community, and a moment of naming the state’s strategy across a larger architecture of security that includes dominant media.

⁷⁰ Through the work of the dissertation, I will argue that as families come together to share stories across geographic spaces that their mobilizations make observable racial violences as well as resistances that can be understood in relation to regions and spatial zones shaped by capital. Racialized geographies can include for example, access to private property and the management of property values as a race project advanced by the state. See, Self, *American Babylon*; as well as, for example, property inscribed by racialized understandings of “crime” and proscribed by policing strategies such as gang injunctions; forces of gentrification and displacement that shift the demographics of urban and rural areas; a “proliferation” of borders, to borrow from Mezzadra and Neilson, that insure that checkpoints of various forms are managed in the interior space of the state; and so on. See Mezzadra and Neilson, “Borderscapes of Differential Inclusion,” 190.

criminalization following a killing. *Did he ever speak of depression or taking his own life? Did he have a history of trouble, or friends that were troublemakers? Did he carry a gun often?* And so on. There were multiple stories of family members being detained by police and interrogated for hours after a killing without being told of the fate of a loved one.⁷¹ Through the stories shared, families exposed multiple forms of criminalization, militarization and state scrutiny targeting their communities, families, and homes.⁷²

While the J4AN December direct action at the San Francisco Federal Courthouse exposed the state in critical ways by making use of what the state sought to keep as its secret, the families gathered at the ICMMC event a few weeks earlier constructed a space for community *testimonio*, sharing what Donna Haraway theorizes as “situated knowledges” that had been overwritten, silenced,

⁷¹ An example of this interrogation of a family that can be traced from the moment following a police killing to the police defense in trial many years later is detailed in depth in the chapter focusing on the SFPD killing of Asa Sullivan.

⁷² By militarization I refer to the increasing violence, forms of surveillance, and technologies of control deployed by the state differentially against communities as a neoliberal strategy of low intensity war discourses as “security.” Militarization can be read through the actions of the agents of the state, particularly policing, as well as through its impact on communities in its capacity to produce “subaltern” violence (narco-violence, gang violence, community shootings, etc.) Militarization in the “social factory” and including the militarization of care that has emerged in the dismantling of the Welfare State is a central area of focus of the larger dissertation project and is elaborated more fully throughout this document. On militarization in a US context, see for example, James, *Warfare in the American Homeland*; Parenti, *Lockdown America*; M. Davis, *City of Quartz*. I draw on the work of Callahan and Dunn to articulate tactics of low intensity war in the present. These include military attacks, police attacks, paramilitary/military violence within community spaces, the circulation of disinformation and misinformation, and the deliberately uneven distribution of social aid. I am grateful for the Advanced Seminar with Callahan, Fall 2013, and in particular conversations around border militarization and violence with colleague Abby Wheatley. On low intensity war, I draw on the work of Callahan, “Permanent War and Crisis” and Dunn, *The Militarization of the U.S.-Mexico Border*. I also rely on K. Williams, “The Other Side of the COIN.”

or rendered nearly inaccessible to logic.⁷³ Here, in a community gathering among families, *testimonios* gave rise to questions, formulated in an open space. Why would officers from six different agencies stalk a sixteen-year-old boy and fire forty-eight shots at him and then refuse to let his mother near his dying body? Why would the state circulate incomplete information about the number of agencies involved in his murder? Why would a task force empty a movie theater and fire forty-eight bullets into a young man standing alone at its center? Why would police enter a home on a “well-being check,” chase someone who they were not looking for and had not threatened anyone in any way into an attic in his own home and shoot him seventeen times as he crouched at the far end? Why would police approach a parked car where two young men sat talking in front of their home and begin firing into the car, and then jump on the hood of the car to fire additional shots, forty total, through the windshield and into the men sitting inside?⁷⁴ How can a community reclaim justice and its own safety in this context?

For the Latina Feminist Group, *testimonio* is “a crucial means of bearing witness and inscribing into history those lived realities that would otherwise succumb to the alchemy of erasure.”⁷⁵ *Testimonios* weave elements of storytelling, oral history, diverse moments of witnessing and local knowledges, as

⁷³ See Haraway, “Situated Knowledges.”

⁷⁴ The first two questions emerge from the killing of James Rivera; the third question from the killing of Idriss Stelley; the fourth question from the killing of Asa Sullivan; and the fifth from the killing of Mario Romero.

⁷⁵ Latina Feminist Group, “Introduction: *Papelitos Guardados*,” 2.

well as contributing to a collective memory and history.⁷⁶ As families gather to hear *testimonio*, they not only resist forces of erasure, they also share hard earned insights and reflections critical to each other's struggles. In many cases, the knowledges that emerge as *testimonio* also draw attention to a heuristic that has been similarly disqualified—it is not only the “knowing” but the ways of knowing that are devalued and then discarded. In these spaces, collective questions are generated.

As an autonomous horizontal research and learning initiative, Uni Tierra Califas has advanced over the course of the past several years, beginning roughly in 2011, a collective reflection and action project on “community safety” across the Bay Area. Organized through the components of defense, justice, care, and relying on spaces of assembly as sites of listening, shared decision making and community-determined *cargos*, or obligations, community safety is a convivial research project that places shared learning, collectively generated questions and the co-generation of knowledge at the center of struggles for autonomy. The work of Uni Tierra Califas’ elaborates moments of community *testimonio* as critical in advancing a community’s knowledge about the conditions that they face, where practices of *testimonio* and “relational *testimonio*” as collective, co-generated knowledges hold “possibilities for the emergence of a collective ethnography, one where the process of research and shared learning is central to our struggles and

⁷⁶ Ibid.

our care for each other.”⁷⁷ *Testimonios* and spaces of relational *testimonio* form a vital part of what Manuel Callahan theorizes as “temporary autonomous zones of knowledge production,” (TAZKP). These are potent moments in community struggles for safety, dignity, and autonomy. In these spaces, new knowledges emerge, are generated, and circulate through “open systems of information.” Understood as moments of struggle, TAZKP also advance theories of knowledge production and a community’s own efforts to reclaim the knowledges being produced about them. TAZKP make transparent and accessible the understanding that the way,

we structure the ways we come together and tell our stories affects how we tell our stories. This precept resonates with a fundamental approach...drawn from cybercultura and the work of Jorge Gonzalez and the *Laboratorio de Investigación y Desarrollo en Comunicación Compleja*

⁷⁷ Callahan, “UT Califas Theses clinic announcement, 11-2-13,” para. 2. Uni Tierra Califas has elaborated on a distinction posed by the Latina Feminist Group between *testimonio* and “relational *testimonio*” where the latter refers to collective, co-generated processes of knowledge production where stories are shared and collaboratively produced as people retell memories, experiences, reflections, and insights in the space of conversation. Both *testimonio* and relational *testimonio* are critical to community-based investigations as well as the health and strength of a community. Uni Tierra Califas’ situates relational *testimonio* within a convivial research approach, weaving together the work of the Latina Feminist Group with Jorge Gonzalez’s theorizations on knowledge production, as well as marking the central role of shared research as critical to advancing our struggles, as in the work of Costa Vargas’ “Activist Scholarship.” See also Callahan, “UT Califas Theses clinic announcement, 11-2-13;” “UT Theses Clinic, Saturday, May 3, 2014;” and “UT Califas Theses clinic summary, 5-3-14.” This theorization has elaborated collectively as part of ongoing collective ethnography produced in numerous shared, horizontal research spaces and is reflected in the Theses Clinic as well as the Democracy and the Social Factory *ateneo* summaries between 2011–2015. These theorizations will also be explored more fully throughout the dissertation.

(LabCOMplex), namely, ‘the way we organize ourselves to produce knowledge determines the knowledge we produce’.”⁷⁸

Such “spaces of encounter” that create conditions for *testimonio*, relational *testimonio*, and other forms of disqualified, subjugated and insurrectionary knowledges to surface and circulate are critical to the shared efforts of families and communities to confront the violences they face.⁷⁹ They contribute to a collective “system of information” through which a community of struggle relies to reflect on what they know, what they must do, and what their hopes are.⁸⁰ Systems of information both draw on and expand the situated and local

⁷⁸ Callahan, “UT Califas Theses clinic summary, 5-3-14,” para. 3. This connection between *testimonio*, relational *testimonio*, storytelling, and knowledge production was the focus of Uni Tierra’s Thesis Clinic in May of 2014. Among those present to generate these connections in the *taller* were participants from ICMC, The Love Balm Institute, Radio Autonomía, Freedom Speaks Radio, People’s Investigations, CCRA, CCWP, and The Hutto Visitation Program of Austin, Texas. Additionally, in Uni Tierra Califas’ work with Quad films in the summer of 2014, we explored “investigative *testimonios*” as a strategic component for engaging witnesses and community members in collective, community-based investigations and in particular people’s investigations as part of a larger strategy of community safety and de-militarization. See Callahan, “*Relational Testimonio taller w/ Quad Productions.*”

⁷⁹ Here, I specifically reference Foucault’s “knowledges,” from Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 1–22, an exploration and excavation I will return to more fully in the following section.

⁸⁰ This echoes a strategic outline advanced by C.L.R. James, “What do we know, What must we do, What do we hope for?” that serves as a basis for a series of facilitation practices and direct action strategies advanced by Uni Tierra Califas in many community and popular education spaces. See, Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Questions,” para. 2. “Systems of information” as a strategic concept is developed in relation to community struggles in the work of Callahan and will be elaborated more fully throughout the dissertation. See, Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Systems of Information.”

knowledges that communities deploy strategically to respond to a number of violences and injustices.⁸¹

As with both the December J4AN rally in San Francisco and the ICMC gathering in Oakland, these systems of information expose and contest the state—its policies and practices, its narratives, and its violence. In revealing the state’s tactics and strategies they narrate a low intensity war targeting the spaces where a community reproduces itself, where it lives, plays, and thrives. But they do not only expose violences. These are “insurrectionary knowledges” that emerge collectively to testify to the struggles being waged from within communities.⁸² When families come together through shared experiences of loss, they refuse those “political operations of power” that individualize and instead advance their

⁸¹ I draw here on Callahan’s “theorization of temporary autonomous zones of knowledge production” or TAZKP as outlined in the essay, “In Defense of Conviviality,” as well as related work through the CCRA and the Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning *taller*. “Temporary autonomous zones of knowledge production” (TAZKPs) form one of the central sites of elaboration and exploration in the larger dissertation project. Building on the “temporary autonomous zones” of anarchist and autonomous Marxist praxis as spaces that exist ephemerally outside of the state and are set against the permanence of institutions, this modification by Manuel Callahan places the co-generation of knowledge at the center of these spaces as a convivial praxis. TAZKP are horizontally convened “spaces of encounter” between community members and various political agents and organized around a respect for difference and the dignity of others, as well as a politics of listening that refuses top-down, programmatic approaches to resolving community problems. See, Callahan, “Rebel Dignity.” TAZKP are insurrectionary moments. Similar to Foucault’s “insurrection of subjugated knowledges” these are insurrections that both challenges dominant epistemology and the displacements that it effects by exposing certain silences and at the same time “reactivates local knowledges” and memories. Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 7, 10. Much work has also been done to theorize TAZKP in relation to struggle through Uni Tierra Califas’ *ateneos*.

⁸² Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*: 7, 10. I am grateful to the work of Avery F. Gordon in reactivating this passage in the context of mass incarceration in the US in the present; see Gordon, “Methodologies of Imprisonment,” 7.

struggle as a collective refusal.⁸³ In gathering to share *testimonio* communities expose the multiple violences directed at them—lived, experienced, survived, systemic, everyday, structural, and epistemic. They form vital sites of self-valorization and regeneration against and beyond the state.⁸⁴

This dissertation examines the struggles around community safety and the circulation of these struggles as part of a larger battle for autonomy by demilitarizing and decriminalizing our communities and establishing radical democratic spaces of community renewal.⁸⁵ Community safety challenges the epistemological foundations on which the policing power rests by making

⁸³ For a more thorough analysis of the “political operations of power,” see, Dillon and Andrew, *Foucault on Politics, Security and War*, 5.

⁸⁴ As this dissertation and the many projects it engages rely heavily on the role of knowledge production in relation to social justice movements, and the critical role of “spaces of encounter” in the “circulation of struggle,” I will return to more fully elaborate these terms drawing on Callahan, Cleaver, and Esteva, over the course of the dissertation. I also draw here on the work of CCRA and Callahan in formulating intersecting violences; see Appendix 1, “Analytics of Violence” (schematic).

⁸⁵ As with other strategic concepts in this dissertation, community safety is theorized as a category of analysis, a praxis, a site of knowledge production, and an objective for achieving greater autonomy. The multiple functions of a strategic concept, as elaborated by Callahan in his forthcoming “Rebel Dignity,” will be explored in greater depth in an upcoming section of the dissertation. Community safety is also a project and a political tool. Community safety emerged over time through encounters among diverse groups in the Bay Area and beyond, including from Chiapas, and in particular draw inspiration from the work of the social defense process elaborated by Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas (Frayba) Center for Human Rights in Chiapas, an organization mobilized to confront multiple forms of state violence including attacks against the Zapatista and indigenous communities. Community safety emerged from struggle and through listening and learning from many efforts across California, Mexico, Spain, and throughout Latin and South America. It became articulated through the work of CCRA according to three central components—defense, justice, and care—and linked to assembly. The categories of justice, defense, and care, are strategic, and while each serves a specific purpose as a strategic category, they are simultaneously interrelated and many projects traverse categories. For example, many defense projects are also justice projects, and so on. Community safety in relation to its component parts will be explored more fully later on the dissertation.

observable the multi-faceted resistances to state practices and discursive formations of “security” that support capital expropriation, accumulation, and a variety of interconnected enclosures. This includes the articulation of racial regimes through violence as a strategy of composition aimed at disaggregating working class power that advances what W.E.B. Du Bois theorizes as the white working-class bargain.⁸⁶ By focusing on the “social factory” this dissertation will make visible the impact of a low intensity war directed at women, the household,

⁸⁶ For “racial regimes,” I rely on the work of Cedric Robinson and draw particularly on the scholarship and engagement of H.L.T. Quan. See Robinson, *Forgeries of Memory and Meaning*, especially xi–xx, 272–380; and Quan, “Geniuses of Resistance.” This concept will be elaborated more fully in the following section. For W.E.B. Du Bois’ notion of, “democratic despotism” and the white working class bargain, I draw on Callahan’s use of Du Bois’ “African Roots of War” to develop a theory of race in relation to capital and violence in the present. On the “bargain,” see Callahan, “In Defense of Conviviality,” 19. On “democratic despotism,” *Ibid.*, 3, 6. See, also, Lipsitz, *Possessive Investment in Whiteness*.

and the community.⁸⁷ In addition, this work will chronicle policing strategies and practices in the current conjuncture as a low intensity war that draws on earlier repressive and disciplinary forms of an ongoing colonial occupation working in conjunction with forms of biopower. Reading a proliferation of local struggles and self-organized activities through the state and capital's "prose of counter insurgency" allows for a research approach that takes seriously the community and the activities of women and families targeted by violence as a key site of struggle.⁸⁸ Using a convivial research method that approaches these spaces as

⁸⁷ Here, I draw on the usage of the "social factory" as it emerged from the women's movement, particularly in Italy in the early 1970s, to make visible capital's imposition of work outside of the wage relation, in particular, designating the site of women's unpaid labor in the home. Introduced more fully in the next section, the social factory functions as a strategic concept throughout my larger study to allow for an elaboration of resistances and self-organized activity against militarization of society aimed primarily at the community and its spaces and relations. As a strategic concept elaborated by Uni Tierra Califas, it allows for a mapping of "capital's attempts to displace the costs of reproducing the worker onto women," and makes legible the multiple sites where relations to capital are articulated, resisted, fractured, and remade outside of the workplace determined by the wage. See, Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, "Social Factory," para. 1. Thus, in the present study, in addition to exposing exploitation and violence in the home and reconfiguring our understandings of gender, care, love, and sex in relation to capitalism, the social factory in this sense can also be imagined as the realm where technologies of militarization, mass incarceration, and surveillance are concentrated to discipline and control populations through capital relations outside of the more traditional wage work relation, as well as a site of biopower. I draw on the initial formulations of the social factory deriving from the late 1960s through early 1970s through the work of Mariarosa Dalla Costa and Selma James, Mario Tronti, Silvia Federici, Giovanna Franca Dalla Costa, Leopolda Fortunati, and Harry Cleaver as well as more recent innovations in the work of Manuel Callahan. As a category of analysis in the present, I draw on the ongoing work of women's collectives locally and including in those spaces convened by Uni Tierra Califas and in particular the Social Factory Ateneo in exploring the social factory as a target for various forms of war (low intensity, permanent, domestic) and a site of racial and gender articulation, as well as a site where we are able to locate autonomous struggles historically and in the present. See M. Dalla Costa and James, *The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community*; Cleaver, "The Inversion of Class Perspective;" Federici, *Revolution at Point Zero*; G. F. Dalla Costa, *The Work of Love*; Fortunati, *The Arcane of Reproduction*; Callahan, "In Defense of Conviviality."

⁸⁸ I draw here on Ranajit Guha's work, "The Prose of Counter-Insurgency;" as well as its formulations in Callahan's work, in particular, *Mexican Border Troubles*.

critical sites for the co-generation of knowledge, this work engages a series of interconnected struggles across the Bay Area.⁸⁹ These are struggles that seek to demilitarize targeted micro-regions and that at the same time exhibit a strategic set of investments organized around a “politics of care.”⁹⁰ As grassroots oppositions, they challenge the racialized systems of violence organized through the intersections of the prison industrial complex and military industrial complex as well as its growing reliance on forms of militarized policing locally and abroad. I argue that the convivial space of community regeneration survives against the onslaught of America's investment in democratic despotism by reclaiming the social relations vital to community regeneration in order to provoke new understandings of resistance, autonomy, and movement building both against and beyond the state.

⁸⁹ The convivial research approach as a strategy in producing a collective ethnography and its relation to an emergent collective subject, as well as its connection to Universidad de la Tierra *Califas* as an autonomous learning initiative underway in the Bay Area will be explored more fully over the course of the dissertation.

⁹⁰ Here I rely on “care” as a contested site of social reproduction that makes visible capital’s attempted imposition, privatization, and enclosure, as well as a site of community resilience and autonomy. See Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Social Factory,” para. 1. In formulating thinking around a “politics of care,” I rely on theorizations emerging from recent scholarship and grassroots struggles focusing on care as a site of social antagonism and autonomy. Much of this thinking emerged through the collective theorizations of the Social Factory Ateneo space. See, also, for example, Precarias a la Deriva, “A Very Careful Strike;” as well as the series of essays in De Angelis et al., special issue of *The Commoner: Care Work and the Commons*.

A Glimpse of Militarization in the Present

Mass incarceration, deportations and detentions, surveillance, and the militarization of the police have continued to escalate over the past several decades in the US as part of a globalized neoliberal investment in “security.”⁹¹ Black and Brown communities, and in particular Black and Brown youth, continue to be targeted for execution and brutal attacks and myriad forms of harassment by law enforcement agencies representing police and sheriff departments, highway patrol, transportation police, and private security forces, as well as armed vigilante formations, including neighborhood watch groups and various self-appointed border patrol groups.⁹² The United States, with California at the center, currently has the highest number of people incarcerated in the world including a near 800% rise in incarceration rates of women since 1977 and rising sharply with the introduction of severe drug sentencing since laws the early

⁹¹ The militarization of the US police began in earnest in 1973 and paralleled a level of working class power that had reached levels higher than those in the immediate post World War II period, as demonstrated through a prolific series of strikes, the buying power of the wage, and an attenuated disparity in the wage hierarchy. For a discussion of the militarization of the police, see Parenti, *Lockdown America*. For a discussion of working class power during this period and in relation to wage hierarchies, see Caffentzis, *From Capitalist Crisis to Proletarian Slavery*. For an elaborated, if succinct, discussion on the wage, the wage relation, and the division of waged/unwaged in the context of cycles of struggle, see Zerowork Collective, “Introduction to Zerowork I.” For a discussion of neoliberal security discourses and deployments, see, for example, Rimke, “Security: Resistance;” and also, M. Davis, *City of Quartz*.

⁹² See Malcolm X Grassroots Movement (MXGM) Committee, “Every 36 Hours.” See, also, Eisen, “Operation Ghetto Storm.”

1990s.⁹³ Militarized policing formations including Special Weapons and Tactics teams (SWAT) estimated at between 40,000 and 50,000 paramilitary raids across the United States per year have been at the forefront of routinized home invasions primarily targeting Black and Brown communities.⁹⁴ Deportations executed through the convergence of local police and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) continue to rise in record numbers, terrorizing and breaking apart families and communities. At the same time, drones, robocops, integrated city-wide surveillance systems, facial recognition programs and gang databases cataloguing people both inside and outside prison walls continue to emerge from the university research centers and tech companies of Silicon Valley to flood law enforcement agencies and correctional facilities across the US and beyond, while the Federal government redistributes military grade equipment to even the smallest of towns, and police departments accumulate submarines and assault rifles. This has resulted in a heavy deployment of armored vehicles, tear gas, and riot police, trained to manage populations according to strategic plans and through militarized formations. They advance across city plazas and streets as well as

⁹³ The Sentencing Project reported in 2011 that since 1977, the rate of incarceration for women nationally rose 800%. See, The Sentencing Project, “More Must Be Done”, para. 1. For an elaboration on militarization and the prison industrial complex, see Gilmore, “Globalisation and US Prison Growth,” as well as Gilmore’s seminal study on incarceration in California in the age of neoliberalism, *Golden Gulag*. See also James, *States of Confinement*. For further statistics on US incarceration rates, see, The Sentencing Project. For women’s incarceration rates in particular, see California Coalition for Women Prisoners, “Facts about Women Prisoners,” and factsheets on incarcerated women put out by the ACLU, “Facts about the Over-Incarceration of Women,” as well as The Sentencing Project, “Incarcerated Women Factsheet.”

⁹⁴ Balko, *Overkill*, 11. The rise of SWAT formations as a particular form of militarization and paramilitary engagement with a civilian population, is detailed throughout Balko, *Overkill*. See also Fisher, *SWAT Madness*.

parks and campuses—cordoning, “kettling,” and attacking people on sidewalks, families at barbecues in parks and protestors alike.⁹⁵ Incidents continue to surface where task forces surround homes of people experiencing mental crisis, in many cases escalating the situation into a hostage crisis, or ending with officers rushing or forcing their way into homes, often resulting in shootings and death.⁹⁶ At the same time, stories emerge of officers, both uniformed or in plain clothes, stopping drivers or approaching parked cars or people on the streets and firing a fusillade of deadly shots, often through a person’s back or after they have fallen. In many instances communities witness people shot multiple times by police and then handcuffed while dying in open streets. In multiple cases, police dogs are released to attack the person even after they have been shot and cuffed.

⁹⁵ Cordoning and “kettling” are policing strategies for containing and controlling people in urban spaces. I will return to these practices in subsequent chapters of this dissertation.

⁹⁶ In California, this was true in the case of Erroll Chang in Pacifica on March 20, 2014; Yanira Serano-Garcia in Half-Moon Bay on June 3, 2014; Kayla Xavier Moore in Berkeley on February 13, 2013; Jeremiah Moore in Vallejo on October 20, 2012; and Peter Stewart in Eureka on June 4, 2007, to name only a few. Of note, in 2015, the US Supreme Court ruled in favor of two San Francisco police officers who broke into the apartment of a woman suffering a mental crisis and shot her multiple times. According to the majority decision, SFPD were within the bounds of the law when they forcefully entered Theresa Sheehan’s apartment on August 7, 2008, and proceeded to attack her with pepper spray and repeatedly shoot her while she was experiencing an episode of acute schizophrenia. Sheehan survived the attack, and the court stated that “officers were entitled to qualified immunity because there was no clearly established law barring their conduct.” See, Liptak, “Supreme Court Sides With Police,” para. 5. On June 30, 2015, the *Daily Kos* drew on *Washington Post* figures to highlight that a quarter of people killed by police in the first half of 2015 were mentally ill. See, Blades, “A Fourth of People Killed by Police,” para. 1.

Militarization and Criminalization: Epistemology and Scholarship

Community activists and scholars from across disciplines continue to analyze and respond to the impact of expanding forms of militarization and mass incarceration with outrage, alarm, and community mobilization efforts. Yet many studies reflected in the academy, non-profit reports, and across the media fail to escape an epistemological framework organized around problems of “crime” in underprivileged areas that could be alleviated through greater access to social services and stronger civic institutions.⁹⁷ Such studies reinscribe race and racialized violence as a “site” of social problems. In other cases, the focus remains on challenging racist depictions across cultural products or on a structural racism pervasive across institutions, often arguing for multicultural solutions that fail to address sources of structural violence and the impunity of white supremacy.⁹⁸ More recent literature emerging from fields of criminal justice, justice studies, and sociology challenges epistemological and tactical deployments of “security,” drawing attention to the restructuring of space, intensifying forms of surveillance, the advancement of technologies of control and the rise of the

⁹⁷ For an analysis of the dangers, and profits, involved in naming “problems” to be targeted by policy, see Scheurich, “Policy Archaeology.” See also Roggero, *The Production of Living Knowledge*.

⁹⁸ For a recent seminal study of the pervasiveness of structural racism across the United States in the present, particularly in relation to discrepancies in criminal convictions and sentencing between African Americans and white populations, see, Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*. It is also of note that many studies continue to advance a civil rights discourse and political strategy based on inclusion without sufficiently addressing the racial formations and racialization processes inherent in capitalism, the class violence on which the policing power rests, or the questions of citizenship that mass incarceration re-articulates across particular populations.

carceral state.⁹⁹ Yet while current literature elaborates the emergence and expansion of the Neoliberal Security State and the racialized violence that forms its base, it often fails to fully situate the current conjuncture of capital in the context of an ongoing relation of social antagonism.¹⁰⁰ It also tends to overlook the realm of social reproduction and the battles waged there particularly by women as a site of struggle. Rather, the focus remains on large, anti-state protests like the alterglobalization movement to both assess resistance and examine the “police state,” thus inscribing both civic space and political power according to forms of “spectacular” policing that position the force deployed against the mass protest as the primary articulation of the state’s repressive apparatus.¹⁰¹

While these studies have created vital maps of policing practices over time and continue to inform present studies of policing, there is little in the current research that positions the struggles of the community and the spaces where the community gathers to co-generate knowledge as strategies towards an autonomous alternative, a world without police and police violence. This elision in the literature historically minimizes the everyday policing and multiple forms

⁹⁹ See for example M. Davis, *City of Quartz*; Rimke, “Security: Resistance;” also Simon, *Governing through Crime*; Beckett and Herbert, *Banished*.

¹⁰⁰ Here I draw in particular on Holloway, “Dignity’s Revolt,” and a broader field of autonomous Marxist theory. I will elaborate this notion of social antagonism more fully in the upcoming sections and throughout the dissertation.

¹⁰¹ Several studies focusing on the policing of protest have elucidated key features in a continuity of policing from the “everyday” to the “spectacular.” See for example, Fernandez, *Policing Dissent*. This area of focus on policing also includes prolific research, much of it generated through struggle, that emerged from the rebellions of the 1960s and 1970s and were critical in graphing police responses that exposed racialized strategies of control through violence. See, for example, Grimshaw, *Racial Violence in the United States*.

of extreme violence that continue to target Black and Brown communities and cannot sufficiently account for the “differential policing” that occurs across spatial geographies not just as racist repression, but as a strategy of racialization in service of capital, a point to which this dissertation is addressed.¹⁰² Further, such elisions can tend to invisibilize the grassroots, autonomous struggles underway in already organized communities to address their own safety and regeneration.

H.L.T. Quan outlines a feminist genealogy in the work of Cedric Robinson that positions the community as a site of struggle historically, situating “gender as an infrastructure of resistance.”¹⁰³ Drawing on Quan’s analysis, my work advances a strategy for reading policing and state violence in the current conjuncture in relation to the micro-regions of the Bay Area in their proximity to the Silicon Valley and new forms of cognitive capital.¹⁰⁴ It situates the realm of social reproduction or the “social factory” as a key site of struggle against low intensity war, a war whose tactics and strategies are designed to disrupt, fracture and terrorize in order to manage whole populations and lives. By engaging a

¹⁰² Differential policing is a term that emerged through collective theorization out of Uni Tierra spaces.

¹⁰³ Quan, “Genuises of Resistance,” 45. Here, I also draw on Gómez’s work, including his historical ethnographic work, on feminist insurgencies, the Black Radical tradition, and genealogy as insurgent methodology. Gómez, “*Puente de Crystal*.”

¹⁰⁴ This again recalls the formulation of Manuel Callahan in conceptualizing the Bay Area as a series of specific micro-regions in a larger enclave economy. This analysis is further developed over the course of the dissertation through an examination of a series of community safety projects and differential policing strategies. This thinking is also informed by an earlier grassroots community research project, Barrera et al., *Action Research*. On cognitive capital, see Roggero, *The Production of Living Knowledge*; also Boutang, *Cognitive Capitalism*.

larger research and learning effort underway across the Bay Area to advance community safety this work is an experiment in producing a collective ethnography of struggle, one that is shaped by practices of urban Zapatismo and made explicit through a convivial research approach, one that is facilitative of the emergence of a collective subject.¹⁰⁵

De-stabilizing “Security”

In “Security: Resistance,” Heidi Rimke examines the police response to the G20 protests in Toronto in 2010 to theorize how an “increasing normativization of ‘security’ underpins official violence.”¹⁰⁶ Aligning neoliberal security with pacification and the maintenance and reproduction of a bourgeois social order, Rimke argues that “at some fundamental level the order of capital is an order of insecurity.”¹⁰⁷ In the current conjuncture, this normativization of security is often analyzed in terms of the neoliberal project and reflects on one level the state’s attempt to claim a monopoly on violence, or a legitimate right to violence.¹⁰⁸ Much scholarship on policing and orthodox Marxist analyses of the role of the police highlights these questions of monopoly and legitimacy, in part a confrontation against hegemony as well as militant strategy to locate points of

¹⁰⁵ On the collective subject, see Callahan, “In Defense of Conviviality,” 9–11.

¹⁰⁶ Rimke, “Security: Resistance,” 192.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 194.

¹⁰⁸ The term “monopoly on violence” was originally advanced by Max Weber as part of a lecture series he delivered in Munich. From this lecture the essay emerged and was published as the now seminal “Politics as a Vocation.”

weakness in what much orthodox Marxist discourse narrates as “the repressive arm of the state” or the “state’s repressive apparatus.”¹⁰⁹ Historically, policing literature has focused on the development and modernization of the police with a particular emphasis on the emergence of the police as an institution and on the succession of reforms that have led to improvements or a modernization of policing over the years.¹¹⁰ Other more recent studies have focused on ongoing brutality and corruption in their attempts to understand and situate police violence.¹¹¹ Many of these studies create an expanded context for understanding the police as a repressive force and have explored questions of “security” in relation to “enemies of the state.”¹¹² Several studies have provided a more critical analysis of the role of the police, including from various Marxist perspectives that focus on the police role in protecting property and modes of production while maintaining class boundaries historically and in the present.¹¹³ Other studies have

¹⁰⁹ While on one level challenging the legitimacy of the state and its right to violence, many of these studies, in maintaining the centrality of the state simultaneously remain trapped in a binary of revolution/reform as the only possible way out of the present condition, rather than imagining, for a example, a third way, or a way of prefigurative politics. For an excellent historical analysis that traces the role of the police as a repressive arm in service of imperial power, beginning with the colonial period through the heightened militarization and repression post-1973, see a collaboratively written publication put forward by the Center for Research on Criminal Justice, *The Iron Fist and the Velvet Glove*.

¹¹⁰ See, for example, Lane, *Policing the City: Boston*; Monkkonen, *Police in Urban America*; and Carte and Carte, *Police Reform in the United States*.

¹¹¹ See, for example, Skolnick and Fyfe, *Above the Law*; Nelson, *Police Brutality*; and Stamper, *Breaking Rank*.

¹¹² An excellent work on enemies of the state and counterinsurgency is Bin Wahad’s, “The War Within: A Prison Interview.”

¹¹³ See, for example, CRCJ, *The Iron Fist and the Velvet Glove*.

contributed to an understanding of the role of the police in relation to capitalism and have posed questions as to the necessity of police.¹¹⁴ These studies, as well as more recent literature critically enhance understandings of policing in the present by tracing various policing practices and the policing power back to colonial conquest, reading the police through a series of colonial policing strategies related to settler-colonialism—as occupation, dispossession, and criminalization in service of an ongoing primitive accumulation.¹¹⁵ Mary Frances Berry’s historiography draws critical connections between the role of colonial militias aimed at insurgent populations that include African slaves, Indigenous populations, and Maroon colonies, and later slave patrols, as formative in the making of a white supremacist nation enshrined through law.¹¹⁶ Together with historical research on Black resistance and slave revolts, from C.L.R. James to Herbert Apthekar to Robin Kelley and the work of scholars elaborating Indigenous resistance like Gord Hill, Winona La Duke, and Joyti Byrd, to name a few, policing, rather than a modern, civilized institution committed to law and order and evolving over time, has been exposed as an ongoing settler-colonial project organized through terror, violence, and control through a series of race and

¹¹⁴ See for example K. Williams’ recent work, *Fire the Cops!*

¹¹⁵ On settler colonialism, see Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology*. For further elaboration on colonial policing, extended to include militias, vigilantes, and forms of private policing, particularly through private detective agencies like the Pinkerton Detective Agency, see Berry, *Black Resistance/White Law*; K. Williams, *Our Enemies in Blue*; Rousey, *Policing the Southern City*; Wagner, *Disturbing the Peace*.

¹¹⁶ Berry, *Black Resistance/White Law*.

gender strategies that include the policing of the US-Mexico border.¹¹⁷

Increasingly, research in the academy and in grassroots spaces of struggle draw critical connections between early slave patrols in the colonial period and early strike breaking practices across factories, mills, and mines, as well as the implementation of Black Codes, anti-immigration policing, and other racial strategies, including “race projects” and racial formation at different conjunctures of capital to understand the present context.¹¹⁸

A recent analysis by Peter Linebaugh offers a concise survey of the racial and economic roots of policing from pre-colonial America to the present that focuses importantly on two central points—policing as an economic and social relation between classes (rich and poor), and policing in its relation to commons, where for Linebaugh, “the actual institution of police simultaneously criminalized

¹¹⁷ See, James and Kelley, *A History of Pan-African Revolt*; Apthekar, *American Negro Slave Revolts*; Kelley, *Freedom Dreams*; Hill, *500 Years of Indigenous Resistance*; LaDuke, *All Our Relations*; and Byrd, *The Transit of Empire*. For work on the border, see Callahan, *Mexican Border Troubles* and “Crises and Permanent War,” and Dunn, *The Militarization of the U.S.-Mexico Border*. There are also substantive historiographies on policing as a tool on colonization and conquest across the colonial world. While a review of this literature is beyond the scope of this work, much of current counterinsurgency strategies can be traced back to strategies and practices developing through policing in the colonies. I explore this more fully in chapter 3 through three key modalities of colonial occupation: curfew, rules of association, and rules of assembly. These form the basis, for example, of Indian-administered counterinsurgency in occupied Kashmir in the present, and is based on the British colonial model of population control.

¹¹⁸ Here I draw on the work of Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*. For Omi and Winant, race projects can be projects of dominance or subversion, and are continuously advanced from a diversity of perspectives. Race projects are part of racial formation as an ongoing process, with the meaning of “race” and the racialization of bodies shifting over time.

the urban commons and efficiently linked plantation and factory, the U.S.A. and the U.K., into a temporary Atlantic system,” or, capitalism.¹¹⁹

Linebaugh’s emphasis on policing as a relation and as an institution linked to the criminalization of the commons provides a rich terrain from which to elaborate “security” as a relation of war, and the processes of enclosure and privatization that appear among its weapons. It is at this point where community safety struggles confront the forces organized under a *dispositif* of security, and where shared spaces of knowledge production become critical to not only challenging the epistemology in which security is rooted, but advancing forms of collective autonomy. Epistemologically, community safety can advance possibilities for multiple epistemologies to be present and alive as part of a self-determination process while at the same time revealing the material and cognitive supports through which “security” is deployed in our communities to support capital’s efforts at command and capture.¹²⁰ Situating policing practices within a larger carceral state and its epistemological foundations and practices of “security” not only makes state and subaltern violence visible in their imbrication with capital in particular ways by revealing the forces and agents at play in its logic, it allows us to imagine alternatives to “security” more clearly through the lens of community safety. Configured around defense, justice, care, and assembly, community safety as an initiative of networked autonomous projects across the

¹¹⁹ Linebaugh, “The Ideal of Justice,” para. 17.

¹²⁰ This draws on Jorge Gonzalez’s work on observables as well. See Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Constructing Observables.”

Bay Area provides a way to explore a shared space of epistemological critique and at the same time forms the basis for a shared commitment to the commons.

In Rimke's work, the "normativization of policing and the fetishization of security" is aligned with official violence as she advances an "anti-security politics" that has as its base an epistemological struggle, aimed at "destabilizing security."¹²¹ This emphasis points beyond questions of the legitimacy of the state and its "right" to violence. Rather, for Rimke, security is a mechanism that conceals state violence, where "security *is* the concept of the police."¹²² Read through Foucault's concept of "war" and Ranajit Guha's "prose of counterinsurgency," "security" represents an entire apparatus organized through capital as an instrument to control the signification of war in an effort to mask the subordination of specific sectors of the community.¹²³ In Guha's exegesis, the prose of counterinsurgency deployed in colonial India is not only a strategy of colonial control (disciplinary, repressive, based on territorial sovereignty, and so on) it marks a project of disqualification where the insurgency of the peasant is narrated by the state (and conversely, then "authored" by the Left to serve its own revolutionary praxis).¹²⁴

¹²¹ Rimke, "Security: Resistance," 192.

¹²² Neocleous, *Imagining the State*, 1, 3–6, 7; quoted in Rimke, "Security: Resistance," 200.

¹²³ This formulation of an apparatus organized to control the signification of war remains a central focus of Uni Tierra spaces. See also, Callahan, "Crisis and Permanent War."

¹²⁴ Guha, "Prose of Counter-Insurgency." It follows that if war is a social relation, social death is one aspect of a prose of counterinsurgency.

Katerina Nasioka advances a similar project in the current conjuncture through a focus on the Greek crisis of 2011.¹²⁵ For Nasioka, the capitalist accumulation of surplus value must be legitimized and enforced through regulations that include laws to insure social and labor dependency as well as propaganda, and brute force.¹²⁶ This reading does not make the state *per se* central to the project of legitimacy, instead it points to an architecture that must be in place that legitimizes capitalist accumulation.¹²⁷ This can occur through the relations articulated through both race and gender projects. This is also central to Foucault's analysis—the state does not disappear through a dispersion of power; in fact it becomes less “visible” but remains present. Through this reading, Nasioka is able to point to the state as an instrument of capital, including at the intersection of legitimacy and force. Additionally, as an instrument of capital, the state can be deliberately put in service of capitalist restructuring to disaggregate or decompose the class. Across a dispersion of offices, institutions, programs, and discourses, it can be used to manipulate social programs and provoke various privatizations as a way of rendering particular populations and bodies vulnerable while safeguarding the health and safety of others. In order to break working class power, the state can be used to create conditions that fray and dissolve the relations of reproduction that sustain the working class.

¹²⁵ Nasioka, “Communities of Crisis.”

¹²⁶ Ibid., 287.

¹²⁷ I will address these questions of legitimacy and architecture more fully in an upcoming section.

Class Is a Relation of Social Antagonism

In this context, John Holloway's understanding of class becomes particularly valuable.¹²⁸ Holloway breaks from more traditional Marxist definitions of class—where class is defined through its relation to the means of production; or in relation to the production of surplus value; or through exploitation, and so on. Rather, Holloway draws on Harry Cleaver's notion of capital as a relation to advance a notion of dignity that is a class concept, even as it refuses a definitional understanding of class.¹²⁹ Holloway writes,

the notion of dignity detonates the definition of class, but does not thereby cease to be a class concept. It does so simply because the starting point is no longer a relation of subordination but a relation of struggle, a relation of insubordination/subordination. The starting point of dignity is the negation of humiliation, the struggle against subordination.¹³⁰

For Holloway, “the forms of social relations in capitalist society...are always in question, which are imposed only through the unceasing struggle of capital to reproduce itself.”¹³¹ He continues by asserting first that if the starting point is dignity, class is no longer understood as a defined group. It follows then that the class antagonism at the root of capitalism is not an “antagonism between

¹²⁸ In the following section, I draw from Holloway's article “Dignity's Revolt.” While the article originally appeared in Holloway and Peláez, *Zapatista!*, it was reproduced in pamphlet form, under the same title (“Dignity's Revolt”) under the imprint of the Zapatista Autonomy Project (ZAP). For all subsequent references I refer to the page numbers in the ZAP pamphlet. In particular, for “Dignity is the Revolutionary Subject,” this includes pages 17–20.

¹²⁹ As a point of reference, see Cleaver, *Reading Capital Politically*.

¹³⁰ Holloway, “Dignity's Revolt,” 18.

¹³¹ Ibid.

two groups of people but [is based] on the antagonism in the way in which human social practice is organized.”¹³² Thus, “class struggle does not take place within the constituted forms of capitalist social relations: rather the constitution of those forms is itself class struggle.”¹³³

I quote at length from the passage here for several reasons. In the first instance, this reading of class struggle complicates a notion of the state—although it represses and disciplines, the state must be seen in a way that is more complex than simply a repressive apparatus aimed at oppressing the working class to serve the needs of capital. Rather, if the working class is not a fixed group, but instead class is understood as always becoming as a relation of struggle against an imposed organization of social practice, the state is better read as an instrument for organizing and reorganizing social relations through a variety of mechanisms and operations. This also provokes new ways to understand relations of struggle and forms of resistance, as well as reclaiming relations and bonds of sustainability from within as well as against and beyond the state.¹³⁴

Nasioka’s analysis of the state introduces a diffuse power that allows her to read resistances as a proliferation of small moments that refuse to make either the state or the mass protest central to challenging capital. Nasioka’s analysis emerges from insurgent moments as “cracks” (drawing on Holloway), where possibilities can expand and grow through interconnected projects. These

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid., 19.

¹³⁴ Mitchell et al., *In and Against the State*.

moments are prefigurative and point to creative and resilient negotiations and ways of being already underway in the present where communities not only resist but organize themselves collectively around care and outside of a reliance on the state. In this reading the state is not central and power is not centralized in a state institution.

War and Biopower

Now is the time in which, when the one from below asks why he is being attacked, the answer from the one above is: “for being who you are.”
-EZLN, August 2015.¹³⁵

Marta Malo de Molina characterizes the present reality as “the affirmation of a state-form based on war as a vector of normative production.”¹³⁶ If we understand war as a vector of normative production on which the state-form is based, this also serves to complicate questions about the legitimacy of state violence. It becomes less relevant to question whether the state is legitimate, just, fair, too violent, and so on, and more urgent to ask about the functioning of a security *dispositif*. If the state-form is based on war as a vector of normative production, we must ask, what is that war producing as “normative”? Moving beyond questions of whether war is being waged legitimately or illegitimately or

¹³⁵ EZLN, “Truth and Justice Will Never, Ever Come From Above,” para. 25. This statement was part of larger statement on truth, justice, and impunity issued by the EZLN stating that “As the Zapatistas that we are, we have realized that two of the intellectual authors of the assassination of compañero teacher Galeano have returned to their homes in the village of La Realidad, fat and happy.” Ibid, para. 6. Compañero Galeano (Zapatista José Luis Solís López) was murdered by paramilitary forces working in the collusion with the Mexican state on May 2, 2014 in La Realidad. See Molina, “After an Assassination, the World Stands in Solidarity With the Zapatistas.”

¹³⁶ de Molina, “Common Notions, Part 1: Workers-Inquiry,” para. 2.

whether violence is excessive or necessary, this alternative reading points to the apparatus that discursively frames the terms of war—linking a repressive, disciplinary power to other forms of power, namely forms of biopower, where some must live but others may die.¹³⁷ This is also closely related to Foucault’s definition of racism, as “primarily a way of introducing a break into the domain of life that is under power’s control: the between what must live and what must die.”¹³⁸ For Foucault, racial distinctions and racial hierarchies that formulate certain races as “good” and others as “inferior” serve as “a way of fragmenting the field of the biological that power controls...it is a way of separating out the groups that exist within a population.”¹³⁹ Thus, for Foucault, “the first function of racism [is] to fragment, to create caesuras within the biological continuum addressed by biopower.”¹⁴⁰

In the analysis of Robert J.F. Day, the neoliberal project is “a complex web of practices and institutions that have the effect of perpetuating and multiplying various forms of interlocking oppression. These allow ‘populations’ to be divided and managed, and our daily lives to be more intensely immersed in capitalist accumulation and rational-bureaucratic control.”¹⁴¹ This is one aspect of the *dispositif* of security. Security as a *dispositif* organized through disciplinary

¹³⁷ This formulation is developed over the course of Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, but more specifically in the final section, “Right of Death and Power Over Life,” 133-160.

¹³⁸ Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 254.

¹³⁹ Ibid, 255.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Day, *Gramsci Is Dead*, 6.

power and biopower is articulated and deployed through various racial strategies to determine who is a target for violence and “social death,” while the war being waged is masked.¹⁴² To expand the possibilities for thinking strategically about struggle, the ethnography that follows will elaborate on security as a *dispositif* organized around war and insurgent efforts to expose and confront this war.

Drawing on Foucault’s inversion of Clausewitz where “politics is war,” a provocation picked up by a number of scholars who take as their point of departure the intersection of sovereign power and biopolitical power, war here is understood as a permanent social relation (which is not to say unchangeable) managed through the state through the *dispositif* of security—its discourses, relations, production of subjectivities, institutions, and so on.¹⁴³ In an autonomous analysis while there is an effort to acknowledge this war and build a collective analysis the emphasis does not rest on overthrowing the state or challenging its legitimacy, much less attempting to reform it. Rather efforts that call attention to

¹⁴² Here, I refer to Lisa Marie Cacho’s work on social death, which I will return to in greater depth further on. See Cacho, *Social Death*.

¹⁴³ On Clausewitz, see Medovoi, “Global Society Must Be Defended,” 58. For further provocations on this theme, see Dillon and Neal, *Foucault on Politics, Security, and War*. See also Dillon and Reid, “Global Liberal Governance;” and Reid, “Life Struggles.” In what likely occurs as the most precise definition of the apparatus, or *dispositif*, Foucault describes it as “a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral, and philanthropic propositions—in short, the said as much as the unsaid.” Foucault, “The Confession of the Flesh,” 194. For Foucault, “the apparatus itself is the system of relations that can be established between these elements.” Ibid.

war and expose the *dispositif* of security in place to manage class antagonisms offer ways to read working class power and revolt.¹⁴⁴

Rimke's project to destabilize security and Nasioka's project to amplify cracks mark a shared recognition of conditions restructured by neoliberal securitization. Recalling Foucault's *some must live and some may die*, these projects expose that while forms of repressive, disciplinary power continue to exist in the militarized, securitized present, they coincide with forms of biopower aimed at the control of life. Here, biopower is read as a form of power aimed at the management and selective production and reproduction of populations *and also* as a power aimed at managing the relations within populations and across communities. Thus, biopower is organized around the reproduction of life. Biopower does not just individualize to manage, it seeks to impose its own relations. Self-determined collective ways of being and forms of autonomous organization threaten this form of power. Management and control of populations does not exclusively exist along an axis of legitimacy and force. Rather, biopower

¹⁴⁴ Following Cleaver and read through "cycles of struggle" this dissertation project relies on an collective ethnography of criminalization, militarization, and struggle to advance an analysis of the *dispositif* of security organized through counterinsurgency strategies as low intensity war aimed at the maintenance and reproduction of a particular class composition favorable to capital, one where racialized violences are necessary from the point of view of capital. I will elaborate this analysis more fully in the following chapters. Cleaver's analysis of the inversion of class perspective reflects what the *operaismo* struggles of the 1960s learned through collective analysis inside the auto factories of northern Italy: that capital responds to working class power, and through capital the working class can read, assess, and reflect on its own power. This inversion methodology positions the organized self-activity of the worker at the center of the analysis. Similarly, in reading security as an instrument of capital, this dissertation marks an effort to read our own struggles as workers as a class antagonism (war) that capital attempts to subdue, conceal, and delegitimize through the apparatus of security. This includes the state-form, as well as legislation (like NAFTA) that exceeds the state-form, and propaganda that serves capital over the state. See Cleaver, "Inversion of Class Perspective."

must manage the relations and the sites of reproduction within and across communities, and when necessary, it functions to disrupt these relations.¹⁴⁵

War and Knowledges: Subjugated, Disqualified, Insurrectionary, and Situated

In her analysis, “Methodologies of Imprisonment,” Avery F. Gordon theorizes the role of subjugated knowledges in relation to prison struggles, “these fugitive, outlaw, insurrectionary knowledges are not hidden in the institutions of official knowledge but are their disqualified secrets.”¹⁴⁶ One critical aspect of thinking through struggle involves collectively formulating questions that begin from this moment of disqualification.

¹⁴⁵ Again, drawing on Cleaver in “Inversion of Class Perspective,” in this way, biopower is linked to cycles of struggle in that the aim of biopower, in managing life is to maintain moments of class composition among and between particular populations, and that it does this not only through producing and managing the individualized neoliberal subject, but through an attempt to manage the relations that determine class composition and coherence. Beginning from the organized self-activity of the worker, capital is understood in as always responding to the power of the working class in an attempt to decompose the class through manifold operations. Here, I argue that one way it does this is through the *dispositif* of security that includes the state form (legislation, restructuring, juridical, etc.), discursive formations, strategies of counterinsurgency, etcetera. While an engagement with the categories of security and war lends itself readily to an understanding of the state form and its “militarized forces” as a disciplining, repressive power, it is critical to understand this power as both productive (of bodies, subjectivities, discourses, desires) and that this productive power itself is a strategy of low intensity war. Thus in mapping through the ethnography the various modalities, operations, and regimes of power, it is important to recall that one form of power does not displace other forms. Foucault’s sovereign power is explored in *History of Sexuality* as the right of the sovereign to *let live and make die*, “the power to foster life or disallow it to the point of death; while biopolitical power, even while directed at populations is more about the circulation of life, and the imposition of a relation that produces forms of life worthy of living (to be counted among living things) and aimed at the very continuance of life itself (for some but not all). Foucault, “Right of Death and Power over Life,” *History of Sexuality*, 138.

¹⁴⁶ Gordon, “Methodologies of Imprisonment,” 652.

For Foucault, knowledges that are “subjugated” and “disqualified” are also “insurrectionary knowledges,” comprised of details and experiences that have been displaced by dominant narratives, exiled through discursive statements and mechanisms, forgotten, or dismissed as local and relegated to the realm of the provincial, ignorant, or unsophisticated.¹⁴⁷ Critically, the silences that attempt to overwrite these knowledges are not removed from power, as Foucault’s genealogical approach uncovers through a search for ruptures and displacements.¹⁴⁸ For Foucault, subjugated knowledges mark those knowledges that institutions like the state have attempted to bury, while those that are “disqualified” are seen as too “local” to have much merit.

Foucault’s exploration of “politics as war” in *Society Must Be Defended* offers a starting point for reading community safety as both a series of related autonomous projects and a strategic concept that functions to expose the presence of a permanent war as class antagonism, one that a *dispositif* of security attempts to conceal. Taking seriously the role of knowledge production as central to a community’s efforts towards regeneration and self-determination, the ethnography at the base of this dissertation attempts to map the existence and

¹⁴⁷ To advance his analysis, Foucault categorizes these knowledges as “disqualified knowledges” or “buried knowledges,” an elaboration of which I will return to later in this study. Foucault, “*Society Must be Defended*.” Here I draw specifically on lecture “7 January 1976,” 7– 8.

¹⁴⁸ Foucault’s genealogical approach is based on silence, rupture, and displacement. See, for example, Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History;” Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*; and Foucault, *Questions of Method*.

generation of insurrectionary knowledges and counter-discourses.¹⁴⁹ These confirm a different truth than the one advanced by the state as “security”—namely, that war exists as “a permanent social relationship, the ineradicable basis of all relations and institutions of power.”¹⁵⁰ In this shared recognition, communities of struggle are able to both confront the state and advance their own efforts towards autonomy.

Subjugated knowledges surface in the context of this war as strategies of destabilization and regeneration. They are revealed as both an object and target of power. Moments of recomposition can be read through the emergence of disqualified knowledges and the deliberate construction of spaces for systems of information to circulate. When families who have been targeted by violence come forward as part of an insurgent community of struggle through their acts of refusal and their demands against silence, they confirm the presence of a war that the discourse of “security” seeks to conceal. The circulation of disqualified knowledges in these spaces produces a “living theory” that emerges from every day practices and experiences of violence.¹⁵¹

Subjugated and disqualified knowledges form critical systems of information that support communities of struggle to confront the violences that

¹⁴⁹ This is the community safety project theorized and advanced by Uni Tierra Califas.

¹⁵⁰ Foucault, quoted in Neal, “Goodbye War on Terror?,” 53. I will return to Neal’s work throughout the dissertation as I develop this analysis.

¹⁵¹ For CCRA, “a living theory emerges out of situated struggles and refuses to impose an already determined or imagined future. Living theory privileges collective ways of knowing and struggling, underscoring that any given struggle necessarily produces theory.” Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Analytical Frameworks,” para. 3.

target them and organize around their own safety. As communities arrange what they know and form hypotheses that are tested against collective experiences, they also develop strategic knowledges. Like subjugated knowledges, strategic knowledges are not limited to the realm of “truth;” they can reveal the state’s attempts to mask its own violence and the community’s efforts to reclaim its own safety.

As an ethnography that includes moments of militarized policing and criminalization aimed at the social factory, this work seeks to advance a critical analysis of security through a reading of community safety as a project that recognizes war as a struggle for marginal discourses to claim a truth as a means of advancing their own autonomy against a low intensity conflict and biopolitical regimes of governance.

Knowleges and Community Struggles

The spaces of the December Nieto rally and vigils and the November ICCMC gathering at the opening of this introduction reflect the multiple ways that communities access, share, and generate knowledges through which to challenge state violence and also state-organized justice, while at the same time rebuilding and protecting their communities. In the case of the search for answers to what happened to Alex Nieto, the community struggle was instrumental in surfacing subjugated knowledges. Armed with fragments of what the state did to Nieto, those organized around this struggle simultaneously engaged the space as a site of speculation and circulation. Drawing on collective experiences of previous police

trials, community members reflected on the impact of the police refusal to release the names. They speculated that in the event that the Nieto case made it to trial, the gap of months between when the incident occurred and when those present were interviewed outside the protective shield of the state might later be synchronized with certain lacunae in memory that might emerge across retelling. The lacunae itself could serve to justify inconsistencies in officers' accounts. Or, what was present as historical knowledge could be easily dismissed by the time the case it made it to trial—the facts eroded by time.¹⁵²

Like many cases, the speculation rested on other information already gathered as a community builds its own case against “official violence.” In the Nieto case, this included the autopsy report that cataloged at least fifteen bullets fired into Nieto, and demonstrated that Nieto had been shot several times in the back, with several shots fired from an angle below him—as if he had been moving away from the attack up the hill. Community members also speculated as to one reason for the state’s refusal to release names: the department needed time to manufacture a viable narrative about *how* the incident transpired to support its narrative about *why* it transpired. As the J4AN collective noted, the presence of many officers on the scene presents particular challenges if the story is being manufactured: it makes it difficult to establish consistency among all officers in

¹⁵² Community presence at recent trials shaped a growing collective analysis on state impunity, including the trial for the Eureka killing of Peter Stewart in 2011 and the recent trial for Asa Sullivan in Fall of 2014, discussed at length later in this work. I am also grateful for a conversation with Adriana Camarena of Justice for Alex Nieto at the December rally where she spoke to some of these issues in relation to the Nieto case. This information is also made explicit in the updates from the rally as well as the flyer handed out that day. The case and updates are extensively covered on the Justice for Alex Nieto website. See in particular, “Call to Community Action,” and also “Court Update.”

the official state narrative. This lack of consistency poses problems for the specific officers named in the civil suit as well as the police department whose practices and policies, as well as contradictions and fabrications, are made visible. It also puts the state itself at risk by provoking questions about its functions in the name of security.

Across mobilized and interconnected families, the December rally at the Federal Courthouse, like the ICMC gathering, was a moment where shared struggles intersected. The family of Alex Nieto in San Francisco was joined by the family of Yanira Serrano-Garcia from the Peninsula on what was the six-month anniversary of her life being taken by law enforcement. On June 3, 2014, while experiencing acute mental crisis, eighteen-year-old Yanira Serrano-Garcia had been killed by Deputy Mehn Trieu of the San Mateo County Sheriff's department. In response to a phone call placed to the fire department by a family member seeking support for the family and Yanira, Deputy Trieu arrived and within minutes shot and killed Yanira.¹⁵³ Yanira's brother, Anton Garcia, traveled

¹⁵³ The details from this paragraph are taken from the many times that Anton "Tony" Garcia has shared the details of this killing, including updates on the case, in shared communities spaces including barbecues, rallies, and protests. See also Police State USA, "Police Shoot Special Needs Girl."

up from the Peninsula on this anniversary to support the Nieto family and share the *testimonio* of his family with others gathered there.¹⁵⁴

The network in place among families and the capacity for this structure to absorb new families was evident as other family members with a shared experience of violent loss arrived without having met the Nieto family, themselves newly propelled into the struggle through a shared experience of violence. As Mesha Monge-Irizarry, mother of Idriss Stelley and founder of the Idriss Stelley Foundation, has noted, “Sometimes the only thing these struggling families have in common is the murder at the center of their lives.”¹⁵⁵ As families come together with this as the primary point of intersection, rather than a shared political goal or position, and often without a shared neighborhood or even a shared language, there is a particular need to theorize the struggle from the point of situated knowledges and through the relations of care that are crafted to sustain and intersect these struggles. Although in many cases families do not have a

¹⁵⁴ Anton Garcia, Yanira’s brother, has mobilized across the Bay Area following the state killing of Yanira, connecting with families who have had loved ones violently killed law enforcement in similar circumstances, particularly, following a call for assistance in dealing with a family member in crisis that ends with a police killing. In addition to supporting numerous other families at that court dates and other moments of interaction with the state, he has connected the family and members of the Half-Moon Bay community to organizing spaces in the Bay Area, and has organized actions in Half-Moon Bay including a birthday party direct action. Organizing in Half-Moon Bay holds a particular set of challenges given its demographics as a quaint, small, beach town for tourists, many of whom escape for a few days from urban San Francisco and other parts of the Bay. For others who support the “escape” offered through the beauty of Half-Moon Bay, the small seaside town is not a retreat but a site of precarious survival, as they work service industry and related jobs of capital “logistics.” Thus, many of those from the Brown community to which Yanira and her family belong are undocumented and participation in each mobilization runs the risk of engagement with and visibility by the police.

¹⁵⁵ Mesha Monge-Irizarry, oral history interview, April 2015.

history of struggle readily recognizable by many on the Left, they are, from the moment of violence, engaged in a struggle for justice and truth, actively contesting and questioning the state as they are forced to engage it through a series of institutions and services—the police, the chief medical examiner, the funeral home, the lawyer’s office, town hall meetings and city council meetings, and the courts. Further, as I explore more fully in the chapter focused on Asa Sullivan and Idriss Stelley, each act of violence occurs in the context of an already mobilized community that families can access and become involved in, learning and building new theories and strategies together. One side of the plaza was flanked by family members holding a large banner printed with a black-and-white drawing of Alex’s smiling face. Even for those who had not known Alex, his face was well recognized across San Francisco based on a series of wheat paste posters with his likeness that had been plastered throughout the Mission District following the killing in March.

From the far end of the plaza, the family of O’Shaine Evans, who had been present at the ICMC gathering arrived with their own justice banner billowing in the rain and wind, painted with a Jamaican flag and massive colored letters, Justice for O’Shaine. It had been less than two months since O’Shaine Evans had been killed by San Francisco Police on October 7th, 2014. As they arrived, O’Shaine’s sister Cadine Williams and mother Angela, re-called chants from other spaces connecting moments of state violence across local, regional, and international struggles. The chants linked the heightened attacks on Palestine from earlier in the summer of 2014 with the police violence in Ferguson, naming

parallel processes of racialized targeting by the state, “From Ferguson to Palestine, being Black is not a crime.” In other chants, those gathered wove together remembered names of those killed by law enforcement locally and across the state and United States.

Then the militant chants that the mother and sister of O’Shaine Evans had started when they arrived with their banner died down, and crossing the circle of twenty to thirty people in the space of the plaza, Cadine approached Alex Nieto’s mother and father and said directly, “What happened to your child? What is his story?”¹⁵⁶

Four days later on Sunday, December 7, 2014, when the Evans family gathered at the corner of 14th and Broadway in Oakland for the two-month anniversary vigil in memory of the loss, they were joined by the collective organized around J4AN. Also present to speak were members of the Idriss Stelley Foundation from San Francisco and Oakland, members of the ICMC from San Leandro and Stockton, family members and supporters from the Oscar Grant Foundation of Oakland, supporters from Justice for Alan Blueford (JAB) of Oakland and also a family from Florida whose son had also been killed by police. As names were recalled at the vigil, it was announced that the first discovery phases were starting in the civil suit against the City of Oakland and County of Alameda for the Oakland Police Department brutal beating death of Hernan

¹⁵⁶ Cadine Williams, public statement at Justice for Alex Nieto rally, December 3, 2014.

Jaramillo on July 9, 2012.¹⁵⁷ Details of an ongoing people's investigation into the suspicious death of Antolin Marengo on October 3, 2014, in the San Francisco County Jail were shared.¹⁵⁸ The People's Community Medics, a grassroots urgent response team from Oakland, were present to offer a brief training on emergency medical care.¹⁵⁹ While the majority of their community-based trainings focused on treating gun shot wounds, at the vigil for O'Shaine Evans and in the wake of Ferguson, the People's Community Medics addressed how to respond with medical care to tear gas and other chemical agents in the state's arsenal of "crowd control." The majority of the families that spoke at the Oakland vigil were Black families, recalling losses and struggles from Salinas, Santa Rosa, Vallejo, Ferguson, and Staten Island, remembering the names across Black and Brown communities.

Within two weeks of O'Shaine Evans' vigil in Oakland, the Nieto family and their supporters held a *posada* for the December solstice, the longest night of

¹⁵⁷ Hernan Jaramillo was beaten to death by several Oakland Police Department officers on July 9, 2012. The officers had responded to a call from Jaramillo's sister, Ana Biocini, who believed that there was an intruder in her house. Biocini let the officers into the house she shared with her brother. When the person she thought was an intruder turned out to be her Jaramillo, Biocini informed the police that it was a mistake, and that they were arresting her brother. The police proceeded to drag Jaramillo out of the house and beat him to death on the sidewalk out front, in full view of several witnesses, including neighbors and his sister, Biocini. Throughout, both Biocini and Jaramillo begged the officers to stop beating him, with Jaramillo saying several times that he could not breathe. *Testimonio* of Ana Biocini, "Libation to Liberation." The names of the officers involved as of this writing have not been released. Author's notes.

¹⁵⁸ For more details on the killing of Morengo, see Miller, "Suspicious death at San Francisco County Jail."

¹⁵⁹ I will return to the project of the People's Community Medics as a self-organized community project centered on both care and knowledge production later in this study.

the year.¹⁶⁰ Families from the Peninsula, including those that had been at the ICMMC gathering in Oakland in November and others that had been in front of the courthouse in early December, were joined by the family of Errol Chang, killed by Pacifica police just a few days before Nieto on March 18, 2014. Like Yanira Serrano-Garcia of Half Moon Bay, Errol Chang was among the rising number of people killed by police while experiencing acute mental crisis. A Daly City SWAT team had surrounded his family home in a six-hour standoff, throwing several “distraction devices” (smoke bombs) through the windows, and finally storming the residence and shooting Chang, despite clear and documented attempts by Chang to surrender.¹⁶¹ Also present to speak with her now half-orphaned children was Laurie Valdez of San Jose, whose partner, Antonio Lopez Guzman was killed by San Jose State University Police on February 21, 2014. Guzman had been sitting eating lunch after crossing the campus with a drywall saw, an instrument of his labor livelihood, hanging by his side on his way home from work to his family when he was tased and then fatally shot in the back by two San Jose State University police officers.¹⁶² Other children whose families had been murdered were present too. Teachers were present to remember the killed youth from their classes, some wearing buttons with the victim’s school

¹⁶⁰ A *posada* is a traditional celebration across parts of Mexico commemorating the biblical journey of Mary and Joseph looking for a room in an inn to spend the night.

¹⁶¹ See Ivie, “Pacifica man shot by police.”

¹⁶² The two officers involved in the killing were Sergeant Mike Santos and Officer Frits van der Hoek. See Salonga, “Coroner: Man Killed by San Jose State Cops Was Shot Twice in the Back.”

pictures from grade school. Organizers from prison struggles joined those fighting evictions in the Mission gentrification struggles. O'Shaine Evans' daughter and niece lit candles inside long glass votives with stickers of holy virgins and saints.

The Peninsula families, the South Bay families, the East Bay families and the North Bay families were joined by a crowd of several hundred people at the entrance to the 24th and Mission Street BART. From the Peninsula, the families were Latin@, Chinese American, and mixed racial heritage; from San Jose, Latin@; and from San Francisco and Oakland, Latin@ and Black. There were *mexica* dancers with long high feathers swaying amidst the smoke of copal. One dancer danced with an infant child strapped to her chest. The justice banners hung from the fences of the BART entrance behind the families. As the sun dropped and the Mission took on an evening chill, the dancers and families led a procession, winding through the lower Mission streets on the long march up to Bernal Heights Park. Banners announcing the justice campaigns were wide enough to shut down the streets, while two vertical banner flags, one scripted with Alex Nieto's name and the other simply scripted with "Justice" flapped high above the march, at the tops of the trees and ducking under wires as the march wove through the streets. The *posada* procession headed up the hill leaving behind it in the opposite direction city hall, the federal courthouse, the precincts, and those institutions that had been its targets at other moments of action. Near the head of the march, a long black banner read, "Safety for who? Rest in power Alex Nieto. Never forgive, never forget."

CHAPTER TWO: COUNTERINSURGENCY AND THE SOCIAL FACTORY

War imposes a new geography.

-Subcommandante Marcos¹⁶³

On the year anniversary of the South San Francisco police shooting that took Derrick Gaines' life, his family returned to the gas station where he had been shot and held a space of vigil. This was part of a series of vigils that the family and community organized over the course of the year following the shooting of the fifteen-year-old boy. As the community grieved and marked their loss collectively in an open space, South San Francisco police deployed a SWAT team to surround the vigil's perimeter.

One year earlier, at 8:30 p.m. on the evening of June 5, 2012, Gaines had been hanging out with friends when they were approached and questioned by police in a gas station parking lot in South San Francisco. Gaines had backed away and turned to run from police when Officer Joshua Cabillo hit Gaines over the head with his service revolver, knocking him to the ground where a brief scuffle ensued between the youth and the officer. A gun fell out of Gaines' pants while he was sprawled on the ground. According to witnesses, while the gun was quite a distance from Gaines and not within "threatening" reach, the police officer stood over Gaines and, aiming his service weapon at Gaines who was still on the ground, shot him point blank in throat. A witness to the incident who was

¹⁶³ Marcos, *Notes on Wars*, 14.

qualified in CPR training attempted to approach Gaines and offer critical life-saving support. Officer Cabillo refused to let the civilian near Gaines' body. After some time, Cabillo attempted to do the CPR himself. Gaines died shortly after arriving at the hospital. According to Gaines' great aunt, Dolores Piper, the gun that went skittering across the pavement was an "old, collector type gun" that fifteen-year-old Derrick had likely been using as a prop for a rap video he had been making with his friends earlier that evening. Derrick and the friends he was with when the police approached them in the evening parking lot were all youth of color.¹⁶⁴

Immediately following the killing of Derrick Gaines, South San Francisco Police entered Gaines' family's home and searched his room without a warrant, removing several items. They interrogated his friends and seized his cell phone. In the weeks and months that followed, police monitored community gatherings and refused to make public their own investigative reports from the evening of the incident or share them with the family. Gaines' great aunt, Dolores Piper, made a note of the policing formation and their practices within the community. In Piper's observations and analysis, "Officer Cabillo was part of a special Neighborhood Response Team (a police unit aimed at combating gang violence in the neighborhood), which swings into high gear when school is out."¹⁶⁵ As families respond to the ways that they have been targeted and search for answers following the killing or incarceration of a loved one, they not only make

¹⁶⁴ See Kay, "Derrick Gaines, Killed by Police at 15," para. 3.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., para. 6.

observable particular tactics and strategies of the state, they produce through their investigations new cartographies that make observable policing practices and strategies, mapped across disparate regions and departments.¹⁶⁶

A Convergence of Wars

The killing, the aftermath, and the remembering of Derrick Gaines makes visible a number of moments of militarization and militarism that make up a continuous low intensity war organized through a convergence of wars--the War on Drugs, the War on Terror, the War on Black and Brown Youth, the War on Migrants and the War on the Social Factory.¹⁶⁷ Through the category of low intensity war, a given moment or space like a police shooting or community vigil

¹⁶⁶ The details in the struggle for justice for Derrick Gaines come from media stories and community spaces, including the Humanist Hall event organized by the ICMMC in November 2014 discussed earlier in this work, where Gaines' Great Aunt, Dolores Piper, has continued to support the struggles of many families and to speak about her own family's struggle for justice for Derrick Gaines. The stories and analyses also emerge from the collective ethnography produced through the announcements and summaries of Uni Tierra Califas' Social Factory Ateneo, a space of community learning and research that many families engaged in justice struggles participated in shaping. The Social Factory Ateneo is explored in greater depth more fully later in this work.

¹⁶⁷ Callahan's work points to a convergence of many wars in the current conjuncture, a convergence to which I will return over the course of this work. See, Callahan, "Crisis and Permanent War." The work of the People's Movement Assembly on militarization also drew on this "convergence of wars" to explore militarization and low intensity war in the present as a critical aspect of its "rolling assembly" process in building towards the larger assembly in San Jose in June 2015 as part of the US Social Forum.

can be understood as traversed by any number of these wars, as well as other wars which can also be seen as present within the larger strategic category of “war.”¹⁶⁸

As part of a larger collective project to advance community safety and autonomy, this chapter aims to contribute to an autonomous reading of policing in the present as a low intensity war aimed at the social factory. This reading situates policing in relation to an ongoing and always shifting series of race and gender projects in the current conjuncture.¹⁶⁹ While the first chapter introduced “war” as a category of analysis through which we can read the actions of communities of struggle to expose the “security” that violently contradicts their own safety and masks conditions of social antagonism, the work of this chapter is to more fully elaborate forms of counterinsurgency aimed at the social factory in order to support the analytical framework for the ethnography of the dissertation.

One central aim of counterinsurgency is to maintain state authority and power.¹⁷⁰ As a strategy, it governs how the war in the present is fought. Yet, counterinsurgency is not new. It has its roots in permanent military occupations and imperial wars abroad but has increasingly been adapted and modified through law enforcement practices domestically and subsequently exported to inform

¹⁶⁸ To take an example, the War on the Social Factory is traversed by and overlaps with the War on Black and Brown youth, the War on Drugs, the War on Migrants, and so on and can be understood as comprised of both a War on the Poor and a War on Women (as well as other wars). This also draws on Callahan’s work and the work of CCRA in analyzing a convergence of wars. See Appendix 2, “Border War Convergence” (schematic).

¹⁶⁹ In thinking through the notion of race and gender projects and racial formation in this chapter, I draw on the work of Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States* and also Rolph-Trouillot, “Culture on the Edges.”

¹⁷⁰ K. Williams, “The Other Side of the COIN.”

military practice abroad, shaped through a continuity across domestic and non-domestic practices. Drawing on Kristian Williams and his analysis of US Army Counterinsurgency field manuals as well as RAND studies, counterinsurgency is a means of war that aims to defeat an insurgency.¹⁷¹ Thus, it is exercised against what has been classified as an insurgent population. It is comprised of forms of militarization and community policing which rely on various mechanisms for controlling populations and for managing dissent including the institutionalization of resistance through routinization, strategies of inclusion and marginalization, and cooptation.¹⁷² Counterinsurgency includes militarized policing as well as tactics designed to map targeted populations that include “social network analysis” or “human terrain systems.”¹⁷³ Mapping populations is contingent on understanding the relations between people, communities, groups, and families, in

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 83.

¹⁷² I am grateful to Manuel Callahan’s insistence on the dynamic interplay between domestic policing and occupations and military strategies abroad—through training, “mutual aid,” and the current economic environment at home, including professional roles that solicit military training. This insures that various forms of security continuously cross-pollinate, as soldiers return from wars abroad to become police and security guards in wars at home; as National Guard are called to fight in the Middle East and then return to local departments, and other moments of overlap. I will elaborate on forms of counterinsurgency more fully through their application in specific local contexts, in particular of Oakland, as a relation across the larger Bay Area in the following chapter, using the downtown Oakland intersection of 14th and Broadway as a convergent space where various relations of force can be read. I am grateful to the work of the UT Austin Advanced Seminar for sharing the tool of “relations of force” as an element of conjunctural analysis designed to elucidate specific moments within conjunctures of capitalism. Here I also continue to draw on the analysis advanced by K. Williams, “The Other Side of the COIN.”

¹⁷³ On “social network analysis,” see K. Williams, “The Other Side of the COIN,” 87. Recently, Robert Gonzalez has also done work exposing the Human Terrain System; see R. Gonzalez, “Human Terrain: Past, Present, Future Applications,” Also the American Anthropological Association (AAA) issued a statement specifically against the Human Terrain System in 2007, “AAA Opposes U.S. Military’s Human Terrain System Project.”

an attempt to make visible and “knowable” the web of relations that make survival, autonomy, care, resistance, and resilience possible.¹⁷⁴ Kristian Williams highlights that this includes preserving a certain sovereignty in order to establish authority, control territory, and maintain a monopoly on violence.¹⁷⁵ In an analysis of counterinsurgency as a strategy, it is useful to draw as well on Foucault’s analysis of power, which has as a critical component the emphasis that one form of power does not replace or displace another form, rather, multiple operations of power (sovereign, disciplinary, biopolitical) can occur within a given epoch and function variously through *dispositifs*. This is a central component of Foucault’s genealogy, and is reflected in Medovoi’s genealogy as well, where the model of war pursued by the state in the current conjuncture has antecedents in larger projects of settler colonialism and colonial projects including occupation.¹⁷⁶ The taxonomy of policing practices as colonial occupation includes rules of curfew, rules of association, and rules of assembly. These sites of disruption are at the basis of many of the militarized policing strategies in the present where criminalization and racialization continue to intersect and produce new subjectivities targeted by policies and discourses of “security.” Each of these technologies of control that articulates “violation” is linked to the carceral mechanisms that makes them possible and holds them in place as a technology.

¹⁷⁴ These strategies for mapping communities involve gathering information about the social relations and details of people’s lives in the context of communities and form a central strategy of policing as counterinsurgency in the present.

¹⁷⁵ K. Williams, “The Other Side of the COIN,” 84.

¹⁷⁶ See Medovoi, “Global Society Must Be Defended.”

Specifically, on the outside, the prison system stands as the threat and force that corroborates these restrictions, and by extension, the methods of penal control that include probation and parole restrictions. These restrictions and the consequences of violation are continuous inside, as “gang” and “Special Security Threat Group” validations that have inscribed at their root the colonial violations of curfew, association, and assembly—the technologies, working in conjunction with large databases, through which incarcerated people are forced into solitary confinement, administrative segregation, and enhanced sentencing.¹⁷⁷ Invoking Foucault’s genealogical approach provides a way to disaggregate power and see policing in relation to counterinsurgency in the present. The persistence of older

¹⁷⁷ Many of the technologies of control and management of populations that form the technological and informational support system for the grids of racial quarantine are synchronous across “gang” and “special security threat group” databases both inside and outside prisons as well as checkpoints in Palestine, and are the site of profound resistance in the present, as the recent hunger strikes emerging out of Pelican Bay, Palestine, Guantanamo Bay and Tacoma Detention Centers evidence. Drawing on numerous conversations, in particular with Diana Block and Alan Gómez, on legacies of resistance inside, this study situates resistances inside as critically connected to struggles outside, and as with struggles in the social factory, as key sites for examining the violence of the state and self-organized activity and networks against and beyond the state. See Buntman, *Robben Island and Prisoner Resistance to Apartheid*; Law, *Resistance Behind Bars*; Waldman and Levi, *Inside This Place, Not of It*. For a thorough discussion of the rise of carceral regimes in California and nationally see Gilmore, *Golden Gulag*; James, *States of Confinement*. For a history of the prison as a tool of repression, see for example, Bukhari, *The War Before*; D. Rodríguez, *Forced Passages*; and Rosenberg, *An American Radical*. For a history of control unit prisons and the struggles against them, see Kurshan, *Out of Control*. Much of the recent work on policing and prison databases, as well as biometrics and policing and intelligence-led in relation to Silicon Valley is being done by journalists and independent researchers. Locally, both Darren Bond-Graham and Ali Winston continue to fortify understandings of these new technologies of policing through analyses and research often appearing in the *East Bay Express* and the *SF Bay Guardian*. Also of note is the work of Critical Resistance, particularly Rachel Herzing, often appearing in the *SF BayView* newspaper, as well as the work of the American Friends Service Committee, and in particular Dalit Baum’s work linking corporations and in particular in Silicon Valley with the occupation of Palestine, including a campaign between 2014–2015 against Hewlett-Packard for its stake and role in the occupation of Palestine.

models in current practices allows for a more layered reading of the multiple forces in action in the present. This also evokes Raymond Williams' theorization that it is the relations between dominant, residual, and emergent forms that comprise a moment of culture and lend it its particularity.¹⁷⁸ I want to draw attention to two important points here. First, power aimed at controlling populations historically remains present in the new forms of policing. This is critical in understanding the colonial and racial roots of current counterinsurgency tactics as the following section will elaborate. Second, while the management of populations can be understood as a form of biopower, it is difficult to point to policing practices historically that are not aimed in some ways at the management and control of certain aspects of populations. Thus, one question worthy of further interrogation becomes what can be learned about counterinsurgency in the present through an understanding of its roots in settler colonialism and its enduring colonial forms, and how does a reading of biopower further illuminate strategies of counterinsurgency aimed at the social factory?¹⁷⁹

Drawing on an ongoing convivial research effort underway across the Bay Area under the rubric of community safety, I situate a diversity of policing practices as state strategies in a low intensity war, reading them as a counterinsurgency directed at a population framed as insurgent and targeting community struggles for autonomy. This reading positions state strategies and the militarization of the police as a response to three critical strands of struggle: 1) the

¹⁷⁸ R. Williams, "Dominant, Residual, and Emergent."

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

insurgency of Black, Brown and Indigenous communities historically and in the present; 2) forms of working class power defined broadly through an autonomous reading of cycles of composition; 3) community efforts to organize themselves autonomously around their own safety historically and in the present. This analysis also offers a way to see how policing strategies endure, overlap, resurface atavistically, and undergo new inventive forms of control and violence; as new forms emerge, they do not necessarily displace the old forms. Thus, security discourses and militarized policing in the current conjuncture can be read according to the different operations of power explored as strategic categories by Foucault. Through this framework, it is possible to rely on a notion of sovereign power to see how forms of “security” and policing are aimed at particular subjects, producing death and terrorizing through violence. As disciplinary power, this same security discourse is linked to forms of differential policing and the construction of racial regimes deployed in relation to space (territory) and the movement and restrictions of particular types of bodies and populations. As biopower, policing is aimed at population management, delineating who is “counted among the living.”¹⁸⁰

¹⁸⁰ Dillon and Neal, *Foucault on Politics, Security, and War*, 14. Here, Dillon and Neal draw on Foucault, “Right of Death and Power over Life,” 138. With Foucault it is important to recall that disciplinary power is never only repressive, it is also productive—of subjectivities, normality and abnormality, etcetera. The classic passage on this formulation occurs in *Discipline and Punish*; Foucault writes, “We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it ‘excludes,’ it ‘represses,’ it ‘censors,’ it ‘abstracts,’ it ‘masks,’ it ‘conceals.’ In fact, power produces; it produces reality: it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth.” Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 194. On racial regimes, I draw on the work of Cedric Robinson, and am particularly indebted to H.L.T. Quan, for pushing this analysis by pointing me to several key texts and passages. Racial regimes for Robinson are “unstable truth systems.” Robinson, *Forgeries of Memory and Meaning*, xii. He defines them as “constructed

Policing Insurgency, Policing Precarity, Policing the Commons

To understand each of these strands in relation to the militarization of police in the present, I refer back to a conjuncture that can be identified as beginning in the early 1970s with Nixon's declaration of a War on Drugs and put into effect in 1973, with the passage of the Rockefeller Drug Laws.¹⁸¹ The early 1970s moment also marked the rise of mass incarceration and the shift to more punitive approaches to punishment.¹⁸² This coincided with the beginning of the dismantling of the Welfare State organized as "crisis" in response to working

social systems in which race is proposed as a justification for the relations of power." Ibid. They are part of a strategy of governance where populations are organized systematically into hierarchies that "masquerade," in Robinson's terms, as "natural orderings." Ibid., xiii. For Gómez, racial regimes are a "spatial organization of race" as forms of management and governance are imposed geographies as territories through hierarchies of violence and vulnerability. I draw here on the formulation of Alan Gómez advanced in his lecture, "Orienting Politics: Research and Survival," delivered at the California Institute of Integral Studies (CIIS) on March 21, 2013. This echoes Cacho's assertion that the way that "race and space are imagined governs how neighborhoods of color and their residents will be managed," Cacho, *Social Death*, 63. Manuel Callahan relies on W.E.B. Du Bois' notion of "democratic despotism" and Gilmore's "ideological surplus value" to draw attention to not only racial hierarchies but the dynamic relations of capital in the production of subjectivities. Callahan, "In Defense of Conviviality," 6. Racial regimes and their relation to space and policing in the construction of racialized geographies will be elaborated further along in this section. A racial regime can be read alongside Omi and Winant's "race projects" that give shape to and are shaped within a particular conjuncture. The fact that they are volatile and always threatened by a "history from below" means that they are constantly being reworked by new relations of power. Several scholars have developed and elaborated on a notion of a "history from below," including Omi and Winant, and E.P. Thompson and others, indeed it is the project of the Subaltern Studies Collective. In the hands of the Zapatistas and across numerous communiqués and translated into many languages, this has become "from below and to the left."

¹⁸¹ On the militarization of the police, see Parenti, *Lockdown America*; CRCJ, *The Iron Fist and the Velvet Glove*; M. Davis, *City of Quartz*.

¹⁸² See, Kurshan, *Out of Control*; Phelps, "Rehabilitation in the Punitive Era."

class power.¹⁸³ It also was an era that witnessed forms of militarization abroad “coming home” as colonial warfare and counterinsurgency against local populations within the United States.¹⁸⁴ Thus the inception of the conjuncture can be read through distinct strategies of capital and the state to respond to moments of high working class power and the intense insurgencies of the 1960s and early 1970s rising from Black, Brown, Yellow and Red Power Movements, student and women’s struggles, the gay liberation movement, and anti-colonial struggles that included international solidarities and a mass anti-war movement.¹⁸⁵ For many these were anti-colonial struggles waged at home in the context of a US settler colonial nation and took up critical issues around race, displacement, and conditions of uneven development. They were struggles that were waged in continuity across prison walls.¹⁸⁶ An emphasis on this moment makes visible ways that capital and the state work in conjunction through a series of race and gender projects to manage a population through the sheer force of militarized violence coupled with surveillance and forms of social control, the power of the

¹⁸³ See Cleaver, *Reading Capital Politically*; Midnight Notes Collective, *Midnight Oil*; Caffentzis, *From Capitalist Crisis to Proletarian Slavery*; Federici, “The Restructuring of Housework;” Baldi, “Theses on the Mass Worker and Capital.”

¹⁸⁴ See Bin Wahad, in particular on the Phoenix Program, in “War Within,” 88.

¹⁸⁵ Capital is a relation not of subordination, but of struggle, as capital attempts to impose a particular set of relations that are conducive to its continued existence. For an autonomist Marxist review of these struggles, see Cleaver, *Reading Capital Politically*. For capital as a relation of struggle, I draw on the work of Cleaver, Holloway, and Callahan. On reading conjunctures in relation to working class power, see Baldi, “Theses on the Mass Worker and Capital.” For analyses of the Black Power movements, anti-colonial struggles, the gay liberation movement, see for example, Bukhari, *The War Before*; Mecca, *Smash the Church, Smash the State!*

¹⁸⁶ See Gómez, “Resisting Living Death.”

courts and the prisons, and the invented crises of capital. In response to the massive social unrest of the 1960s, community struggles and community programs were attacked by the state both directly in the streets and through the disinformation and misinformation campaigns of COINTELPRO, while capital responded to moments of working class power by introducing a disciplining “crisis” that allowed for a roll back of the social wage and other state protections that had been hard won through workers’ struggles and the Civil Rights movement, and in particular, in relation to the social wage, through the struggles of Black women.¹⁸⁷

Stuart Hall’s work on policing the crisis relies on the specific moment of a “mugging” to elaborate on the ongoing manufacturing of “crime” and its relation

¹⁸⁷ The early 1970s also marked a powerful moment in the emergence of new feminisms—Black, Brown, Red, Yellow, anti-imperialist and intersectional—that were critical of the largely white feminist movement. It was 1974, for example, when Black Feminists organized as the Combahee River Collective and began meeting and forming a collective intersectional analysis in relation to other struggles of the previous period. The Combahee River Collective’s “A Black Feminist Statement,” drew on women’s struggles, shared experiences in the militant movements of the 1960s, as well as the work of Harriet Tubman, Angela Davis, Michelle Wallace, Robin Morgan, Karl Marx, and others, and remains a seminal document in Black Feminist Thought as well as other women of color feminisms and intersectional analysis. Their statement also confirmed that their analysis linked liberation and autonomy, as well as horizontal decision-making. They write, “we believe in collective process and a nonhierarchical distribution of power within our own group and in our vision of a revolutionary society. We are committed to a continual examination of our politics as they develop through criticism and self-criticism as an essential aspect of our practice.” See, Combahee River Collective, “A Black Feminist Statement,” 218.

to race projects in the production of subjects and at the root of policing.¹⁸⁸ This device provides a useful tool in examining a US context of policing that situates the rise of militarized policing in the conjuncture that begins with 1973. Through this, policing in the present unfolds as a race project, and as a way of policing insurgency and autonomy via manufactured crises through a deployment of war.¹⁸⁹

The intersection of securitization and as a series of interconnected race projects aimed at the repression and destruction of forms of anti-colonial

¹⁸⁸ In the US context this can be read against the production of crime and criminal subjects through the national project of the National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement, known as the Wickersham Commission, which was responsible for a comprehensive state research project launched during the Great Depression and culminating in an fourteen-volume set of reports released between 1931–1932, largely authored by former Berkeley Police Chief August Vollmer. Known as the Wickersham Reports, in their claims to homogenize and professionalize law and order nationally, the national project defined crime in relation to race and immigration, and served as a tool for criminalizing and encoding that criminalization against particular racialized groups. See National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement, *The Wickersham Reports*.

¹⁸⁹ Thus, the War on Drugs, the War on Black and Brown Youth, and the War on the Border can be read as direct attacks on the insurgencies coming out of communities of color as anti-colonial struggles, struggles that expose a long-standing and ongoing settler colonialism, and draw their understanding from forms of policing that go back to Indigenous genocide in the United States; the formation of standing militias to crush both Native resistances and slave uprisings (and also the many collaborative resistances); as well as the slave patrols and later the policing apparatus that is the Black Codes; together with deployments of troops and paramilitary formations across the United States and on the border of Mexico against Mexican “bandits.” The policing project that responded to the Black Power and Black Liberation movements, and to organized resistances like the Black Panthers, Brown Berets, American Indian Movement, and the Young Lords struggling for Puerto Rican Independence is also at the root of the explosion of mass incarceration as a strategy of the state to contain and crush these resistances. No where is this war more visible in the present as ongoing than in the severe sentencing and convictions of former insurgents from the Black Power Movement and other anti-colonial struggles, many of whom the state has attempted to entomb forever in isolation cells like California’s solitary housing units (SHU). Their ongoing resistance, including during the California Prison Hunger Strikes of 2013, remain among the most powerful mobilizations shaping the present—despite the conditions under which they are forced to stage their insurgencies.

resistances organized by communities of color and their comrades in the 1960s continues to be documented through a collective history of insurgency that exposes the corresponding strategic responses of state repression and violence. Struggles in the current conjuncture continue to learn from and listen to the insights gained from, and the profound knowledges produced through these previous struggles. In an enduring moment of class recomposition forged through social antagonisms the struggles of the sixties and seventies produced a cartography of a repressive state operating through counterinsurgency strategies advanced through the collusion of local, state, and federal forces. These included the direct crushing of dissent in the streets and in communities, combined with terrorizing violence aimed at particular leaders and groups, as well as misinformation and disinformation campaigns aimed at the very sinews of family, solidarity, and the community base of the movement.¹⁹⁰ This remains a critical map for the present.

Precarity and a “Politics of Care”

Counterinsurgency organized through projects such as COINTELPRO against anti-colonial struggles can be analyzed making use of an autonomous Marxist approach that accounts for the state as a vehicle of capital aimed at

¹⁹⁰ For a fascinating analysis of this collusion of federal and local forces and in particular in relation to the FBI’s intrusion into the policies and practices of local departments during this time, see Cunningham, *There’s Something Happening Here*.

decomposing the class during moments of strong working class power.¹⁹¹ In particular, the work of Midnight Notes Collective and other autonomists provides a reading of the crisis of 1973 as one deliberately manufactured by the state to produce the conditions of precarity that shape labor and capital relations into the current conjuncture.¹⁹² In this context, the rise of militarized policing, in addition to emerging out of the violent terrorizing and dirty surveillance strategies against anti-colonial struggles at home, is at the same time a form of policing that runs parallel to what has become known as the “rollback” of the Welfare State. In other words, it is, on one level, a form of policing directly targeting those made vulnerable by the deregulation of capital and the privatization that supplanted forms of social protections formerly under state regulation.¹⁹³

As this dissertation will explore throughout the ethnography, policing in the current conjuncture can be seen as a project aimed at anti-colonial struggles organized through communities of color as well as a way of “policing precarity” through strategies that criminalize ways of living and surviving. This includes the

¹⁹¹ The Freedom Archives documentary, COINTELPRO 101 is a moment of living archive that draws on *testimonio*, oral history, and relational *testimonio* as revolutionaries targeted by the program reflect years later on its impact and its lessons for the future. On COINTELPRO, see also Bin Wahad, “War Within.”

¹⁹² The Frassanito Network classifies precarity as “living and working conditions without any guarantees.” The Frassanito Network, “Precarious, Precarisation, Precariat?,” para. 1. Precarity exists as a condition of capitalist strategies of decomposition as well as a site of resistance “against work.” This is not to claim that conditions of precarity are “chosen” on an individual level, but rather to point to the condition of precarity for both the advantage and the threat that it poses to capital. To rework the articulation of Foucault, *some must work but some may not work*, or perhaps even *some must work but some may die*.

¹⁹³ See Beckett and Herbert, *Banished* for a spatial analysis of policing aimed at social control. See also Gilmore, *Golden Gulag*.

rapidly growing houseless community that has become a prominent presence in all parts of US urban and metropolitan space, as people continue to try to find spaces of survival among concrete and fences and homeless shelters become increasingly inadequate to the demands placed on them by the crisis, as evidenced by the number of people sleeping in entryways, alleyways, parks, and sidewalks and also evidenced by increasingly cruel forms of enclosure--fences, gates, and spikes and erected to restrict spaces for rest and safety, making all common spaces for privacy and sleep uninhabitable. In some cities, including San Francisco, water jets have been installed in some areas, to prohibit sleeping. As part of the expansive prison industrial complex, forms of policing directed at a precarious population continue to extract value and create conditions for an ongoing primitive accumulation by policing the very sites where a society lives and reproduces itself.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁴ Both community members and academic scholars have continued to advance a critique of police and policing practices in the present by calling attention to the roots of policing in strategic ways that reveal the racist history of police as “slave catchers” and their role in service of capital as “strike breakers.” This intertwined history of the police makes visible the role of police in relation to capital and property, and opens ways of thinking historically about extraction, accumulation, and surplus value. While this analysis keeps the direct physical violence of policing at the forefront of an analysis, policing in the current conjuncture in relation to capital is not always so easy to see as the “busting heads” that happens at the edge of a mine or in protection of scab labor. As this ethnography attempts to expose, communities of struggle grapple to expose and confront the violence of police repression and police terror in the context of a new phase of cognitive capital, as explored more fully through the notion of an economic enclave in the following chapter. As the recent housing crisis of 2011 made visible capitalist crises not only disproportionately impact communities of color—they directly target specific communities to disrupt communities and space through instruments like subprime mortgage rates. In a recent article, Mezzadra and Neilson cite “subprime mortgages, land expropriation, and the enclosure of ‘public goods’ crystallized in the welfare systems...[as well as] the logisitical shift of jobs and livelihoods to locations where the cost of labor is even cheaper ” as moments where “continuing mutations of ‘primitive accumulation’...have been hastened by the dynamics and management of the [current] crisis.” Mezzadra and Neilson, “Operations of Capital,” 6. They add that in “all these

Following a similar autonomous analysis, Feminist collective *Precarias a la Deriva* based in Madrid, Spain, situate the current crisis as a “crisis of care.” Strategically, *Precarias* identifies four central components that contribute to the crisis of care: 1) the Welfare State is purposely receded in order to prioritize “risk management” or the “the containment of the subjects of risk” 2) an externalization of the home occurs as waged labor outside the home means the work formerly “inside” the home is privatized and in many cases shifted onto domestic workers (thus spurring fast food production, the rise of domestic labor, as well as telephones and other technologies that supplant physical connections with family and friends); 3) there is a lack of time, resources, recognition and desire to do “care work” in the home or in the absence of the wage (this ranges from the care of children to the care of elderly relatives to the affective and sexual labor previously performed in the home as part of a larger “care continuum”; and 4) the privatization of public space and the fragmentation of worker neighborhoods becomes more pervasive (through urban planning strategies, the prominence of the car, closed commercial and residential areas, etc.).¹⁹⁵

cases the operations of capital take on a pronounced ‘extractive dimension.’” Ibid. For Mezzadra and Neilson, extraction is a “forced removal” and offers a way to think about gentrification in terms of global operations of capital and its violences, one where, for example, the subprime mortgage rate can be seen as an instrument in the operations of capital, both of primitive accumulation and extraction. Ibid, 2.

¹⁹⁵ *Precarias a la Deriva*, “A Very Careful Strike,” 33–44. The concept of “crisis of care” occurs on page 38, though many other scholars also use this phrase, see for example Bastia, “Women's Migration and the Crisis of Care.” The concepts of “risk management” and “containment of subjects at risk” occur specifically on page 37. The remainder occurs as a summary of pages 33–44.

Similar to the way that multiple wars intersect in a conjuncture, forms of policing intersect in a particular moment or space. Thus, the “crisis of care,” as elaborated by *Precarias*, is also a site of policing (a point to which I will return shortly and explore more fully throughout this ethnography). Further, the tactics deployed historically and in present in service of policing insurgency and policing precarity also produce the current “crisis of care.”¹⁹⁶

An enduring impact of policing insurgency can be witnessed in the devastating attack on the generational ties and familial bonds across communities of color through targeted state violence and state manufactured violence, including as families are separated by mass incarceration, forcing a reconfiguration of communal relationships in response to the many and various vectors of the prison industrial complex. As a result of the counterinsurgency strategies of the 1960s and 1970s, combined with the War on Drugs, many Black and Brown families and whole communities have been forced to reconstruct family ties and community relations around absences forced by the state of one or both parents, as families struggle to maintain relations and connections across prison walls.

This is also true around the restrictions imposed on community relations through legislation that restricts associations among family members on probation

¹⁹⁶ *Precarias* a la Deriva, “A Very Careful Strike,” 38. There has been much excellent scholarship in recent years on care work and the crisis of care, some of which I will take up in an upcoming chapter. Yet while much of this work elaborates on the work of child care and elder care, less attention is paid to the extensive care work required of families, and in particular often women, in the care of the mentally ill and disabled, a point to which I will return.

with others marked “felons,” or those labeled as “gang members” and other categories and classifications that restrict associative relations. The impact of the state in severing familial and community ties in ways that both produce and then police the “crisis of care” is also clearly evidenced in strategies of deportation and detentions aimed primarily at Mexican and Latin@ communities.

In order to think through the “crisis of care” scholars, including community researchers and grassroots scholars through the open spaces of Uni Tierra Califas, have advanced a “politics of care” as a dialectic relation, one where we must first recognize that the crisis of care is manufactured, but it is also at the same time both the result of policing precarity and a site for a further policing of precarity. A clear testament to this is the rapid rise of women’s incarceration rates, particularly among communities of color, following the decimation of the social wage and in alignment with mandatory sentencing laws.¹⁹⁷ This has occurred as forms of stability provided by the social welfare state and the home are rendered unstable through the reorganization, precaritization, and migration of labor as hallmarks of the same conjuncture of capital that began with the militarization of the police. As a dialectical relation, the

¹⁹⁷ CCWP, an organization supporting people in women’s prisoners across California, cites figures from the California Department of Corrections, stating that “since mandatory-sentencing laws went into effect in the mid 1980s, the California female prison population has skyrocketed. At the end of 1986, women in California’s prisons totaled 3,564. In 1998, the population numbered 10,897.” They note that this is “an increase of 305% in twelve years.” California Coalition for Women Prisoners, “Facts about California Women’s Prisons,” para. 3. These figures have continued to climb. The Sentencing Project reported in 2011 that since 1977, the rate of incarceration for women nationally rose 800%. See The Sentencing Project, “More Must be Done to Slow the Rising Female Prison Population,” para. 1. As women’s incarceration rates continue to rise by drastic rates, the number of children with mothers in prison has also continued to rise drastically.

politics of care also points to profound strategies of collective resilience and survival across families and communities, even as these strategies of state and capital render particular members targets of the state or vulnerable to a multitude of state-manufactured violences that they must navigate on an every day basis. Thus, policing precarity means that those sites made manifest through a fabricated crises of capital, one that manufactures forms of poverty and new forms of alternative (often cast as “illegal economies”), become sites of criminalization as well as sites of accumulation through the extraction of surplus value. These in turn function to perpetuate manufactured demands for more policing and more prisons.¹⁹⁸

Thus what *Precarias* explores in the current phase of capitalism as a crisis of care can be read through a convergence of wars and also as a site produced through strategies over time aimed at both policing insurgency and policing precarity. Highlighting the role of the state in the convergence of wars, and in particular through the War on the Social Factory in the present, the crisis of care is also site of policing aimed at the destruction of the commons—in short, where a

¹⁹⁸ As the next section and the larger dissertation will explore, alternative and illegal economies can refer to forms of labor and exchange prohibited by law—i.e. forms of sex work and the sale of restricted substances like narcotics, but it can also refer to forms of economic survival that have become “enclosed” and “privatized” for example, forms of labor that cannot be sold or exchanged because they require licensing and certification processes validated by the state. These can range from food preparation to traditional medicine to the sale of handicrafts in public space. They can also refer to attempts to sell labor that while some may find valuable, others consider a “nuisance.” In a famous example under Boston Police Chief William Bratton in the 1970s this included crackdowns on the “squeegee men” washing windows of cars in exchange for donations on the side of a highway, and extended to include paramilitary enforcement against fare-evaders in the subways. See Nagy and Podolny, “William Bratton and the NYPD;” Parenti, *Lockdown America*, 73.

series of mechanisms are advanced that produce “need” and “lack” and deteriorate stability.¹⁹⁹

Taken together and read through the category of “war” this complicates the way we understand forms of policing in service of the state and capital in the present. Policing is simultaneously a repressive, violent force directed at racialized bodies and aimed at producing terror and reinscribing colonial relations, including policing associations between people and their practices of assembly, as well as spatial restrictions on movement. Policing also serves as a mechanism for producing precarity as a condition of existence and then policing the very conditions it creates. Further, it functions as a force of intervention at the site of a community’s collective self-care and regeneration. In this convergence of wars and policing, a *dispositif* of security serves to disrupt a community’s efforts to organize itself autonomously around its own care, work, and living.

In his *Notes on Wars*, Subcommandante Marcos speaks of the changing nature of war, where we now face a “war from above.”²⁰⁰ In this war, Marcos writes, “it is no longer possible to locate any conflict upon a strictly physical terrain. The terrain of war is more and more complicated (be they large or small

¹⁹⁹ Here again, Illich’s notion of “needs” becomes a strategic category and an observable. It is in this moment of the production of needs that care becomes militarized. This is true in the steadily increasing police response to health and mental health calls, unsurprisingly, with increasingly fatal results. This is the focus of the ethnographic exploration in chapter 5, “*Death at Gaia*,” where police respond to a mental crisis call, proceed to dismantle a complex care network already in place upon their arrival, and in their attempts to arrest the woman who is in need of care, crush her to death under their combined weight of six officers. Here, policing targets the very ways that communities have organized themselves around their own resilience and living. See Illich, “Needs.”

²⁰⁰ Marcos, *Notes on Wars*, 6.

wars, regular or irregular, of low, medium, or high intensity, world, regional or local).”²⁰¹ Rather than being primarily about conquering territory and “demanding tribute” from the forces whom have suffered defeat, in the present era, Marcos observes, “the will that capitalism attempts to impose is to destroy/depopulate and reconstruct/reorder the conquered territory.”²⁰² As part of this process under the current situation of capital, Marcos continues, “it becomes necessary to destroy the conquered territory and depopulate it, that is, destroy its social fabric. I am speaking here of the annihilation of everything that gives cohesion to society.”²⁰³ In Marcos’ observation, the war from above goes beyond this destruction and depopulation. As part of this war the territory itself is reconstructed, at the same time “reordering the social fabric” according to a new “logic, another method, other actors, another objective.”²⁰⁴

Such a reading provides a basis for understanding the ways counterinsurgency strategies are deployed in the present and in the process how these strategies exacerbate and produce the conditions for an increasing

²⁰¹ Ibid., 10.

²⁰² Ibid., 14.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

militarization and militarism of everyday life.²⁰⁵ Our efforts to de-militarize and regenerate ourselves requires a closer examination of the various intersecting strategies deployed by the state.

Militarized Policing, Order Maintenance Policing, Place-based Policing, and Community Policing.²⁰⁶

We are the broken windows.

*-Fred Moten*²⁰⁷

On January 29, 2015, William Bratton announced the formation and deployment of Strategic Response Groups (SRG), a roving force of three hundred and fifty officers armed with machine guns to patrol New York City. Heralded as

²⁰⁵ I am reminded here of counterinsurgency strategies in Indian-occupied Kashmir where the threat of armed guerilla movement had to constantly be re-deployed by the Indian nation-state, as for example instances where young children playing soccer in the evenings were shot dead by armed security forces and named “militants” in the media and press. It is not that Kashmir does not have a profound self-determination movement and anti-colonial struggle, but that the majority of the occupation, as counterinsurgency, was directed at the community, the population itself. In short, violent (often cast as pan-Islamic) militants had to be manufactured by the state in the forests and on highways so that they could not be raised in the villages. I spent significant time studying and learning directly about insurgency in Kashmir through many trips and projects, including through the work of grassroots documentation and investigation projects, much of it advanced by families of the “disappeared” as part of my early doctoral studies from 2004–2009.

²⁰⁶ Here, for this taxonomy of policing, I draw on a collaborative grassroots project, the Community Safety Database (CSDbase) a project collective facilitated by a number of groups across California, including CCRA. The CSDbase organizes state policing strategies through the categories of militarized policing, order maintenance policing; place-based policing; community policing; interagency cooperation; raids; and training. See Community Safety Database, “CSDbase.” To explore the multiple mechanisms, instruments and strategies of policing in the present, I also rely on theoretical analysis generated from community struggles through the work of Critical Resistance and in particular Rachel Herzing and INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence in defining “quality of life policing,” “broken windows policing,” and “zero tolerance policing.” See, INCITE! “Quality of Life Policing.”

²⁰⁷ Moten, “Do Black Lives Matter?”

a “new terrorist strike force” the SRG are specifically designed and trained in “disorder control and counterterrorism protection capabilities.”²⁰⁸ The SRG, a decentralized force with high mobility, was Bratton's version of a return to community policing models that put officers on the street in more regular contact with local populations.²⁰⁹

Bratton’s approach to policing is rooted in the restoration and maintenance of public order through what he names a “quality of life initiative.”²¹⁰ Quality of life policing is rigid, punitive, and based on a form of control that is particularly focused in certain communities. Rachel Herzing of Oakland and a longtime member of Critical Resistance situates what has become as known as “quality of life policing” within zero-tolerance approaches, “aimed at restoring public order by aggressively enforcing, through sweeps, ticketing, and arrest, minor quality of life infractions such as public drunkenness, littering, or begging.”²¹¹ Herzing

²⁰⁸ CBS New York, “Commissioner Bratton Unveils Plans,” para. 1, 3.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence, “Quality of Life Policing,” para. 4.

²¹¹ Herzing, “No Bratton-Style Policing in Oakland,” para. 6.

emphasizes that under Bratton, “No crime, no matter how insignificant would go unnoticed and unpunished – zero tolerance.”²¹²

Thus, order-based policing is based on the intertwined approaches of “zero-tolerance” policing, quality of life policing, and broken windows theory. Zero-tolerance policing is largely directed towards forms of heightened policing in particular places with extremely punitive responses to “crime.” Quality of life policing primarily targets particular behaviors and activities. And broken windows theory ascribes “disorderly populations” versus “orderly populations” in relation to place and space.²¹³ This linking of population and territory means that order maintenance policing is intimately enmeshed with place-based policing. The result is a militarized cartography graphed as a race project.²¹⁴ And although seemingly aimed at “property,” Fred Moten situates broken-windows policing within a different genealogy as an “extension of lynch law.”²¹⁵

²¹² Ibid., 7. While Bratton himself avoided the term “zero-tolerance policing,” it has come to be commonly understood as a hallmark of Bratton’s approach and involves methods that “under the guise of community policing...break up neighborhoods into militarized police zones often alienating and angering community members rather than engendering hope or safety.” Herzing, “No Bratton-Style Policing in Oakland,” para. 28. For INCITE! zero-tolerance approaches are aggregated with quality of life policing and aligned through the now infamous social theory advanced by James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling known as “broken windows” theory. Broken windows theory seems to be born from the same mind as the theory that postulate marijuana as a “gateway drug” that eventually leads to heroin addiction. In a similar equation, broken windows theory “proposes that minor social and physical disorder – broken windows, overgrown weeds, public urination, loitering – left unchecked, will inevitably lead to an increase in ‘serious’ crime.” Wilson and Kelling, quoted in Herzing, “No Bratton-Style Policing in Oakland,” para. 6.

²¹³ INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence, “Quality of Life Policing,” para. 17.

²¹⁴ I will return to an exploration of militarized policing through order maintenance policing and place-based policing in a local context in the subsequent section.

²¹⁵ Moten, “Do Black Lives Matter?,”

There have been many excellent studies, many of them emerging from investigations emerging from targeted communities, that explore these intertwined approaches and strategies in relation to militarization and race. This dissertation reads militarization as a site of value production and in relation to counterinsurgency aimed at controlling populations through a *dispositif* of security.²¹⁶ Thus, while militarization and counterinsurgency are primarily understood as a response to social movements and powerful insurrections arising primarily out of communities of color in the 1960s and 1970s, order maintenance policing is also strategy of counterinsurgency closely linked to capital and specifically accompanies the dismantling of the social wage. In this sense, as a specific response to working class power it functions as a strategy of class decomposition. It directly targets those made vulnerable by capital through the rollback of the Welfare State.

In their analysis of current policing strategies, INCITE! writes, “the practice of order maintenance policing is premised on society being divided into two groups, the ‘orderly’ upstanding, law-abiding citizen and the ‘disorderly’ criminal-in-the-making. Once in existence, this construct is used to justify policies that treat the disorderly person as one who ‘needs to be policed, surveyed, watched, relocated, controlled’.”²¹⁷

²¹⁶ As part of this *dispositif* it is important to note that new forms of zero-tolerance and “predictive” policing draw on military strategies developed in Palestine, Iraq and Afghanistan have meant an increase in technologies of control and surveillance that function to transform civil forms of policing into a militarized institution.

²¹⁷ See, INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence, “Quality of Life Policing,” 17.

Leerom Medovoi calls for a return to Foucault's original formulation of biopower where "the regulation of the life of the population is itself conceived on the model of war."²¹⁸ In Medovoi's analysis globalization and the War on Terror have a "common genealogy and a shared biopolitical aim," one where the distinction between internal and external enemies is collapsed, as are the practices which respectively target them—regulation and warfare.²¹⁹ Globalization, in this analysis, is "the name that implicitly designates the 'pacification' of populations in the name of world market integration," and the Global War on Terror "is the territorially unbounded, politically malleable military strategy that this pacification actually demands."²²⁰ Bratton's order maintenance policing that carved out disorderly populations from orderly populations reflects and renews a domestic war. Under cognitive capital, the primary technology for fighting this war was Compstat, a program for reporting on "crime" that not only organized data and populations, it manufactured criminal subjects to keep the war raging.²²¹

²¹⁸ See Medovoi, "Global Society Must Be Defended," 55.

²¹⁹ Ibid., 53.

²²⁰ Ibid., 55.

²²¹ While largely understood in terms of its data gathering and statistical technologies, Bratton himself acknowledges that the primary effectiveness of Compstat is not achieved through the data that is gathered and organized and stored (the monitoring of populations) but in the relations within the department that the routinized practice of gathering and reporting produces—as policing "culture."

Bratton's "security" is global in its reach, advancing militarization and militarism at home in step with forms of military adventurism abroad.²²² These remain in many ways enduring colonial projects. Through militarized policing, training, technologies and military grade equipment, "security" is made manifest in the restriction and production of racialized bodies through tactics of terror (population and race projects) and strategies of spatial control (territory and occupation). While orthodox Marxist theorizations of the police tend to stress the role of the police in protecting property and the means of production, a reading of race projects through uneven development, or to rely on H.L.T. Quan's analysis "savage developmentalism," differential policing, and racial quarantine as a feature of an enclave economy offers a more complex understanding of the role of capital accumulation and property, including property relations.²²³ In this reading, "enclosure," as both an attack on the commons and as an ongoing process of privatization, explores the role of the police, property, and accumulation in relation to colonial occupation that can be traced to racial regime of settler

²²² I am grateful for the thinking that emerged from the collective that met regularly between February and June 2015 to organize a "rolling assembly" as part of a People's Movement Assembly against militarization leading up to the US Social Forum in San Jose in June 2015. Community organizers and scholars have focused on Bratton's "export" work as a policing contractor in other countries, including Johannesburg, Mexico City, Caracas and Rio de Janeiro. See Herzing, "No Bratton-Style Policing in Oakland," para. 24; Siegel, "William Bratton in the Other L.A."

²²³ See Quan, *Growth Against Democracy*. For an excellent Marxist analysis emerging from the struggles of the 1960s and 1970s on the role of the police see CRCJ, *The Iron Fist and the Velvet Glove*. For a discussion of property as capital and property relations as race projects in the Bay Area, see Self, *American Babylon*. See also Lipsitz, *Possessive Investment in Whiteness*.

colonialism in its specific US context.²²⁴ This context also allows for a reading of the policing power as an “enumeration of restrictions” that attempt to contain and limit the movement of particular bodies in space.²²⁵ The police role in “disturbing the peace” is one that is antagonistic to community safety and autonomy.²²⁶ A critical component of the research process at the base of the subsequent chapters involves reading the state archive against the “prose of counterinsurgency to determine the layers of codification through the discursive statements that document incidents where the state interrupts or violates community space.”²²⁷

The tactics developed by Bratton as place-based policing coincide with strategies of enclosure that are closely linked to privatization policies that accompanied the dismantling of the Welfare State. Working in conjunction with order maintenance policing, forms of “place-based policing” quarantine space and restrict movement of particular bodies in their attempts to ossify a racial regime conducive to capital.²²⁸ In the Neoliberal Security State, space is organized geographically through a series of borders and demarcations that are intricately

²²⁴ See Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism*.

²²⁵ Wagner, *Disturbing the Peace*, 4, 10.

²²⁶ Wagner, *Disturbing the Peace*.

²²⁷ Callahan, Dissertation Seminar, CIIS, November 2013. This draws on on the work of Guha and also Callahan for reading state archives and discourses of power. See Guha, “The Prose of Counter-Insurgency,” Callahan, *Mexican Border Troubles*.

²²⁸ I am grateful to H.L.T. Quan for pointing out the connection between forms of quarantine and racial regimes. My thinking here draws as well on Foucault’s “plague-stricken town” which he cites as a “panoptic establishment.” Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 205.

linked to capitalist racial regimes.²²⁹ As with forms of settler colonialism, these race projects are codified at the intersection of territory and population. Thus, security and “securitization” in the present rely on forms of differential policing in the articulation and maintenance of racial regimes in relation to space. They rely on and are graphed onto geographic terrain to form racialized spatial regimes. These regimes are organized geographically and inscribed and restricted by policing strategies and practices that draw on the relation between territory and populations in systems of control.²³⁰

This arsenal of differential policing strategies rely on spatial restrictions and jurisdictions and include federally supported gang injunctions, stay away orders that include Stay Out of Drug Area (SODA) and Stay Out of Prostitution Area (SOPA) restrictions, “hot spot” policing targeting certain neighborhoods and

²²⁹ The policing of space and the regimes articulated and enforced through place-based policing have roots in colonial occupation strategies. For a discussion of neoliberal security and territory, see for example, Callahan, “Crisis and Permanent War;” Rimke, “Security: Resistance.” For a discussion of space as a category of analysis in relation to power and violence see Foucault's *Security, Territory, Population*; see also Soja, *Postmetropolis*. On social control and urban space, see Beckett and Herbert, *Banished*. See also Mezzadra and Neilson, *Border as Method*. On property as space, see Self, *American Babylon*.

²³⁰ This territory and control of populations is always in relation to borders and thus, capital, racial hierarchies, and “differential laboring subjects” and “differential inclusion” through a “multiplication of labor.” Here I draw on work on the border and territory of Callahan in relation to “differential laboring subjects,” Callahan, “Crisis and Permanent War,” 4. For “differential inclusion” and “differential laboring subjects” produced through the border, see Mezzadra and Neilson, *Border as Method*, also Mezzadra and Neilson, “Borderscapes of Differential Inclusion.” Yen Le Espiritu also advances this category of “differential inclusion,” in *Home Bound*, 47. This also reflects Du Bois’ argument of “democratic despotism,” in Du Bois, “African Roots of War.” Also, recalling Foucault, the securitization of space occurs at the intersection of multiple forms and operations of power—sovereign and disciplinary; repressive and productive; biopolitical and necropolitical. For more on necropolitical power and necropolitics see Mbembe, “Necropolitics.” See also Giroux, “Reading Hurricane Katrina.”

corners, as well as curfews, checkpoints, and legislation governing associations among and relations between particular people while regulating forms of assembly—who can gather when, where, in what numbers. These myriad forms of policing designed to control populations are enforced through the coordinated efforts of local, state, and federal agencies trained in military tactics and outfitted with military grade weapons and technologies.²³¹

From the rise of the militarized border to gang injunctions, the boundaries and the spaces they create in the name of security are formed and reinforced through legislation and policy as well as physical geographic features—fences, surveillance cameras, rebar and concrete. Within the Neoliberal Security State, this has meant that certain areas are heavily policed, controlling the movement of particular bodies and articulating racial regimes spatially.²³² The analysis of security in relation to territory has been critical to an understanding of the relation

²³¹ A number of these policies and restrictions are reviewed in Beckett and Herbert, *Banished*. Bratton's policing approaches are reviewed succinctly in Herzing, "No Bratton-style policing in Oakland." For predictive policing and its links to military occupations abroad, see Bond-Graham and Winston, "Forget the NSA" For a historical analysis of policing practices that begins in settler colonial American and advances into the present, see K. Williams, *Our Enemies in Blue*; also, for policing practices in relation to the law, see Berry, *Black Resistance/White Law*; for a comprehensive account of intelligence and surveillance-based policing strategies in the present, see Ratcliffe, *Intelligence-Led Policing* and for analysis of these strategies in relation to space, see Beckett and Herbert, *Banished*. For a discussion of military technologies and counterinsurgency tactics in a US context, see K. Williams and Messersmith-Glavin, *Life During Wartime: Resisting Counterinsurgency*.

²³² In excavating the militarization of urban space at the height of neoliberalism through what he calls "fortress L.A", Mike Davis charts a cartography of the neoliberal security state through the rise of gated communities and consumerist spaces in Los Angeles, including quasi-public spaces like shopping malls and pedestrian areas in particular neighborhoods. M. Davis, *City of Quartz*, 221. Through both the gated community and the shopping mall, the Security State demarcates racial segregation geographically, a physical quarantine where apartheid is enforced through surveillance, fences, and force.

of geography, racism, urban space, and differential policing practices, as well as practices of exclusion and terror. Security discourses align policing strategies with forms of enclosure that insulate the wealthy, safeguarding property and shielding assets.

This then is a system of apartheid enforced through spatial restrictions and sites of quarantine enforced by a number of “borders” that delineate racial geographies and restrict movement of particular bodies and populations. In linking apartheid and ongoing settler colonialism in a US context it becomes critical to insure that the emphasis on space and property at the same time accounts for the role of violence aimed at Black and Brown communities in extending conditions for capital accumulation. Simultaneous to this, an analysis of apartheid must account for alternate epistemologies around “crime.”²³³ Through the lens of the neoliberal state and its management of war, the project of “destabilizing security” builds on work that focuses on policing and security strategies that separate the rich from the poor, for example through gated communities, guarded neighborhoods and properties, and the less visible restrictions around “public” spaces like upscale shopping districts and

²³³ The development of particular notions of “crime” as central to both capital accumulation projects historically and in the present, and its relation to the rise of the police has its own genealogy, always intimately connected to racial formation, “threats,” and enemies of the state. To rehearse a few points of reference already mentioned in this regard, this includes Gilmore’s theorization around the production of “ideological surplus value;” Callahan’s criminal subjects produced in alignment with particular conjunctures, as in Callahan, *Mexican Border Troubles*; and the Wickersham Commission’s national project to standardize “crime. See National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement, *The Wickersham Reports*. See also Mbembe *On the Postcolony*; Rabasa, *Without History*.

“community gardens.”²³⁴ An analysis of those areas of urban space that are heavily surveilled, cordoned off and otherwise “enclosed” offers a map of the neoliberal security state and intersecting strategies of policing. This map provides a more thorough understanding of uneven development and the role of violence as critical aspects in the coherence of enclave economy.²³⁵

These spaces simultaneously reveal and enforce what Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson call “differential citizenship” where some bodies move with ease, and others are marked for interruption, arrest, and containment.²³⁶ Increasingly, these spaces become securitized sites targeted for abandonment and banishment; they are inscribed with a form of “social death.”²³⁷ Securitization can be read through militarization and gentrification as an assault on public space and through privatization as an enclosure of the commons. Such enclosures and forms of privatization are reflected in the increasing rise in the “spectacle” of militarized policing at community gatherings and sites of mourning and collective

²³⁴ A seminal study in this regard is M. Davis, *City of Quartz*, and in particular, the full section on “Fortress LA,” 221–263.

²³⁵ For a discussion of uneven development in the greater Bay Area, see Self, *American Babylon*. For an analysis that extends this analysis across the Global South, see Escobar, *Encountering Development*.

²³⁶ Mezzadra and Neilson, “Borderscapes of Differential Inclusion.” On citizenship and uneven development, see Quan, *Growth Against Democracy*.

²³⁷ As I will elaborate in chapter 7 around the notion of “securitized abandonment” and police strategies that emphasize bleeding out, these sites increasingly exist as sites where a politics of care is contested, and living theory emerges.

remembering of lives taken.²³⁸ As the securitization of the vigil for Derrick Gaines makes visible, in the invasions and the imperative to “secure the scene” there is increasingly a seamless deployment of discipline and violence between the home and the streets, in some ways paralleling the externalization of the home explored by Precarias a la Deriva.²³⁹

Aligning policing with counterinsurgency provides a way of seeing territory in relation to movement and restriction. It also offers a way to understand the increased monitoring and policing of relations through initiatives like community policing and social network analysis.²⁴⁰ Read through the categories of community safety and the social factory, policing in the current conjuncture retains the forms of an ongoing colonial occupation administered through the

²³⁸ This has also been the case at community barbecues across the Bay Area, in particular in Stockton, which forms a critical point of reference in the unfolding collective ethnography.

²³⁹ For a discussion of “security,” particularly in relation to increasing militarization of space, see M. Davis, *City of Quartz*. In their analysis of the “crisis of care” resulting from capitalist restructuring projects including the dismantling of the Welfare State, Precarias a la Deriva, a feminist collective operating in Spain, examine this crisis as an “externalization of the home,” a point of reference raised earlier in this work and to which I will return to and develop further in succeeding chapters. Precarias a la Deriva, “A Very Careful Strike,” 37. These spaces where the community “meets” the police become contested sites between on one hand the spectacle of the state, and on the other, sites where the community makes visible and shares amongst themselves the war targeting the social factory and the struggles being waged there. These direct action spaces outside of the space of the home reveal patterns in the ways that communities are targeted. As “open spaces of encounter” they can be seen as both an effect and strategy of multiple players to negotiate this externalization at the intersection of capital’s crisis and the policing of space.

²⁴⁰ Here I also draw on the work of the CSDBase to position community policing programs like PAL and others, many of which target youth and spaces that youth frequent, as an extension of a larger counterinsurgency strategy, one where the non-profit industrial complex (NPIC) is integrated in the *dispositif* of security. Community Safety Database, “CSDBase: State Policing Strategies: Community Policing.”

modalities of curfew, rules of association, rules of assembly, shoot to kill policies, and home invasion. Situated within a *dispositif* of security that organizes bodies and space, these modalities do not only repress, they codify what relations and gatherings are permissible through an enumeration of the policing power.²⁴¹ Drawing on these colonial forms, policing practices organized through counterinsurgency strategies target the “social factory” in particular ways, disrupting and monitoring relations, movement, gatherings, and the space of the home as a site of care, reproduction, renewal, shared learning, and self-valorization.

A focus on the War on the Social Factory provides a way to situate militarization as a process where, drawing on Foucault, the regulation of the life of the population—its health, management, and functioning—is conceived on the model of war. In this view, both militarization and regulation are directed at the management of population—strategies common to counterinsurgency approaches or low intensity war where violence, legitimacy, peacemaking, order maintenance, quality of life and population control are entwined.²⁴² An analysis of security and policing in the present as counterinsurgency calls attention to a permanent relation of war and exposes a more complex operation of biopower—one that aims at managing not only individuals as metonymic of larger populations, but more specifically, as a power aimed at managing the relations

²⁴¹ On the enumeration of the policing power, see Wagner, *Disturbing the Peace*, 5.

²⁴² Callahan, “Crisis and Permanent War;” K. Williams, “The Other Side of the COIN.”

between and among populations.²⁴³ Critical to this functioning of power is the disruption of the relations (community bonds, networks of support, family relations and other collective experiences, etc.) that resist a particular management in service of the state and capital. Biopower can be seen as operating through myriad state policing strategies as a force of decomposition and composition.

Through the concept of biopower aligned with strategies of counterinsurgency, a number of mechanisms become visible in a larger *dispositif* aimed at breaking working class power and disrupting or recapturing collective moments of self-organization outside the state. In this reading it is not only the state in service of capital but a *dispositif* of security operating to impede and reorganize the relations between people and among and across communities in order to effect the most desirable composition and insure that a population remains “governable.”

²⁴³ This analysis is emerges as a collective one from the open spaces of encounter of Uni Tierra Califas where struggles from across the Bay circulate through and connect. Advancing an analysis is a political act. I recall the work of Raquel Gutierrez-Aguilar, who states, “My goal is to identify and trace the components of a matrix to make it possible for us to analyze—desire and produce—social emancipation.” Gutierrez-Aguilar, *Rhythms of the Pachakuti*, xxi. To analyze is to participate in a project of desiring and producing social emancipation. This is at the base of a convivial research approach as well as the TAZKP of Uni Tierra Califas that emphasize “spaces of encounter” as spaces of collective research, learning and investigation, where, through the invention of new convivial tools, communities gather to build a shared analysis. In this view, analysis is never an academic or isolated process of “knowing” but rather the practice of a collective subject imagining and generating its own emancipation and autonomy.

Through the efforts of families and communities in their confrontations with militarized policing and counterinsurgency, these complex operations of power become more visible. Building on the work of UT Califas and the Social Factory Ateneo, this study relies on the Social Factory as a category of analysis to “expose capital’s attempts to displace the cost of reproducing the worker onto the home, family, community, and in particular women.”²⁴⁴ In short, the War on the Social Factory can be read as capital’s attempt to regulate the population biopolitically through strategies of regulation, criminalization, and militarization at the site where the population reproduces itself.

The Social Factory as Strategic Concept

Drawing on the convivial research approach that highlights the use of strategic concepts as critical tools for collective problem-solving and inquiry, this dissertation relies on the “social factory” as a strategic concept in four critical ways: as a category of analysis that illuminates how communities engage resistance and struggle; as a praxis through which to theorize the knowledges being produced through struggle; as a site of knowledge production that takes seriously the community and the multiple knowledges shared and produced there as vital sites of autonomy; and as an objective for advancing community safety as

²⁴⁴ See, Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Social Factory,” para. 1. See also M. Dalla Costa and James, *The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community*.

a postcapitalist, prefigurative process.²⁴⁵ As a strategic concept, the social factory also functions as a site of direct action and struggle through which to read and advance a series of specific community safety projects explored in this work within the larger coherent project of community safety and community regeneration.

The first task in this regard is to elaborate the social factory as a category of analysis and a praxis, one which initially emerged from the autonomous workers' struggles of the 1960s that rose out of the Italian factories and workers'

²⁴⁵ As a convivial research project, this work relies on the device of the “strategic concept” as a critical element in the theorization and circulation of struggle. Drawing on a transdisciplinary approach to problem solving and grounded in Illich’s notion of convivial tools, strategic concepts encourage an excavation of the history of struggles to resurface terms, strands of thought, practices, and other implements or weapons from earlier (whether related or unrelated) battles and across fields and issues. Strategic concepts provide a way of cobbling together new theoretical innovations and strategies in the present. In drawing attention to their own presence and function, strategic concepts democratize spaces of learning as collectives repurpose and use these terms collectively, establishing their function and use through genealogy, agreement, and use in the present rather than doctrine and theoretical pedigree. Further, the implementation and reflection on the use of strategic concept functions as a tool that can subvert common academic practices (traps) of interpreting the world. In a convivial research approach, researchers can rely on the strategic concept as a tool for generating knowledge, a tool in service of “living theory”—yet always explicit about the genealogy that produced it and its relation to struggle. On “living theory,” see, *Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning*, “Analytical Frameworks,” para. 3. Living Theory will be discussed in greater depth over the course of this work. For an elaboration of a strategic concept, see Callahan, “Rebel Dignity.” Something similar to a strategic concept can be seen represented in Dillon and Neal’s *Foucault on Politics, Security, and War*, where Dillon and Neal begin with an unfulfilled promise from Foucault that is recorded in *Society Must Be Defended*. Foucault promises to excavate “war” as a concept and in particular to elaborate on it in relation to security and biopolitics. They note, he does not do this, but rather leaves the field fallow with the provocation—which forms the basis for their important edited volume that relies on an approach that moves back and forth across Foucault’s oeuvre to not exactly continue or “fill in” what Foucault “might have meant” but to note the rupture in his own thinking (writing) and to return this moment to explore moments of struggle and urgency in the present. Dillon and Neal, *Foucault on Politics, Security and War*, 11. On convivial tools, see Illich, *Tools for Conviviality*.

movements *Potere Operaismo* and *Lotta Continua*.²⁴⁶ Theorized in the context of *operaismo*, the “social factory” is generalized recognized as initiating with Mario Tronti, and his observations and efforts to “note the ‘leap’ of the factory’s forms of discipline and regulation outside the factory walls to permeate everyday life.”²⁴⁷ This provided a way to name a form of regimentation that paralleled the capitalist time clocks and the organization of workers’ space.

²⁴⁶ I draw here on a history of *operaismo* (literally “workerism”) and its transformation into autonomism, a strand of Marxist theory and practice that begins from the power of the working class, as in the work of Wright, *Storming Heaven*. See also, Ramirez, “Interview with Guido Viale.” In 2002, Carlo Ginzburg exposed the ongoing effort of the state to criminalize the work of *Lotta Continua* and to support and protect the police, producing a counter-investigation in response to the unsolved murder of a police officer, Luigi Calabresi, in Italy in 1972. Ginzburg’s *The Judge and the Historian: Marginal Notes on a Late 20th Century Miscarriage of Justice* offers a strategy for reading court documents and witness statements, and using the space and event of a trial that occurred more than two decades after the incident, as a site of direct action research. Both a compelling narrative and a document of indictment of the Italian state, it is also a powerful testament to the collective approach to struggle of *Lotta Continua*, and in particular the dignity of Adriana Sofri, Ovidio Bompreschi, Giorgio Pietrostefani, and indeed, the author and researcher himself, Carlo Ginzburg. See Ginzburg, *The Judge and the Historian*.

²⁴⁷ See Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Social Factory Ateneo 1-24-15.” For a discussion of Tronti and this formulation, in Cleaver, “Inversion of Class Perspective,” 115. Tronti’s use of the concept applied to present conditions of capital and in particular Palestine occurs in UT *Califas* Social Factory Ateneo announcement for January 2015, Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Social Factory Ateneo 1-24-15,” para. 7. The diffusion of the rhythms and disciplines of capital out from the organization of the work place across the spaces of everyday life is of course an area that has received much attention. It is worth noting here that in addition to prisons (and prior to that clinics) this discussion of the order of the workshop also occurs in Foucault’s exploration of disciplinary power in *Discipline and Punish*. The work of Nick Dyer-Witheford (formerly Nick Witheford but cited throughout as Nick Dyer-Witheford) explores resistances to the organization of life that the factory attempts to impose as critical to organizing three specific conjunctures of capital over the course of the last century, see Dyer-Witheford, “Autonomist Marxism and the Information Society.” Nicholas Thoburn draws on Tronti in his work, *Deleuze, Marx and Politics*, to explore the social factory as a site of “minor knowledges” critical to struggle; see Thoburn, *Deleuze, Marx and Politics*, 8; and also throughout the chapter “The Social Factory,” 69–102.

The term was later picked up by the Italian *operaismo* feminist struggle, *Lotta Femminista* closely aligned with militant factory struggles, who claimed it fully over the next decade.²⁴⁸ The social factory as a site of struggle against capitalism was theorized prominently in the work of Mariarosa Dalla Costa, Giovanni Dalla Costa, Leopoldina Fortunati, Silvia Federici, Selma James, and others primarily working from within the Italian *operaismo*, feminist, and later autonomist struggles to expose the wage as an instrument of capital that invisibilized (and devalued) labor, predominately the labor of women, in the home. These struggles drew attention to the reproductive labor performed inside the household, situating the household as one organized by capital through the patriarchal family structure and dependent on the (predominantly) male wage earned outside the home.²⁴⁹ Theorized as both the wages *for* housework campaign and the wages *against* housework campaign, these struggles advanced the social

²⁴⁸ See M. Dalla Costa, “The Door to the Garden.” Here I also draw on recent reflections on the close, if also politically vexed around questions of gender, relationship between *Potere Operaio* and *Lotta Continua*, and the feminist movement in Fortunati, “Learning Struggle.”

²⁴⁹ This “dependency” on an outside (male) wage is one of the points of contestation advanced through the category of the social factory, as is prominent in the work of the women’s groups, autonomists and others. While the focus on the Italian feminists’ work around the social factory remained largely on the status quo, there is much from this work that drew from and supported other forms of organization, demand, and dissent, sharing tools and insights across struggles. was closely related to struggles for a national wage or social wage in the United States waged primarily by Black women. While the patriarchal family structure is identified as a central disciplinary structure of capital, there are of course many other family structures, modes of survival, as well as sites of exploitation and oppression that exists as both targets of capital and sites of resistance, both at the time and in the present.

factory as a category of analysis in several critical ways, carving out various connected “areas” or locations of the social factory simultaneously.²⁵⁰

²⁵⁰ Angela Davis has a powerful critique of the “wages for housework” campaign that brings together both historical differences at the intersections of gender and race, as well as outlining a different strategy for challenging capital, one informed by a collective historical experience that shaped a Black Feminist approach. See A. Davis, *Women, Race, and Class*, Chapter 13. In the first instance, Davis points out that, “In the United States, women of colour – and especially Black women – have been receiving wages for housework for untold decades,” (A. Davis, *Women, Race, and Class*, 237) noting that the “enervating domestic obligations of women in general provide flagrant evidence of the power of sexism” (ibid., 238) but explains that sexism combined with racism has insured that “vast numbers of Black women have had to do their own housekeeping and other women’s home chores as well.” (ibid. 238) In the second instance, rather than advocating for “wages for housework” she asserts the demand for “a guaranteed annual income for all” (ibid.) as a response to a “dehumanizing welfare system.” (ibid., 237) Davis argues further that, “the guaranteed annual income functions, therefore, as unemployment insurance pending the creation of more jobs with adequate wages along with subsidised systems of child care” (ibid.). Davis’ point echoes that of many feminists who did not see the “wages for housework” campaign as an effective strategy for women to confront capital or patriarchy. While I believe in some ways, particularly with the “wages against housework” campaign, this slightly overlooks the campaign as a tactic rather than a program, Davis’ argument for “a guaranteed annual income for all” or, a social wage, brings her, in my view, in closer resonance with path the campaigns of the Italian feminists continued along—namely, resistances to the imposition of capital through approaches that included “zero work”—with time for creative living, love making, and collective practices outside of capital. However, while Davis’ response exposes much about women’s struggles in the United States in relation to race and cannot be left out of an autonomous feminist analysis moving forward, I am less interested in this aspect of Davis’ critique in thinking the present. In my view, what can be looted from early women’s struggles around the “wage” in relation to the social factory lies less in a notion of equality, equal pay, etcetera. and more in the way these early struggles relied on the wage as an instrument of capital. Here, I draw on the collective ethnography produced through the Social Factory Ateneo, in the collective interrogation of the category as follows, in response to a situation of ongoing state violence brought to prominence with Ferguson and the “Black Lives Matter” moment. Collectively, they note that “Women’s struggles theorized prominently by Mariarosa Dalla Costa, Selma James, Silvia Federici, Andaiye and others relied on the category of the social factory to reveal the work that the wage made invisible, devaluing both work and lives in the process of furthering primitive accumulation,” Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Social Factory Ateneo 1-24-15,” para. 7. From this observation, they pose the following interrogation: “We ask, what can we learn from the struggle to claim ‘Black Lives Matter’ about capital’s mechanisms for devaluing lives?” Ibid. I will explore this reading more significantly in the exploration of the social factory in the section that follows. Beyond this, what I find critically important to the use of the social factory in the present as a category of analysis is Davis’ work in thinking through these campaigns in relation to resistance and social cohesion in apartheid South Africa. It is this thinking that I rely on to think through the war on the social factory in this section and throughout the ethnography.

Drawing on this work, the social factory as a category of analysis and praxis can be read in the first instance as a somewhat literal, spatial term. The struggles around housework identified the home, where the work relation was demanded or imposed by capital, as a site of exploitation, oppression, and violence.²⁵¹ In this most literal use (though no less rich strategically and analytically) the social factory is a realm of labor “outside the factory,” the factory’s “other.” It is the realm that capital depends on for the reproduction of the worker. These struggles made evident that it is in the interest of capital if the cost of reproducing the worker can be borne elsewhere (outside the space of organized production for capital) and at a low cost (even free).²⁵² As an analytical category that makes visible strategies of capital and forms of work the social factory also functions as an objective in that it expands the definition of the working class to include workers who are not remunerated for their labor with a wage.²⁵³ Thus, in keeping with autonomous Marxism, the working class becomes a more robust category for interrogating and confronting capital. At the same time, used in its most literal, spatial sense, the social factory as a strategic

²⁵¹ These struggles have also produced an analysis of the violence directed at women as inherent in capital relations. Here I draw on G. F. Dalla Costa, *The Work of Love*.

²⁵² G. F. Dalla Costa’s *The Work of Love* explores the mechanisms, and the inherent violence, of capital that produce this labor as “free.”

²⁵³ As a legacy of 1968 and *operaismo*, this expanded understanding of class is central to autonomist Marxist thought. See Cleaver, *Reading Capital Politically*. Cleaver argues that struggles in the 1960s and 1970s advanced the category of the working class to include students, women, and others. This is the legacy that Holloway’s notion of dignity as a class concept also draws. Cleaver, *Reading Capital Politically*; Holloway, “Dignity’s Revolt.”

category also offers a way of understanding the shifting sites of militarization and police violence in relation to capital in the current conjuncture.²⁵⁴

Secondly, and these theorizations first occur prominently in the work of Dalla Costa and Dalla Costa, James, Federici, Fortunati and Andaiye, the social factory as a category of analysis and praxis functions to identify the wage relation, specifically the relation between waged/unwaged and the subsequent invisibilization of work that the wage effected.²⁵⁵ The social factory in this sense functions to expose the role of the wage (and the sites of its absence) in the exploitation of women's labor in the home, as capital attempts to displace the labor of reproducing the worker onto the household, family, and community and in particular onto women.²⁵⁶ Beyond exploitation, the role of the wage in devaluing women's labor in the home both a) devalues the labor of the home (child-rearing, cooking, washing, caressing, caring, decision-making, and so on);

²⁵⁴ Critical interventions into questioning the role (and necessity) of police in the present have been deliberate in reconstructing a history that exposes the policing role as "slave catchers" and "strike breakers." This history remains alive in the present, and also takes on new forms under changing conditions of capital. The primary site of police violence in service of capital is no longer primarily exercised in geographic relation to the plantation or shop floor or picket line. This is one sense in which the social factory as a category can be used to reveal intersecting race projects as well as gender projects, an analysis that this dissertation will continue to develop throughout subsequent chapters.

²⁵⁵ This is also the work of Zerowork Collective, see "Introduction to Zerowork I."

²⁵⁶ I am indebted to Manolo Callahan for this formulation. This appropriation forms the basis of the social factory as a strategic concept and also the Social Factory Ateneo as project.

and b) devalues the person who must do that labor. Thus both work and lives are devalued as part of the process of primitive accumulation.²⁵⁷

Third, as a category of analysis and praxis the social factory can be read against notions of “private,” as a realm that is the other of the public, cohering the

²⁵⁷ Federici, *Revolution at Point Zero*. While there are many sources on primitive accumulation, a recent work that situates primitive accumulation in relation to extraction poses exciting provocations for current struggles, see Mezzadra and Neilson, “Operations of Capital.”

term “public” through a binary dependency.²⁵⁸ It is also the realm of leisure. In this sense, it is not just not/factory, it is rather, “away from the factory.” Here, the social factory is used to reveal another mechanism of capital. Federici draws on the work of Fortunati to explore what Du Bois names, “the white working class

²⁵⁸ While much current work around urban space and a recent emphasis on the “right to the city” takes as it’s battleground the reclaiming of public space from forces of privatization, this dissertation instead engages “commons” as a category of analysis that allows for a thinking beyond the public/private binary. Here, I rely on theorizations of commons and urban Zapatismo, in particular drawing on the body of work of Gustavo Esteva and Manuel Callahan, and thinking around the commons that was shared in Uni Tierra spaces following the Zapatista *escuelitas* of 2013–2014, including through collective spaces of reflection produced for Radio Autonomía in the late summer of 2013. See Radio Autonomía, September 2013 Show: *La Escuelita Zapatista*, September 1, 2013. Similar to the use of “wages for/against housework” as a strategy (not a full demand or actual solution to capital’s exploitation) this author and indeed the work of this dissertation fully recognizes the powerful struggles historically and in the present that deploy the realms of public/private strategically in theorizations and direct action spaces, often to make visible spaces experiences of violence. This work recognizes as well the work of the public/private bifurcation in producing powerful corresponding binary reworkings in different conjunctures, as in feminist struggles insisting that the personal is political—which in addition to exposing violences often relegated to “the private,” claimed a space for speaking and reshaped political discourse in the 1970s, following questions of “political space” that emerged from the 1960s. As I will address in a subsequent section, there has also been much excellent work elucidating an American apartheid through theorizations on public space, including differential policing strategies aimed to restrict and monitor specific bodies and populations. In some ways, the realm of the “private” as a discursive realm and site of struggle serves as a kind of doppelganger to the social factory throughout the work, though as I argue throughout the category of the social factory with its emphasis on relations and collective experiences of communities of struggle also far surpasses any full reflection in the “private.” Relying on the social factory to shift from a focus on the fight for public space to a fight to reclaim commons, I attempt to both subvert an over reliance on civic terms that carve particular geographies through the state, and also to elaborate commons beyond “resources” and plots of shared land. In “Regenerating People’s Space,” Esteva writes, “‘we’ need to change the nature of the tools ‘we’ use. (I use the word in the Illich sense.) There was an epistemological transformation when the commons was turned into resources.” Esteva, “Regenerating People’s Space,” 138. For Esteva as well as for Callahan, the commons are less a plot of land and more about how a community organizes itself through commoning. See Esteva, “Commoning in the New Society.” Manuel Callahan and the collective work of Uni Tierra Califas, drawing on the Zapatista *escuelitas*, elaborated this usage further as a community’s relation to work, relations, and obligations, specifically how a community organizes itself collectively around work and work projects. This reflects an autonomous position that capital is a relation, and the work relation is an area where this relation can be (and repeatedly is) “broken” to configure new relations that exist outside of capital. This thinking emerges as collective analysis through an engagement with (AZ) South Bay from 2012–2015.

bargain” as a strategy of class decomposition.²⁵⁹ Using an inversion analysis, Federici uses Fortunati’s concept of “scooperation” in service of an autonomous feminist reading of post war suburbanization, to draw attention to a series of mechanisms following the end of World War II, including the construction of suburban life, aimed at breaking the bonds that had developed among workers through collective experiences (of austerity, of war) extending from the Depression through the experience of World War II.²⁶⁰ Focusing primarily on the instruments that individualized the lives of waged workers (primarily men) in the hours outside of work (for instance, the rise of the manicured lawn), Federici points to processes of decomposition in the realm of the social factory. These processes target (and manufacture) gender differently (and differentially). In this way, the social factory is developed in a related but somewhat divergent arena from the main theorizations advanced by Tronti and later Dalla Costa and James. As reviewed above, for Tronti, the social factory designates the spread beyond the factory of the modes of organization in the factory that distribute particular social

²⁵⁹ Here I draw on Callahan’s elaboration on a theory of value through the connections he draws between Du Bois’ democratic despotism and Gilmore’s “group differentiated vulnerability to premature death” in his work to theorize interlocking racial strategies in relations to cycles of struggle and conjuncture in relation to a theory of value. Callahan, “In Defense of Conviviality,” and Gilmore, *Golden Gulag*, 28. I am grateful to Manuel Callahan who drew my attention to this formulation of race in the work of Gilmore, and in particular for a conversation in his Activist Ethnography class at the California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco in Spring 2013 where Alan Eladio Gómez also engaged this concept in relation to violence against Black and Brown communities as meted out through the prison-policing apparatus. See Gilmore, *Golden Gulag*. On race and capital, see also Gilmore, “Globalisation and US Prison Growth,” and “Fatal Couplings of Power and Difference.”

²⁶⁰ In addition to Cleaver’s work on “Inversion of Class Perspective,” inversion analysis provides a way of reading conjunctures, as in the work of Baldi, “Theses on Mass Worker and Social Capital.” On composition and crisis, see Dyer-Witheford, “For a Compositional Analysis of the Multitude.”

relations, eventually transforming all aspects of life.²⁶¹ For Dalla Costa and James, the social factory is a category of analysis for understanding the realm of women's invisibilized exploitation made possible by the emergence of the industrial factory as it displaced other rhythms of work and family relations. In their analysis, it is also a site of devaluation. Drawing on Fortunati, Federici's use of *scooperation* further illuminates the social factory as a site where capital aims particular decomposition strategies that work adjacent to "the factory" or, the site of waged labor. This layers an understanding by focusing less on the permeation of everyday life with the forms and discipline of factory labor regimes as they spread beyond factory walls, and less on the construction of two spatially separate realms divided by the wage relation. Rather, *scooperation* as a form of decomposition attempts to control the time (as "leisure") of workers outside of the factory in order to interrupt those already existing bonds, and thwart any emergent relations among the working class that would potentially threaten capital's attempts to command and control the class. In addition to the exploitation and the devaluation that capital directs at the social factory, it is also a critical site for the decomposition of the class—in short, the "private" is not (only) a space, but is a strategy of capital to disaggregate the class.²⁶²

Fortunati and Federici's work facilitate a reading of the social factory in the present as a site of praxis and knowledge production. The social factory

²⁶¹ See Cleaver, "Inversion of Class Perspective," 115.

²⁶² See Cleaver, "Inversion of Class Perspective;" Vishmidt, "Permanent Reproductive Crisis." On inversion analysis, see Cleaver, "Inversion of Class Perspective."

provides a way to theorize militarization and counterinsurgency in the present in relation to capitalist strategies of decomposition. More specifically, taking the category seriously, this prompts a reading where state and state manufactured violences are not moments of aberration in an otherwise civilized nation-state project nor do these violences mark a decline towards levels of a less civilized one. And while these violences can be understood in part as a product of structural racism that include archaic, enduring, and emergent policies that continuously re-inscribe racial violence and a multitude of racist state agents enacting these policies as well as inventing and testing out brutal and demeaning practices on their own—this reading lends itself too easily to reforms that fail to extract particular communities from the violence they continue to face. Instead, relying on the category of social factory, violence (in its many forms) can be read as a strategy of class decomposition and re-composition that creates favorable conditions for capital, a claim this dissertation will explore more fully.

Informed by each of these histories to formulate the social factory as a strategic concept in the present, I draw on the collective research project of the Social Factory Ateneo that re-appropriated the “social factory” as a strategic concept beginning with the Democracy Ateneo and later as a satellite *ateneo* in the spring of 2014 as part of an engagement with a number of community safety projects across the Bay Area. Drawing on Spanish anarchist traditions of worker’s inquiry as well as other self-organized spaces of research and learning, Uni Tierra Califas advances the *ateneo* as a horizontal space of convivial research and

insurgent learning, collective reflection and direct action.²⁶³ As a project of Uni Tierra Califas, the Social Factory Ateneo functioned as a site where the concept was further elaborated as a way to think through community safety as a prefigurative process.

Recalling Tronti, the social factory marks a “leap” from another site of labor, where labor here is read less as a particular kind of work and more as capital’s imposition (of a relation).²⁶⁴ Thus, read through particular race projects (which will be further elaborated in the next section) the social factory can be seen as the site where a particular imposition of capital (and state) has “leapt.” For example, if we read the prison system as on one level a repressive, disciplinary institution that serves a particular purpose in the current conjuncture of capital, or (and this is related), if we read the occupation of Palestine not as an aberration but a relation, we can read the social factory as a site of both capitalist expansion and as capitalist continuity. This reading can be witnessed in the moment, for example, when the parole officer comes into the home to monitor the terms of compliance for someone’s probation period, or when the state checkpoint “drifts” from the border to the interior road or community festival, or to the street corner

²⁶³ The *ateneo* as a convivial research tool and research strategy will be elaborated more fully through the ethnography, including role of the *ateneo* in producing both a collective ethnography and cohering a collective subject in relation to learning, investigations, and assembly.

²⁶⁴ See Cleaver, “Inversion of Class Perspective.”

or crossing point.²⁶⁵ In this instance, the social factory as first theorized by Tronti becomes way of seeing and theorizing the movement or permeation (of a particular relation of capital or a state form) beyond its “original” boundaries.²⁶⁶

Similarly, as a category of analysis, the social factory as a site targeted by militarization and criminalization offers a way of reading the prison industrial complex and the production of surplus value.²⁶⁷ This ranges from the low cost of labor made available to corporations inside the prisons themselves where devaluation of the lives lived inside secures conditions of possibility for exploitation; to the exacerbated fees on everything to do with contact across prison walls (from prohibitively expensive “care packages” to phone rates to food vending machines when families visit loved ones inside) as capital establishes conditions for accumulation at the site of care and reproduction. It is interesting to note that relying on the social factory to think through sites of accumulation in relation to prisons makes visible how these mechanisms for insuring accumulation

²⁶⁵ In a US context, this is the work of ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) and their collusion with local and state law enforcement agencies to extend the border to the streets, homes, parks, and all areas where communities gather. This can be seen in the specific project, for example, of Operation Stone Garden.

²⁶⁶ This thought is illuminated by standing in contradistinction to the work of Giorgio Agamben to theorize the *State of Exception*, where incursions of the state occur legislatively first as exception and then as rule. See, Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*.

²⁶⁷ Angela Davis, Ruth Wilson Gilmore, Joy James, Michelle Alexander, Eve Goldberg and Linda Evans, the collective work of Critical Resistance, and others have demonstrated in recent decades the surplus value that the PIC produces across multiple spaces and its relation to democracy, repression, and resistance. In particular see, A. Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?*, and A. Davis, *Abolition Democracy*; Gilmore, *Golden Gulag*; James, *States of Confinement*; Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*; Goldberg and Evans, *The Prison-Industrial Complex*; and CR10 Publications Collective, *Abolition Now!*.

function in reverse. In other words, in the case of the social factory and gender in relation to the home, the labor involved in reproducing the worker must be devalued as “housework” in order to extract surplus value, and by extension those who perform this labor are devalued; yet in the case of prisons, the person is devalued through criminalization so that the exploitation is possible in order to extract surplus value. Similarly, rather than a family’s efforts to provide care for a loved one being invisibilized by the love relation (G. Dalla Costa) to insure the labor is free as a way of insuring accumulation, a family’s efforts to provide care are made “visible” to capital at every point, so that they can be privatized and from there, extract surplus value based on the wager that the love relation is present.

The criminalization and militarization aimed at the social factory as a site of capital accumulation includes the court system as a site of surplus value, produced through a response to “crime” that includes multiple court dates related to each incident, a proliferation of paperwork, costly transcripts and official forms and documentation to file, as well as the range of services and personnel associated with “crime.”²⁶⁸ It also includes the entire infrastructure of surveillance and data gathering in relation to the prison, from parole officer visits to alternative custody ankle monitors, to search warrants, and more. These are all sites that produce value. If in its original formulation, the social factory as a category called attention to sites of exploitation and accumulation adjacent to the production

²⁶⁸ It is not convenience, for example, that positions the bail bondsman’s office in multiple stations outside the courthouse.

within the factory itself, it can be used to make similar aspects of capital observable in the present. The social factory is the streets, sidewalks, school yards, homes, and myriad other spaces that capital attempts to manage conditions for the production and accumulation of value and for its own preservation. In this view, there are not only certain tangible sites where value is produced, relations themselves become targets of value production.²⁶⁹

Here, Angela Davis' analysis of apartheid South Africa is invaluable. In an analysis emerging during South Africa's apartheid regime, Davis writes that, "Black domestic life in South Africa's industrial centres is viewed by Apartheid supporters as superfluous and unprofitable. But it is also seen as a threat."²⁷⁰ In her analysis "the homemaking role of women," or, their domestic labor as a source of social reproduction, is one which South African government officials

²⁶⁹ In thinking of the production of value across community and family bonds and in particular in relation to gender, I draw on analyses of the Grameen Bank and other micro-lending institutions that specifically aim at women based on the understanding that women's experience in community has shaped a collective experience that will more often than not translate to the burden of the loan being shouldered by a collective rather than left unpaid. Micro-lending practices are keenly aware that a community survives based on its relations, and by offering loans to women who remain—through children, elders, family ties—embedded in complex community relations, it is much more likely that the loan will be repaid rather than abandoned. Seen by micro lending agencies as a kind of capital much like property or other forms of "dead capital," these relationships offer stability for capital, a kind of collateral even. But, capital must also be able to exercise some control over these relationships, including disrupting them, so that for example, the community does not form its own collective borrowing and lending program that does not need the micro finance institutions. For an excellent discussion of the role of the Grameen bank and other micro lending development projects aimed at "empowering women" through financial independence and small business entrepreneurship in Bangladesh, see Karim, *Microfinance and Its Discontents*: Rahman addresses this complexity as well in *Women And Microcredit In Rural Bangladesh*.

²⁷⁰ A. Davis, *Women, Race and Class*, 235.

recognize and fear.²⁷¹ They fear that the presence of women in the urban centers “will lead to the establishment of a stable black population.”²⁷² Thus she argues that the “consolidation of African families in the industrialised cities is perceived as a menace because domestic life might become a base for a heightened level of resistance to Apartheid.”²⁷³ This is at the base of her argument that situates apartheid strategies as informed both by “economic expediency and political security.” Davis writes, “apartheid is eroding – with the apparent goal of destroying – the very fabric of Black domestic life.”²⁷⁴

Thus, Davis argues that in the context of South African apartheid, it is not the unwaged labor in the home that capital depends on as a site of primitive accumulation, as women bear the burden of capital for “reproducing the worker.” Instead, for Davis, the South African situation demonstrates the opposite: South Africa has engaged in the “deliberate dissolution of family life.” The “private home economy” in South Africa, she argues, together with the “public production process” has made it possible to destroy domestic life. Thus, for Davis, “South African capitalism...blatantly demonstrates the extent to which the capitalist economy is utterly dependent on domestic labour.” In other words, what Precarias refers to as the “externalization of the home,” under South African capitalism, is a

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷² Ibid.

²⁷³ Ibid. This resonates with other policies designed to disrupt relations as a way of dissolving resistance and has been documented from inside prison walls as well. See Gómez “Resisting Living Death.”

²⁷⁴ A. Davis, *Women, Race, and Class*, 236.

deliberate strategy where privatization is not primarily organized around surplus value but rather is a strategy of class decomposition—or, a form of war aimed at an insurgent population. It is in this context that the Black women’s work as domestic laborers *outside their own homes* should be read.

What becomes most critical here is not a comparative analysis between Italy and the United States and the living theory that emerged from particular women’s struggles in these contexts versus a South African capitalism which has produced a different situation of domestic life and domestic labor. There is, for example in the work of Michel Rolph-Trouillot, research that demonstrates that forms of capitalist imposition and race projects vary across geographies in the same era—sometimes in as close a proximity as a forest community and a seaside community. Rather, what Davis is able to do in her analysis—both in recalling the role of Black women in the United States as domestic workers and in situating domestic labor against domestic life under South African apartheid—is to reveal different strategies of state and capital aimed to manage social antagonisms along racial divisions, in short, to produce racial regimes.

This can be elucidated through a reading of W.E.B. Du Bois’ “democratic despotism” and the racial divisions and hierarchies that capital articulates. Returning to Fortunati’s notion of cooperation as a strategy of composition aimed at pacifying a post World War II white, heteronormative, patriarchal America, capital seeks to stabilize particular communities or groups (white) while destabilizing others (Black and Brown). This destabilization occurs through the mechanisms of both capital and the state—as crisis, as policy, as housing options,

loan programs, and so on, as well as through forms of violence. Thus in a given conjuncture, groups are being composed and decomposed differently. In the situation of social antagonism in South Africa under apartheid, it became, if we follow Davis, critical that capital continued to direct an assault on Black family life as a strategy of war, even if this did not mean that women's labor in the home could be a site for the expropriation and exploitation of labor to reproduce the worker (and future worker as the child). Rather, the apartheid system itself depended on the destruction of "the very fabric of Black domestic life."²⁷⁵

In the current US context, the social factory as a target of counterinsurgency and low intensity war offers a new way of understanding the PIC as a site of value production in relation to gender and race, as well as a strategy of decomposition through militarization and criminalization. This enables a new reading of the concentration of policing practices aimed at Black and Brown communities under the name of "crime" and the devastating attacks through the Drug War and mass incarceration, including the incredible rise in women's incarceration rates over the last two decades that continue to remove

²⁷⁵ A. Davis, *Women, Race, and Class*, 236.

women from families, homes, and communities.²⁷⁶ And there are sites of value in this targeted dissolution as well.

An ethnography of community safety through the category of the social factory makes observable sites of primitive accumulation associated with the criminalization of the prison-industrial and militarized policing complex in conjunction with strategies of class decomposition and composition. How much will a family member pay to maintain a phone connection with a loved one inside? When all home cooked food or food from “outside” has been made prohibitive by the prison system, how much will a family member spend to be able to share a manufactured sandwich from a vending machine during a family visit? How much for an avocado, impossible inside and impossible to bring in from outside, only available in that same machine in the “borderland” of the visiting room? What will a family or community give up, sell, or scrap together to make bail to keep another family member home as long as possible—for a birthday, a holiday, a funeral, a graduation? Similarly, what forms of cooperation defy the relations that capital attempts to impose, and forge new relations, new collectives and possibilities?

²⁷⁶ It is beyond the scope of this work to address the number of people behind bars that have children, including children under eighteen. It is also beyond this work’s scope to adequately break down the statistical representation of specific forms of legislation targeting Black and Brown communities through mass incarceration policies. However, some statistics can provide a brief glimpse. According to the Sentencing Project in relation to a study conducted using information from 2007, in that year, “1.7 million children had a parent in prison on any given day,” (para. 2) with the number of children with an incarcerated parent increasing 80% between 1991 and 2007 (para. 1), for a total, as of 2007, of 744,200 fathers and 65,600 mothers behind bars nationwide (para. 1). See, The Sentencing Project, “Parents in Prison,” 1, 2. The impact on targeted communities, when combined with deportation and detention policies and legislation that criminalizes low-income families across the United States, is profound.

Thus, in this way the social factory exposes forms of state violence aimed at disrupting and dismantling the community, the home, and the family as a site of reproduction and care as well as the home “unbound,” the home that one carries to the visiting room of a state institution during Saturday visiting hours.²⁷⁷ As a strategic concept, it provides current struggles with a way to name the “site” towards which particular forms of militarization, criminalization, and racialized state violence are directed.²⁷⁸

The work of *Lotta Continua* and the women’s movement in Italy and later, the Midnight Notes Collective, examined the wage as a mechanism of capital that devalued certain kinds of work and by extension, devalued those doing this work. Drawing on this, the social factory as a strategic concept in the present can provide a useful point of orientation in examining capital’s mechanisms for devaluing lives in the current conjuncture. It offers an opportunity for naming not

²⁷⁷ I draw here, to name a few sources, on *The Commoner*, “Care Work and the Commons;” Gill and Pratt, “In the Social Factory?”; as well as the range of articles in *Feminist Review* 87: Italian Feminisms.

²⁷⁸ Reading militarization and racialized violence in the present as a “war on the social factory” has been conceived by Manolo Callahan and advanced through the “spaces of encounter” of Uni Tierra Califas as a way to connect and build a shared analysis across a number of projects in the larger Bay Area. This will be explored more fully in the following section and throughout the dissertation, where violence and war (low intensity, permanent, domestic) are seen as attacks on the social factory that advance capital’s efforts at command and capture. This includes the relation of violence to the production of racial, gender, and sexual subjectivities—both as individual subjects and as populations through the emphasis of biopower. This also allows for a reading of extreme forms of violence directed at women across the Global South in relation to border militarization and capitalist restructuring projects and secured through free trade agreements like NAFTA, as evidenced through the feminicides extending throughout the Americas and targeting primarily indigenous women, from Quebec through Saskatchewan to Vancouver, British Columbia, and from Juarez, Mexico, and across Latin America. For more on feminicides see Fregoso and Bejarano, *Terrorizing Women*; S. G. Rodríguez, *The Femicide Machine*; and Radford and Russell, *Femicide*.

just capital's attempts to "displace the cost of reproducing the worker onto the household, the family, the home, and women" and to find new sites for the production of value.²⁷⁹ As a category, it also offers a way of seeing and analyzing those sites in a low intensity war waged in service of capital where multiple violences are directed.²⁸⁰ These violences are structural (the dismantling of the Welfare State); sporadic and terrorizing (the police killing of Black and Brown youth in the streets or in their own homes); everyday (forms of routinized policing harassment and criminalization like "stop and frisk"); and numerous other forms of violence.²⁸¹ As a category, it provides a way of situating the ethnography we continue to produce collectively in the spaces where we gather to tell each other stories. Relying on the social factory as a strategic term, we are able to disaggregate the multiple violences aimed at the social factory, and read these through counterinsurgency including not only direct violence but strategies of uneven (savage) development and disparate allocations of aid; the circulation of misinformation and disinformation; and a series of tactics from the carceral to the biopolitical aimed at the disruption and destruction of a community, or the

²⁷⁹ Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, "Social Factory Ateneo," para. 1.

²⁸⁰ Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, "Social Factory Ateneo 1-24-15." As a consistent, open research and learning space, the Social Factory Ateneo analyzed collectively, including through the sharing of *testimonio*, the multiple violences directed at the social factory.

²⁸¹ On multiple violences, see Appendix 1, "Analytics of Violence" (schematic).

destruction of some communities adjacent and intimately connected to the security and longevity of others.²⁸²

Directed at the relations of a community, this does not occur solely through aid or privileges, often monetary. It occurs as well for example, in the state's fostering (or attempted fostering) of a "snitch culture" among some communities through carceral and penal regimes.²⁸³ It can be seen at the intersections of state, private and nonprofit realms, and can be traced through the disciplinary and surveilling function of programs like Child Protective Services (CPS); the undermining of care facilities, including access to mobile crisis units for the mentally ill; an abundance of anti-violence and anti-"gang" programs run by the police departments and the District Attorney's office and a corresponding non-profit structure aimed at "at-risk youth;" as well a range of policies and penalties that insure aid and subsidies will be allocated unevenly across economically disenfranchised communities. The social factory as a strategic concept offers a way for reading racialized violence as a strategy of war directed at a community and reveals through these strategies the ways that portions of the

²⁸² In addition to the work of Callahan, Dunn, and K. Williams, I draw here on different operations and modalities of power as explored by Foucault and in particular through the work of Dillon and Neal, *Foucault on Politics, Security and War*, and Medovoi, "Global Society Must Be Defended." The strategic allocation of aid as a counterinsurgency strategy is also a form of collectively allocating the "white man's bargain" (Du Bois) as a way of establishing privileges and promoting competition as well as cultivating resistance. See Du Bois, quoted in Callahan, "In Defense of Conviviality," 19. On aid and counterinsurgency see also K. Williams, "The Other Side of the COIN."

²⁸³ For an analysis of the role of the informant and the impact of a state-manufactured "snitch culture" directed at Black and Brown communities in producing violence and destroying social bonds, see Natapoff, *Snitching*.

population are treated as “deserving” while others are treated as criminally insurgent.²⁸⁴

Situated within an autonomous reading of capital where capital is understood as a relation, the social factory as a praxis and site of knowledge production draws attention to capital’s attempts to impose particular relations and restructure community bonds in ways that maintain favorable conditions for class composition.²⁸⁵ However, the social factory is also a site of struggle, connection, collective ways of being, and prefigurative politics. Like Gustavo Esteva’s “hammock” of relations, the social factory provides a way of understanding the relations of struggle and care on which community resistance and resilience depend. Thus, the social factory “exceeds a spatial frame and is not only a place

²⁸⁴ The roots of current counterinsurgency strategies can be traced to early collusions between militarized colonial expeditions and imperial anthropologists in service of colonial warfare and occupation. Ahmed explores these connections in Ahmed, “Some Remarks from the Third World.” In particular, anthropologists were commissioned by imperial powers to map social relations across tribal groups, including codes of inter-marriage, shared languages and agreements between groups, points of hostility and other connections and relations among people. This mapping of relations could be (and was) then used in service of colonial governance to divide groups, instigate hostilities and manipulate relations. This coincides with strategies in the present, including “social network analysis.” The role of anthropology and anthropologists in supporting state militarism ventures and wars extends into the present and has resulted in strong pushback from both outside and within the discipline. Of note are three recent studies, Price, *Weaponizing Anthropology*; Kelly et al., *Anthropology and Global Counterinsurgency*; and Network of Concerned Anthropologists, *The Counter-Counterinsurgency Manual*. On the role of colonial anthropologists see, Asad, *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter*; on social network analysis, see K. Williams, “The Other Side of the COIN,” and R. Gonzalez, “Human Terrain.” See also R. Gonzalez, *Anthropologists in the Public Sphere*.

²⁸⁵ This also echoes Foucault’s *dispositif*, where the “architecture” is not the institutions, documents, discourses, and so on, but rather the relations between those things. Foucault, “The Confession of the Flesh,” 194.

‘outside’ of something else through which we can see its continuity.”²⁸⁶

Similarly, in its re-appropriated form as a strategic concept in the present, “the primary relationship of the category” is no longer “the relation of waged/unwaged.”²⁸⁷ Rather, the social factory becomes “the relations that we draw on to resist capital’s imposition, the very relations that sustain us and through which we reproduce ourselves and our communities.”²⁸⁸

Through the collective ethnography of community safety produced as a deliberate research strategy of the Social Factory Ateneo, the relations that form the social factory include “the ways we gather to listen to loss and narrate our struggles.”²⁸⁹ It is from this elaboration of the strategic category of the social factory, generated through struggle, that the interrogation is posed: “what can we learn about the war on the social factory if we assess collectively the ways the state aims its militarized and carceral apparatus at the relations that sustain us?”²⁹⁰ And further, “With the families of those that have been taken [by forms of state violence] at the center, what can we learn about collective survival? How does this shape our strategies and spaces of militant direct action?”²⁹¹

²⁸⁶ Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Social Factory Ateneo 1-24-15,” para. 7.

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

²⁹¹ Ibid.

Through a convivial approach that addresses local spaces and projects networked to foster community safety across the Bay Area, the collective ethnography that follows will contribute to critical social movement scholarship by offering a way of reading resistance, political activity, feminist insurgency and community struggle that claim the social factory as a site of militant activity and vibrant possibility.

CHAPTER 3: THE BATTLE FOR 14TH AND BROADWAY

On December 7th, 2014, the family of O’Shaine Evans gathered at 14th and Broadway for a vigil marking the killing of O’Shaine by San Francisco police officer David Goff. Two months earlier on October 7th, Officer Goff who was not in police uniform at the time approached the parked car where O’Shaine was sitting with two friends and fired into the car, killing O’Shaine, seriously wounding another friend in the car, and arresting another who ran from the violence a few blocks from the Giants baseball stadium. Throughout October and November the family of O’Shaine—his mother Angela, sister Cadine, brother and brother-in-law Tyrone and Raheim, and O’Shaine’s young daughter and niece—organized vigils, rallies, protests, and press conferences, joined speak outs and spaces of community research. As a family they had mobilized with a powerful presence immediately following the shooting, including attending the police-organized “town hall” to challenge the SFPD’s actions and the narrative of the night that O’Shaine was killed.

Originally from Jamaica, O’Shaine’s family had been living in Oakland at the time O’Shaine was killed. Most of the gathering and rallies had been in San Francisco close to the location where he was fatally shot, including an insurgent action to draw attention to the violence during the Giants World Series games. On December 7th, the family moved the vigil to 14th and Broadway, gathering together with other families from Oakland, Stockton, San Francisco, and joined by a family from Florida as well. Family and supporters from Justice for Alex

Nieto, Justice for James Rivera Jr., the Oscar Grant Committee, the Kenneth Harding Jr. Foundation and Idriss Stelley Foundation were among those gathered. Together with community members they stood in a circle around those speaking with small electronic tea lights in transparent plastic cups.

Families rely on these spaces to keep their struggles in view and alive.²⁹² Although in some ways “visibility” can be seen as a strategy for engaging a dominant media (or any media), the visibility created and offered through these spaces is complex in many ways. It can, for example, serve as a kind of insurance policy against lawyers who have been known to indiscriminately drop families and cases, or miss critical filing deadlines, leaving families little recourse except the networks they have established among themselves to circulate information. Beyond this, the space of the vigil functions as an open system of information, where knowledges are circulated and analyses are fortified and realigned. At the December rally, stories were shared of recently surfaced camera recordings that had captured a brutal incident of police violence. Other stories from distant counties revealed that new witnesses had come forward to speak after years of silence. Upcoming court dates in police murder cases were announced at the vigil, including details in the developing judicial process for the fatal beating by the Oakland Police Department of Hernan Jaramillo in Oakland in July 2012. Critical information about predatory lawyers or delays in court filings were exchanged. There were whispers of settlements in cases that had dragged on for years. Some

²⁹² In thinking about visibility beyond a media strategy, I also recall a statement from a militant fighting in Indian-occupied Kashmir during a visit there, who when questioned about the use of violent tactics responded, “we fight to keep our struggle above ground.”

families revealed new details from autopsy reports, including cases where the fingernails of a loved one had been cut off during the autopsy.²⁹³ This provoked other information shared from autopsies—a collective process of sifting through what stories the gruesome details held or implied, listening for resonances, aligning the narrative produced by a dead body against the narrative of the state, attune to the contradictions.

These details exposed the presence of other knowledges—situated, disqualified, insurgent—that contested those framed in the narratives advanced and circulated by the state. They offered critical ways of thinking about families' cases as they moved, always slowly, towards settlement agreements or, in rare cases, trials. But they also oriented a community of struggle towards new questions of justice, collectively formulated. The stories were told together with the stories of Eric Garner, John Crawford, Eric Brown, and the names of those killed in Salinas and Santa Rosa and across the Peninsula were called out by those present in honor of the families who could not be present. The connections made through these retellings continued to weave together militarized policing and militarized borders, state occupations and forms of state violence, and the ongoing insurgencies that marked each space. As the afternoon grew later, the People's Community Medics offered a brief training with an emphasis this time not only on gunshot wounds and heavy bleeding, but reviewing the care necessary to clear

²⁹³ The speculation was that there may be evidence under the victims' fingernails that would have disproved the police version of events. For example, if traces of flesh that could identify an officer were found under the fingernails, it might prove that there had been a close altercation rather than a gunfight that justified an officer involved shooting, or it might indicate that the person had engaged an officer in an act of self-defense.

tear gas and other chemicals out of people's eyes and off their skin, how to prepare for militarized attacks on crowds, whether militant and peaceful.

The Intersection: 14th and Broadway

The intersection of 14th and Broadway in front of City Hall in downtown Oakland is explored in this chapter as a space of convergence. As such a space, it is a space of circulation and critical site of knowledge production in a larger Bay Area struggle, one that reflects the situated knowledges of the various micro-regions of the Bay Area.²⁹⁴ Fourteenth and Broadway (and its proximate "civic space," the renamed "Oscar Grant Plaza" in front of Oakland City Hall) is a physical and symbolic territory.²⁹⁵ While Oscar Grant Plaza is a space of both negative (in Negri's sense) and prefigurative politics, 14th and Broadway marks a battle zone and a recurrent temporary autonomous zone of knowledge

²⁹⁴ Here I draw on the formulation of Manuel Callahan in conceptualizing the Bay Area as a series of specific micro-regions in a larger enclave economy. By micro-regions, I refer to sectors of the economy in relation to geographies constructed according to capital, for example Silicon Valley and its digital, military and bio-technology economy, the shipping and oil refineries of the East Bay, and the tourism, real estate, cultural, and financial capital of San Francisco. In this chapter, these form the context for understanding differential policing strategies and community safety as a larger project. See also Barrera et al., *Action Research*. On cognitive capital, see Roggero, *Production of Living Knowledge*; see also Boutang, *Cognitive Capitalism*.

²⁹⁵ When Oscar Grant was killed by BART police officer Johannes Mehserle on New Year's Day, 2009, his murder launched a wave of rebellions across the Bay Area that continued for over two years and saw the emergence of many new coalitions, collectives and actions across diverse groups. The Occupy Movement in Oakland took root in the ferment of the Oscar Grant Movement, which was largely a movement against the extreme levels of violence targeting Black and Brown communities across the Bay Area. Thus a productive tension and many new forms of organizing and relating to each other were produced at this intersection.

production.²⁹⁶ Taken together under the broad name of 14th and Broadway, these form a heterotopic space where relations of force meet, engage, contest, and take new shape in relation to Oakland as a nexus of Bay Area struggles that emanate from and circulate among urban and suburban centers and their regional peripheries in the broader geographic terrain of Silicon Valley.²⁹⁷

Fourteenth and Broadway as urban space and as a recognizable locus of collective rebellion is traversed by countless instances of state and state manufactured violence that are replayed nightly across Oakland and its surrounding areas. It serves as an intersection for remembering a history of struggles too—a space of living archive where legacies are recalled to fortify and understand the present, from the Black Panthers and Black Power Movement, as well as Brown, Red, and Yellow Power Movements, student movements and anti-war movements, the women’s movement and Third World struggles, together with union and anti-fascist battles, anti-apartheid and anti-occupation struggles

²⁹⁶ Cleaver draws on Antonio Negri’s formulation of “negative” and “positive” resistance to differentiate those forms of resistance which directly engage and challenge the imposition of capital (for example, the wage strike) versus those processes that advance autonomous, self-organized activity. For Negri, negative politics are politics that engage the state but do not yet exist outside it. Cleaver highlights the emphasis on “positive” moments of working class autonomy as a key contribution of Negri’s concept of self-valorization. “Negative” moments, for Negri, involve those moments of refusal where the working class resists capital’s attempts at domination. “Positive” moments are reflected in working class struggles to build and claim new practices and relations as part of a larger effort at recomposition. Cleaver, “Inversion of Class Perspective,” 129.

²⁹⁷ Here I draw on Foucault’s use of “heterotopias” in Foucault, “Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias.” I return to this concept of heterotopias and elaborate it more fully in relation to resistance and resilience in the final chapter of the dissertation. While San Jose is often positioned as the heart of Silicon Valley, here I argue that the Bay Area is comprised of micro-regions that exist in geographic relation to the economic landscape of Silicon Valley that stretches from the outer regions of the Bay Area in northern California to the greater Los Angeles area in Southern California.

from South Africa to Palestine, and against waves of gentrifying forces, and the resistances from Redwood Summer down through to Chiapas. Demarcating this space as a battleground of contested and convergent forces in the present provides a way of mapping militarization and the struggle to demilitarize being waged from the social factory and from within a larger historical context.

The Rupture: Oscar Grant III and Lovelle Mixon²⁹⁸

In the Bay Area, two killings in Oakland in 2009 marked the beginning of a rupture that provoked a different imagination and set of tactics in the present. On January 1, 2009, Oscar Grant was shot in the back while handcuffed and lying on his stomach at Fruitvale Station in Oakland by BART transit police officer Johannes Mehserle while Grant's friends, handcuffed against a station wall close to where Grant lay, watched. Grant was left unassisted, surrounded by police and bleeding to death, on the raised platform. New Year's revelers returning from parties in San Francisco and across the Bay watched from BART subway cars as well, witnessing and recording via mostly cell phone video technology the gunshot that took Grant's young life and left his small daughter, Tatianna, without

²⁹⁸ Oscar Grant was shot and killed by BART police on January 1, 2009. Lovelle Mixon was shot and killed on March 21, 2009, after killing four Oakland police officers. Grant's "innocence" and Mixon's "insurgency" are often counterpoised as communities struggle to build a shared analyses and respond to a wide range of militarized violence aimed at the community. This struggle also occurs in relation to officer-involved shootings versus subaltern violence, with families who have lost children at the hands of other families' children fighting to expand the discourse on militarization beyond police executions. Notably, several films, both feature and documentary have been made about the killing of both Grant and Mixon and the community responses, including Adimu Madyun's *Operation Small Axe*; Ryan Coogler's *Fruitvale Station*, and Sam Stoker's *The Ghosts of March 21st*.

a father. The rebellions were immediate and rocked Oakland up through to the trial in the summer of 2010.²⁹⁹

Several months after Grant was killed, on March 21, 2009, Oakland police pulled over Lovelle Mixon in East Oakland for an alleged traffic violation. Mixon responded by shooting and killing two of the officers. Mixon then ran to his sister's apartment where he was tracked by a SWAT team, killing an additional two SWAT team members before he was fatally shot multiple times through a closet door. The response of the police and city was swift and spectacular—the Oakland Coliseum was organized as a staging ground in a funeral for fallen police heroes, and the life and family of Lovelle Mixon immediately criminalized and isolated in the media as the state closed ranks in a stadium filled with police. There were other killings by law enforcement during this time as well but Grant and Mixon came to signify the points in an emerging collective analysis struggling to formulate questions about occupation, insurgency, and war. Despite the dominant media's attempts to surface past convictions and a history of incarceration including a criminalization of the family that extended to highlight Grant's father currently serving time in Solano State Prison, a powerful movement on the ground rebuked these attempts to cast Grant as a hardened criminal and reclaimed Grant through photos, drawings, posters, and murals and various images that traversed global circuits. Grant came to symbolize for the West Coast the deadly attacks by police on young men of color and particularly

²⁹⁹ Much critically important and formative analysis and writing came out of these insurgencies, including George Ciccariello-Maher and others in publications including *Raider Nation 1*.

Black men. Yet, through the presence of his young daughter and her mother, as well as Grant's mother Wanda Johnson and Grant's uncle, Cephus Johnson ("Uncle Bobby"), he also in many ways came to represent the state's violent destruction of Black families targeted by the state through law enforcement and mass incarceration. While many attempts focused on establishing Grant's "innocence" in the face of law enforcement execution, this discursive framing expanded with the circulation of the video of Grant's murder to support an analytical framework organized around war as a strategic concept: at the time of the shooting, Grant was handcuffed and in no way posed a "threat." Its obvious violence provoked larger questions about the war being waged on Black and Brown youth.

The extended moment that began with the OPD traffic stop on the 7400 Block of MacArthur Boulevard and ended with the violent death of Lovelle Mixon and four Oakland police officers immediately surfaced as a more contested symbol. For the state, Mixon became synonymous with the deadliest day in California law enforcement history and was immediately aligned with a series of heinous crimes including allegations of a double rape.³⁰⁰ For others, including organized collectives in Oakland like Black Uhuru who stood solidly behind Mixon, he emerged as an example of dignified resistance to unabating harassment, brutality and inescapable cycles of incarceration constructed by the state. In the eyes of some, Mixon was a hero, the "rabbit with the gun" that fired back, and served as evidence of the occupation of Oakland and its enduring anti-

³⁰⁰ Though this charge remains unproven.

colonial struggle.³⁰¹ As time passed, across many spaces of the larger movement confronting a carceral state extending from prison/fortress to the everyday control mechanisms levied on particular bodies at the community level, Mixon seemed to hover at the edges of the Oakland rebellions like Grant's doppelganger. Combined, they functioned as a kind of good subject/bad subject dichotomy and even those that may have been sympathetic to an analysis of structural racism that produce a "criminal" or "oppositional" subject found it easier when Mixon's legacy was not fully embodied or present in the surge to define justice for Oscar Grant. But Mixon would also not go away, and as a brilliant short documentary *The Ghosts of March 21st* by Sam Stoker recognized, nor would the many ghosts that came before and that gave shape to the life that Mixon lived.³⁰²

The film and the community speak out with Sam Stoker present that followed on March 20, 2014, at the San Francisco Public Library auditorium was skillfully facilitated by *SF BayView* reporter and co-editor JR Valrey, where the majority of the audience was Black and many engaged the space by offering *testimonio* about the impact of incarceration on their own lives and the lives of

³⁰¹ This sentiment is surfaced in an interview with J.R. Valrey who in reference to the Mixon case states, "The saying among low-income Black people in the streets of East Oakland, and in the Bay area, is 'How does it feel when the rabbit has the gun'." See Bukowski, "Reporter faces felony charges," para. 7. The Black Panthers were among early theorists to name conditions of occupation in Oakland, and specifically in relation to uneven development, as a colonial occupation. See Self, *American Babylon*.

³⁰² Stoker skillfully situated the landscape of Oakland where Mixon lived and died against a cartography of police violence that included police killings, police dog attacks, home raids, and other instances of state violence that targeted the area in recent years. Through this cartography, Stoker resisted the hero-villan dichotomy in the narrative Mixon. See Stoker, *The Ghosts of March 21st*.

their families.³⁰³ It was very much a space of learning, particularly as so many discussions circulating in other spaces at the time focuses primarily, even exclusively, on the issue of a right to violence, and whether Mixon's act was righteous against the police or to be condemned. Stoker's film, and Valrey's facilitation, both resisted this form of enclosure for Mixon. JR Valrey, supported by the *SF BayView* newspaper was a strong voice throughout the Oscar Grant movement. In some of the early rebellions, OPD had confiscated JR Valrey's camera and charged him with setting fire to a trashcan. Several groups, including Labor Action Solidarity Committee, a dedicated support group for Mumia, organized many rallies to help JR fight the case, which was eventually thrown out though Valrey was working without a camera for at least over a year. A documentary of the Oscar Grant Rebellions highlights the Valrey's court case, and the substantial community presence that followed the case and mobilized repeatedly outside the court, as a key component of the Oscar Grant rebellions. During this period, community members were extremely attentive to what Andrea Prichett of Berkeley Copwatch calls "the chill effect" as a way of noticing and cataloguing technologies deployed by the police and state in relation to specific

³⁰³ The *SF BayView* is an independent Black newspaper published out of the predominantly Black neighborhood of Bayview-Hunter's Point and forms a critical point of exchange for systems of information from the street as well as across prison walls. Throughout this work, I have retained the newspaper's own use of lower and upper case letters to spell "BayView" when referring to the newspaper, and have adhered to the more common use of "Bayview" when referring to the San Francisco neighborhood, sometimes also referred to as The Bayview or Bayview-Hunters Point.

sites of a movement.³⁰⁴ If the intent in the case of targeting Valrey was to introduce a “chill effect” that would ripple through the spaces he claimed—from the Black Dot Cafe in Oakland to the *SF BayView* newspaper (which likely this was the intended effect), the result worked to the contrary and served to expose the heavy policing taking place in the early spaces of protest mobilized by the largely Black and Brown community of Oakland.

Beginning in the Spring of 2009, Grant and Mixon became points of reference in a collective and sustained interrogation among communities of struggle in their efforts to confront myriad forms of racial violence. Together, Grant and Mixon produced a complex inquiry into the terms of a war pursued through militarized policing and buttressed by prisons in a state that both exacted and manufactured violence. As it became difficult for the movement to justify differentiating between the “good victim” and the “bad victim” of police violence, a space was also opened to interrogate the politics of organizing around explicitly authored state violence (such as police shootings) and forms of state manufactured violence (the ongoing subaltern violence produced by the state in primarily Black and Brown communities) reflected in police and carceral violence as well as homicide rates that left quantitative evidence of the high incidence of Black and Brown lives lost. This interrogation fed an analysis that was critical to the process of unraveling the complex interplay of “security” masking low

³⁰⁴ Author’s notes from various public spaces where Prichett spoke across the Bay Area.

intensity conflict, and critical to building community safety as an autonomous initiative outside the state and police.

The questions around justified state violence and more “deserving victims” unquestionably emerged from many spaces simultaneously, and continued to provoke a sharper analysis to frame the events of the late summer of 2014. The Ferguson uprising occurred in close proximity to two other police killings of Black men that rose to national prominence—the choking of Eric Garner in Staten Island on July 7, 2015, and the shooting of John Crawford in Ohio on August 5th. Though there were others, often uncaptured in state archives, killed by police during this period too. With Eric Garner, who was accused of selling cigarettes illegally (a detail that was later disproven) the questions were posed around “legal” versus “illegal” activity and a justified killing; with John Crawford, and later Tamir Rice, both from Ohio and both of whom had toy guns at the time they were killed, the questions revolved around toy real/not real guns, which had also been a central to the 2014 killing of Andy Lopez in Santa Rosa; this reflect back on earlier debates around armed/unarmed as a condition of justification or condemnation. In the case of Brown, debates arose around the question of college-bound/not college bound which reflected other debates around employed/unemployed as communities sifted through the discursive traps laid by the state to justify not only the threat posed, but to try to engage both the white community and communities of color in the politics of “the life worth living.” Through these dichotomies can be read a synchronicity between low intensity war as a form of governance and biopolitical governance. As a strategy of low

intensity it reflects in many case the circulation of misinformation and disinformation. More critically, it is a strategy to divide the community. In terms of biopolitical governance, it draws a line between who can be let to live, and who made to die, as each of these dichotomies inscribes in particular ways what it means to be able to be “counted among the living.”³⁰⁵

In addition, through the actions and reflections that proliferated in the wake of the killing of Grant and Nixon and continued as unabated as the violence in the subsequent years and into the present, communities actively engaged and created TAZKP they could rely on to link formations and practices of state violence locally to similar formations and practices abroad.³⁰⁶

From January 2009 to July of 2010 when Johannes Mehserle faced trial for the shooting of Oscar Grant, Oakland served as a hub for collective outrage against police and as a space for sharing, interrogating, and exposing an apartheid held in place through violence.³⁰⁷ The rebellions that exploded across Oakland night after night, far from failures, were spaces where knowledge was continuously produced and circulated as part of a growing effort to comprehend state strategies. These were critical spaces of convergence—not just of people

³⁰⁵ Dillon and Neal, *Foucault on Politics, Security, and War*, 14. Here, Dillon and Neal draw on Foucault, “Right of Death and Power over Life,” 138.

³⁰⁶ This was particularly clear in the emergence of the Arab Spring in December of 2010 and evidenced as well in the long standing Bay Area solidarities with Palestine and Palestinians against the occupation of their land by Israel.

³⁰⁷ On apartheid and violence, see Callahan, “In Defense of Conviviality.” See also Eyerman and Jamison, “Social Movements as Cognitive Practice.” In the wake of the Grant and Nixon murders, the rebellions escalated in frequency and intensity leading up to and during the trial, where Oakland served as locus of outrage and solidarity for a trial that had been moved to Los Angeles to escape the wrath in the Bay Area.

who joined together from points all across the Bay, but where different vectors of struggle converged as well. In many cases, efforts to collectively think through the confrontation against police excess and forms of racial violence continued to run up against many of the old forms of analyzing the state.³⁰⁸

When by the Fall of 2011 the linked spaces at the intersection of 14th and Broadway and Oscar Grant Plaza was overtaken by the first tents of the Occupy movement, the desire for a more complex theorization of capital was already alive. Beyond forms of structural racism and repression, there existed a desire, and an urgency, for something that could explain violence not only through the actions of racist police (though this remained a problem with a particular history in Oakland), but that could also account for a series of policing strategies aimed directly at community networks and family structures, and orchestrated across specific delineations of territory.³⁰⁹ In some territories for example in the obvious case of areas designated through gang injunctions, the policing took particular forms, while adjacent territories, for example the infamous Rockridge area of

³⁰⁸ In this analysis, for example, the role of capital was largely theorized through a model that prioritized an imperialist order in service of capital's constant drive in the search of new markets, and where the state functioned as a repressive apparatus in service of capital and in particular, the protection of markets, property, and modes of production. In this view, a reserve army of labor was necessary and the lumpenproletariat unavoidable.

³⁰⁹ Oakland has a particular history of racist policing, including deliberate recruitment policies from areas and organizations in the South known for their own history of racist attitudes, beliefs, and practices. While this history is beyond the current scope of this document, it remains a site in need of further excavation. I am grateful to conversations with Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz on this history. The racist practices and policies of OPD, as well as other Bay Area departments in the present are woven throughout this work. This is not of course to imply that racist police are limited to Oakland. See for example, Peter Santana, "Jim Crow in San Francisco," which provides evidence of not only virulent racism, but outright support for "white power."

Oakland, the policing was executed in a completely different way.³¹⁰ In some cases these territories were separated by a single street.³¹¹ This was linked to pressing questions to understand gentrification beyond processes of displacement and new development and construction and instead to also account for the diverse forms of migration and movement accompanied by new vulnerabilities and requiring ever more creative means of survival.³¹²

The Occupy movement's presence was significant as encampment and assembly.³¹³ In Oakland, this occupation was located in the dynamic space made up of Oscar Grant Plaza and 14th and Broadway, and grew to include a strong decolonial element. Thus Occupy Oakland was also significant for the way it was drawn into dynamic relations with strong already existent movements to confront California's growing transformation into a carceral state, including abolition

³¹⁰ Here I draw on Alexander's work to explore how the level of activities deemed "illegal" versus "legal" does not correlate to conviction levels or policing strategies, and rather makes visible "crime" as an epistemological obstacle. Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*.

³¹¹ I am grateful to conversations with Alan Gómez in the Insurgent Learning Ateneo in San Francisco about the border as an internal construct repeated across cities—for example the US/Mexico border also exists in the space between Valencia Street (a highly gentrified street in San Francisco's Mission district) and Mission Street, which has for many years been the Mexican and Latin@ heart of San Francisco. Mezzadra and Nielson also take up this argument in their article, "Borderscapes of Differential Inclusion."

³¹² As capital demands ever-increasing mobility, scholars have theorized gentrification with different points of focus. For example, David Harvey's work explores capital in relation to the surplus value to be extracted from continuous construction. D. Harvey, *Rebel Cities*.

³¹³ See Maeckelbergh, "Occupy the US;" and also Maeckelbergh, "Experiments in Democracy and Diversity."

movements against the police and the prisons.³¹⁴ If Occupy Oakland drew some of its momentum from the alter-globalization movement spaces of the 1990s that had included a series of powerful strikes along the Oakland docks, it took its shape from the surge of rebellions and new political imaginaries emerging from the Global South—Spain, Argentina, Brazil, and in Mexico, Chiapas and Oaxaca.³¹⁵ Nationally, it emerged from what was for some a heurisitic realization and for others an anticipation of horizons proscribed by student loan and other forms of debt and increasingly precarious working conditions combined with a lack of health care and an unpredictably violent housing market.

In this chapter, I rely on the urban perimeters of Oscar Grant Plaza—the tiered semi circle of the open air assembly facing city hall and the expanse of open lawn behind it where the Occupy tents and encampment were established in the Fall of 2011 and the street intersection where 14th crosses Broadway in downtown central Oakland, where between 2009 and 2012 in particular and continuing into the present people converged from across the Bay Area, its

³¹⁴ See Ruth Wilson Gilmore's *Golden Gulag* for a detailed account the emergence of California's prison system. During the period of the Occupy movement's marches, protests, and barbecues, and including the mock trial of Occupy the Justice Department on April 24, 2012, and the rally and speak-out of Occupy 4 Prisoners outside the gates of San Quentin on February 20, 2012. It was a period where it was common to see a platform occupied by survivors from the wars of the 1960s and 1970s who were still fighting—former Black Panthers Kiilu Nyasha, Angela Davis, and Elaine Brown; Luis “Bato Talamantez” of the San Quentin 6; Cell 16 founder and indigenous scholar and activist Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz; Linda Evans of All of Us or None; a organization committed to a movement to end mass incarceration; Claude Marks of the Freedom Archives; even Grace Lee Boggs visited to share from the struggle in Detroit in a conversation, “On Revolution,” with Angela Davis at the University of California, Berkeley on March 2, 2012. Boggs and Davis, “On Revolution.”

³¹⁵ See, for example, Esteva, “The Oaxaca Commune;” Maeckelbergh, “Experiments in Democracy and Diversity; and Sitrin, “Horizontalism and the Occupy Movements.”

suburban outposts and its periphery regions to gather on sidewalks and the edges of the street until the numbers grew large enough to move into the street and block traffic, and hold the intersection almost casually until sunset when the police would begin issuing orders to disperse through a loudspeaker as multiple lines of shoulder to shoulder riot police began pushing people out of the intersection. Beginning at sunset, the complexity of agencies, agents, acts of rebellion, tactics, maneuvers, entrapments, escape...took shape differently each of the evenings that these many variegated forces met—state, non-state, non-profit and everything else—the insurgent working class.³¹⁶

Mapping the convergence of forces establishes critical connections between desire and struggle in the creation of diffuse networks and multiple strategies, situating police violence and resistances from within the social factory in the context of struggles for autonomy across the Bay Area.³¹⁷ Placing 14th and

³¹⁶ The first Occupy encampment at Oscar Grant Plaza lasted from October 10–25, 2011; and the second lasted from October 26–November 14, 2011. Occupy Oakland encampments also were established at Snow Park near Lake Merritt and Veterans Camp during this time. While all camps were eventually dismantled by a constant onslaught of law enforcement, including early morning raids and violent attacks by various agencies, the camps were also vigorously defended from across a broad range of groups from the Left and members of diverse communities across the Bay Area. On protest and assembly, see also Precarias a la Deriva, “A Very Careful Strike.” On decolonization, struggle, and social reproduction, see E. G. Rodríguez, “Politics of Affects Transversal Conviviality.”

³¹⁷ Here I draw on the analysis the work of the collective Claire Fontaine on desire and struggle, see Claire Fontaine, “Human Strike.” I also draw on Deleuze, “Desire and Pleasure.” Mapping this struggle follows a genealogical approach as theorized by Foucault, but with struggles for autonomy as the category of analysis for the genealogy. Foucault’s genealogical approach is developed over many texts and essay, but a few obvious points of reference are Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” particularly 1–22, and Foucault, “Questions of Method.” In situating struggles for autonomy as a category of analysis for the genealogy, I draw on the work of Dyer-Witheford, specifically *Cyber-Marx*; as well as Roggero, *The Production of Living Knowledge*; and Quan, *Growth Against Democracy*.

Broadway at the center of this work offers a particular space for examining a mobilized community confronting the imposition of a new racial regime in service of capital. This organization, I argue, is maintained through forms of differential policing that target certain bodies, their movements, and their relation to multiple populations, organized through violence, biopower and abandonment. This includes forces of gentrification and other individual and collective migrations across the larger Bay Area, situating laboring subjects and workers' struggles in a particular phase of capitalist capture. In this reading, race and racial violence in the current conjuncture are read as strategies of decomposition and biopolitical governance.³¹⁸

Racial Formation and the Economic Enclave

Once the State functions in the biopower mode, racism alone can justify the murderous function of the State.

—Michel Foucault³¹⁹

Drawing on Michel Rolph-Trouillot's conjunctural analysis of the plantation as a historical context, the national Welfare State in the postwar era can be understood, in Rolph-Trouillot's borrowing from E.P. Thompson, as a "race-making institution" operating through numerous projects and articulations. One way it particularly functioned as an instrument of racialization following World

³¹⁸ On decomposition, I draw on Cleaver, "Inversion of Class Perspective." On war and biopolitical governance, I draw on the work of Dillon and Neal, *Foucault on Politics, Security and War*; Dillon and Reid, "Global Liberal Governance," and Reid, "Life Struggles," to name a few.

³¹⁹ Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 256.

War II was through differentially managing property ownership, as federal subsidies for home mortgages were funneled directly to the mostly white middle class through programs like the Federal Housing Authority and the Veteran's Administration.³²⁰ Across the greater Bay Area, mortgage assistance packages that privileged white homeowners buttressed tax campaigns organized around private property rights to create what Robert O. Self in his account of postwar Oakland termed "an architecture of suburban apartheid," one that also coheres with Du Bois's white working class bargain and the "psychological wage" of whiteness.³²¹

During this time, massive and widespread infrastructure that would form the basis for present day Silicon Valley was built, much of it through investments of the business community and federal capital grants. This included the construction of BART beginning in 1964 and extending over the next decade.³²² The construction of BART linked the various regions of the Bay Area at the same time that it displaced entire segments of Black and Brown communities across the Bay Area and reorganized the labor force in relation to public transportation

³²⁰ On his use of Thompson's "race-making institution, see Rolph-Trouillot, "Culture on the Edge," 200. On federal subsidies, property, and whiteness, see Self, *American Babylon*; Lipsitz, *Possessive Investment in Whiteness*.

³²¹ On suburban apartheid, see Self, *American Babylon*, 267. On Du Bois' white working class bargain and the psychological wage, see Callahan, "In Defense of Conviviality," 7.

³²² The construction of BART was subsidized by federal capital grants (which paid for sixty-four percent of its total cost of construction), as well as contributions from the business community. See BART, "A History of BART: The Project Is Rescued," para. 2. On the history of the construction of BART in the context of larger Bay Area development and struggles against this development, see Self, "American Babylon," and Barrera and Vialpando, *Action Research*.

access. Throughout the duration of the build, there were struggles extending across the Bay Area against the dislocations and racialized reorganization that the project would produce. A community-based research and direct action project aligned with these struggles and in particular with the displacement of the *Mexicano* communities in and surrounding San Jose, *Action Research in the Barrio*, investigated the investments behind these key infrastructure projects. In addition to direct federal subsidies, the research methodology created a map that situated the role of the university system in the development of Silicon Valley. In conjunction with research and other resources generated by the university system and affiliated research centers, the membership of the board of the university and colleges across the Bay Area reflected the presence of key investors in a number of projects related to this infrastructure development.³²³

Thus, in the postwar period through mechanisms like loans, mortgages, and tax breaks, the state allocated a series of privileges to a largely white working class that included property ownership and the amenities that accompany what became recognized as the lifestyle of the middle class. Similar policies in employment, including training and educational opportunities from preschool through university, insured an organization of labor and access to a wage that favored white citizens and to coincide with this, infrastructure that insured access from the suburbs where workers owned homes to a range of employment opportunities in urban centers. The development of specific regions at the expense of others was a key feature in establishing a hierarchy of life quality, with

³²³ See Barrera and Vialpando, *Action Research*; see also Self, *American Babylon*.

the terms of the white working class bargain reflected in property ownership and worker privileges for some and the destruction, isolation, and decay of community life for others.³²⁴

These postwar shifts eroded autonomy in a number of critical ways as well. With the destruction of community and neighborhood life, forms of self-organization, including networks of support and mutual aid across families and generations were disrupted. A range of forces of dislocation often meant sustainable practices like the cultivation of common and household gardens were also destroyed—plots that previously had contributed food to a family's and community's survival in many became unsustainable as land prices either went up or down and inhabitants found it more profitable to sell land, or faced various forms of eviction. At the same time as modes of collective survival were disrupted, capital imposed new forms of labor discipline and capitalist integration as a prerequisite for survival, as for some, sustainable livelihood meant a new negotiation of time, distance, and income—areas that communities had once called home were often no longer affordable places to maintain homes, or available jobs were often scarce and far away, and unskilled laborers were often not compensated enough to live in areas where labor demand was high. In effect, this created a two-tiered labor system that worked in conjunction with the nation's borders, in particular, the U.S.–Mexico Border. The massive investments of capital in a series of megaprojects insured dispossession for some segments of the population while multiplying accumulation for others. Thus, the management of

³²⁴ Self, *American Babylon*. Barrera and Vialpando, *Action Research*.

property ownership and the labor force on the part of the state apparatus to serve the demands of capital formed the basis for the racialized spatial geographies at the base of the Neoliberal State. Beginning in the early 1980s this racialized geography and the management of particular populations in relation to these boundaries was further delineated through the War on Drugs and later, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).³²⁵

From an autonomous perspective, capital responds to cycles of struggle through which working class power can be read as moments of composition, decomposition, and recomposition.³²⁶ Decomposition and sustained periods of composition—favorable to capital—are produced through the reorganization of labor.³²⁷ The capitalist restructuring that marked the emergence of the neoliberal period focused on breaking working class power and increasing repressive mechanisms, including police militarization and the rise of mass incarceration. This restructuring also included dismantling the Welfare State in direct response

³²⁵ For Mitropoulos, the “de-regulation of capital and trade flows” (deterritorialization) through legislation like NAFTA that remain central components of neoliberalism also meant the “re-regulation of the movements of people” (territorialization). Mitropoulis “Autonomy, Recognition, Movement.” These are the “new enclosures” that threaten the commons and practices of communing. In re-regulation, people are contained and their movements restricted according to the militarization of space enacted through enduring forms of colonial occupation. On the “new enclosures,” see Midnight Notes, “The New Enclosures.” On the impact of displacement and dislocation, see Self, *American Babylon*.

³²⁶ See Cleaver, *Reading Capital Politically*, and Cleaver, “Inversion of Class Perspective.”

³²⁷ See Baldi, “Theses on Mass Worker and Social Capital”; and also Zerowork Collective, “Introduction to Zerowork I.”

to the gains made by Black women's struggles for the national wage.³²⁸ Thus at the same time that services previously provided by the state were being defunded and privatized as the Welfare State was scaled back and new "needs" (Illich) were produced, poverty and "the poor" (as well as alternative forms of economic survival) were increasingly criminalized or made otherwise untenable, as were attempts to live outside of capital. For Robert J.F. Day, the "neoliberal project" is "a complex web of practices and institutions that have the effect of perpetuating and multiplying various forms of interlocking oppression. These allow populations to be divided and managed, and our daily lives to be more intensely immersed in capitalist accumulation and rational-bureaucratic control."³²⁹ The Neoliberal State emerged on the geographic terrain reorganized in the postwar period and pitted the suburbs against the declining inner cities, creating zones of "good" living versus "inferior" living. Here I return to Foucault's definition of racism as a "way of introducing a break into the domain of life that is under power's control" where "certain races are described as good and...others, in

³²⁸ For a discussion of capitalist restructuring see, for example, Zerowork Collective, "Introduction to Zerowork I;" Caffentzis, *From Capitalist Crisis to Proletarian Slavery*; Federici, "The Restructuring of Housework." For an elaboration of the historical struggles of Black women and other racialized groups for a social wage, see Springer, *Living for the Revolution*; Orleck, *Storming Caesar's Palace*; Dunbar-Ortiz, *Outlaw Woman*; Piven and Cloward, *Poor People's Movements*. I draw on the work of both Dunbar-Ortiz and Block in understanding a diverse women's movement and radical feminist struggles aligned with anti-colonial struggles, in conversations and including Block's *Arm the Spirit* and Dunbar-Ortiz's *Outlaw Woman*.

³²⁹ Day, *Gramsci Is Dead*, 6.

contrast, are described as inferior.”³³⁰ This “break between what must live and what must die” is exercised on populations and graphed onto territories.³³¹

Beginning from the perspective of autonomous Marxism and cycles of struggle, Callahan puts forward an analysis of the Bay Area as comprised of micro-regions that form an enclave economy in the context of Silicon Valley, where the micro-regions and their relations to each other are organized through racialization processes. These racialization processes are the result of social antagonisms under specific conditions of capital.³³² In an enclave economy, a particular sector of the economy—for example manufacturing or technology—is developed in one specific, localized region. This leads to differential levels of prosperity in relation to surrounding regions. Frequently, state resources as well as private and corporate resources are directed towards the enclave through investments, favorable legislation and policies (for example, tax breaks, subsidies, or loans) to enhance the enclave’s prosperity, often with the intention to manufacture products for export. In the case of more prosperous localized regional enclave, in addition to capital investment, features also tend to include higher wages and salaries, high levels of employment, highly skilled labor, and

³³⁰ Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 254–255.

³³¹ *Ibid*, 254.

³³² This formulation was also further developed collectively through ongoing conversations and collective generated questions, in the Democracy Ateneo in San Jose between 2011–2015. The Democracy Ateneo in particular maintained a consistent interrogation of the new relations of capital shaped by and through Silicon Valley, relying on democratic despotism as a strategic category. This interrogation pursued questions of new racial formations and relations shaped through violence and vulnerability to death.

advanced technologies.³³³ Correspondingly, in the areas outside the primary specialized production of the enclave, these features tend to occur in their inverse—low and often stagnant wages, high levels of unemployment, unskilled (or “inappropriately” skilled labor, for example, a highly skilled rural farmer who has no training in digital technology production), and so on.³³⁴ In the current conjuncture and as a strategy of class composition, salaries are often replaced with precarious employment (part-time, short-term, contract-based, and generally lacking benefits, including most importantly, healthcare).³³⁵ These conditions are particularly true in the non-specialized zones surrounding the enclave.

While Silicon Valley is commonly considered to be an enclave economy unto itself, organized around digital, military, and bio technologies, Callahan’s analysis provides a more complex and dynamic reading. This reading situates the greater Bay Area as a whole as an enclave economy comprised of various regions in relation to a Silicon Valley that stretches down through Southern California and comprised of various micro-regions that shape and influence different zones and

³³³ See Economic Point, “Enclave Economy,” para. 1, 5.

³³⁴ Ibid.

³³⁵ Much work has been done around precarious labor in recent years, much of it from feminist struggles and theory, as in the work of *Precarias a la Deriva*, for example, “A Very Careful Strike.” See, also, for example, Frassanito Network, “Precarious, Precarisation, Precariat?,” and Gill and Pratt, “In the Social Factory?”

populations through a dynamic relation of the enclave economy.³³⁶ In this dynamic relation of key micro-regions, each region is shaped through specific sectors of the economy, forming geographies constructed according to capital and in the present, organized through a racialized biopolitical operation of power.³³⁷ In the context of Silicon Valley, these micro-regions have at their center three interrelated urban areas organized as economic sectors—San Francisco, organized around finance, culture, tourism, and real estate; Oakland, organized around shipping, oil refineries, and the non-profit industrial complex; and San Jose, organized around digital, military and bio technologies. Each of these urban centers structures a corresponding region that depends on unskilled, precarious labor that is proximate and readily accessible, for example for the service industry (the labor force for hotels and restaurants as well as conferences, trade shows, and other large urban events.)³³⁸

³³⁶ For an analysis that theorizes the tech industry of Guadalajara, Mexico using Silicon Valley as a template for an enclave economy, see Gallagher and Zarsky, *The Enclave Economy*. Callahan's argument that Silicon Valley extends down through to Southern California is in part based on the recognition that the universities and research centers that form a critical component of Silicon Valley's industry and funding stretch across all of California and are densely concentrated in the south. This draws on the analysis of the role of the research institute in Bauer and Cleaver, "Minority Report," as well as Barrera, and Vialpando, *Action Research*.

³³⁷ Security can be seen as traversing each of these sectors, as increasingly private guards and city police guard corporate entrances and retail stores as well as pathways and subways to insure the safe movement of capital and labor. Similarly, security systems and forms of surveillance become ubiquitous. For example, in San Francisco, the SFPD regularly stations an officer at the entrance to the Apple Store in Union Square, as well as at the Bank of America ATM machines at Powell Station, also in Union Square. Union Square is the center of tourism and shopping in San Francisco.

³³⁸ Gelderloos, "Precarity in Paradise."

In addition, these micro-regions are also situated within two critical statewide networks. The first of these involves a network of universities and research centers, as sites of immaterial labor and through which private, corporate, and government funding circulates. The extended university and research network is also a critical component of financial capital, including investments, speculations, and so on. Each micro-region functions in a particular way in relation to this network in the current phase of cognitive capitalism, which as Yann Boutang points out, encompasses many forms of knowledge production, “digitalization,” and intellectual labor (or for others like Nick Dyer-Witheford, “information technologies”).³³⁹ Forms of immaterial labor do not replace the material side of production under cognitive capitalism, in fact they rely on very material operations, including through extractivism. In the most basic sense, extractivism refers to the extraction of resources from the earth *to their very limits*, until there is nothing left. Raul Zibechi develops the concept of extractivism extensively in relation to social struggles across the Global South, relying on the term not just to describe a process of resource extraction, but a way of understanding “capital accumulation by dispossession” and as a way to better assess growing connections between rural and urban struggles.³⁴⁰ For Zibechi, urban extractivism takes the form of real estate speculation.³⁴¹ While Mezzadra

³³⁹ Boutang, *Cognitive Capitalism*; Dyer-Witheford, *Autonomous Marxism*, 86; Bauer and Cleaver, “Minority Report.”

³⁴⁰ Zibechi, “Extractivism Staggers,” endnote 1.

³⁴¹ Ibid.

and Neilson rely on the term “extraction” rather than *extrativismo* (in Spanish, *extractivismo*), their thinking follows similar lines, as they argue that “important processes of capitalist valorization such as those linked with the gentrification of urban spaces can also be critically analyzed as forms of extraction.”³⁴² Extraction, for Mezzadra and Neilson, together with finance and logistics, form three critical sectors in the operation of capital that when read together provide a way of seeing larger transformations in capital at play, a point to which I will return shortly.³⁴³

The second of these networks is the expansive prison and corrections network that extends across California and has, since the rise of the neoliberal era, become an industrial complex of its own.³⁴⁴ It, too, is a race-making institution, and as many studies have documented, a site of tremendous value production. The presence of the university-research network and the prison-carceral network in relation to the enclave is closely entwined with both the formal education system at all levels and the military-industrial complex that fuels much of Silicon Valley’s profits and investments. The technologies and tools developed in relation to these networks are aimed at particular racialized micro-regions within the enclave. The fact that certain micro-regions are home to larger numbers of people who are outside of production (as evidenced by low median income rates and high unemployment rates in urban zones like Bayview-Hunters Point and East Oakland, and periphery zones like Stockton, Vallejo, Antioch, El Cerrito) does

³⁴² Mezzadra and Neilson, “Operations of Capital,” 2.

³⁴³ Ibid., 1.

³⁴⁴ See Gilmore, *Golden Gulag*; Goldberg and Evans, *The Prison Industrial Complex*.

not mean that these areas are not sites of profit for others. As this work explores, populations can be marginal to production and “obstacles” to development and at the same time be integral to the production of surplus value. This can be witnessed in the budget of the Department of Defense as well as local law enforcement budgets. It can be witnessed in the prison system and including private prisons and detentions where the state, in this case California, pays private corporations like GEO Group a certain amount per bed to house incarcerated or detained people both throughout and outside California. And it can be seen in the biopolitical exercise of power that produced lives that are terrorized by the state and others that are free from terror. From gated communities to private chauffers to home security and surveillance systems, the production of fear and the cultivation of a population where particular subjectivities understand themselves as destined for the good life with an imperative to health and happiness and a right to survival, biopower generates considerable surplus value as it carves and differentiates populations. Police and militarized terror are critical to this process, as are discursive formations of crime that attempt to convert insurgency into a series of individualized criminal acts and mask social antagonisms.³⁴⁵

Situating the greater Bay Area as an enclave economy in relation to cycles of struggle and in the context of cognitive capitalism provides a strategy for reading militarization and violence and at the same time serves as a tool for

³⁴⁵ Guha, “Prose of Counter-insurgency;” Callahan, *Mexican Border Troubles*.

reading and circulating struggle.³⁴⁶ Arguably, an analysis of the enclave economy always exposes a colonial relation of gendered and racialized violence, oppression, and exploitation. In the case of the United States, this colonial relation is one of settler-colonialism based on the expropriation of land from Indigenous peoples across the Americas, the reliance on imported slave labor, the enclosure of “the commons,” and the ongoing chain of legislative contortions—from the Constitution to the current drug sentencing laws—required to maintain this relation into the present.³⁴⁷ This backdrop continues to buttress white supremacy and sites of capitalist accumulation and is at the base of property ownership, institutional privileges (and institutional punishments) and indeed, the right to life. Considering the Bay Area through micro-regions in their dynamic relations of capital provides a way of seeing uneven development as a strategy of capital at the local level and in a global context. It also functions to expose strategies of differential policing in relation to racial regimes and racialized geographies across the greater Bay Area. As taken up throughout this work, this includes the counties, cities, neighborhoods, parks, and street corners where police presence is deployed most heavily, as well as the bodies and subjects towards which these strategies are directed. It also includes the militarization of our most intimate and sustaining relations.

³⁴⁶ The emergence of new forms of capitalist organization of accumulation and imposition do not displace the old forms, and numerous layers of these process can exist simultaneously, targeting different populations, territories, types of work, socialization processes, and so on.

³⁴⁷ On settler colonialism, see for example Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism*.

Secondly, situating the Bay Area as an enclave provides a way to understand what Mezzadra and Neilson name “the operations of capital,” providing “strategic conduits of analysis to unearth key logics and trends.”³⁴⁸ For Mezzadra and Neilson, these are the “underlying transformations of capitalism” often neglected in discussions of neoliberalism which tend to focus on “the hegemonic circulation of economic doctrines or processes of deregulation.”³⁴⁹ These operations of capital—which Mezzadra and Neilson categorize as extraction, finance, and logistics in order to better assess the underlying transformation—draw attention to “both the material aspects of capital’s intervention in specific situations and their wider articulation into systemic patterns.” To briefly rehearse the usage of the three terms by Mezzadra and Neilson, extraction is the “forced removal of raw materials and life forms from the earth’s surface,” (but can also be analyzed in terms of urban space and gentrification); finance and financialization goes beyond “financial market trends and technologies” and serves to describe and elucidate the “ongoing and violent tendency of finance to penetrate and subsume economic activity and social life as a whole;” and logistics refers to the efficient organization of infrastructure as “transportation, communication, linking, and distribution.”³⁵⁰

These operations of capital offer a way to construct a cartography in relation to the Bay Area enclave and its composite micro-regions. This

³⁴⁸ Mezzadra and Neilson, “Operations of Capital,” 1.

³⁴⁹ Ibid.

³⁵⁰ Ibid, 2–3.

cartography could be read in relation to existing cartographies of the greater Bay Area and Silicon Valley, for example those that map sites of surplus value through various industrial-complexes.³⁵¹ In identifying extraction, finance, and logistics, Mezzadra and Neilson note that the point is not to see each sector of the economy as dominant, or isolated (given that each “exceeds the boundaries of its sector” and “cannot be confined to limited realms of activity.”³⁵² Each sector, they argue, “is mutually implicated;” the sectors “work in consonance.”³⁵³ Thus, they argue, the point is to see the ways that each sector functions to advance and “drive” the development of the other sectors.³⁵⁴ Across the Bay Area, the struggles themselves expose the operations of capital as extraction (extractivism), finance, and logistics.³⁵⁵

³⁵¹ A number of “maps” exist to aid in this effort. See for example the work of Rebecca Solnit, in *Infinite City*, and in particular her map “The Right Wing of the Dove: The Bay Area as Conservative/Military Brain Trust,” 32–33. Solnit’s map includes the Chevron headquarters and Chevron oil refinery of the East Bay “where Iraqi crude oil is refined;” military bases; both Stanford and UC Berkeley for their roles in promoting war and torture; corporate headquarters for Bechtel “a major nuclear, oil, and defense contractor,” and Lockheed Martin “the world’s largest defense contractor” as well as various defense industry laboratories and weapons designers throughout the greater Bay Area and Silicon Valley. Ibid. The work of the Anti-Eviction Mapping Project has done extensive mapping and accompanying narratives in relation to gentrification and “urban extractivism,” see <http://www.antievictionmap.com>. For a textual map of California’s carceral regime, see Gilmore, *Golden Gulag*. For a community-based mapping project summarized as a collective research project, see Barrera, and Vialpando, *Action Research*.

³⁵² Mezzadra and Neilson, 2.

³⁵³ Ibid, 3.

³⁵⁴ Ibid., 4.

³⁵⁵ While beyond the scope of this project to provide a thorough map of the interrelated sectors, a focus on a few key sites can provide a strategic cartography of the enclave in relation to militarization and efforts to confront it.

In the height of the Occupy Movement in the Fall of 2011, the occupation of San Francisco's Justin Herman Plaza experimented with forms of moving occupation. Drawing on the living history of a walking tour, the calling-out and tactics of exposure of a protest, and the community learning space of a teach-in, these were marches conceived as a series of direct actions that "occupied" sites in the operation and circulation of capital across the Bay Area. One such march traversed downtown San Francisco's Financial District, pausing for an extended period before a number of prominent financial institutions including banks, insurance companies, and corporate headquarters. One of the stops was Bechtel International. Listed as the fourth largest private corporation in the world by Forbes in 2014 with a revenue of \$37.5 billion, Bechtel was involved in the construction of both the Hoover Dam (1936) and the San Francisco—Oakland Bay Bridge (1936) and by 1941 was filling defense contracts for the federal government for wartime shipbuilding.³⁵⁶ Two years later, Bechtel was building oil refineries in the Middle East. Bechtel has continued to build "mega-projects," including dams, nuclear power plants, transportation infrastructure (including BART [1972] and the "Chunnel"[1994] connecting the United Kingdom to France beneath the English Channel) as well as airports, metro rails, and massive urban construction projects, including involvement in the razing and rebuilding of cities in anticipation of hosting the Olympic Games. Funded privately and through government contracts, including defense contracts from the

³⁵⁶ See Forbes, "America's Largest Private Companies 2014." For revenue data, see Bechtel, "Fact Sheet." For a history of Bechtel and a survey of its many projects, see, Bechtel, "Our History" and Bechtel, "Our Projects."

U.S. government, Bechtel is one of the major contractors for rebuilding post-war infrastructure (including following the bombing of Kuwait and Iraq and building refugee shelters in Kosovo) as well as post-disaster infrastructure (following Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans) and also major clean-up projects including following chemical spills and warfare.³⁵⁷ With contracts that begin in the earliest planning phases and carry through to the completed construction, Bechtel also produces pipelines for extracting oil, iron ore, and other resources, and has mining and drilling operations all over the world. As testament to the imbrication between finance capital and the university and college network, Stanford University in Palo Alto, one of the many arguable “hearts” of Silicon Valley, in addition to claiming one of the world’s largest clusters of research centers that include centers dedicated to nanotechnology, the genome, cancer, artificial intelligence, information systems and integrated systems, urban water infrastructure, and international security and cooperation, also hosts the Bechtel International Center for students from across the globe.

A key institution in San Francisco’s financial sector, Bechtel traverses multiple sectors of operation. Much of its revenue comes from the planning and construction of infrastructure, a component of logistics aimed at greater efficiency. As a function for the multiplication of surplus value, infrastructure has always been a site of dispossession and enclosure.³⁵⁸ It has also been a close

³⁵⁷ Bechtel, “Our History.”

³⁵⁸ See for example, Zibechi, “Uruguay: Birth of a Movement Against Mining and Extractivism,” and Zibechi, “Extractivism Staggers.”

partner to post-war development industries backed by the IMF and the World Bank. Megaprojects, including those aimed at resource extraction as well as those designed to insure the efficient flow of capital and increase surplus values, tend to increase the value of the land, often land that Indigenous people have lived on for many centuries. These projects displace people from their commons, promoting a forced integration into capital. This displacement and integration is often aided by police, military, and paramilitary forces. As the ongoing work of scholars from the Global South since the early 1990s has demonstrated through their critiques of development, this can occur in many ways. As land values surpass agricultural yield, it becomes more profitable to sell land, even for short-term gains, than to try to maintain it in the face of increasing encroachment. This practice is made easier as once rich agricultural areas are decimated by mono-cropping, pesticide use, or urban development, or as populations of rural areas are decimated by forces of capital that produce migration—never singular, but rather imposed and desired migrations, subsumed and resistant migrations, and so on. If these forces are not successful in unsettling an entrenched way of being and living and systematically uprooting those who live there, forms of direct violence both state and state-manufactured, often coupled with a range of incentives, can also be deployed. This is increasingly the case across the Global South, and in the territories of the Global South in the Global North, in particular, the lands of Indigenous peoples from across the Americas, including Canada.

In California, infrastructure from BART to Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) altered the geographic landscape to suit the demands of capital, creating

worker enclaves and suburbs in different eras, and disrupted vibrant communities from Oakland to San Jose and points in between. Through a corporation like Bechtel, the financial capital centered in San Francisco is fused to the technologies and innovation of Silicon Valley and share intimate links with the extractivism ravaging Indigenous lands and communities across the globe. Financial investments translate to better design and more efficient mechanisms for extraction (of all forms, not only resource extraction). At the same time, the very metals and minerals which power Silicon Valley and which serve as the basis for the material production of goods manufactured to circulate the cognitive capital generated by Silicon Valley—in the form of digital apps, programs, platforms—all result from resource extraction from mining operations worldwide. Smart phones and tablets require precious metal and mineral extraction, with factories to manufacture these products, oil to run the ships that cross daily from China to the port of Oakland, and so on.³⁵⁹

These products demand and facilitate the circulation of more apps, programs and platforms and the operations increase the demand for a skilled and competitive labor market, and salaries, rents, and living expenses rise in the heart of these enclaves. New buildings are constructed to meet the demand for greater housing. These buildings require tons of new building materials, including steel.

³⁵⁹ This analysis was produced collectively in space of Uni Tierra's Democracy Ateneo over the course of monthly conversations and a collectively generated ethnography between 2011–2015. In particular, we introduced “the methodology of the iphone,” situating the device at the center of circuits of capital and delineating a series of capital flows. The many conversations focused on Silicon Valley, extractivism, the Global South, violence and struggle, production and cognitive capital and are woven throughout of the announcements, questions, and summaries of the Democracy Ateneo between 2011–2015. See, CRIL, “Democracy Ateneo.”

As buildings are constructed in areas of San Francisco that are a close commute to the corporate offices of Silicon Valley, the demand for materials like iron ore, a primary component of steel, rises. From planning to construction, mining operations for iron ore and other products extracted from the earth are established, pipelines are erected to ship these products across many miles of land towards ports just being built or refurbished, often with bays or waterways needing to be dredged or new canals being built.

Peter Gelderloos' recent work analyzes tech cities as "urban playgrounds" that offer such a wealth of entertainment and modern amenities that highly skilled tech workers are encouraged constantly work and constantly produce—whether they are relaxing in cafes with their laptops or collectively imagining new apps as they navigate a city's nightlife and urban geography.³⁶⁰ For Gelderloos, the urban playground is a productive model in a new economy.³⁶¹ Gelderloos compares San Francisco and Barcelona as two cities that have been able to attract both highly skilled workers and other forms of wealth to the metropolis. This analysis points to ways that the micro-regions of the Bay Area function in intimate relation in the current conjuncture, each depending on the specialized sectors of each region.

In the case of San Francisco, as local struggles against Google have exposed and as highlighted by both Gelderloos and in the work of The Invisible Committee, San Francisco, in addition to being an enclave in its own right with

³⁶⁰ Gelderloos, "Precarity in Paradise: the Barcelona Model," para. 4.

³⁶¹ Ibid.

financial capital at its center, it also serves as the urban playground for both tourists and skilled workers of Silicon Valley alike—driving up rents, real estate prices and speculation, and offering an ever-shifting range of hip pleasures, from coffee shops and night clubs to furniture and design stores to art exhibits and concerts, continuing to produce value for the city while both benefitting from and contributing to the steady rising cost of living.³⁶² Thus, the financial sectors contaminate the tech sectors and the transportation and infrastructure, and so on.

In addition to tech giants with headquarters across the Bay Area, including Apple (Cupertino), Yahoo (Sunnyvale), Google and Linked In (Mountain View), Ebay (San Jose), Facebook (Menlo Park), and Twitter (San Francisco), It is estimated that as of August 2015, there are over 120 “unicorn” tech start ups, or tech companies with valuations worth over \$1 billion in Silicon Valley, an additional twenty five companies worth over \$100 million, and between two and three hundred companies worth over \$10 million.³⁶³ Twitter is estimated to have “minted” roughly 1,600 instant millionaires in their initial public offering (IPO) in November of 2013.³⁶⁴

In San Francisco, city officials eager to cater to the wealth of the tech sector have offered a number of initiatives, including tax breaks. This included a waive on payroll taxes when Twitter announced plans to double its employees and expressed an interested in San Francisco's South of Market (SOMA) district. With

³⁶² Gelderloos, “Precarity in Paradise.” *The Invisible Committee, To Our Friends*.

³⁶³ Carson, “Silicon Valley Lingo,” para. 3, 4, and 5.

³⁶⁴ Steinmetz, “What the Twitter Tax Break Means,” para. 13.

these incentives, the city hoped to draw new tech sector start-up companies whom they argue are prohibitively encumbered in their initial phases of development by payroll taxes, or taxes on the high number of skilled employees necessary for a new tech company to establish itself successfully. The tax break for Twitter alone, according to the Securities and Exchange Commission, could be worth up to \$56 million.³⁶⁵ To argue the point and justify the pro-business incentives, areas are designated as “blighted” and in need of “revitalization.” These are strategies of dispossession in an urban context. As politicians, real estate speculators, and the business community colloquially christen the SOMA district “Silicon Alley” in the hope that corporations like Twitter will draw other corporations to relocate in the city, the high-paying salaries of the tech sector displace local residents who can no longer afford rents and the high cost of living associated with the coterie of hip businesses that move in--from Whole Foods supermarket to restaurants and bars, even parking lot fee hikes. And, these rates are highest next to public transportation stops, from BART (servicing parts of the East, North, and South Bay) to Caltrain (serving the South Bay down to San Jose) to the MUNI stops (San Francisco’s municipal bus line) where groups mobilized to deter the tech buses from stopping to transport workers to and from Silicon Valley.

To accompany the tax breaks designed to draw new tech companies to participate in the “revitalization” of SOMA, the SFPD committed to a heightened presence in the area. SFPD increased beat officers from sixteen to twenty-four officers in the SOMA district as well as added "community ambassadors" through

³⁶⁵ Ibid., para. 8.

the SFPD Central Market Safety Hub on 6th Street, a few blocks from Twitter's "revitalized" building on Market Street. The SFPD hub is part of a larger "Central Market Economic Strategy" that aims at "community outreach, stabilization, and crime prevention to improve neighborhood safety and cleanliness."³⁶⁶ SFPD Chief Greg Suhr states that the newly erected Safety Hub in SOMA is a "direct response to the public's request for more police presence along this corridor and will help in the city's efforts to transform this neighborhood."³⁶⁷ It is worth noting that SFPD Chief Greg Suhr is the highest paid police chief in the United States earning close to \$500,000 annually in total pay and benefits.³⁶⁸ In the early summer of 2015, the SFPD was in the process of securing approval for the hire of an additional five hundred officers.³⁶⁹

SOMA, like the famous Tenderloin District in San Francisco, has long had a visible presence of people who call its streets home as well as numerous offices for social services, unemployment offices, thrift stores, gay and queer bars and cafes, leather shops and bike shops, Single Residency Occupancy (SRO) hotels and other low income housing, punk clubs and Mexican and Thai restaurants, afterhour clubs that stay open until noon the next day and so on. With the "revitalization" projects, residents of all kinds are simultaneously priced out of housing and other amenities, services that cater to diverse urban populations are priced out by new businesses, and the street is cleaned up through a concentration

³⁶⁶ Office of the Mayor, "Mayor Lee Celebrates," para. 1.

³⁶⁷ Ibid., para. 4.

³⁶⁸ Transparent California, "All Salaries for San Francisco."

³⁶⁹ Ho, "Plans to Increase S.F. Police Staffing."

of police patrols and "ambassadors" that insure the "right" kind of people (read: white consumers) are the ones who have the "right" to be on the streets. Thus, the tech sector reorganizes geographies and creates in its wake a range of subjectivities. Precarias workers in the service industries are pushed to the peripheries of the rent zones surrounding the high salary areas, but can still feasibly commute in to work their low paying, de-skilled jobs and survive. At the same time, those who in the theorizations of the Invisible Committee, are outside of production, become marginal subjects, dispossessed and displaced.³⁷⁰

Drawing on David Harvey's analysis of capital as accumulation by dispossession, Zibechi argues that capitalism in the present is an "update of colonialism," through an extractivism that extends from lands where largely Indigenous people live and thrive to urban centers. Zibechi's extractivism extends from an appropriation of the water and land, the development of mono-crop agriculture from corn to soy, megaprojects that include "hydroelectric infrastructure works" and "open sky mining." These projects both "expel entire communities" and catalyze "ferocious real estate speculation."³⁷¹ For Zibechi, in this extractivist model of "the population, instead of being integrated, as occurred in previous periods, is an obstacle to overcome." In an urban context, it occurs similarly "as happens when a mega-work is carried out and the population is

³⁷⁰ The Invisible Committee, *To Our Friends*.

³⁷¹ Zibechi, "Emancipating the People," para. 7.

displaced.”³⁷² In the Bay Area, much of the population that has been forced out through urban extractivism is the site where the carceral state and militarized policing extracts additional surplus value. From these same areas—Bayview—Hunters Point, East Oakland, Stockton, Vallejo, Richmond, and other periphery areas, this displaced population returns Oakland to connect and wage a collective struggle.

Similar to the Bechtel “moving occupation” during the Occupy Movement, struggles across the Bay engage the Port of Oakland as a strategic point of disruption that traverses multiple operations of capital. In order to analyze movement building in the wake of anti-globalization summit hopping, Robert J.F. Day begins to read struggles against the context of the “neoliberal project” and chart new ways of organizing that challenge this project.³⁷³ As explored throughout this chapter, over the past several decades and continuing into the present, the Port of Oakland continues to be shut down repeatedly. The Port is a key geographic feature in a larger circulation of struggle; it serves as stationary point that facilitates a collective analysis across struggles as various struggles return to it as a point of shut down. From the protest of the anti-globalization movement to the anti-war protests in 2003 against the shipping of military equipment to Iraq to the rage against police brutality following the killing of Oscar Grant to the Occupy Movement in 2011–2012, and the blocking the

³⁷² Ibid., para. 8.

³⁷³ Day, *Gramsci Is Dead*.

Israeli Zimm ship from docking in August of 2014 following the ruthless attacks by Israel on Palestine earlier in the summer, the Port of Oakland has been at the center of efforts to both disrupt and analyze the complexity of capital relations and violences across sectors.

Similarly, struggles against capital and violence have exposed ways that the various sectors that organize each micro-region are “mutually implicated.”³⁷⁴ In Silicon Valley, struggles in the present have exposed the role of digital tech companies in advancing forms of data mining, data collection, and data storage, including continuities across carceral mechanisms and regimes. Corporations across Silicon Valley, including Motorola Mobility in Sunnyvale, contract with local police departments to install various forms of surveillance that feed big data systems and also inform more intrusive policing strategies, including predictive policing models like PredPol and CompStat.³⁷⁵ These contribute to both “hot spot” policing, “hot lists” of suspects, and are central to populating gang databases that drive a number of escalating militarizations.³⁷⁶ In their analysis of the relations between big data and biopolitical governance, the Invisible Committee points out that, “the object of the great harvest of personal information is not an individualized tracking of the whole population,” nor is it “to assemble massive databases that make numerical sense.”³⁷⁷ Rather, they argue, “it is more

³⁷⁴ Mezzadra and Neilson, “Operations of Capital,” 3.

³⁷⁵ CRIL, “Democracy Ateneo Announcement 3-15-14,” para. 4.

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

³⁷⁷ The Invisible Committee, *To Our Friends*, 114.

efficient to correlate the shared characteristics of individuals in a multitude of ‘profiles,’ with the probable developments they suggest.”³⁷⁸ “One is not interested in the individual, present and entire” they continue, “but only in what makes it possible to determine their potential lines of flight.”³⁷⁹ With Bratton as among its primary architects, this is the state functioning, in the words of Foucault, “in a biopower mode.”³⁸⁰

Beginning in the Summer of 2014, activists began organizing a sustained boycott against Hewlett-Packard (HP), exposing links between its role in supporting the ID checkpoints that uphold the occupation in Palestine with the “gang” databases that organize and feed the Solitary Housing Units (SHU) of Pelican Bay and other California prisons.³⁸¹ The sustained HP actions, continuing into the present, included a number of teach-ins across the Bay and a protest at the annual shareholder’s meeting in Santa Clara in March of 2014.³⁸² These actions draw attention to the complicity between Silicon Valley and Israel. In 2013 alone, “trade between Silicon Valley and Israel-Palestine... totaled over \$4 billion.”³⁸³ Companies like Nice Systems in Redwood City in Redwood City, “an Israeli company that collects information daily generated through surveillance of the

³⁷⁸ Ibid.

³⁷⁹ Ibid.

³⁸⁰ Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 256.

³⁸¹ Ibid., para. 1.

³⁸² Ibid.

³⁸³ Ibid.

public and synchronized to assess threats” are part of this larger structure of global “security” and flows of technology and training between local forces in the Bay Area and the Israeli forces engaged in the occupation of Palestine.³⁸⁴ Direct actions in Oakland confront the shared military training between Israeli forces, local police departments and other agencies, and federal law enforcement agencies from the Department of Homeland Security to the FBI through events like Urban Shield, and have successfully pushed Urban Shield out of Oakland. Parallel to this, the collective that mobilized successfully in the sustained battle to limit the attempted city-wide spread of the Domain Awareness Center (DAC), a surveillance structure based at the Port of Oakland, has also increasingly taken up other surveillance and monitoring issues that directly target Black and Brown communities.

These battles reflect a complex confrontation with the operation of capital. In the current conjuncture of cognitive capital, “security” organizes the zones of

³⁸⁴ Ibid., para. 3.

the enclave through differential policing to enforce forms of racial quarantine.³⁸⁵

The epistemology in which “security” is rooted and circulates can be traced through processes of knowledge production specific to the capitalist transformations of the Bay Area as an enclave where the military industrial complex and university systems and research centers that shape and traverse this enclave are instrumental in creating and maintaining uneven development.³⁸⁶

Police violence across the Bay Area occurs at the intersection of a series of race projects emerging in relation to cycles of struggle.³⁸⁷

Returning to Foucault’s statements on racism, where racism is a “primarily a way of introducing a break into the domain of life that is under power’s control: the break between what must live and what must die” and “a

³⁸⁵ For quarantine here I draw on Foucault’s elaboration of practices of quarantine as spatial and relational as well as Mike Davis’ discussion of quarantine and the militarization of space. Quarantine is explored in a number of ways throughout this project, including in the social factory to draw attention to a regulated space that is at once a space of violence, banishment and abandonment, and at the same time a site for the production of needs and surplus value. Spaces of quarantine can make visible steps in the dehumanizing process that makes the ongoing violence against particular bodies possible. For a discussion of quarantine as regulated space, see Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*; M. Davis, *City of Quartz*. For a discussion of the production of needs, see Ivan Illich, “Needs.” See also Abdul R. JanMohammad’s work on the “death-bound-subject,” JanMohamed, *The Death-Bound-Subject*. See Also Achille Mbembe’s notion of necropolitics in Mbembe, “Necropolitics” and *On the Postcolony*. I am grateful to the work of James Braggs of CCRA in theorizing his concept of “differential abandonment” as a strategy of capital and a racial strategy of capital’s state. See Braggs, *The Southern Freedom Movement Assembly*.

³⁸⁶ On the rise of the military-industrial complex and the university see Bauer and Cleaver, “Minority Report.” See Scheurich, “Policy Archaeology,” on policy formation that reinscribes “the problem” through the lens of the university.

³⁸⁷ For Omi and Winant, race projects can be projects of dominance or subversion, and are continuously advanced from a diversity of perspectives. Racial formation is an ongoing process, with the meaning of “race” and the racialization of bodies shifting over time. Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*. On cycles of struggle, see Cleaver, “Inversion of Class Perspective.”

way of separating out the groups that exist within a population.” Foucault continues, “This will allow power to treat the population as a mixture of races, or to be more accurate, to treat the species, to subdivide the species it controls, into the subspecies known, precisely, as races. That is the first function of racism: to fragment, to create caesuras within the biological continuum addressed by biopower.”

For Callahan, Ruth Wilson Gilmore’s ideological surplus value (as a necessary compliment to surplus value) read together with Du Bois’ “democratic despotism” provides a foundation for understanding conditions of uneven development and colonial occupation. Both depend on a racialized violence executed in the current cycle of struggle through the strategy of low intensity war. Callahan relies on Gilmore’s theorization of “ideological surplus value” to elaborate on the construction of both foreign and domestic “enemies of the state” through racial hierarchies to illustrate that “knowledge production is integral to capitalist command.” These hierarchies, he argues, can function to “decompose the class,” often masking the role of the state apparatus.³⁸⁸ This offers insight into the ways in which a history of racial segregation in the Bay Area aligns with strategies of composition, recomposition, and decomposition in relation to militarization, criminalization, and violence. Rooted in the production of surplus values, racial regimes for Gilmore are articulated through hierarchies and

³⁸⁸ See Callahan, “In Defense of Conviviality,” 6; Gilmore, *Golden Gulag*, 28; Gilmore, “Globalisation and US prison growth,” 178; and Gilmore, “Fatal Couplings of Power and Difference,” 16. An analysis of uneven development is central to accumulation, expropriation, and enclosure through an ongoing project of settler colonialism.

differential access to life itself. In this sense, her analysis relates to both biopolitical forms of governance and necropolitical conditions.³⁸⁹ Racism, for Gilmore, is “the state-sanctioned or extralegal production and exploitation of group-differentiated vulnerability to premature death.”³⁹⁰ It is also “a practice of abstraction, a death dealing displacement of difference into hierarchies that organize relations within and between the planet’s sovereign political territories.”³⁹¹ This also recalls Foucault’s theorization that racism is a critical aspect of the exercise of biopower, as the “precondition for exercising the right to kill.”³⁹² Foucault clarifies the notion of killing (and in so doing, also distinguishes the exercise of sovereign power from biopower), stating, “When I say killing, I obviously do not mean simply murder as such, but also every form of indirect murder: the fact of exposing someone to death, increasing the risk of death for some people, or, quite simply, political death, expulsion, rejection, and so on.”³⁹³

Robert O. Self’s study of race and property across the Bay Area draws on colonial models of development/underdevelopment made visible by Black Power

³⁸⁹ This analysis engages the work of both Michel Foucault and Achille Mbembe. See Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*; Mbembe, *Notes on the Postcolony* and “Necropolitics.”

³⁹⁰ Gilmore, *Golden Gulag*, 28.

³⁹¹ Gilmore, “Fatal Couplings of Power and Difference,” 16. I am grateful to Manuel Callahan who drew my attention to this formulation of race in the work of Gilmore, and in particular for a conversation in his *Activist Ethnography* class where Alan Gómez also engaged this concept in relation to violence against Black and Brown communities as meted out through the prison-policing apparatus. See also Gilmore, *Golden Gulag*, 28, and “Globalisation and US prison growth.”

³⁹² Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 256.

³⁹³ *Ibid.*

struggles to show policies of containment exercised by largely white, middle class homeowners.³⁹⁴ In this account of urban and suburban geography and development, the social production of space is articulated through race and in turn, articulates race. This is critical in the formation of the enclave because spaces exist in dynamic relation to each other—for example, the worker neighborhoods cannot exist at too great a distance from the centers where wealth circulates. In the current conjuncture, the presence of particular bodies in specific spaces are codified through racial regimes and situated within a context of “post-Keynesian militarism.”³⁹⁵ Through this organization of space, racialized bodies and communities make possible certain conditions of accumulation.³⁹⁶ The restructuring that took place as a result of the insurgencies of the 1960s and 1970s was, according to the Invisible Committee, “a territorial restructuring” from which “the new global network of value production would be created.”³⁹⁷ Rather than being generated from “society,” the Invisible Committee argues, “the new form of productivity would come from certain territories. In the wake of capital’s

³⁹⁴ Self, *American Babylon*.

³⁹⁵ I rely on the above formulation of Gilmore for this naming of the conjuncture; see Gilmore, “Globalisation and US Prison Growth,” 183. It is also critical to note that racial formation is always relational and that relation is contingent on the social relations that capitalism continuously attempts to impose.

³⁹⁶ I am grateful to insights of H.L.T. Quan in helping me develop a more sophisticated analysis here.

³⁹⁷ The Invisible Committee, *To Our Friends*, 175.

restructuring, “a new spatial ordering of the world has emerged,” with Silicon Valley as the “universally accepted model.”³⁹⁸

Framed by the expansive growth of Silicon Valley, 14th and Broadway in Oakland functions to reveal other, interconnected spaces of rebellion from across the Bay Area, as TAZKP work as nodes in a larger network that relies on Oakland as critical articulation in a cross-region resistance. As a TAZKP, the intersection of 14th and Broadway offers a space for new questions to be posed collectively and negotiated in relation to other struggles and “spaces of encounter” networked across the Bay Area and beyond. It is through such circulation that community safety as an autonomous initiative takes shape, organized through the components of justice, defense, care, and assembly.³⁹⁹ Here, community safety becomes a counter-project to “security” through a number of spaces that resist and confront the state and also reflect a lived prefigurative politics. I also argue that communities of struggle rely on the space of this battleground to actively reconfigure the geography of the Bay in order to respond, reveal, and reorganize the conditions of an enclave economy.

³⁹⁸ Ibid., 175–76.

³⁹⁹ Justice will be explored throughout the ethnography as a category of analysis as well as as an epistemological obstacle specifically situated at this intersection, as various forces converge to contest the institutions of the state, including the courts and their ability to hold police officers accountable, or the effectiveness of this strategy. Both defense and care will be read through community struggles and considered in relation to the assembly. In fact, the area of 14th and Broadway and Oscar Grant Plaza function as a site of assembly, or multiple assemblies, and as a space of praxis that exceeds all containment. This zone is a critical site in the reclaiming of the commons and the institutions of the commons; and as a “space of encounter” that is always a space of co-learning. Callahan, “In Defense of Conviviality.”

Fourteenth and Broadway as Temporary Autonomous Zone of Knowledge Production

The learning generated within and through the convergence of these two prominent movements that marked the Battle for 14th and Broadway in Oakland—Justice for Oscar Grant and Occupy—led to new analyses and the need for new tactics and tools of struggle. Following Oscar Grant’s murder, a series of rebellions erupted across Oakland that forced the BART police department to respond to the calls to take Johannes Mehserle off the force. It is worth noting a few key features of this struggle. Much of the organizing focused around the slogan “Jail All Killer Cops.” In the context of extreme rates of incarceration in California and a powerful abolitionist movement a punitive demand that advocated prison and reaffirmed the courts as a site of justice had an uneasy circulation across many groups that were otherwise clearly fighting against the carceral state and at the same time fighting to reclaim justice from the state.⁴⁰⁰

After the initial neighborhood rebellions, much of the organizing was taken on by unions, including those that served the dockworkers on the Port of Oakland and represented many African American workers. Specifically, strikes, rallies and coalitions were called and formed through International Longshoremen Workers’ Union (ILWU) Local 10, known for its militant history and socialist

⁴⁰⁰ For Foucault, the modern bourgeois state is established by placing the state at the center of all arbitrations, thus, removing justice from the traditions, practices, and autonomy of the community. See, Foucault, “The Mesh of Power.”

organizing against capital and the state.⁴⁰¹ The involvement of the unions and by extension the Oakland Labor Council meant that great pressure could be applied to shut down docks and other sites of commerce in the name of Oscar Grant. As part of the extended Oscar Grant rebellion, the entire Western seaboard of the United States was shut down for a day in protest and solidarity.⁴⁰² However, the presence of the Labor Council and its proximity to City Hall in some cases also meant that many of the decisions around strategic moves were relegated to union meetings and Labor Council meetings and according to rules and restrictions that many people could not access or understand. In some ways, it removed the people from the process and relegated them to the status of numbers that would fill out the masses necessary to effect the strikes and large marches.⁴⁰³ There was for example, an unprecedented amount of flyering taking place during this time to get people to turn out in mass numbers.

Many other longtime socialist groups with a Marxist-imperialist framework also were involved, bringing a strong Maoist and Trotskyist element to

⁴⁰¹ For a history of ILWU and its militant past, see Larowe, *Harry Bridges: The Rise and Fall of Radical Labor*; Wellman, *The Union Makes Us Strong*.

⁴⁰² There are several key moments when the docks have been shut down in support of and to advance the alter-globalization movement (e.g. since '94 or '99). I was present at the meetings for the Oscar Grant Port Shutdown in 2009 including at the ILWU hall in San Francisco and participated in the successful moving pickets at the port shutdown as well.

⁴⁰³ For a critical analysis of movement strategy that attempts to organize mass numbers of people through a top-down ideological approach and the impact of this people's relation to struggle, see Day, *Gramsci is Dead*. See also Gustavo Esteva's analysis of the masses in Esteva, "The Oaxaca Commune," 991.

sections of the organizing process.⁴⁰⁴ As the rebellions continued, city hall and its supporters, the business class and merchants, much of white Oakland, and even several socialist groups in an attempt to carve out their own programs condemned property damage as “violence” and leaned on this assessment to advance a critique of anarchists as ultra-leftists. In many cases, this supported the divisive strategy set into motion through the corporate media—that the rebellions were the result of “outsiders” [read: white and anarchist] descending like hoodlums to attack the small local businesses (and by extension families) of downtown Oakland, and did not reflect the desires or the mobilized force of Oakland’s Black and Brown community. The dense nonprofit industrial complex that proliferates across the East Bay and largely profits off of the problems of Black and Brown Oakland worked to contain the rebellions as well.⁴⁰⁵ As was well documented, debated, and challenged at the time across groups, many of the large, youth-oriented non-profits faced direct pressure from the City of Oakland and the threat of lost funding if they did not find ways to keep youth off the street and diverted to nonviolent activities during some of the peak events following Grant’s murder. These were largely gauged to occur in relation to specific moments in the trial which had been moved from Oakland to Los Angeles in an effort by the state to

⁴⁰⁴ This is the context of much organizing in the Bay Area, as in the sixties through the influence of the Third World Strikes and anti-colonial struggles and through prominent groups like the Black Panther Party and The Weather Underground, as well as an array of socialist groups, Maoist and Trotskyist organizing strategies became entrenched, even ossified, with enduring effects in the present. While there are many, for a context of organizing through Bay Area movements, see Brown, *A Taste of Power*; Block, *Arm the Spirit*; Berger (Ed.), *The Hidden 1970s*.

⁴⁰⁵ K. Williams, “The Other Side of the COIN.” Ciccariello-Maher, “Introduction” (*Raider Nation I*).

escape the massive and enduring community support and rage across the neighborhoods of Oakland and throughout the Bay Area and beyond.

For nonprofits whose programming was oriented around Black and Brown youth, the rebellions made observable their role in the privatization of struggle, a politics made visible to the movement in a series of blatant capitulations to City Hall in an attempt to invisibilize community outrage and clear the streets.⁴⁰⁶ Still, the series of rebellions continued, demonstrating an insistent refusal not to leave the streets. From across the greater Bay Area and beyond, people repeatedly showed up at 14th and Broadway with lemons or scarves soaked in vinegar to confront a police presence that promised tear gas, noise grenades, and mass arrests, including “kettling maneuvers” that trapped protesting crowds at the intersection itself, or funneled them into neighborhood rotaries and closed in from all sides.⁴⁰⁷ During these rebellions, the BART entrances were often suddenly closed not only for the two stops that served downtown Oakland, but extending to other stops, making the journey home dangerous and sometimes impossible for those who had to rely on public transportation. For those joining the protests from other areas—including from across many Black and Brown communities that had already been displaced from Oakland by forces of capital, to protest in Oakland

⁴⁰⁶ The role of nonprofits in a broader counterinsurgency strategy of the state is examined in K. Williams, “The Other Side of the COIN.” See also Ciccariello-Maher, “Introduction” (*Raider Nation I*).

⁴⁰⁷ Both lemons and a cloth soaked in vinegar and tied over the nose and mouth help to mitigate the effects of tear gas. “Kettling” is a form of entrapment of a crowd, in this case relying on features of urban geography to funnel and then encircle a group of people. In many cases law enforcement proceed to arrest whoever was trapped in the center, thus removing people from the streets.

was not only a wager regarding possible brutality and arrest, followed by a lengthy series of court dates, it was at the same time an acknowledgement that one might be stranded in unfamiliar territory for a night until the BART commenced again in the morning. To be stranded in the streets of Oakland during this time was to risk being targeted by the countless law enforcement agencies—police departments across the state, county sheriff deputies, park rangers, federal agents including the ATF, DEA and FBI—that converged in parading formations and after dark in violent ones, around the intersection of 14th and Broadway.

The mobilizations in response to Oscar Grant offered a rich space of learning as well as opportunities for connecting across struggles, including across families who had lost children to violence. During this period of sustained rebellion, 14th and Broadway functioned as a consistent “space of encounter” as families and justice struggles from the outlier areas came with their crews and connected and reconnected with the struggles of the East, South, and North Bay.

Parallel to this was a prolific battle being waged against gang injunctions in Oakland. The community-wide fight against the gang injunctions undergirded in many ways the Oscar Grant rebellion as a war against criminalization, categorization, and forms of differential policing targeting particular activities, behaviors, and relations in the community.⁴⁰⁸ It was also a battle against apartheid

⁴⁰⁸ Foucault reminds us, “Penal law was not created by the common people, nor by the peasantry, nor by the proletariat, but entirely by the bourgeoisie as an important tactical weapon in this system of divisions which they wished to introduce.” Foucault, “On Popular Justice: A Discussion with Maoists,” 22. Here, we can read both legacies of “othering” central to the colonial project, as well as Du Bois’s “white man’s bargain” which insures the maintenance of racial hierarchies.

and for self-determination in relation to territory—to assert that people’s lives could not be restricted into racialized, militarized zones.⁴⁰⁹ In the space of 14th and Broadway, older stories resurfaced as well, among them the Oakland Police Department Riders’ Scandal from 2001 that had revealed horrific patterns of violence and sadism against the Black and Brown communities of Oakland. This drew renewed attention to the Negotiated Settlement Agreement which still had not met the terms of reform stipulated by court order nearly a decade before, provoking questions of violence, impunity, and oversight. “Who polices the police?” “How are they different from the police?” “Do we need police?”

Justice and Defense

We see and hear that all of these people receive only lies and mockery from those who proclaim to administer justice and who in reality only administer impunity and encourage crime... Truth and justice will never, ever come from above. We will have to construct them from below... And on the Roman scale of our sorrows, we will weigh what they owe us. And we will send the bill... and we will collect it. We will then indeed have trust and justice. Not as a handout from above, but rather as a conquest from below.

-EZLN, August 2015.⁴¹⁰

If the killing of Oscar Grant forced a collective confrontation with state impunity in instances of violence exacted on youth of color, Lovelle Mixon left unsettling provocations about a community’s right to defend itself against what

⁴⁰⁹ This battle against gang injunctions in Oakland mobilized powerfully from 2010–2015 under a collective named Stop the Injunctions, of which Critical Resistance played a strong part. By the Spring of 2015, the community claimed a hard won victory in successfully pushing the injunctions out of Oakland.

⁴¹⁰ EZLN, “Truth and Justice Will Never, Ever Come From Above,” para. 30–37.

many saw as an occupying force in the form of municipal police. Other moments of contestation that emerged prominently as a result of the ongoing rebellions focused on issues of property, belonging and crime. Discursively this was a battle over a dominant frame that responded to the rebellions by insisting on “property destruction” and “outsiders” and “looters.” Each of these proved instrumental in advancing a collective analysis. In the first instance, it was not only a question of whose property is being protected by the police (answer: downtown business owners), or how do we reconcile destruction of property with the taking of young man’s life (answer: there is no reconciliation), but what is revealed about the forces of social antagonism in this emphasis on property damage?⁴¹¹

⁴¹¹ The legacy of the Oscar Grant rebellions in relation to Occupy and Oakland resistance has offered a rich terrain for thinking that is critical to advancing our struggles in the present. Matthew Edwards’s analysis, “Insurrection, Oakland Style,” locates questions of property destruction in a larger discussion of justice, pointing out that these questions are central to the Oscar Grant Movement, arguing that “the actions of property destruction seemed to overshadow the context in which they were used.” Edwards, “Insurrection, Oakland Style,” 11. Edwards points out that “the tactic itself was the perfect expression of the powerlessness that people felt in demanding, from an unjust state, some sort of ‘justice.’” Ibid. He goes on to compare the action to a “tantrum,” arguing that protestors are essentially “saying, ‘in this protest zone, in this space of social rupture, I only have the ability to destroy’.” Ibid. He continues, “A statement like that, while unifying for the participants within that instant of ‘social rupture,’ has little to no organizing potential. And so the movement went from active conflict to history. Its steam and momentum were lost.” Ibid. While I take a very different view than Edwards, one that situates the Oscar Grant rebellions as carving a critical space of shared learning and knowledge production that initiates, with other local struggles across the United States, the Ferguson moment (and does not prioritize “momentum” as a category of value in this context), Edwards is on point in drawing attention to the questions around justice that the Oscar Grant moment produced as collective questions. Throughout the extended Oscar Grant rebellions and mobilizations, these moments of “thinking across the Bay” from a number of perspectives have helped to shape both tactics and theory in the present. In “Spatial Equivalents in the World System,” Frederic Jameson reflects on whether space can be political, considering Gehry’s architecture in the context of residual and emergent architectural forms. For Jameson, in relation to space, the building “thinks a material thought,” Jameson, “Spatial Equivalents in the World System,” 137. I draw on this formulation in relation to the spatial parameters of 14th and Broadway, as a “space of encounter,” where the struggle is trying to think itself in relation to space and the “materiality” of an emergent collective subject. I argue this is a nascent phases of the

This provoked further questions around privatization, enclosure and the commons. Was not the physical assertion of presence and protest, afterall, that 14th and Broadway belonged to the people?⁴¹²

Meanwhile, the question of “looters” surfaced a continuity with the LA Rebellions and the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans.⁴¹³ This exposed not only an ongoing process of criminalization, but drawing on the work of Cacho, subjects who were only legible as criminal.⁴¹⁴ This was a powerful moment of collective recognition against the backdrop of a trial that had been moved to Los Angeles, and where each member of the jury had a relative who was employed by law enforcement.⁴¹⁵ How would there be any justice for Grant in the courts?

What appeared initially from this confluence of vectors was a questioning of the strategic engagement with the state as a site of justice, a renewed frustration among many with vanguard formations and prominent entrenched chauvinisms

Ferguson moment and the ongoing movement to militarize and decriminalize from which “Black Lives Matter” emerged as a powerful statement and organizing tactic to orient the violence directed at Black bodies and communities.

⁴¹² A recent essay by Maria Mies and Veronkia Benholdt-Thomsen examines the supposedly seminal theoretical contributions of Garret Hardin from 1968 on the commons. Hardin’s justification for the need for enclosure, or the privatization of the commons, draws on a rational model of crime control. He argues that “when men mutually agreed to pass laws against robbing, mankind became more free, not less so” to confirm the necessity for privatization and the individualized governance over limited resources. Hardin, quoted in Mies & Benholdt-Thomsen, “Defending, Reclaiming and Reinventing the Commons,” para. 67. Hardin, *Tragedy of the Commons*, 29.

⁴¹³ See Giroux, “Reading Hurricane Katrina,” and Cacho, *Social Death*.

⁴¹⁴ Cacho, *Social Death*.

⁴¹⁵ According to Malaika Kambon, “all jurors had ties to law enforcement through friendship, past service or relatives.” See, “Centuries of Rage,” para. 9.

and sexism across many of the Maoist and Trotskyist groups, and a belief that no matter how many times Oakland changed its mayors to reflect a more progressive party or brought in a new police chief to “clean up the force,” there was little justice to be achieved through City Hall or the Oakland or Alameda courts.⁴¹⁶

Theorizations generated from struggle, like those coming out of CCRA that highlight community safety challenge this reactive logic through diverse practices as, in the words of Richard J.F. Day in *Gramsci is Dead*, people strive “to recover, establish, or enhance their ability to determine the conditions of their own existence, while allowing and encouraging others to do the same.”⁴¹⁷ At this time, People’s Investigations began to emerge from a number of different locations and moments of violence. These grassroots investigations learned from these moments the importance of spaces where members of the community could think collectively about the concerns facing the community and imagine new forms of justice not routed through the juridical institutions of the state.

Susana Kaiser’s work on the *escraches* of HIJOs in Argentina posed similar questions of the relationship between practices in autonomous justice, and

⁴¹⁶ These questions and the development of new strategies are being read against Thomas Nail’s analysis of Zapatista organizing as retreating and refusing the traditional forms of revolution, namely: the capture of the state; political representation of the party; centrality of the proletariat; leadership of the vanguard. These points were made central in a Democracy Ateneo in the Fall of 2013 in thinking through struggles and urban Zapatismo in the present. See Thomas Nail, *Returning to Revolution*. See, also, Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Democracy Ateneo Announcement 11-16-13.”

⁴¹⁷ Day, *Gramsci is Dead*, 13. Day refers to these practices as affinity-based practices. Ibid., 18.

property damage and state impunity for acts of violence.⁴¹⁸ Kaiser notes that in some cases, those not involved in the *escraches* were quick to condemn the torturers and mass murderers responsible for the disappearances of the previous regime, but at the same time thought that the destruction of property during the process of outing and exiling the revealed torturer were too extreme and showed a kind of disrespect. Rather than resorting to an easy argument about the hegemonic role of dominant media and the blinding pressures of the status quo, it is far more interesting in this moment to shift to the tactics and theorizing of those involved in the *escraches* themselves. Colectivo Situaciones explores the utility of *escraches* through conversations with those who participated in them, highlighting the relationship between exposing the perpetrator and at the same time building relationships within the community as part of the *escrache* process so that the actual celebration after months of work in the neighborhood is a moment irreducible to shame, but rather, exile. The participants note that the neighborhoods where they built the strongest relationships among the community were those that produced the strongest *escraches*. The *escrache* cannot be reduced to a performative act with the shaming of an individual as its central component.⁴¹⁹ Thus, issues of property and destruction coming out of the Oscar

⁴¹⁸ HIJOs is the shortened name for the group “Hijos por la Identidad y la Justicia contra el Ovido y el Silencio,” translated as “Children for Identity and Justice against Forgetting and Silence.”

⁴¹⁹ Kaiser, “Escraches,” and Kaiser’s larger ethnographic work on the subject, *Postmemories of Terror*. See also Colectivo Situaciones’s collective ethnography on *escraches* in Colectivo Situaciones, *Genocide in the Neighborhood*. I will elaborate more fully on the *escrache* as a complex tool in service of grassroots autonomy projects in a subsequent chapter.

Grant rebellions posed questions that brought into focus what Lisa Marie Cacho theorizes as “white injury.”⁴²⁰ Yet, beyond this, each instance of property damage that arose from the rebellions was critical to advancing a collective analysis and in turn, the beginnings of an emergent collective subject, however temporary—one that began to think more thoroughly through questions of enclosure, extractivism, and the commons. The question of property destruction was closely aligned with a discourse of “authentic belonging,” who really could claim Oakland? Who had the “right” to destroy it? Those protesting and resisting in a myriad of ways from a myriad of places fought hard to claim each other against this onslaught.⁴²¹ New questions were generated about community, conditions of precarity, and migration.

From the rebellions emerged new theory and new strategies for direct action borrowed from the Global South and advanced in autonomous spaces on the eve of Occupy.

⁴²⁰ For many, including many anarchists involved in the Oscar Grant Rebellions, these were also questions of violence, revolution and war, and evidenced the frontline of a larger developing strategy to directly confront the state and fight back.

⁴²¹ A pamphlet was widely circulated at the time that addressed the media spin of outsider, “Who is Oakland?” During this period throughout the Bay Area, from readings at Modern Times Bookstore and radical spaces like 518 Valencia shared by Freedom Archives and AROC (Arab Resource Organizing Center) in San Francisco; to public conversations like that between Angela Davis and Grace Lee Boggs at UC Berkeley; to East Side Arts Alliance and The Holdout (now Qilombo) in Oakland; and in other smaller gatherings across organizations like CCWP and Critical Resistance—these ideas were constantly being sorted through in open spaces of exchange. These included public talks and conversations with Roxanne Dunbar-Otiz, Claude Marks, Diana Block, Rachel Jackson, and JR Valrey, and many, many more too numerous to name here—but the point is, these conversations were everywhere.

By the time the Mehserle verdict was announced in the early afternoon on July 8th, 2010, a new emphasis that marked a move away from the state had already emerged: in front a thick crowd of countless differences, orientations, and affinities, a massive painted banner was unfurled from a light post overhanging the now totally blocked intersection of 14th and Broadway. On it, a drawing of Oscar Grant's face and the words, "Oakland Says Guilty."

The Oscar Grant Movement had opened a critical location of struggle. As with the *escraches* in Argentina, we learned that "the search for justice does not end with imprisonment nor can it be contained in legal bureaucracies."⁴²² Likewise, similar to the engagement with space and struggle of the feminist collective Precarias a la Deriva in the large strikes in Madrid, Spain, in 2002, the violence made visible through the killing of Oscar Grant, including the efforts to resist his criminalization and dehumanization by circulating photos of him smiling with his baby girl and the constant presence of his family, the "event" of the killing of Grant produced a mobilization that made communities visible to each other in struggles against capitalism that emerged not from the work place but

⁴²² Colectivo Situaciones, *Genocide in the Neighborhood*, 45.

from the social factory.⁴²³ For many who experienced exploitation, enclosure, and expropriation in spaces not directly related to the site where they earned their wage or did not earn their wage, Grant's killing provided a context to come together in the streets to not only express outrage but to articulate a series of violences that coalesced with his blatant execution.⁴²⁴ It also produced many new

⁴²³ When members of the collective Precarias a la Deriva articulate a particular anticapital, postcapital research approach known as the drift, their articulation emerges from a moment of solidarity with workers organizing in Madrid in a strike around the wage. While members of the collective Precarias a la Deriva was in support of the strike, neither the impositions of the factory nor the demand for a higher wage directly related to their own relations to capital and the wage. Drawing on the Situationist practice of moving through space without a particular direction but revising the practice to situate it within an approach that could be considered as embodying both militant and convivial aspects, Precarias a la Deriva launched a series of "drifts" a form of moving inquiry through urban space that opened up relational conversations between women who were also working within systems of precarity yet not represented directly through the strike while still sympathetic to it. This included sex workers, telephone operators, and various other precarious workers. Precarity here is seen as a condition of the restructuring of capital intended to decompose working class power by attacking full, stable employment and instead promoting conditions of inconsistent and unpredictable employment that make survival and consistency a source of constant effort. Precarias a la Deriva also draws attention to the possibilities within this framework for greater autonomy, including large spans of free time that are not violated by wage relations and the state, the possibility of less than full time employment that allows for greater care for one's immediate and extended family networks, and the possibility of organizing differently, outside of the predictable structures of unions and other work place formations, to develop new ways to fight and to care. On drifts, see Precarias a la Deriva, "A Very Careful Strike" and "Adrift Through the Circuits." On precarity, see Frassanito Network. "Precarious, Precarisation, Precariat?" On precarity, care, and feminized labor, see Gill and Pratt, "In the Social Factory?"

⁴²⁴ Cleaver addresses a similar question in his response to the *Aufheben* critique, stating, "the real issue is not that of whether some (often ill-defined) 'social group' should or should not be classified as 'working class' but to recognize how a whole array of people in various unwaged situations find themselves suffering the capitalist imposition of work, and how their efforts to resist it, and sometimes move beyond it, can rupture capitalist reproduction." Cleaver, "From *Operaismo* to 'Autonomist Marxism'," 29; also, "Inversion of Class Perspective," 112, 137; Zerowork Collective, "Intro to Zerowork I," 111–12. Similarly, Federici uses this analysis to contest identity as an essentialized and reified category in understanding in the women's movement. Women are defined as a collective based on the struggle they wage together from the site of the social factory and against particular regimes of unwaged labour. See Vishmidt, "Permanent Reproductive Crisis".

relations and was critical in drawing families into shared networks of support that have continued to expand and mobilize across the state.⁴²⁵

This is the terrain on which the Bay Area Occupy movement took hold. Drawing from the prolific assemblies across South America, Mexico, Spain, and elsewhere, the Occupy movement's emphasis on the assembly as a key tool in organizing offered opportunities for reflecting on the vanguardist and party representation politics and their residual strategies of mass organizing and conscientioustitizing that dominated large sections of Bay Area political life. The emphasis on "horizontalism" served as an invitation to take systems of information and multiple ways of knowing and being seriously.⁴²⁶ Simultaneously, the assembly functioned as a site of radical democracy that made visible the despotism inherent in the liberal representative system. It made prominent a form of coming together that encouraged the possibility of placing an interrogation of knowledge production and epistemology at the center of organizational strategies.

Care

Through the encampment and its many tents set up to accommodate a variety of needs that the state had first taken responsibility for and then "differentially abandoned" in different conjunctures, a new space of politics was

⁴²⁵ Families also organized powerfully in the wake of the Ramparts Scandal in LA, see M. Davis, *City of Quartz*.

⁴²⁶ For a more thorough discussion of horizontalism, see Sitrin, "Horizontalism and the Occupy Movements."

opened that placed care and autonomy at the center of its practice.⁴²⁷ This “politics of care” was made visible and emerged as central to a more widespread political practice, raising the visibility of care and care work as central to the struggles in the social factory and in struggles around the commons.⁴²⁸ Such an elaboration extended beyond the invisibility of forms of care made possible through the absence of the wage. Rather, the social factory as organized around care merged with the street to reveal the entwined attacks of capital and the state aimed at the site where the community reproduces itself.⁴²⁹

The confluence of the Oscar Grant Movement and the Occupy Movement produced many new projects focused on community safety and autonomous self-organized activity. Among these was the People’s Community Medics, a grassroots medical response team that emerged from the murder of Oscar Grant and the ambulance that arrived “too late” and the street medics of the Occupy movement who assisted the People’s Community Medics’ founders in developing

⁴²⁷ Here I refer to the enclosures of the New Deal State, and its subsequent dismantling that accompanied the restructuring of capital beginning in 1973. This process and its relation to “needs” drawing on Illich, and a politics of care will be more thoroughly examined in subsequent chapters. See, Midnight Notes Collective, “Midnight Oil;” Carpignano, “US Class Composition in the Sixties;” Illich, “Needs.”

⁴²⁸ I will return to this point throughout the ethnography.

⁴²⁹ On relations of production and reproduction, see E.G. Rodríguez, “Politics of Affects Transversal Conviviality.” These attacks are advanced through forms of capitalist restructuring and low intensity war designed to break working class power and autonomy.

a training program.⁴³⁰ The People's Community Medics strategy subverts the structure of needs imposed by the state and then retracted as a strategy of attempted decomposition, terror, and dehumanization. Although the first community trainings presented by the People's Community Medics took place in the open spaces of parks during a series of barbecues organized through Occupy and in particular through Occupy Patriarchy, as an autonomous project, they are well situated to arise out of the space of 14th and Broadway, in the overlap between the Oscar Grant rebellions and the Occupy movement. They were formed as a project that raised the possibility of responding to urgent violence in the community outside of the state, and put this practice into effect in an immediate way.⁴³¹

Assembly

In the wake of Occupy and its large general assemblies in Oscar Grant Plaza, several spaces of reflection and action were convened to open possibilities for oppositional knowledges and new collective strategies to emerge. In early March of 2012 a temporary convergence of organizers under the name Against Hired Guns invited community members to gather in a basement of a fading

⁴³⁰ See Gansett, "Interview with the People's Community Medics." Drawing on their own interview with Sean Gillis, a paramedic investigator with the Oakland Fire Department, the People's Community Medics testify to what many across Oakland and beyond already know, that "the OPD routinely delay and prevent ambulances and first-responders from treating people of color." Ibid., para. 2. I will draw on the work of the medics more fully in the chapter 7, "Spaces of Encounter."

⁴³¹ The work of the People's Community Medics is elaborated in chapter 7.

department store in downtown Oakland, a few strides from 14th and Broadway. It marked one of the first larger gatherings following the detumescence of Occupy and the repeated and spectacular engagements with police across downtown Oakland. The basement of the department store was constructed as a space to reflect together about our collective responses to police killings and see ourselves as a community of families and networked members. Here, communities spoke together on the effectiveness of organizing themselves according to punitive forms of justice adjudicated through liberal institutions, as well as the importance of assessing response strategies vis-à-vis the state as a movement. There was a shared affirmation of the necessity to respond to each murder in the community as a community. The question was also raised as part of generating a collective analysis, “how do we move beyond responding one death at a time?”⁴³² The reasoning, hard-won through collective experience over time, was that the state anticipates this, counting on our collective exhaustion and eventual fragmentation.

Fourteenth and Broadway and the “Ferguson Moment”

When Ferguson police officer Darren Wilson shot and killed seventeen-year-old Mike Brown on August 9, 2014, in a suburb of St. Louis, Brown’s body was left lying in the street in a zone of securitized abandonment for over four

⁴³² Against Hired Guns gathering in downtown Oakland, March 2012.

hours.⁴³³ As people gathered and attempted to approach Brown's body and move him from where he lay in the street, police restricted the community's access to Brown's body with the threat of force. As a community, they contested this blatant moment of state abandonment. The coordinated response by the state across law enforcement agencies in their attempts to manage the community uprising following the murder and abandonment of Brown by police brought into full spectacle the militarized arsenal available to local departments and state agencies—including law enforcement with full riot gear and assault rifles, armored vehicles, tear gas, flash bang grenades.

In recent years leading up to Ferguson, communities across the United States had organized to make visible and confront a number of police killings, catapulting the issue of police brutality and racialized violence onto a national

⁴³³ By securitized abandonment, I draw on the work of Braggs who advanced the term “differential abandonment” to describe a practice and strategy of the state where particular populations are left to die by the state—in particular Black and Brown populations. For Braggs, “Differential abandonment, and inclusion, is a category of analysis used to describe a strategy of governance, informed by, what Wendy Brown calls a ‘neoliberal-neoconservative political rationality’.” Braggs, *The Southern Freedom Movement Assembly*, 11. Braggs argues that this strategy of governance “both produces and manages disposable populations.” Ibid. In its individual application to particular bodies it can take the form of bleeding out, as well as the prolonged abandonment of a dead body in an open, public space. This practice and strategy became visible in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, which exposed abandonment as a larger biopolitical project contoured around race. Critical to this abandonment however is that it is enforced, as certain areas or bodies are cordoned off from assistance by the state, often through the presence of armed law enforcement and a family or community's access to the body is restricted. Katrina made visible this practice as applied to an entire population, made further comprehensible through repeating the designation of “wards.” I will develop this notion of “securitized abandonment” more fully over the course of the ethnography of this dissertation, and in particular in relation to a “politics of care” to draw attention to the ways that increasingly relations of care are targeted by both the state and capital. See Braggs, *The Southern Freedom Movement Assembly*. On Katrina, see Giroux, “Reading Hurricane Katrina.”

stage.⁴³⁴ In addition to the rebellions, protests, murals, and various direct action spaces, there had been more sustained efforts of documentation. As early as 1997 the Stolen Lives Project had released a report documenting police killings organized by state. A second edition was released in 1999 and lists thousands of killings by law enforcement, including civilians killed by police cars, for example, which are often not included in police archives documenting killings.⁴³⁵ Building on this early effort and others were two significant reports released by the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, “Every 36 Hours”, and “Operation Ghetto Storm,” chronicling the number of Black people killed through state and extra legal violence across the United States.⁴³⁶ This became a key point of reference as communities attempted to both grasp and make visible the extent of racialized state violence. In Los Angeles, the Youth Justice Coalition (YJC) engaged in a similar project documenting killings by law enforcement across the LA area, testifying to the high number of Chican@, Latin@ and other killings of Brown people. Similarly, a number of local copwatch and anti-police brutality projects

⁴³⁴ These included the murder of Sean Bell, Amadiou Diallo, Kimani Grey, Ramarly Graham in New York, Idriss Stelley in San Francisco, Oscar Grant in Oakland, and a range of targeted killings and attacks in New Orleans following Katrina as well as ongoing, pervasive, and highly visible forms of state violence in cities like Los Angeles, Chicago, Detroit, Denver, Albuquerque, Philadelphia, to name a few in more recent history.

⁴³⁵ This project continues into the present. See Stolen Lives Project, <http://stolenlives.org>.

⁴³⁶ These grassroots research and documentation projects confirmed local experiences of sustained violence across Black communities with the calculation that every 36 hours in the United States, and later updated to every 28 hours, an African American man, woman or child is killed by either an agent of the state, or a person operating under some form of state protection. See Malcolm X Grassroots Committee’s “Every 36 Hours.” See, also, Eisen, “Operation Ghetto Storm.”

across the United States had emerged in this period as part of an increased awareness of police excess.⁴³⁷

Over the last two decades, these efforts successfully linked instances of violence and brutality to ongoing corruption across departments, including corruption in the Los Angeles Police Department made visible through the Ramparts Scandal and the pervasive and sadistic brutality against Black and

⁴³⁷ While “copwatching” has always been a critical element of a community’s self defense, beginning in the early 1990s, several copwatching groups began to develop as more permanent organizations. One of the first of these organized copwatch groups was Berkeley Copwatch which has endured for many years and trained generations of copwatchers across the United States under the steady and sustained guidance of Andrea Prichett. Berkeley Copwatch has since 1995 been conducting street monitoring shifts with video recording devices, moving through the urban landscape by car, bike, and foot, where they hand out the now ubiquitous yellow “know your rights cards” with important legal information in dealing with law enforcement as well as important phone numbers. They regularly host Know Your Rights trainings, document police in the streets and at larger protests, and organize at the community level around a number of issues related to policing, militarization and surveillance. With an emphasis on accountability and transparency for the police, they also work as a collective and in coalitions to pressure city councils, fight back the incursion of new technologies like Tasers into the local arsenal, and regularly host a class through the UC Berkeley’s DeCal program to provide a historical background and framework for current policing practices as well as copwatching trainings for students and community members. In addition, they hold rallies, provide court support, and have worked in collaboration to conduct People’s Investigations, as in the case of the Berkeley Police Department killing of Kayla Moore in 2013, which will be examined in greater length in the ethnography of this dissertation. For more information on Berkeley Copwatch and other copwatch groups, see Simonson, “Copwatching”.

Brown communities that the Riders Scandal in Oakland opened to public view.⁴³⁸

More recently, groups had drawn attention to the pervasiveness of racialized policing across the United States, including through harassment policing and the entrenched battles against stop and frisk in New York City and gang injunctions in Oakland.⁴³⁹ These practices, as the Department of Justice report would later expose, were critical in shaping the landscape of Ferguson from which the sustained rebellions emerged. Attesting to just one aspect of this landscape, in response to the uprisings in Ferguson, the Department of Justice released a report reported that out of a population of 21,000, Ferguson police listed 16,000 people with outstanding warrants, or seventy-five percent of the residents of Ferguson.⁴⁴⁰

And while the armaments on display in Ferguson may have been shocking to many who were for the first time seeing armored vehicles in the “streets of America,” for certain segments of America, the presence of riot police, SWAT

⁴³⁸ The LA Ramparts scandal was a widespread case of corruption, misconduct, and brutality involving at least seventy officers in the Ramparts Division of the LAPD in the late 1990s, assigned to the patrol area of downtown Los Angeles. The Oakland Riders scandal was also a case of corruption, misconduct, and brutality that primarily involved officers beating, kidnapping, and planting evidence to terrify and harass Oakland’s Black and Brown communities. While the charges remained primarily on four veteran officers—Francisco “Frank” Vazquez, Clarence Mabanag, Jude Siapno and Matthew Hornung, community members note that the corruption and brutality was much more widespread through the department. The scandal emerged publicly in 2000 and is the focus of the ongoing civil suit *Delphine Allen et al. v. City of Oakland*. This is the root of the ongoing oversight of the OPD through the Negotiated Settlement Agreement, a process of litigation and oversight designed to reform the OPD from which the department has not yet emerged as of this writing.

⁴³⁹ Malcolm X Grassroots Movement has been central to this struggle in New York, and has had many of its members harassed, arrested and beaten in their work of monitoring and documenting police. For a detailed review of attacks on copwatchers nationwide, see Prichett and Paradise, “The Criminalization of Copwatching.”

⁴⁴⁰ See Marciana and M. David, “75% of Ferguson Citizens Have Arrest Warrant,” para. 6.

teams and other paramilitary units, and tanks was not unfamiliar.⁴⁴¹ In Compton and other areas of Los Angeles for example, battering rams and SWAT teams had been present in communities of color since before the LA Rebellions. Increasingly across particular communities of color in the United States, SWAT and other tactical teams in full riot gear were being deployed for a number of offenses, including accompanying parole officers to monitor people on probation, and, in the majority of SWAT invasions, to serve narcotic warrants. In some instances of such deployments, representatives from several cooperating agencies enter homes and clear each room by ordering all family members into a central room.⁴⁴² Anti-Gang Units and other paramilitary formations regularly patrolled certain districts and parts of town with assault rifles. Flash bang grenades were tossed casually into certain homes with sparse oversight from local departments and in several

⁴⁴¹ Much of the current resistance to state violence traces a history to the LA Rebellions and the nationally recognized beating of Rodney King in 1992. The moment of the LA Rebellion had at its foundation a collective understanding of the state's disruption of the gang truces as part of divisive strategy to destabilize the community's own safety. This disruption was critical to maintaining a "security" through enforcement policies related to the drug war and rising war on gangs that would be at the base of the expansion of mass incarceration, together with new forms of surveillance and control across California in the decades to come. The LA Rebellions also proved pivotal in the emergence of new efforts to confront police excess and analyze collectively the extent of the violence directed at communities of color. For many, the analysis focused on the much more immediate impact of the beating of King, and the subsequent acquittal of the officers involved, as communities already ravaged by the increasingly militarized policing developed through the war on drug. In this reading, the rebellion is linked to a more immediate outrage, rather than the well-reasoned insurgency at the base of Guha's analysis of the Indian peasant uprisings under colonial rule. See Guha, "Prose of Counter-Insurgency." Beginning in 1992, police brutality emerged as a more widespread concern, though most studies focused on the impact of the King beating and trial. On the "emergence" of police brutality in the current conjuncture, see Skolnick and Fyfe, *Above the Law*; Nelson, *Police Brutality*; and Stamper, *Breaking Rank*; for work situating police brutality in contexts of militarization, incarceration, detentions, and racial capitalism, see J. James, *Warfare in the American Homeland* and *States of Confinement*.

⁴⁴² See Balko, *Overkill: The Rise of Paramilitary Police Raids in America*.

cases with deadly results. In other cases, chemical weapons were deployed in massive amounts ostensibly to force people out of “barricaded” homes rather than allowing family, health care workers, or fire departments to intervene and deescalate. This militarization was always differentially applied.⁴⁴³ Beginning with the militarization of the police in 1973 and in particular with the rise of SWAT raids and paramilitary formations that escalated in parallel with the war on drugs, the police presence in Ferguson that many found shocking was for much of the population a feature of everyday life.

For others who claimed an activist politics, the armaments on display were familiar from protests going back at least as far as the WTO and NAFTA protests, and had become increasingly common in spaces of dissent.⁴⁴⁴ In California, both the Oscar Grant Movement and the Occupy Movement had solicited the full arsenal of tanks, tear gas, and assault rifles, as well as the less lethal weapons, including famously, at UC Davis, the pepper spray incident. For many, however, even beyond Occupy, militarized policing was a phenomenon that existed to

⁴⁴³ Except in the case of accidents where white homes were targeted by mistake and which received much publicity.

⁴⁴⁴ For the role of police at large protests in the 1990s, in particular the anti-globalization movement, see Fernandez, *Policing Dissent*. In many cases, militarization had received traction on the premise of crowd control related to large sporting events and concerts, which were marketed by forces like the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) as a way of safely controlling crowds on campuses and around other large events through the use of military vehicles and other devices designed to control movement. See PERF. This strand of militarization can also be traced to the reorganization of college campuses following incidents like the National Guard killings at Kent State. Campuses were redesigned for greater military access, including changing the rise-to-run ratio of steps surrounding areas like the quad to slow down crowds of protestors. Thus, parallel to a militarization of armaments was a militarization of geography and space, often to accommodate tanks and overall movement of state forces.

repress dissent—there was often little recognition that this was a force and a strategy deployed regularly across the “war zones” of the United States.⁴⁴⁵

There were, at an earlier inception of what would later become the Ferguson moment other prolific struggles against militarization as well that became immediately visible through the uprising. The anti-war movement in response to the US assault on Iraq and Afghanistan, although not monolithic, had pushed for forms of de-escalation, mobilizing against the ongoing bombing and occupation of the Middle East and human rights violations. The military spending budget and the larger military industrial complex, including private and mercenary forces like Blackwater (then *Xe*, now Academi) also were the targets of oppositions. Increasingly militarized technologies, including forms of surveillance which function as methods of control as well as practices aimed at the destruction of families and communities along with the decomposition of the working class have been the focus of political mobilizations.⁴⁴⁶ Also a point of focus in the “war coming home” has been the return of soldiers, many with PTSD and other forms of mental disorders as a result of situations of extreme violence and combat. Many of those returning had also been actively recruited into local law enforcement departments, while others found themselves relegated to security jobs in the absence of other forms of available work.

⁴⁴⁵ See Kelley, “‘Slangin’ Rocks...Palestinian Style’.”

⁴⁴⁶ For an elaboration of military technologies in relation to Silicon Valley, see Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Democracy Ateneo Announcement 3-15-14.”

In the years leading up to Ferguson there had been a proliferation of efforts by journalists and grassroots groups to expose federal funding programs like the 1033 Program and to raise alarms about violations of *posse comitatus* restrictions. The Bay Area witnessed coordinated efforts at the grassroots to stop the purchase of armored vehicles, drones, and expansive surveillance systems like the powerful battle against the Domain Awareness Center (DAC) in Oakland.⁴⁴⁷ Similarly, there had been a rising alarm and opposition against training programs that coordinated military assistance with local departments, as well a range of federal law enforcement agencies through initiatives like Urban Shield in Oakland.⁴⁴⁸ Groups like School of the Americas (SOA) Watch had long contested militarized trainings done by US forces and arms transfers through the US Army's School of the Americas (now Western Hemisphere Institute for Security

⁴⁴⁷ Struggles against both DAC and Urban Shield marked powerful anti-militarization battles that brought together a range of community members and groups. Similar community mobilizations have been waged across the greater Bay Area against the purchases of armored vehicles through the Federal 1033 program. The 1033 Program has come under significant scrutiny for its role in transferring military grade equipment into local law enforcement departments. Through the 1033, multiple agencies can come together, for example across several municipal police departments, university police departments and sheriff departments to purchase armored vehicles collaboratively with the assistance of Homeland Security grants, usually for the purpose of "crowd control" and often referencing the salubrious and potentially life saving qualities of the vehicles in dealing with crowds at concerts and large sporting events. However, they are primarily used against protestors in street confrontations. A coalition of Berkeley groups mobilized primarily by Berkeley Copwatch was able to halt the purchase of the Lenco BearCat armored vehicle. Similar battles rage across the Bay Area, from Santa Cruz to San Jose to San Leandro. While marketed as a rescue vehicle designed for officer safety, the Lenco BearCat can shoot gas canisters as well as host a turret for a gun mount.

⁴⁴⁸ See, Fireworks, "Urban Shield, SWAT, and the Domain Awareness Center."

Cooperation) that aided counterinsurgency efforts across Central and Latin America and Mexico.⁴⁴⁹

The struggle that emerged in the early Fall of 2014 connecting Ferguson, Ayotzinapa, and Palestine and picked up across the Bay Area has roots in the experiences and knowledges emerging from multiple community rebellions. It can be situated within a larger moment of convergence, reflecting struggles across the United States, the Global South, the Middle East, as well as Greece and Kurdistan. In the Bay Area the “Ferguson moment” exposed an ongoing insurgency, one that emerged in the context of community rebellions and ongoing struggles with Oakland at the center of a rupture that occurred with the killings of Oscar Grant and Lovelle Mixon in 2009.⁴⁵⁰ I put forward a reading here that argues that the moments of rebellion in places like Oakland (and rising out of Black and Brown struggles across the United States and beyond) served as a collective laboratory where questions and convergences were percolating incessantly. This percolation signaled a desire to merge sometimes disparate struggles in their efforts to understand racial violence and the role of capital vis a

⁴⁴⁹ By the Spring of 2015, SOA Watch was traveling across the United States in a connected struggle that linked families of the forty-three students with families whose loved ones had been targeted by state violence.

⁴⁵⁰ The Ferguson Moment is marked by many parallel moments of rupture—the point is not to identify a singular geographic moment, but rather to see rupture in relation to a genealogy that includes many moments of communities mobilizing against particular iterations of state violence, including earlier killings that were met with massive resistance and outrage like the New York Police Department (NYPD) killing of Amadiou Diallo on February 4, 1999, by four plain-clothed officers: Sean Carroll, Richard Murphy, Edward McMellon and Kenneth Boss; and the NYPD killing of Sean Bell on November 25, 2006, by five plainclothed officers: Michael Oliver, Gescard Isnora, Paul Headley, Michael Carey, and Marc Cooper.

vis the state in the current conjuncture. As spaces of rebellion, contestation and gathering, they became critical TAZKP in building a collective analysis of “security” as a low intensity war.

When in the summer Palestine was exposed to weeks of violent attacks by Israel, solidarities already in place and recently activated in response to the paramilitary killing of Comrade Galeano in Chiapas earlier in May were quickly activated again. Enduring for weeks across San Francisco and Oakland, protests resulted in a historic port blockade for several days. The noteworthy mobilization left the Israeli Zimm ship unable to unload on the Oakland docks. Palestine solidarity actions—full of rage, grief but also of resistance—were already in the streets by the time the first chants of “I can’t breathe” and “Hands up, don’t shoot” hit the West Coast from Staten Island and Ferguson respectively. Immediately the struggles converged in the streets. Traffic that had been blocked going one way on Market Street in San Francisco the previous week was stopped going both ways at Van Ness and Market as the Justice for Alex Nieto march held the intersection for an extended period, everyone chanting with hands raised in the air in connection with Ferguson. The same was happening in Oakland, as marches wove their way from three different directions to meet up at 14th and Broadway, surrounded by lines and lines of riot gear cops blocking streets and forcing marchers in other directions. In the marches were the families of those murdered by police together with community organizers and copwatchers from across the Bay and its peripheries—Berkeley, Vallejo, Stockton, San Jose. Families with posters of their children killed by the state walked side by side with

others who had not slept for days as part of the rotating Zimm ship blockade at the dock. This remained true when by the end of September, news began circulating of the forty-three students gone missing from Ayotzinapa in Guerrero, Mexico, revealing not only the collusion but also the undifferentiated functioning between narco traffickers and the Mexican state.⁴⁵¹ As mobilizations against state violence circulated across borders and solidarities were rewoven, multiple (and multiplying) efforts to demilitarize became more visible, more legible to each other.

The “Ferguson moment” then can be read as a moment, in Rimke’s words, of “destabilizing security” and advancing efforts of community safety as self-organized spaces within, against, and beyond the state.⁴⁵² In this context, the Ferguson moment marks a moment of fruition in an emergent collective analysis that had been building and percolating across many spaces in the United States. I argue here that the events of Ferguson in the late summer of 2014 reflected a

⁴⁵¹ This activation can be traced to multiple strands of the struggle—from those strands that wove Palestinian solidarities to prison hunger strike and prison and jail abolitionist movements to Black and Brown power movements and longstanding anti-colonial struggles including the for Puerto Rican liberation and highlighting the continued incarceration of political prisoners from Leonard Pelletier to Oscar Rivera Lopez to all members of the Black Power movement still locked up inside. The immediate resonance with Ayotzinapa was due in large part to the enduring presence of autonomous collectives and spaces like AZ, Radio Autonomía, Chiapas Solidarity Network, Uni Tierra Califas, the newly formed Qilombo social center that transformed out of the space of The Holdout in downtown Oakland at the end of the Occupy movement as a people of color collective, as well as a growing resonance between anarchist, autonomous, and Zapatista struggles, including many people from the Bay Area who had travelled to the Zapatista Escuelita (“Little School”) in August of 2013.

⁴⁵² Rimke, “Security: Resistance,” 192. While the emphatic and strategic, “Black Lives Matter” can be (and was) picked up in many ways to assert many forms of resistance and refusal, it can also be read as an assertion of self-valorization, outside the state. See Cleaver, “Inversion of Class Perspective.”

confluence of mobilized resistances built on decades of struggle against police excess and militarization that can be organized in three distinct areas.⁴⁵³

The first of these areas or strands reflected the anti-police brutality struggle emerging in the wake of police killings like those of Oscar Grant and Lovelle Mixon and further back with the Los Angeles Police Department beating of Rodney King.⁴⁵⁴ The anti-police brutality struggle critically served as “site” of “living theory” and knowledge production, continuously advancing a racial analysis attuned to diverse interconnected race projects and racial strategies of capital across the United States.⁴⁵⁵ This analysis relied on analogies with forms of racialized violence historically—in particular the lynching of African

⁴⁵³ It goes without saying that these struggles are not totally distinct. They constantly overlapped and learned from each other, and many groups and campaigns engaged across these areas. Rather, the point is to locate in broad strokes three strands that were not always legible to other as a shared struggle. It is also critical to note that each of these struggles reflect a different experience of militarization, a point which emerged with great clarity during the collective effort to organize a “rolling assembly” leading up to the People’s Movement Assembly (PMA) against Militarization as part of the US Social Forum in June 2015 in San Jose. In particular, this became evident at the Tactical Cartography *taller* or workshop held on March 14, 2015, in San Jose.

⁴⁵⁴ Nelson, *Police Brutality*.

⁴⁵⁵ On “living theory,” see Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Analytical Frameworks,” para. 3.

Americans.⁴⁵⁶ This strand highlighted police harassment on an every day level through policies like stop and frisk, and the overall criminalization of Black and Brown youth. At the center of this struggle were the families, and in particular the mothers, whose children had been murdered and abused by the state, as well as youth of color pushing back against curfews, gang injunctions, expulsions from

⁴⁵⁶ The historical recollection of lynching in the present in relation to police brutality serves many key functions. It illuminates both state and state-manufactured violences directed at particular racialized populations, exposing connections, continuities, and consent operating in conjunction across police killings and the “lynch mob.” it exposes a historical continuity with a white supremacist nation–state, including a continuity of violence against African Americans that did not “end” with an executive order as a wartime power (the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863), the capitulation of the Confederacy that brought the American Civil War to its conclusion (1865), or the ratification of the 13th Amendment abolishing slavery (1865). It exposes extrajudicial terror as a disciplining technology in service of control and complacency, aimed at a range of racialized populations, not only Black but also white, Brown, and Indigenous. At the same time, in exposing a form of extrajudicial violence directed at particular populations, it also complicates notions of the state, one where the state is seen as a relation rather than a singular, centralized entity. While in some cases an analysis of lynching is expanded to include forms of extrajudicial and often “spectacular” violence targeting Mexicano and Indigenous communities historically, thus broadening an understanding of racial violence in relation to primitive accumulation, settler colonialism, privatization, the border and the production of differential laboring subjects, and so on, in other cases the analysis is advanced with a particular focus on the violence against Black communities. This emphasis can illuminate the production of particular subjects historically in important ways. However, it can also serve a Black–white racial dichotomy that invisibilizes not only the experience of violence experienced by other populations, but invisibilizes the complex processes of racial formation that intersect in a given moment of racial violence. At risk is a de-emphasizing of police violence against Mexicano and Latin@ communities, as well as Indigenous communities, historically and in the present. This is not about demanding recognition in a kind of “democratic” visibility of violence across communities, where the visibility granted one population, for example African–American, erases or threatens another group’s “right to visibility,” for example Mexicano or Indigenous. Rather, at risk is a robust analysis of the complex, and shifting, racialization processes on which capital depends, for example through the *dispositif* of the border and in particular the US–Mexico border. The number of shootings and beatings, often fatal, of Latino/@s and Mexicano/@s across California, and in particular targeting migrant labor in the Central Valley and Central Coast and “gangs” in more urban areas, confirms the state’s commitment to violence directed at Brown populations. For example, in the Spring of 2014 in Salinas, California, a key agricultural area on the Central Coast, witnessed the killings by Salinas police officers of five men, all Latino or Mexicano, and many of whom were laborers: Angel Ruiz (March 20, 2014); Osman Hernandez (May 9, 2014); Carlos Mejia (May 20, 2014); and Frank Alvarado (July 10, 2014), all shot dead, often after being tased, in East Salinas. The fifth man, Jaime Garcia, was tased to death on October 31, 2014.

school, and other forms of control and disenfranchisement. For this struggle, SWAT invasions, illegal detentions, armored vehicles, and helicopter spotlights shining from the sky into the streets were not unfamiliar features of everyday life.

The second area reflected the anti-repression struggle that emerged from more public spaces of dissent like the Occupy movement but also from spaces that exposed in particular federal forces of repression (for example, Homeland Security and the Patriot Act) over local forces (but nonetheless attuned to their collusion). The anti-repression struggle saw its expression in areas that were intricately connected to both prisons and political prisoners and also linked violences and criminalization in the present with anti-colonial and anti-imperial struggles of the 1960s and 1970s. This was particularly manifest in the solidarity and support of the historic prison hunger strikes that emerged from the Solitary Housing Unit of Pelican Bay State Prison in July of 2011 in protest of the tortuous and inhumane conditions solitary confinement. These strikes spread across the state, with over 6,600 other prisoners joining the Pelican SHU strikers in solidarity. After the California Department of Corrections failed to follow through on the commitments made during the negotiations that had ended the 2011 strikes, prisoners resumed again on July 8, 2012, and lasted until September 3, 2012, this time with an Agreement to End of Hostilities as part of their program, organizing across racial division to uniting groups inside as well as outside prison walls. Over 30,000 prisoners in California prisons, including women's prisons, joined in the hunger strikes of 2012, as well as many prisoners from outside of California,

making it the largest prisoner hunger strike in US history.⁴⁵⁷ Direct actions like the Occupy4Prisoners rallies held on February 20, 2012, formed critical sites of convergence bringing together anti-prison struggles with other confrontations against militarization and criminalization through simultaneous rallies outside of prisons nationwide.⁴⁵⁸ This also included struggles to confront the targeting of Muslim and Arab communities, in particular through memorandums of understanding (MOUs) that produced Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTFs) as sites where federal law enforcement and local police joined forces in shared operations with very little oversight. This strand of solidarity struggles exposed the presence of Control Management Units and other isolation experiments across the United States housing primarily Arab, Muslim, and Middle Eastern populations, but also catching a few radical environmental activists. These were linked as solidarity struggles to the ongoing repression and torture at various US interrogation centers (“Black Sites”), and most notoriously, at Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib. Anti-repression solidarity struggles were brought to the forefront in the summer of 2014 through the state-orchestrated persecution of Rasmea Odeh

⁴⁵⁷ For an overview of the prison hunger strikes and the continued struggle, see Prison Hunger Strike Solidarity (wordpress blog), <https://prisonerhungerstrikesolidarity.wordpress.com/about/>.

⁴⁵⁸ In the Bay Area, Occupy4Prisoners took place at the gates of San Quentin State Prison, a few miles outside of San Francisco and brought together speakers who had been criminalized as “habitual offenders” through legislation like Prop 36, California’s notorious Three Strikes Law (1996) as well as members of the “San Quentin 6” including Luis Bato Talamantez who had been incarcerated at San Quentin during “Black August” (August 21, 1971), the day George Jackson was assassinated by prison guards. George Jackson was a prominent member of the Black Panther Party and while incarcerated, the Black Guerilla Family. Families and comrades of incarcerated people, activists, occupiers, and various forces mobilized to confront capital and political repression gathered for a full day in front of the San Quentin gates to share stories and struggles.

and the communities organized to support her centered in Chicago and Detroit. The anti-repression strand critically served to highlight the increasingly militarized police presence at protests as well as the targeting of activists and specific spaces and configurations in a larger social movement of dissent, and in many cases organized court support for activist comrades who had been arrested during protests. For this struggle, tactics of a “security culture” that involved removing batteries from phones, using particular email platforms, and working in close knit, trusted groups was a common feature of movement and mobilization.

In the third instance was the anti-militarization struggle, which was in many cases overlapped with the anti-repression struggle and oriented around a de-escalation of technology including drones, tanks, and forms of surveillance. This strand connected wars and military excursions abroad, and in particular the wars against the Middle East, with the war “coming home” and continued to raise alarms around technologies of surveillance, and an increasingly militarized arsenal, including armored vehicles, facial recognition software, and other repressive technologies being fed into domestic law enforcement. A strong presence in this struggle was formed through Occupy Oakland Working Privacy Group and their sustained and successful struggles working against the DAC, an \$10.9 million city-wide integrated surveillance system that would have linked private and public cameras and sensors across Oakland. The concerted community effort was able to push back and restrict to its originally permitted

function at the docks of Oakland.⁴⁵⁹ In addition and in many ways interwoven with the struggles against DAC, another key element in this strand was the annual mobilizing effort against Urban Shield, a training and trade show held in Oakland that brought together military and police units from around the world in collaborative exercises and mock operations against “terrorists.” Urban Shield also housed a massive “gun show” displaying the latest arsenals of war. In September 2014 local mobilizations forced Urban Shield out of Oakland.⁴⁶⁰ More recently, interconnected struggles have also involved efforts to expose the Bay Area Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI), an initiative to coordinate resources, training, and technology across federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies as part of a “national preparedness program.”⁴⁶¹ This strand of struggle grew out of an earlier anti-war struggle, and knew of the dirty wars in Latin America and

⁴⁵⁹ The Doman Awareness Center (DAC) surveillance hub was unanimously approved by the Oakland City Council on July 30, 2013. Less than a year later, on March 4, 2014, facing sustained pressure, the city council voted to restrict its use to its original location at the port, limiting its function as a hub by denying its integration with traffic camera and other camera and monitoring systems, including ShotSpotter maps (a system of police generated maps for tracking gun shots based on a series of microphones and other sensors). For excellent open source documentation of this significant battle, see the Oakland Local wiki, “Doman Awareness Center.”

⁴⁶⁰ For a history of this struggle, see “We Pushed Urban Shield Out of Oakland, But the Struggle Continues!,” a statement put forward in September 2014 by the Stop Urban Shield Coalition Coordinating Committee in *Facing Teargas*. The coordinating committee was comprised of AROC, Critical Resistance, International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network (IJAN) and War Resisters League (WRL), working with a broad base of support across Bay Area groups.

⁴⁶¹ UASI is part of a Homeland Security grant program that includes two other grants, State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) and Operation Stonegarden (OPSG) all of which are interconnected. See Department of Homeland Security Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) website.

the training and funding siphoned through the School of the Americas (SOA). In this area, city councils and budgets were a critical field of struggle.⁴⁶²

The convergence and circulation that marked the Ferguson moment was one where a confrontation against police brutality was made central to a project of destabilizing and deconstructing “security.” The Ferguson moment grew out of rebellions and occupations across the US as groups being shot with assault rifles during home raids and removed from their families by ICE began to increasingly cross paths with college students studying on the Dream Act and anarchist youth with student loan debt or who had chosen to avoid college. Domestic workers and sex workers, “the precariat” and adjunct professors and union electricians at a certain point began to realize they were looking at the same armored vehicle together in the streets. Rather than regarding the institution of the police as a repressive, racist apparatus, the focus shifted to a discussion of militarization, as elements of the insurgency began naming, and mobilizing against, low intensity war.

However, this process was not only about building a new collective analysis. Autonomous and prefigurative elements began to take shape in a much more cohesive and deliberate way. In the Bay Area, these efforts increasingly organized around “community safety,” whose central components took on the categories and practices of self-defense, justice, and care, linking these through

⁴⁶² Resistances to state violence and racial violence have long history and have continued to draw on struggles to confront settler colonialist violence as far back as 1492. To name just a few documents from this ongoing violence, see Hill, *500 Years of Indigenous Resistance*; Berry, *Black Resistance/White Law*; R. F. Williams, *Negroes with Guns*.

the assembly. Central to this community safety project was a reorganization of the ways that knowledge was produced through struggle. It is possible to understand this project in the present through the intersection of 14th and Broadway.

What began to emerge from the convergence of forces at the intersection of 14th and Broadway can be understood as part of a shift in organizing strategies in struggles across the Bay and globally to recognize a different kind of movement-building, one which insists on articulating the terms of its struggle outside the framework of liberal politics, or what Richard J.F. Day calls “the politics of representation, recognition, and inclusion.”⁴⁶³ Fully aware that such logic belies an investment in the state as a site for meaningful social change, justice, and equal protections, the deliberate “spaces of encounter” convened across groups through projects like skill shares, trainings, and investigations in an effort at, to borrow a phrase from the Zapatistas, “a new kind of politics.” This effort can be read as a moment that both makes state violence visible and takes seriously the regeneration made possible through community-based, self-valorizing activities.⁴⁶⁴ This involves locating sites of struggle outside of the traditional sites of politics and the institutions of the state. In this rendering, “to understand and amplify ‘circulation of struggles’ involves an attentiveness in

⁴⁶³ See Day, *Gramsci is Dead*, 18.

⁴⁶⁴ See Esteva, “Regenerating People’s Space,” 136; see Cleaver, “On Self-Valorization in Mariarosa Dalla Costa.” Many collectives, authors, and projects—from both the Left and the Right—claim the phrase a “new kind of politics.” Here I draw on the formulation advanced by the Zapatistas over many years, as well as the work of Colectivo Situaciones, including through the spaces of relational testimonio convened with Mesa de Escrache in Colectivo Situaciones. *Genocide in the Neighborhood*. See, for example, page 43.

‘reading’ political activity and assessing realms often overlooked as sites of struggle.”⁴⁶⁵ The social factory as a category of analysis can be seen as a tool for reading, and theorizing these realms differently, and reorienting those strategies aimed at the capture of state power, liberal institutional reform, or a party politics. Such strategies remain mired in a despotic democracy based on worker hierarchy and made possible through the creation of conditions of development and underdevelopment.⁴⁶⁶

Enclosure and the Commons

The Oscar Grant rebellions and the collective refusal to bury Lovelle Mixon and the many “ghosts of March 21st” surfaced questions of a community’s right to defend itself against violence, and marked a rupture catalyzed by the question, and imaginary, of justice. These traced a common root with anti-colonial struggles, recalling the militant self-defense projects of the Black Panther Party as well as struggles to reclaim safety and defense made visible by earlier efforts of Mabel and Robert Williams in Monroe, North Carolina.⁴⁶⁷ These also included the Native American occupations of Alcatraz Island off the coast of San

⁴⁶⁵ The quote regarding circulation of struggle reflects the discussion from Uni Tierra Califas’ Ateneo and can be found in the *ateneo* summary for October 2013. Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Democracy Ateneo Summary 10-19-13,” para. 4.

⁴⁶⁶ Here I draw on the work of Callahan, “In Defense of Conviviality,” exploring Du Bois’ notion of democratic despotism in “The African Roots of War.” I also draw here on the work of Quan and her examination of savage developmentalism. See Quan, *Growth Against Democracy*.

⁴⁶⁷ See, R. F. Williams, *Negroes with Guns*. See also, M. Williams, *Robert F. Williams: Self Respect, Self Defense & Self Determination*.

Francisco and Wounded Knee on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota as well as related anti-colonial and self-determination struggles, including the struggle for Puerto Rican Independence, and on and on.⁴⁶⁸ Other militant self-defense projects that emerged from feminist struggles of the 1960s and 1970s informed the Bay Area present, including in the work and legacy of San Francisco Women Against Rape (SF WAR) and women's self-defense groups like Cell 16, originally based in Boston. These struggles were kept alive as "living archive" in part through the presence of scholars and revolutionaries that had remained located in these struggles for decades and continued to weave these past histories into current practice and analysis, among them Angela Davis, Kathleen Cleaver, Richard Brown, Ericka Huggins, Kiilu Nyasha, Bobbie Seale, Elaine Brown from the Black Panther Party, Diana Block and Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, both of whom had mobilized with other women, including queer and trans women, to engage in women's defense and collectively organized care initiative outside of the state and marked a refusal to interact with or rely on the police. Additionally, archives of community resistance like the Freedom Archives curated by Claude Marks was instrumental in insuring that present struggles were able to learn from and draw on a rich history of past struggle, circulating audio recordings, pamphlets, and documentary film projects as well as bringing other revolutionaries through a Bay Area scene of resistance. This collective history and analysis was also shaped by *SF BayView* newspaper, edited by Mary and Willie Ratcliff, which circulated both

⁴⁶⁸ The occupation of Alcatraz lasted from November 20, 1969, to June 11, 1971, and at Wounded Knee from February 27 to May 5, 1973.

inside and outside walls. Combined with an ongoing struggle against mass incarceration and in particular the enduring incarceration of members of the anti-colonial and anti-imperial struggles, these histories exposed the state's severing of a community's right to defend itself and access to justice. For many of those occupying the plazas, parks, and libraries during Occupy and for those in the streets, the names of those who had spent decades in solitary confinement as "enemies of the state" were not only familiar, many had actually connected with struggles inside through various visiting programs, often established by comrades and allies from these earlier struggles.⁴⁶⁹

As a related point of reference, Foucault's modern bourgeois state is one where all arbitrations are removed from the community and relations of that community and instead are routed through the state.⁴⁷⁰ One role the state performs is precisely this cleavage between defense and justice. How can a community manage its own safety when its justice practices are distant and managed elsewhere? One critical component in struggles for autonomy then would be bringing safety and justice back into harmony, or, into the relations of the community. This would expand our commons.

From the rebellions for Oscar Grant that refused to leave the streets and defied a state-enclosed justice to the encampments and the assemblies of Occupy,

⁴⁶⁹ For an historical analysis of SF WAR in the context of anti-colonial, anti-imperial, and feminist struggles, see Block, *Arm the Spirit*; for a history of Cell 16 in a shared context, see Dunbar-Ortiz, *Outlaw Woman*. There are many excellent histories of the Black Panther Party. See for example, K. Cleaver and Katsiaficas, *Liberation, Imagination, and the Black Panther Party*.

⁴⁷⁰ See Foucault, "The Mesh of Power."

a struggle began to take shape in defiance of these enclosures. Even as the encampments were being uprooted from Oscar Grant Plaza, the imagination and energy of these convergences was already spreading to mobilize picnics across Oakland where food was served, community speak outs were organized, and the People's Community Medics offered trainings to care for each other as a community. From parks in Oakland to parks in Vallejo following the brutal police killing of Mario Romero in on September 2, 2012, communities gathered to heal and to grieve and at the same time, to organize skill shares on how to disengage and document the police. A collective effort was well underway—organized around food, spaces of *testimonio* and community investigations as well as diverse forms of care that included holding car washes to raise money to bury loved ones killed by police, and organizing barbecues in corner store parking lots to pay families' water bills. From the early summer through the winter of 2014, moments of insurgency unfurled in a concatenation of refusals to confront violences and through efforts weave struggles tighter—from the vibrant mobilizations in front of the Mexican Embassy in San Francisco that spilled into *mitotes* and solidarity circles across the East Bay following the murder of Compañero Galeano in Chiapas in May; to the sustained clamour and rage in the streets that met the narratives and images rising out from the Israeli bombings of occupied Palestine in June that were then circulated across Facebook, Tumblr, and retold in spaces of resistance; to the many nights of rebellion amidst tear gas following police killings from Staten Island to Ohio to Ferguson to San Francisco, to the enraged searching and demands for the missing forty three from Ayotzinapa

as communities representing and connected to Southern Mexico gathered in plazas and *ateneos* and began organizing caravans to connect families.⁴⁷¹

In mid December, there was an act that recalled that the struggle had not forgotten Nixon: the sign on the highway commemorating the officers who on March 21st had been killed in the same political moment as Nixon, was defaced and hacked down.⁴⁷²

⁴⁷¹ Compañero Galeano was killed and fifteen compañer@s seriously wounded on May 2, 2014, during a “treacherous attack by government supported Central Independiente de Obreros Agrícolas y Campesinos Histórica (Cioac-H) paramilitaries on the Junta de Buen Gobierno (JBG) in La Realidad [Chiapas].” See, Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Democracy Ateneo Announcement 6-14-14,” para. 2; see, also, Radio Autonomía, “June 14th Show,” under “Attack on La Realidad” and “Oakland Mitote Audio,” Radio Autonomía, June 14, 2013. On July 2, 2014, sixteen-year-old Mohammed Abu Khdeir was abducted from East Jerusalem, tortured, and set on fire after being forced to swallow gasoline by an Israeli paramilitary group following the kidnapping and murder of three Israeli youth in the West Bank in June. Both kidnappings mark a moment of settler colonial state manufactured and incited violence, with Netanyahu publically speaking of vengeance following the discovery of the Israeli youths’ bodies in a search effort by the Israeli military known as “Operation Brother’s Keeper.” Flamed and fueled by the state as ethnic or religious violence, the costs are exacted heavily on one side and authored by the state. The Palestinian community’s response to Khdeir’s horrific death provoked a brutal attack by the Israeli military on Palestine. Rania Khalek reports that “Of the 2,220 Palestinians killed during Israel’s 51-day bombing campaign, at least 1,492 were civilians, including at least 547 children.” See Khalek, “Israel ‘directly targeted’ children in drone strikes on Gaza, says rights group,” para. 1. The police killings of Eric Garner in Staten Island Michael Brown in Ferguson, Alex Nieto in San Francisco have been highlighted earlier in this work, and rest (in power) alongside vast numbers of largely Black and Brown youth from across the United States killed by law enforcement. The murders of forty-three students in Ayotzinapa were also discussed earlier. Regarding the *mitote*, Uni Tierra Califas reappropriates the term from Spanish colonization to reclaim the celebration as a site of resistance and research. “Often criminalized in the popular consciousness, the *mitote* works as a reclaimed public space of celebration convened to generate poetic and strategic knowledges that privilege arts, dance, and embodied research.” See Uni Tierra Califas folleto, para. titled “Mitote.” Critical to the elaboration of the *mitote* as a TAZKP is the recognition of the state (and originally, colonial occupation) to criminalize indigeneous resistance. The *mitote* generally takes the form of a house party that includes an initial convened space of facilitated dialogue. *Mitote* is a strategic concept as well as a celebration where food is shared as well as “local wisdoms between generations in order to regenerate the community.” Ibid.

⁴⁷² See article by EastWest, “That’s War.”

CHAPTER 4: ASA AND IDRIS

Asa

*HEY ACE REMEMBER WHEN WE WAS STANDING ON THE BALCONY ON THE 10TH FLOOR OF THE HOLIDAY INN ABOUT 5AM AND THE SMOG WAS DOWN OVER THE CITY LOL AND YOU WERE SINGING AIR FORCE ONE BY NELLY WHILST WE BOTH WROTE OUR NAMES IN THE CONDENSATION ON THE WINDOWS I OFTEN WONDER IF OUR NAMES ARE STILL THERE.*⁴⁷³

-Bernadette Harakati, "Tributes to Asa Sullivan 1980 – 2006"

Asa Sullivan was killed on June 6, 2006, when officers from the San Francisco Police Department entered the Parkmerced residence where he was staying on a "well-being check" after receiving a call from a neighbor that she suspected the unit next door might be a "drug house."⁴⁷⁴ Once inside, four officers tracked Asa into an attic crawlspace while several others shouted and pounded with sticks from the room below against the ceiling where Asa had retreated and crouched near the furthest end of the attic. Within a matter of

⁴⁷³ Here I have chosen to keep all the original formatting of the quote by Bernadette Harakati, which appeared in all uppercase in "Tributes to Asa Sullivan," on Gone too Soon" online memorial site.

⁴⁷⁴ SFPD Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) reports from June 6, 2006. Author, trial notes. Both the terms "well-being check" and "drug house" were raised repeatedly throughout the trial by both legal teams as well as in numerous police testimonies. See, also, Jeffrey S. White, District Judge, Presiding, "Appeal from the United States District Court."

minutes, from within the crawlspace, SFPD officers Michelle Alvis and John Keesor opened fire, shooting Asa seventeen times, including five shots fired directly into his face.⁴⁷⁵

⁴⁷⁵ In most community-based investigations and in particular in the investigations that are initiated and sustained by the family who often are the ones who see and attempt to comprehend what happened to their loved ones, the number of bullets counted by the state and the number of bullet holes counted by the family are often not the same number. Where the family has visited the body and counted the bullet holes, I respect the number counted by the family even though the mainstream media and police reports often produce a different number. In many cases, the number counted by the family, the number released by the state, and the number printed in the newspapers are drastically different numbers, an accusation framed by the Idriss Stelley Foundation as “minimization by the corporate press on the number of bullets pumped into [people].” Idriss Stelley Foundation, “Enough is Enough!” para. 2. It is often difficult to get an accurate number for a variety of reasons, including that the numbers may in some cases indicate a higher number of officers present than reported by the state, or a use of firearm or level of force incommensurate to the threat posed by the subject and read against witnesses’ accounts. Based on private conversations with different family members, it became clear that one “observable” that would form a valuable and important yet also gruesome research methodology for confronting the state’s lack of disclosure surrounding its own violence would be to assess the amount of time and the amount of the final bill charged by the funeral home in cases where the body has to be significantly reconstructed in preparation for an open casket funeral. While often funeral directors will share information confidentially with the family that contradicts official reports, it is difficult to determine how readily morticians and funeral home directors are to make public information that contradicts state reports. Many families have been able to document the damage to a loved one’s body when they take photos at the morgue using their phones and thus are able to provide critical counter-information to state narratives. Further complicating this issue, while funeral homes are privately owned, in some cases in California, the Chief Medical Examiner or coroner’s office is under the Sheriff’s Department. While this is not the case for San Francisco County, it is the case for Alameda County (which includes Oakland and Berkeley). It is the Chief Medical Examiner’s office that provides the official autopsy report on the body, which includes information like the number of exit and entry wounds, gun power residue tests to see if a person fired a weapon before their death, toxicology reports that can confirm even trace amounts of substances and are often a powerful component of criminalization, and other valuable information. A critical element in a community’s autonomy would be its access to an independent autopsy, which the state has made prohibitively expensive. In many cases, families are also under pressure to cremate a loved one quickly as the per diem morgue rates can be as high as \$80–\$100 per day. Often, families are prohibited from any access to a body for as long as a week or more on the basis that the case is under investigation. The costs associated with storing a body for additional time are exacerbated by the conditions of the death itself. In addition to expensive mortuary and burial costs, families face other immediate and severe obstacles to not only justice but their own survival—for example, in some cases, cars that may be related to the case (and often in which a family member was killed by police) are impounded for months and years as part of the investigation, often leaving family without transportation to work. As

Asa was mixed race—Black, Native American, and white—and was twenty-five years old at the time his life was taken by police.

Over the next eight years, Asa’s family fought a relentless battle to bring a civil suit to the federal courts to insure the officers that killed Asa and the department that protected them would have to answer for their actions against the family and community.⁴⁷⁶ Various forces arrayed to shield departments from transparency and insure their impunity mounted obstacle after obstacle to keep the case from reaching the courts. Dates were announced and delayed on appeal from the City’s defense team. In the Fall of 2014 the civil suit finally came to trial in

families share these insights and experiences, a more comprehensive picture of counterinsurgency strategies takes shape, and the body as a site of value production following a killing can be traced across multiple offices and relations between institutions. I am grateful to ongoing conversations with many families from across the greater Bay Area for sharing stories from their experiences, including through *testimonios* offered in various community spaces. In particular, I draw on the diligent work over many years of Mesha Monge-Irizzary of the Idriss Stelley Foundation. Many of these insights also emerge from the collective space of People’s Investigations and through personal conversations with various coroner’s offices following police killings, including following the in-custody death of Kayla Xavier Moore in Berkeley in February of 2013. This research methodology is also informed by work done in the Punjab document extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances of Sikhs by the Punjab police, primarily between 1984–1994. As documented in the extensively researched *Reduced to Ashes* researchers formulated a ghastly but effective equation indexing the purchases of firewood by various police departments with the amount of wood required to burn a body to estimate and prove the extent of the “disappearances” as a counterinsurgency strategy advanced through the police. See, Kumar et al., *Reduced to Ashes*. See also, Idriss Stelley Foundation, “Enough is Enough!”

⁴⁷⁶ Officers present, involved, and responsible for the incident that resulted in the violent death of Asa Sullivan included Michells Alvis, John Keesor, Paulo Morgado, Yukio “Chris” Oshita, Tracy McCray, Darren Choy, and others. The Chief of the Police at the time of the incident was Heather Fong. Drawing on the work of HIJOs and the *escrachas*, and in particular the reflective exchanges between HIJOs and Colectivo Situaciones in *Genocide in the Neighborhood*, this document and others produced through community research insists on each time naming the agents of the state responsible for ordering, overseeing, and enacting acts of violence, as well as those whose protections make possible forms of impunity, including those higher up on a chain of command. See Colectivo Situaciones, *Genocide in the Neighborhood*.

Oakland.⁴⁷⁷ After nearly a month of testimony and a few scant days of deliberation, the jury returned a verdict. The decision refused to acknowledge any wrong doing on the part of the police department, thus sanctioning an act of state violence as they ratified the city's defense: Asa, the jury unanimously affirmed through their decision, had desired a violent death at the hands of the state and had actively pursued this strategy to end his life by committing "suicide by cop."⁴⁷⁸

The decision insured that Asa's family, including his young son, received no financial compensation from the city and county of San Francisco as a result of the attack that produced this violent and untimely death. It also meant that the

⁴⁷⁷ The full name of the case names as Plaintiff-Appellees, in order, four members of the family: the living mother Kathleen Espinosa; her killed son, Asa Sullivan; the living child of Asa, also Asa Sullivan, and the living mother and guardian of Asa Sullivan's child ("Little Asa"), Nicole Guerra. In addition to the City and County of San Francisco, the case names Chief of Police at the time of Asa's killing, Heather Fong as Defendants, and three SFPD officers who were at the residence that evening, two of whom fired their weapons to kill Asa, Officers John Keesor, Michelle Alvis, and Paul Morgado as Defendants-Appellants. Heather Fong was Chief of Police for San Francisco from 2004–2009. *Kathleen Espinosa v. the City and County of San Francisco*. The trial ran from September 3, 2014 (jury selection), to October 6, 2014 (closing arguments), and took place at the Ronald V. Dellums Federal Courthouse in Oakland.

⁴⁷⁸ The term "suicide by cop" emerged in 1983 after a former police officer coined the term. In a recent article in *Slate* Magazine, Josh Voorhees analyzes the term in relation to the August 19, 2014, fatal police shooting of Kajieme Powell in Ferguson, Missouri, ten days after the killing of Michael Brown by Officer Derrick Wilson. In Voorhees' analysis, he exposes the frequency with which the term is used to justify acts of deadly force by police against people experiencing mental crisis. Voorhees also stresses the "inevitability" that the term implies in terms of the violence that it protects. Voorhees, "The Problem with 'Suicide by Cop'."

officers and department that responded with such violence took no responsibility for the decisions and actions that took a life.⁴⁷⁹

Over the course of the long battle to the courts, Asa's family had been exposed to a series of lies and retractions on the part of the department. They had experienced not only the killing of Asa, but a criminalization that engulfed the entire family, the community, and everything that had supported and nurtured Asa in his twenty five years of life. Beginning immediately after the shooting, it was Asa and his family who were under scrutiny by the state for the violence that the state itself had produced. In order to justify its own act of violence, the state

⁴⁷⁹ Following the decision from the October 2014 trial the family and legal team attempted to appeal the decision based on a number of factors, including the issue of warrantless entry; the fact that both the history of 2 Garces and Asa's own background and history introduced at the trial were unknown to the officers at the time of the killing; issues of witness exclusion for the plaintiffs; the use of excessive force; a paternal relationship (nepotism) between the judge and a member of the defendant's legal team; critical contradictory statements made by Officer Choy during the trial itself; the admission of Sangh's testimony; unreasonable search; and jury instructions, particularly in relation to property and privacy issues that determined whether Asa had a "right" to be safe in his home. Author's conversation with plaintiff legal team and family, April 2015. A People's Investigation with the family of Asa at the center in support of the appeal was formerly launched through a collaborative effort on the part of the family of Asa Sullivan, Idriss Stelley Foundation, CCRA, SF Mission Copwatch, ICCMC, and other community members on March 3, 2015, even as the process recognizes that the investigation began eight years ago with the family's efforts to find out what happened to Asa. The People's Investigation also launched a grassroots fundraising campaign to help defray the costs of purchasing the transcripts, the procurement of which the appeal depended. The cost of the court transcripts required on which a successful appeal of the case depended was \$10,000. Despite a solid effort, the community and family were unable to raise this amount of money to file the appeal in such a short time. The People's Investigation, anticipating that this may be the case, determined to go forward with the community investigation as a commitment to exposing the state and to imagining forms of justice collectively that are not contained in the courts. See, Justice4Asa, "The People's Investigation into the Police Killing." Marking the launch was a performance of "Stars Out" by Lisa Ganer and Nomy Lamm, performed live at SomArts by Lisa Ganer to the backdrop of a short film that included a montage of both Asa and Idriss, and recognized Alex Nieto, Kayla Moore, and O'Shaine Evans. The phrase "stars out" is in reference to a statement made during the trial by Officer Michelle Alvis by way of her explanation for charging into the attic with her gun drawn. See Ganer and Lamm, "Stars Out, Gun Drawn."

directed its attack at the very site where Asa had been cared for and nurtured in an effort to eventually establish for the jury and the public that Asa's life, even to him, was one that was not worth living.

In her analysis of "social death," Lisa Marie Cacho examines how "the criminal, the illegal alien, and the terrorist suspect are treated as obvious, self-inflicted and necessary outcomes of law-breaking rather than as effects of the law or as produced by the law."⁴⁸⁰ Cacho also distinguishes between two forms of criminalization—one involves the process of being stereotyped or "misrecognized" as someone who committed a crime while the other refers to a process of criminalization where someone is "prevented from being law abiding."⁴⁸¹ This chapter focuses on the struggles of families to connect across violences, responding to state violence and the subsequent criminalization of families and communities as the state attempts to justify its own "official violence" through a deployment of "social death." The focus on the work of Mesha Monge-Irizarry, mother of Idriss Stelley and Kat Espinosa, mother of Asa Sullivan, provides two interconnected strands in a fifteen-year period of Bay Area justice struggles centered in San Francisco and beginning with the killing of Idriss Stelley on June 12, 2001. This chapter illuminates community efforts across the Bay to reclaim justice from the state, mobilize to defend their families and communities including those taken by the state and those targeted as a result. It also explores how these collective efforts have the capacity to turn spaces of

⁴⁸⁰ Cacho, *Social Death*, 4.

⁴⁸¹ Ibid.

criminalization, like the courts, into direct action spaces in service of community struggles.

The eight-year battle to bring Asa's case to the courts reflected a complex reckoning with justice that took shape as the family and community that rallied around Asa struggled to make sense of the violence. Given the state's response, the family had to reclaim Asa. The community organized with Asa's family at the center were well aware that the courts could not deliver a justice that corresponded in any way to the loss or the trauma that continued to reverberate even as years passed by.⁴⁸² What could justice possibly mean to Little Asa, only five years old at the time he lost his father? To his mother who had watched him grow? To his brothers that searched for answers through the offices and institutions of the state? The sustained effort to push the case into court marked an enduring confrontation by the family and community against the state's own narrative of what it had done and why its actions were justified.

According to Asa's mother, Kathleen Espinoza, in a statement in the newspaper two months after Asa was killed in August 2006, the civil suit was about getting answers: "it's not about the money, it's about the truth."⁴⁸³ Yet the family's struggle over time exposed something far more potent: it was no longer so simple as a struggle for a truth that would reveal the fabrications and the misinformation, where finally one of the many stories put forward, including several conflicting stories circulated by the police, about why Asa had to die

⁴⁸² Kathleen Espinoza, conversation with the author, October 2014.

⁴⁸³ Van Derbeken, "Family of Man Killed."

violently in that moment rose above the others as the one that actually transpired that evening in the attic crawlspace. Rather, the struggle entailed a collective refusal to accept the social death that was being apportioned them by the state via Asa.

The protracted struggle that accompanied the push to the courts opened on many fronts across the Bay Area—confronting the state, challenging dominant media representations, provoking new questions and formulations of justice and weaving acts of care within a community organized against forms of “security” that continue to take Black and Brown lives at an alarming rate. In part, the struggle was waged to insure the incident where Asa’s life was taken could not be erased or rewritten by the state. As such, it could never be contained by the courts. Nor could it be reduced to a simple process of rebuking the narrative advanced by the only witnesses on the scene—the police themselves—that Asa was a criminal and a threat, and that he desired a violent death at their hands. It was also a process of refusing the state—rejecting not only its legitimacy but the very subjects that it attempted to produce in its efforts to secure governance across a broader population.⁴⁸⁴ In this way, the struggle for justice for Asa can be read as part of a larger project to expose, understand, and confront a low intensity war organized through strategies of criminalization and militarization at the very sites where families and communities reproduce themselves.⁴⁸⁵

⁴⁸⁴ This connection between subject production, biopolitical power, and war is elaborated more fully in the introduction to this dissertation.

⁴⁸⁵ K. Williams, “The Other Side of the COIN.”

The community of struggle organized with Asa at the center was able to strategically engage, investigate, and build relations across families and regions following the killing of Asa. One of these was the space of the trial itself, which exposed a myriad of strategies in the state's attempts to justify the killing and shield the police department. Because the trial occurred within a larger texture of struggle, the context was created to insure the trial was reclaimed as a space the community could use. By circulating the stories, lies, and strategies out from the courtroom and across a community of struggle that included many other families, Asa's family and those connected to the case converted the trial into a space of knowledge production and direct action of critical importance to larger community safety struggles.⁴⁸⁶

Theorizing TAZKP and the multiple systems of information that circulate in a community of struggle reveals an insurgent community, one constantly engaged in acts of self-organization against ongoing processes of criminalization and militarization. In this instance, TAZKP were organized both inside and outside the courtroom. As zones of knowledge production, they are also interconnected *through* the courtroom. Such theorization makes observable an emergent collective effort to understand, reveal, contest, and escape the numerous counterinsurgency strategies that exist as forces within a more expansive strategy

⁴⁸⁶ Uni Tierra Califas Social Factory Ateneo announcement for October provides an analysis of the courtroom as a site of direct action and as a space of knowledge production connected to other spaces outside the courtroom. See Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, "Social Factory Ateneo 10-25-14." The ateneo space for October also took up this conversation among families and people who had been in attendance at the trial and others participating in the space.

of social control in service of capital—one that relies on forms of social death and, drawing again on Ruth Wilson Gilmore’s definition of racism, one that relies on “a death-dealing displacement of difference into hierarchies that organize relations within and between the planet’s sovereign political territories.”⁴⁸⁷

Placing Asa and his family’s struggle at the center of an analysis of a community’s confrontation against social death represents one effort to insure that the shooting frenzy in the Parkmerced attic that took Asa’s life would not go unmarked. It also makes visible that the murder of Asa occurred in the context of an already mobilized community. This can be read through three distinct phases of community mobilizations and direct action responses that illuminate struggles in the social factory.

In the first phase, the immediate response by Asa’s family directly after the shooting is followed by a series of spaces of reflection and direct action punctuated by milestones in the long battle forward to the courts. This first phase involved the family’s initial distressed quests to the coroner’s office following the shooting, unaware of what had transpired or how Asa had been lost. It involved repeated attempts to navigate a media that had simultaneously dealt in fabricated evidences and appeared to have access to select details that the family did not. It included the fight extending for a week and a half after Asa was killed to finally see his body at the funeral home after the Chief Medical Examiner completed his autopsy and tests were done to try to determine gunpowder residue by the evidence teams. This was one aspect of the family’s interrogation and navigation

⁴⁸⁷ Gilmore, “Fatal Couplings of Power and Difference,” 16.

from institution to institution across the state apparatus. The state, in turn attempted to contain and also slow down the family's efforts. Deliberate delays were accompanied by other strategies to disrupt family bonds and antagonize relations among those who loved Asa the most, at a time when all were grappling with an unfathomable loss.

But all this was not so easily managed by the institutions or the process. The killing of Asa in 2006 did not occur as an isolated event or an anomaly in the landscape of policing practices across San Francisco. It occurred against a pre-history of direct actions: an already mobilized community.⁴⁸⁸ A few months prior to the killing of Asa, Kathleen Ecklund had been fatally shot in San Francisco following a pursuit by the California Highway Patrol (CHP) that ended with her trapped in a dead end alley and a CHP officer firing at her repeatedly as she was immobilized.⁴⁸⁹ Between 1990 and the time that Asa was killed in 2006, law enforcement had shot and killed forty nine people in San Francisco, and had been responsible for another ten deaths including in-custody deaths or other forms of violent abuse and/or deadly negligence, bringing the total to fifty nine deaths in the fifteen and a half years prior to Asa being killed.⁴⁹⁰ The questions and refusals provoked by these killings surged into streets, parks, and plazas where Asa's

⁴⁸⁸ Uni Tierra Califas' Social Factory Ateneo announcement and summary draws attention to this "ferment" of struggle. See Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, "Social Factory Ateneo 10-25-14."

⁴⁸⁹ Some sources refer to Ms. Ecklund as Kathleen Ecklund and others as Karen Ecklund. Here, we follow the documentation archived by the Idriss Stelley Foundation.

⁴⁹⁰ In both 1990 and 1998, law enforcement agents were responsible for seven civilian deaths in a single year. In 1990, all seven of the people who were killed died as a result of officer involved shooting (OIS).

family encountered other families whose losses were also incalculable and unanswered. Among these were a series of direct action spaces that included a candlelight vigil less than two weeks after the killing on Asa on June 18, 2006, outside the Parkmerced Residence where Asa was killed; the protests for October 22nd Day to Stop Police Brutality, Repression, and the Criminalization of a Generation starting at Haight Street and Stanyan Avenue in San Francisco; and a series of marches, picnics, and other gatherings.⁴⁹¹ In these encounters, families and community members shared what they knew and constructed histories together. Details and tactics were exchanged, names of loved ones criminalized by the state across an apparatus that included dominant media were pushed back up to the surface and reclaimed by friends, children, lovers, mothers, fathers and elders.

Thus, the mobilizations immediately following the shooting that reverberated through the months and years that followed revealed the presence of a variety of sustained and interconnected insurgencies already in place prior to the murder of Asa. The violence that took Asa resonated against decades of earlier violences and the networks—tightly woven in some moments and tenuous in others—of families linked through loss, rage, and struggles for justice and meaning. The second phase of mobilizations is the one that is revealed by the first: it is the prehistory of militancy that rises to frame or to catch the present

⁴⁹¹ See for example, Mahtin, “SF October 22nd Protest.”

moment of where Asa is shot, cradling the new loss.⁴⁹² At the time that Asa was shot, a community networked and mobilized through collective experiences of violence was already in place.

But it was also a community organized through collective and militant care. Central to this struggle is Mesha Monge Irizarry, whose own son and only child, Idriss, had been killed by San Francisco police in 2001 in a moment of tremendous violence unleashed by the San Francisco Police Department and aimed at Idriss in an otherwise empty Imax Theater in 2001. Together with her own battle to take the police who killed her son to the courts, since 2001, Mesha continues to take on the patient and difficult work of weaving together families who have been targeted by the state as part of a larger struggle to document and confront this violence. She has worked to connect families and build spaces where the community can confront the violences they face together. Interwoven in the story of Asa are the stories of many lives taken, including the story of Idriss. The family and community's response to the killing of Idriss helped make Asa's story visible, created the circuits for this new struggle to resonate, and established support networks that Asa's family could draw as they fought their way to the courts. So Asa's story is also these other stories. It is also Idriss' story, as this chapter will explore.

The actual trial for the wrongful death of Asa Sullivan, eight years later, can be understood as the third phase. Here as in other cases that families have

⁴⁹² One recalls Derrida's argument that the first always comes after the second, its intelligibility as *a priori* contingent on the events that happen *after* that reveal its presence as *a priori*. See Borradori, *Philosophy in a Time of Terror*.

pushed to the courts the trial is not the apex of a righteous trajectory towards justice. In many ways, the court itself functions as a *dispositif* in the production of social death.⁴⁹³ In reflecting on the recent wrongful death trial, Uni Tierra Califas' Social Factory Ateneo announcement observes, "rather than simply a neutral space of rational arbitration between street level policing on one hand and punitive institutions on the other, in many cases, the state-organized justice process itself targets family and community bonds in destructive ways."⁴⁹⁴ In his 1974 study, Isaac Balbus provides an analysis for the ways the courts functioned to hobble the Black Power Movement.⁴⁹⁵ More recent struggles, including the Occupy Movement, have also, while supporting each other, raised cautionary conversations about strategies that repeatedly sent the struggle into the courts, a process that drains resources and can fatigue resistance efforts over time. Largely due to an inability to see criminalized populations as resistant populations, less emphasis has been placed on analyzing the juridical process in its efforts to target the social factory. Instead, in studies that glance in this direction, the emphasis generally focuses on questions of court bias or structural racism, rather than seeing the courts as a node in an architecture of social control that depends on racial hierarchies and criminal and illegal subjects. By the time the family arrives

⁴⁹³ Here I draw on M. Callahan's articulation of the US-Mexico border as a *dispositif*. See Callahan, "Crisis and Permanent War."

⁴⁹⁴ Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning. "Social Factory Ateneo 10-25-14," para. 10.

⁴⁹⁵ See Balbus, *The Dialectics of Legal Repression*.

at the court, much has already been exhausted and lost. The state in fact counts on this.⁴⁹⁶

Struggles for justice challenge the role of the court and its self-representation as a “disinterested arbitrator” in a legitimate political democracy. Thus, as a third moment in the struggle for justice for Asa, the trial functions as a site of grassroots investigation and direct action. Through it, a community is able to read and reflect together the ways it is organized collectively around its own defense, safety, care, and self-valorized justice. It also reads the strategies of the state with greater clarity. This reveals not only the limitations of state-organized forms of justice, it simultaneously exposes the intricate mechanisms of capital aimed at the the relations that sustain community autonomy.⁴⁹⁷ Each of these phases can be read as moments of community autonomy, resistance, and resilience through which the community’s collective dignity is claimed and its regeneration dreamed and made possible.

Situating the murderous and brash attack on Asa in the context of moments of community mobilization and through the category of the social factory exposes a confluence of militarizations.⁴⁹⁸ These include, but also exceed, forms of militarization made visible in moments where armored vehicles, SWAT

⁴⁹⁶ Cacho’s recent study that advances this thinking; see Cacho, *Social Death*.

⁴⁹⁷ Here I draw on Cleaver’s discussion on self-valorization in “The Inversion of Class Perspective;” and “On Self-valorization in Mariarosa Dalla Costa’s ‘Women and the Subversion of the Community’.”

⁴⁹⁸ This notion of the confluence of militarizations emerged from the space of Democracy Ateneo in San Jose on January 10, 2015.

teams and tear gas are deployed as in the case of the Oscar Grant rebellions and Occupy Movement in Oakland, and more recently, in Ferguson and Baltimore.⁴⁹⁹

While a militarized police force with its bellicose armaments is often the most legible form of militarization that raises questions about the role of the police at home, often raised in reference to violations of the *posse commitatus* clause, the social factory as a category of analysis provides a way of reading everyday policing within a larger counterinsurgency approach to low intensity conflict.

In reading the social factory against counterinsurgency other elements emerge of the more pervasive tactics that produce a subject as criminal or somehow deserving, or in the case of Asa, even desirous of the violence that targets them. Cacho argues that while criminalized populations are excluded from law's protection, they are not excluded from law's discipline, punishment, and regulation.⁵⁰⁰ Many elements of counterinsurgency are designed to disrupt the ways that marginalized or targeted families and communities have organized themselves to manage their own collective safety and survival. Processes of criminalization work in tandem with these strategies and in turn can serve to erase, rewrite, and make illegible a family and community's experience of itself as resilient and caring. Taken together these processes function to justify and

⁴⁹⁹ As a note on the militarization of care, state discourse names armored vehicles like the Lenco BearCat "medivac" vehicles. Members of the ICMC pointed this out publicly in a January 2014 rally in San Leandro against the city's purchase of the new tank.

⁵⁰⁰ Cacho, *Social Death*, 5.

underwrite the myth of the infallible state, masking at the same time the state's service to capital.⁵⁰¹

If we begin, with autonomist Marxists, with “an inversion of class perspective,” one that reads capital through its responses to workers’ refusals, and take seriously the spaces in the current conjuncture that advance a collective analysis, these three phases make visible a community struggling to demilitarize and decriminalize.⁵⁰² Such an inversion in regards the tactics of the state provides the opportunity to learn from the multiple strategies aimed at breaking bonds that sustain relations and resistance from within the social factory.

⁵⁰¹ I am grateful to Kat Espinoza, Kahlil Sullivan, Nomy Lamm, and Lisa Ganser for conversations in September and October 2014 emerging from the trial for the SFPD killing of Asa that advanced our theorizations, in Lamm’s words, on the role the courts, trial, and expert witnesses in maintaining “the myth of the infallible state.” Nomy Lamm, conversations during the trial, author’s notes, September–October 2014. These conversations emerged during the trial and the Social Factory ateneo that occurred during the trial, where several of those who were attending the trial were also in attendance. These conversations were further developed over the course of the following year through Uni Tierra Califas’ *ateneos* and through the collaborative work of the People’s Investigation into the Wrongful Death of Asa Sullivan.

⁵⁰² Cleaver, “Inversion of Class Perspective.”

The Killing of Asa and the First Mobilizations

I went into that attic myself, just as he had that night, and climbed to the area where he was last alive. I saw my brother's blood covering the floor and walls. There were holes from bullets everywhere, in the rafters and the walls. From where he would be positioned, it looked like bullets sprayed up from the bathroom below through the ceiling into the attic. A big hole was in the attic floor over the bedroom, where they must have pulled him down.

*-Kahlil Sullivan*⁵⁰³

On June 6, 2006, the night that Asa's life was taken, San Francisco police officers entered the residence where Asa was staying on a "well being check." Officers were responding to a call placed to the police department by a neighbor who suspected the apartment unit at 2 Garces was a "drug house."⁵⁰⁴ According to the neighbor's testimony, there were cars and people coming and going late into the evening, there was noise spilling out from cars in the driveway and from inside the house, and it was unclear at times who was living in the residence.⁵⁰⁵

Asa had spent much of the past year living with his mother, Kathleen Espinoza, in Santa Clara and commuting to appointments related to parole in the city. Kathleen, or Kat, as she often goes by, recalls driving him to the CalTrain station early in the mornings so he could catch the train to attend the variety of appointments in the city on which his successful parole completion was

⁵⁰³ K. Sullivan, "In that attic," para. 11.

⁵⁰⁴ Author's trial notes, September–October 2014.

⁵⁰⁵ These two are moments of counterinsurgency that breakdown the social fabric of a community—where the neighborhood watch is supported by armed force.

contingent.⁵⁰⁶ At the trial, Kat recalled a large white board in the kitchen of their home in Santa Clara, with the schedule for the upcoming week and month charted out between his work hours and appointments so she knew when she needed to take him to the train for San Francisco. Once there, some of that time was spent with his young son, “Little Asa,” a toddler at the time, at the house of Little Asa’s mother, Nicole Guerra. Some evenings he had spent sleeping in a car with his younger brother, twenty-three-year-old Sangh.

That June, Asa was staying at the 2 Garces unit with friends and helping with various maintenance projects to fix up the interior of the unit to insure that those living there would receive their full security deposit when they moved out.⁵⁰⁷ Close to San Francisco State University, Parkmerced complex was designed as “garden living” for middle income family housing for post World War II families who could not afford the high rates of more central San Francisco properties.⁵⁰⁸ Built by Metropolitan Life, Parkmerced was at one point the largest

⁵⁰⁶ Depending on the train and whether it’s a bullet, an express, or a local, the trip from San Jose to San Francisco is between an hour and an hour and a half long each way. It reflects a significant commitment to spend up to three hours for round trip travel each day to meet the appointments on which the terms of probation rest. In many cases, these commutes are necessary as people are forced to live in less expensive areas surrounding urban centers, but the services and resources required remain in those same centers from which they have been displaced. It is also true that in many cases charges, convictions, and incarceration severely disrupts people’s employment and possibility of employment, as well as their ability to sign leases and access housing. Thus, where possible, many young people move in with their family during periods of transition as they seek to transcend penal and carceral regimes where they are pinned. Often, their parents have been priced out of urban centers too, thus requiring a complete reorganization of family life just to meet the transportation requirements to adhere to the probation restrictions.

⁵⁰⁷ See Brayton Purcell, “SF Rent Control Board Rules.”

⁵⁰⁸ For an historical analysis of garden living, property values, whiteness, and the rise of Bay Area suburbs and urban housing complexes, see Self, *American Babylon*.

neighborhood of apartment blocks owned by single owner in the Bay Area and as late as 2007 remained one of largest garden apartment block complexes under private ownership in the United States. Beginning in the 1980s, following its purchase by Leona Helmsley, the complex itself had steadily deteriorated. While it remained one of the largest rent-controlled properties in the Bay Area and provided many Section 8 subsidized housing units, Parkmerced experienced a “revolving door of property owners.”⁵⁰⁹ Subdivisions allowed sections to be sold off to the San Francisco State University, and by 2011, long term and recent residents alike were fighting to save their townhomes from demolition in one of the few remaining affordable communities in San Francisco. District Attorney Dennis Herrera was “dead set...to fast track the massive project” in a move that would instigate the eviction of at least fifteen hundred families.⁵¹⁰ At the time that SFPD entered the apartment complex at 2 Garces and tracked Asa Sullivan into an attic crawlspace in 2006, D.A. Herrera was in the process of naming “criminal gangs” and implementing gang injunctions across the city to criminalize and restrict the movement, associations, and actions of mostly Black and Brown youth. D.A. Herrera first targeted the Bayview through the Oakdale Mob in 2006. By June of 2007, Herrera expanded to file two lawsuits across other historically Black and Brown communities in San Francisco, targeting first the Mission District through the Norteños, and then the Western Addition on the edge of the

⁵⁰⁹ Merriouns, “Why Destroy Parkmerced?,” para. 5.

⁵¹⁰ Coalition to Save Parkmerced, “S.F. Planning Commission approves demolition,” para. 3.

Fillmore District, against the Chopper City, Eddy Rock and Knock Out Posse gangs. Later, injunctions targeted Visitacion Valley between the Parkmerced complex and Bayview-Hunters Point. Visitacion Valley, like Bayview-Hunters Point, had become home to Black and Brown communities in connection with the shipbuilding industries of World War II. These communities were notoriously pushed out of the Fillmore and Western Addition neighborhoods in the 1960s and 1970s through demolitions, evictions, and a corrupt system of “certificates of preference” issued through urban renewal programs of the Redevelopment Agency. Redevelopment has long been aligned with forms of criminalization in San Francisco. These policies coincided with the rise of various forms of quality of life policing based on the theory of “broken windows.” INCITE! explains how according to this theory, “allowing broken windows and other signs of ‘disorder’ to exist in a neighborhood quickly leads, if left unchecked, to an explosion of serious crime by ‘signaling that the community is not in control’.”⁵¹¹ INCITE! takes this a step further to point out, “When coupled with the ‘zero tolerance’ approach, this type of policing favors arrests in situations where a warning or citation would otherwise be issued. This in turn contributes to soaring criminalization, largely of people of color, and increased police brutality.”⁵¹²

On the evening of June 6, 2006, in response to a call from a neighbor, officers arrived at the Parkmerced complex. They entered the residence without

⁵¹¹ INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence, “Quality of Life Policing,” 17.

⁵¹² Ibid. On gentrification in San Francisco theorized in relation to ethnic cleansing, see Santana, “Ethnic Cleansing in San Francisco.” See also, Merriouns, “Why Destroy Parkmerced?” See, also, Winston, “Are San Francisco’s gang injunctions working?”

knocking, pushing open a door whose knob and lock were being repaired along with the rest of the repairs in the apartment. At the trial the officers testified that upon entering, they found carefully draped over a doorframe as if it were placed there to dry, a t-shirt with several splotches of dried blood on it from a cut sustained by one of the other men in the apartment the previous day.⁵¹³ According to the police's own narrative in court, they progressed further into the house out of care that someone might be bleeding. According to their narrative, the officers progressed further out of a commitment to the safety of the occupants were inside, whomever they might be, after seeing the dried blood stains on the t-shirt.

It would seem from the stories told by the only other person in the apartment at the time and by the police themselves that when Asa and his friend who were staying at the apartment realized that someone had entered the residence without any provocation or notice, they had both retreated from the common main room upstairs into the bedrooms and closed the doors against the intrusion. The police first went to a large bedroom where, after a short interval,

⁵¹³ This shirt would later feature prominently in the trial, in various blown up photos shown repeatedly to the jury and court room as in an effort to establish the *raison d'être* for the police's own presence in the space. Later, after Asa was killed and the details massaged in the hands of the city's legal team, the shirt functioned as the point where the police justified their progression through the house, arguing that the garment speckled with dried blood prompted a situation of great urgency that demanded a response. They may have just stumbled upon a serial killer, the defense team and their expert witnesses would later reason, arguing that the police on their well-being check needed to investigate further after seeing the shirt whether there might be someone who was in need of care in the house. A friend would later testify in court that he and his friends had hung the splotched shirt over the door because it looked funny, the blood having created a sort of tie-dye pattern. This detail and the reference to Jason Martin's testimony was repeated frequently throughout the course of the trial, both in the interrogations of the lawyers for both sides and in the testimonies of multiple witnesses. Author's trial notes, September–October 2014.

Asa's friend behind the door unlocked it and let the police in at which point several officers immediately placed him in handcuffs face down on the bed and searched him. They began questioning him—who else was in the complex, did anyone have weapons, were there other exits in the unit, and a series of other interrogations.⁵¹⁴

Asa had retreated to the other bedroom, one that had a closet with access to an attic crawl space. At the point where there were several officers advancing through the house, in both bedrooms as well as in the bathroom, Asa's friend responded to the officers' interrogation, telling them that Asa was in the other bedroom. As Asa began crawling over the attic joists towards the furthest end of the attic, his movements were discovered by officers below. Within minutes, four officers entered or partially entered the attic crawlspace and aimed their guns and flashlights at Asa. Meanwhile, his handcuffed friend, face down on the bed, explained that there was no other way out of the house outside of the front door.

Much later, at the trial, all accounts would confirm that once in the crawlspace, there were numerous officers issuing different commands at Asa as well as to each other including through radio transmissions. Whether the officers were excitedly shouting over each other with conflicting orders or whether they were speaking calmly and in turn, waiting for each to finish, became a point of debate in attempting to determine whether officers had escalated the situation to the point of violence. Also of contention was whether the officers had in fact,

⁵¹⁴ Author's trial notes from the testimony of Officer Tracy McCray, September 22, 2014.

created “a barricaded subject” in their zeal to “clear and secure the area.”⁵¹⁵ Over the course of the next twelve minutes, several things purportedly transpired with different meanings attached. It is debated how effective or how much attempted negotiation unfolded to get Asa to come towards the police with their guns and flashlights aimed at him from the recess at the furthest end of the dark crawlspace.

At some point though on what basis is unclear, in the police’s efforts to secure the situation, Asa shifted from being someone who was potentially in need of care from the police in their response to a “well-being call,” and, instead, became someone who posed an unknown but potentially severe threat to the police. Thus, in a matter of minutes, in the police assessment of the situation reflected in their interpretation communicated in the radio transmissions, Asa quickly transitioned from “subject” to “suspect” despite the fact that he was unarmed and had committed no crime that would merit or solicit the response he was suddenly faced with in the residence. According to the SFPD’s CAD log, it seems that at some point during the interaction while he was cornered in the attic, Asa Sullivan became classified as an “802” over the radio—in translation, this meant he was assigned a category of threat that would determine—in fact

⁵¹⁵ Author’s trial notes, September–October 2014. The issue of whether the officers had in fact created a barricaded subject, whether the subject was or was not barricaded, and whether there should have been an alternate policy that was followed for dealing with a barricaded subject were repeatedly addressed by numerous witnesses and cross-examinations during the trial.

eclipse—his likelihood of surviving the incident. In police code, an 802 refers to the California Penal Code and is the designation for “suicide by cop.”⁵¹⁶

It is also known from the police records that during the time that Asa had gotten into a seated position in the far end of the attic and officers were shining flashlights in his eyes, a call was placed for the canine unit and Asa was informed that “the dogs were coming.” Depending on how the statements are interpreted, there is evidence that the officers attempted to coax, coerce, or scare Asa out of the attic.⁵¹⁷ At least one officer suggested or urged the nine or so officers who had arrived on the scene to support the “well being check” that it made most sense to “back off” to reassess the situation and return later—a clear attempt to deescalate the situation in progress. This differed drastically from the response of another officer who would later testify that he made Asa aware during the time that he was barricaded that the date was June 6, 2006, or, “666” and that he warned Asa that any actions that occurred may send Asa “straight to hell” or “to a very dark place.”⁵¹⁸

⁵¹⁶ Author’s trial notes, September–October 2014, including the testimony of Tracy McCray on September 22, 2014.

⁵¹⁷ While some witness statements were taken immediately after the incident, several were not, and several were, based on the department’s own regulations, subject to contamination, as in the case where two of the officers involved in the shooting, Officer Alvis and Officer Keesor (the only two officers that fired their weapons), were allowed to ride back to the station together, against department policy. It is also unclear how these statements changed over time. Author’s trial notes, including the witness testimony and cross-examination of Tracy McCray and Darren Choy, both on September 22, 2014.

⁵¹⁸ Author’s trial notes, including from the testimony of Officer Yukio Oshida, September 24, 28, and 29, 2014.

The notion of negotiation rests uneasily alongside these threats of dogs and demons. Yet years later when the case would finally come to trial, the crisis management expert who was paid as an expert witness by the City and County of San Francisco to testify in support of the police commended the officers' decision to announce the threat of dogs as well as the threat of hell. In his assessment, these reflected "excellent" strategies in dealing with a subject in crisis.⁵¹⁹

Asa had been in jail before and didn't want to go back. His actions in the past offered evidence of a fear of police, a response that is not uncommon among particular communities that are the targets of differential policing strategies, a fear that is often hard for communities *not* policed this way—and those frequently serving on juries—to comprehend. His mother recalls an earlier time when as a child, Asa had hidden in a dryer when police officers came to their house.⁵²⁰ Asa was mixed race—his parents claim African American, Native American, and Caucasian racial backgrounds. Asa's skin was light brown, and that June he had long, thick hair plaited neatly against his scalp in fine braids that reached well past his shoulders, in a style commonly read as Latino. He had clear green eyes. His childhood had been repeatedly interrupted and his family continuously monitored by the state—Child Protective Services, juvenile hall, jail and later on release, probation. The communities he resided in and claimed were communities of color and working class. In short, he had grown up with every opportunity to

⁵¹⁹ Author's trial notes, including from the testimony of Dr. Kris Mohandie, from September 30, 2014. Dr. Mohandie is a Clinical Police and Forensic Psychology Expert Witness.

⁵²⁰ Kathleen Espinoza, conversation with the author, October 2014.

have his life constantly intervened on by police and carceral institutions, and had every reason to want to avoid both wherever possible.

During those twelve minutes in the dark attic crawlspace with Asa backed into the furthest end, Officer Michelle Alvis edged closer, her gun trained on Asa. Another officer stood somewhat at a distance, another assumed a position on his stomach much like a sniper position, another stood with his torso through the entryway to the attic through the closet's ceiling. All were shouting or cajoling at various times—possibly one at a time and calmly or possibly issuing commands and making statements over each other. All had their guns pointed at Asa. From downstairs, more officers shouted commands and repeatedly banged against the ceiling below the spot where Asa had retreated. There was no way out of the attic. At some point, Asa began striking his heel through the plaster ceiling into the bathroom below. Officers who had been stationed downstairs during the brief standoff offered their assessment at the trial—it seemed Asa was trying to kick his way out from where he was trapped.⁵²¹

Whether the officers commanded Asa to put his hands up and he began to raise them and they fired; or he didn't put his hands up and they fired; or whether, as the claim was made in the summaries produced through the state investigation later and then in court, he wielded an eye glass case towards them in a threatening way that resembled a gun it is difficult to definitively know, as many of the statements in the trial as well as the statements in the investigative reports either

⁵²¹ Author's trial notes, including from the testimony of Officer Darren Choy, September 22, 2014.

contradicted each other or were based on questionable practices. Further, the only witnesses to live through what happened in the attic were the police. What is certain is Officer Alvis and Officer Keesor began firing directly at Asa. Later, at the trial one of the forensic experts, an expert in blood spatter was paid over \$100,000 to “read the splatter” in a testimony that corroborated the police narrative that Asa’s right arm had been raised as if aiming a gun towards the officers when he was shot.⁵²² There was much debate whether the spray of blood that came out of Asa’s mouth and nose occurred while he was still breathing, or was forced out by the impact of the bullets penetrating his face and skull thus creating an “aspirated” pattern on his forearm on impact. This fine spray of blood from a second itself split into fragments seemed to emerge later at the trial as among the potentially definitive moments where notions of justice might rest.

But Asa’s fate in the court, much like in the attic, was foreclosed by displacements that occurred prior to such red herring moments of scintillating denouement in the trial. For most jurors raised on courtroom dramas and American morality tales, these moments serve to promote the façade of justice. For the jury, including the US public outside the trial but following along in the papers, rather than a militarized brutal killing exacted on a life that can claim no protection before the law, each case represents a mystery ready for unraveling. It represents the promise, each time, that the juridical process will uncover the deepest glittering secrets towards securing a righteous world.

⁵²² Author’s trial notes, including the cross examination of Expert Witness Alexander Jason by the plaintiff legal team, September 28, 2014.

But in fact, the story of what happened to Asa was one that the state immediately stepped in to author. The incident that transpired initiated a series of internal investigations. According to department protocol, the first phase of the internal investigation begins immediately following an officer involved shooting (OIS) as written testimony is taken from all officers involved in the incident and present on the scene when they return to the precinct.⁵²³ In the case of Asa, the state initiated another investigation that produced another series of testimonies several weeks later. Several months later, a third series of testimonies were taken from the officers involved. In addition to the internal testimonies of officers being interviewed by other officers, there were several other investigations. As is standard, Internal Affairs began conducting its own investigation of its department immediately following the shooting. The city District Attorney's office also opens an investigation in all instances of officer-involved shootings. Additionally, the homicide unit begins its investigation into the incident itself. Months or years later, in cases where a Department is being called into court as in the case of Asa, the lawyers working to bring the case to trial bring the officers in again for depositions.

For Ranajit Guha, the state relies on a prose of counterinsurgency as a form of colonialist knowledge.⁵²⁴ In Manuel Callahan's analysis of frontier defense on the Mexican Border, the state advances a series of specific statements

⁵²³ This did not happen in this case, or else the records were altered to demonstrate something different. As will be elaborated more fully later, in the case of one officer, the earliest documented testimony on file with the department does not officially occur until a month after the killing.

⁵²⁴ Callahan, *Mexican Border Troubles*, 9.

to construct the ideological work necessary for the settler colonialist project, one that appropriates forms of defense to support its own ideological apparatus.⁵²⁵ Callahan writes of the state investigations following violences, “in every way the investigative apparatus developed by the U.S. supported the ideological work required of settler colonialism, producing specific statements regarding territorial expansion and control, and making frontier defense a critical racial project.”⁵²⁶ For Callahan, the confrontations between Anglo settlers, backed by the state, and *Mexicano* and Indigenous peoples were struggles that were “expressed in opposition to larger processes of social and material enclosure and articulated through race.”⁵²⁷

From the moment of the state’s killing of Asa, the state’s investigative approach “supports the ideological work required” to produce Asa as a criminal, to “appropriate” defense and establish the necessity of law enforcement, and displace both the larger landscape of social antagonism in which this specific counterinsurgency strategy is at play, and deny Asa a subjectivity as anything outside of a threat and a criminal.

Asa’s brother Khalil documents the different stories that are advanced by the state at different stages:

The first report was my brother had a gun, and my brother shot at them. When he shot at them, they saw a flash from his alleged gun, barely missing one of their heads, so then they returned fire and killed him,

⁵²⁵ Guha, “Prose of Counter-insurgency;” Callahan, *Mexican Border Troubles*.

⁵²⁶ Callahan, *Mexican Border Troubles*, 9.

⁵²⁷ Ibid., 8.

fearing they were trapped. Then the chief of police made a statement to the news that my brother took a shooting standing position with outstretched arms in a two-foot attic and the officers did what their training told them to protect them from danger.⁵²⁸

The Police Officer Standards and Training (POST) manual outlines the conditions under which these investigations take place. Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) designates specifically that officers involved in a shooting be separated from each following an incident as a measure to insure the integrity of the evidence gathering procedures and documentation of testimony that are immediately taken as part of the internal investigation, including statements from those present as actors and witnesses. Despite this none of the officers on the scene, including several sergeants, intervened when the two shooters, Officer Alvis and Officer Keesor drove back to the station in the same patrol car. Sergeant Choy who was on the scene as well also stated during his trial testimony that he did not intervene.⁵²⁹ Ostensibly, this practice is in place so that officers involved in a shooting do not compare stories and wittingly or unwittingly sync up the details of their accounts before their statements are taken in the first, immediate investigation.

The Department doesn't only take testimony from its own officers as it seeks to respond to violence. The day following the incident, Asa's younger brother, Sangh went to the coronor's office in a search of Asa. According to the family, during the course of an interrogation by the SFPD that lasted for six hours,

⁵²⁸ K. Sullivan, "In that attic," para. 10.

⁵²⁹ Author's trial notes, September 22, 2014.

Sangh was told that Asa had a gun. Thus, in the case of Asa, when the family mobilized in response to learning that something had happened, the police honed their interrogation on the family.⁵³⁰ Asa's brother Khalil provides critical information:

We did not get his remains until a week later, so the city's medical examiner could check for gunpowder residue and do an autopsy. We were not even allowed to identify his body. The first one of my family who tried to find him at the coroner's office was my youngest brother. He was taken to a room and interrogated about Asa for six hours, like he too committed a crime. It was not until a week and a half later we finally saw Asa at Duggan's mortuary; we all finally saw Asa's dead body.⁵³¹

The project of criminalizing Asa and building the case that would justify the state's violence began at the coroner's office and in the hours immediately following the killing in the interrogation of Asa's brother Sangh. Sangh was questioned without knowing what had happened to Asa. Based on the narrative put forward at the trial it is possible to extrapolate that these questions involved an interrogation of Asa's mental state, any history of violence, his moods, his work, and personal details. These details would emerge, edited and remixed, years later in the trial—relying on Sangh's responses under duress to put forward the argument to the jury that Asa did not want his life any longer.

⁵³⁰ In many cases, the police will immediately search a house or a bedroom of someone they have just killed, even in cases where the person is a minor. This was true following the shooting of Derrick Gains in 2012 in South San Francisco. Derrick's mother, Rachel Guido-Red testifies that following the police killing of Derrick, they searched the family's home without a warrant: "They searched Derrick's room, and they searched the garage. They didn't find anything, but they didn't really say what they were looking for." Plake and Patel, "Derrick Gaines: They Treated Him Like a Statistic."

⁵³¹ K. Sullivan, "In that attic," para. 13.

The designation “suicide by cop” requires a series of statements and actions for it to affix on a subject. The state needs to establish that a subject is suicidal, or in other words, has nothing to live for and seeks a violent death in confrontation with the police. To this end, from the beginning the state had to produce before the jury a particular subject, one who was, to borrow from Abdul JanManhomad, “death-bound;” the jury had to see a person with no reason to live.⁵³²

As soon as the story of the police shooting of Asa began to circulate in the mainstream media, the family realized what the state had done to Asa, through Sangh. They pushed forward to demand access to his body. In the days and weeks that followed, the family also connected with other families through Mesha Monge-Irizarry and the Idriss Stelley Foundation. Mesha, who understands the experience that families go through following a police killing, reaches out to families in the early stages and assists families to set up a justice campaign through yahoo.groups. This was a way to immediately construct critical systems of information across a larger mobilized community and circulate the family’s knowledge of the incident and deductions based on its own situatedness and proximity to a loved one and their familiarity with state violence. It is also the first step in circulating upcoming actions and spaces as families react immediately to the killing in search of answers and support. These form important archives of the history of the justice campaign. Following this first gesture by Mesha, the family joined in a number of spaces over the next eight years, and with Mesha,

⁵³² JanMohamad, *The Death-Bound-Subject*.

continued to document their process—contributing greatly to the collective understanding and memory of the community, and advancing the shared analysis of a community of struggle.

For Mesha, the justice campaigns were often a first mode of contact and support that the family could then begin to build on. This would be followed by forms of accompanying, or “walking with” that form the basis of a community defense process and a militant care.⁵³³ This included locating and attending the SFPD town hall meetings that were immediately called by police following a police shooting, often without notifying the family, where the state advances the first stages of its criminalization narrative to the public and press. Without being connected to a larger support network, a family might only hear about the police town hall meeting through the news after the meeting has already been held. These first meetings are critical spaces to learn key information about the ways the state begins to frame the incident early on. They thus provide opportunities to reflect collectively across an organized community in order to better confront misinformation and disinformation. To make use of this as a site of confrontation and knowledge production involves organizing the community and family to attend the regularly scheduled Police Review Commission meetings held on the first and third Wednesdays of each month at City Hall or the Hall of Justice and California’s Superior Court (and also a county jail) at 850 Bryant Street, so that families and supporters might join in the public comment section and lodge their

⁵³³ The practice of accompanying, or “walking with” is central to an urban Zapatismo that goes “beyond solidarity.” Callahan engages this argument of “beyond solidarity” in Callahan, “Why Not Share a Dream?”

demands and questions. Critically, these are also spaces where the community mobilizes to speak in contestation to an organized pro-police presence that takes on the public comment section to support law enforcement actions as well as their discursive claims.

The first mobilizations and the accompanying of families with other families and a larger community were also critically about convergences—insurgencies and gatherings. In many cases this involved rallies with signs and bull horns on the steps of 850 Bryant or the Federal Courthouse at 450 Golden Gate—demanding names of officers, police reports, and other details about the case that were often delayed for months as the Department shielded its officers from scrutiny during the critical immediate phases following a killing in the community.⁵³⁴ There were the confluences of rage and loss that filled the streets on established collective anniversaries, like October 22nd and January 1st or that surged up following a recent killing.⁵³⁵ There were the more quiet spaces of vigils, often on the street where the person had been killed, marking the first month anniversary, the second month, the year, and often the birthday of the one who had been taken from the community. With Asa’s family, this meant that in the days and weeks following their loss, they were merged together with other

⁵³⁴ This is similar to the case of the SFPD murder of Alex Nieto and the “threat” that the police used to refuse to release names, as elaborated in this dissertation’s introduction.

⁵³⁵ The histories of the October 22 Movement (RCP) and Oscar Grant Movement are elaborated more fully in chapter 3 of this dissertation.

families—including families who were also just being thrust into the same space, all encountering each other.⁵³⁶

These struggles for justice are from the outset inextricable from the question of what happened and why. The struggle against social death is a struggle for dignity. They are marked by moments of inquiry launched from families and communities of struggle that directly confront the forces of violence arrayed against them collectively and in many cases, expose the “prose of counterinsurgency fully and decidedly constructed by the state.”⁵³⁷ This is a critical moment of disavowal in the community reorganizing itself according to its own safety, as it constructs spaces of self-valorization and regeneration.

The *SF BayView* newspaper circulated an exchange between Asa’s mother, Kat, and her son and Asa’s brother, Kahlil, in 2009, close to the three-year anniversary of the day that Asa’s life was taken. The written conversation attests to a family’s own militant grassroots investigation from a place that refused to let Asa be claimed by the state. Marking the intense situatedness of his own research strategy, one that is corporal and embodied, Kahlil writes:

I went into that attic myself, just as he had that night, and climbed to the area where he was last alive...I couldn’t help but cry while I was in that place, trying to put myself in his place to find out what happened. Then the chief herself changed the report twice and said the facts were not clear, they were just preliminary reports and he was holding a cylindrical object in his hands that the officers thought was a gun. Then the report was

⁵³⁶ San Francisco Police would fatally shoot an additional four people in 2006 following the killing of Asa at 2 Garces on June 6, 2006. These included Oliver “Big O” Lefiti on June 25, 2006; Charles Breed on August 27, 2006; Michael Harrington on September 17, 2006; and Marlon Ruff on December 22, 2006.

⁵³⁷ Callahan, *Mexican Border Troubles*; Guha, “Prose of Counter-Insurgency.”

changed again, stating he held an eyeglass case. After 14 hours of their crime scene team investigation there with my brother's body, they found no weapon. The chief portrayed my brother like he wanted to get shot and the officers reacted appropriately.⁵³⁸

To which Kat responded to Kahlil:

You were brave to go up into the very attic where Asa was killed...The horror of Asa being shot in various parts of his body and face 16 times, with more bullets bouncing off in that tiny attic space sickens me. Kahlil, you know first hand Asa could not even stand all the way up in that small attic space. I could only look up in the huge hole cut into the ceiling where I was told Asa's body had to be taken out. I listened to your descriptions of what you saw. I thank you for investigating and putting yourself in the last place Asa was alive.⁵³⁹

In this same response, Kat affirms the commitment to this shared research as part of the struggle for justice. She writes, "We speak for Asa now. Asa cannot tell us in his words anymore. Your words, Kahlil, are a comfort to me."⁵⁴⁰

The exchange between Kat and Kahlil stands as testimony to the powerful collective investigations of the family to reclaim Asa at all costs from this "second death" the state seeks to impose.⁵⁴¹ There is a geometry against the lies that forces the state into a new narrative. They both speak to a moment of direct action and reflection as they force themselves to contemplate the hole they were

⁵³⁸ K. Sullivan, "In that attic," para. 11.

⁵³⁹ K. Sullivan, "In that attic," (includes Kathleen Espinosa, 'A Mother's Response'), para. 25, 32, 33.

⁵⁴⁰ Ibid., para. 30.

⁵⁴¹ This notion of the "two deaths" was described by Cyndi Mitchell at the ICMC gathering at Humanist Hall elaborated in the introduction to this dissertation. She refers to the first death and the police killing, and the second death as the murder in the mainstream media.

offered as part of an explanation. They affirm that they will fight forward for Asa together.

There is no end of dignity in their exchange.

Idriss

Do you know how much I wish that the police was not called on my child when he had a psychotic decomposition? They shot him forty eight times. Nine officers.

*Mesha Monge-Irizarry*⁵⁴²

On June 13, 2001, the San Francisco Police Department forced an evacuation of the Metreon IMAX Theater on the corner of Mission and 4th street in downtown San Francisco, clearing and securing the area and isolating Idriss Stelley inside. Nine SFPD officers fired forty-eight shots at Idriss as he stood in the massive, and now empty, IMAX theatre. A few minutes before, reportedly, Idriss had responded to a character on screen lighting a cigarette by lighting up a cigarette of his own. As other patrons complained, Idriss grew agitated. We know from his mother and his girlfriend that Idriss was by this point, and in the days leading up to the evening at the theater, struggling with an attack of mental crisis. His girlfriend of five and a half years placed a 911 call as Idriss became more agitated. She explained the situation, asking for mental crisis support. When questioned if Idriss had a gun by the dispatch on the phone, she insisted that he did not, and that he was not dangerous. Later reports from the police made much

⁵⁴² KPFA, “Police Violence in San Francisco: Mesha Irizarry on the New KPFA Morning Show.”

of a knife with a three-inch-long blade that Idriss supposedly swung threateningly around his neck while attached to a thirteen-inch chain. By all accounts of those who knew Idriss, this was a small pocketknife with a short chain that attached to his belt, like a wallet chain. Idriss' girlfriend conveyed clearly that Idriss was in crisis but not violent. Instead of medical or crisis assistance, the theater was cleared and police confronted Idriss alone between the empty rows of seats three stories high inside the IMAX. And then they opened fire. His mother, Mesha, was on the other end of the phone talking with his girlfriend who stood at the edge of the theater entrance. From the phone, she heard the forty-eight shots that took her son's life.⁵⁴³

The SFPD killing of Idriss would shift the terrain of community mobilizations across San Francisco for decades to come and form the basis of a struggle extending across the Bay Area and beyond with families at the center that continue to impact struggles in the present. It would emerge as a struggle increasingly aware of its confrontation with the neoliberal security state and low intensity conflict.

Following the killing of Idriss, Mesha engaged. She recalls that in her case, she had a political background extending from struggles in her Basque homeland to May '68 in Paris, and work with domestic violence survivors in the Bay Area. Although the struggle for Mesha following the loss of Idriss would prove brutal, nearly deadly, within a day of the killing of Idriss, she recognized

⁵⁴³ Mesha Monge-Irizarry, oral history interview, April 2015.

that she was in a collective struggle, for her child and for the children of others.⁵⁴⁴ She initiated an investigation independent of the state's investigation and in connection with the *SF BayView* newspaper and with the support of its editors, longtime Bayview-Hunters Point militant community members Willie and Mary Ratcliff. Among the first tactical moves of the grassroots investigation was to address the callous and salacious framing of the violent incident in the press, with Mesha speaking out from the context of community of support.⁵⁴⁵ Three months after the violent loss, Mesha filed a civil claim, *Idriss Stelley v. City & Council and SFPD*. At this time, Bay Area Police Watch who along with the *SF BayView* newspaper worked to support Mesha and the family noted that significant information continued to be withheld by the state, including the names of five witnesses to the IMAX shooting. They noted that despite numerous requests from Mesha, the police refused to release the names of witnesses, essentially making it impossible to verify the state's version of the story independently, or contest its numerous discrepancies.⁵⁴⁶ The space of the press conference announcing the filing of the suit became a site where the community, with Mesha at the center, was able to emphasize how much remained absent from the account given by the state in its story of the killing of Idriss.

To prevent the case from going to court, the city and county of San Francisco proposed a settlement of \$500,000 to account for "damages" but the

⁵⁴⁴ Mesha Monge-Irizarry, oral history interview, April 2015.

⁵⁴⁵ See, Willie Ratcliff, "They Butchered My Child!"

⁵⁴⁶ Policewatch, "Idriss Stelley's Mom Files."

terms of settlement stipulated that the police refused to accept any level of culpability for the killing of Idriss. Calling the settlement “blood money,” Mesha used what remained after the legal team took its portion to set up the Idriss Stelley Foundation and began redistributing it to support other families targeted by the state and to bring communities together in shared spaces.⁵⁴⁷ The money lasted through nearly a decade to support the struggles of other families confronting state violence. In the continuous pattern of evictions and the accompanying corruption that emanates in waves in relation to Silicon Valley booms that push San Francisco’s Black and Brown communities further to the edges of the city and outer extremities of the Bay Area—or displace them into new high rises that are then later torn down again, or leave them stranded on the streets—Mesha eventually lost the home where she raised Idriss.⁵⁴⁸ Yet well into 2015, the Idriss Stelley Foundation continues to provide free and confidential resources to immediate and extended families whose loved ones have been disabled or killed by law enforcement.⁵⁴⁹

Simultaneously, the Idriss Stelley Foundation has served as a critical site in the production of counter knowledge through its commitment to grassroots investigations and direct action spaces. Mesha and the Idriss Stelley Foundation

⁵⁴⁷ Mesha Monge-Irizarry, oral history interview, April 2015.

⁵⁴⁸ For an analysis of capital that expands on the surplus value gained through ongoing new construction in cities, see D. Harvey, *Rebel Cities*.

⁵⁴⁹ While Mesha is at the center of the work of the Idriss Stelley Foundation, it functions as a loose collective, including the work over many years of long time members Jeremy Miller and Rebecca Luisa Ruiz-Lichter.

have continued to investigate and document police shootings across the Bay Area with an emphasis in San Francisco. These grassroots investigations include interviews with families, witnesses and survivors of police violence as well as an assessment, often comparative, that exposes inconsistencies in media reports and in the reports produced by the police themselves through a series of internally conducted investigations.

Over the years, vigils have proved a powerful tool in families and communities' efforts to seek justice. In the space a vigil directly after an incident of violence, the family is able to connect to a mobilized community. These vigils are often organized quickly—Mesha recalls in at least one instance, the car where the person had been killed was still on the scene at the time the community gathered. Here, stories are shared among those gathered, reflecting and fostering a collective understanding of the violence and loss.

The vigils are often the first stage in the community's own investigation of the incident. And a quick response Mesha is critical as it provides the opportunity “to reconnect with people around the scene.”⁵⁵⁰ This is critical for several reasons: it is important to speak with witnesses while the incident is still fresh in memory, but perhaps more important, before the witnesses have been intimidated by the police, either threatened or warned of legal issues. In some cases, witnesses report police telling them to return to their houses and close their blinds and not return to the street, stating that a crime is in progress and it is dangerous. In other

⁵⁵⁰ Mesha Monge-Irizarry, oral history interview, April 2015.

cases, people have been warned that an investigation has been opened and they are not allowed to speak to anyone about the incident.

In these instances, trusted and long-term community groups like the Idriss Stelley Foundation are vital institutions in a community's safety and justice struggles. The Idriss Stelley Foundation has a free hotline that is used by community members, including witnesses, who may have information about a case. Other groups conducting investigations across the Bay have also spoken with witnesses who, while often fearful of being named as a witness, offer valuable details that can be followed up as part of a collective effort and confirmed and validated in other ways. For example, a narrative could be checked against a CAD report to trace what a witness testified transpired against the narrative put forward by the police. Witnesses can reveal inconsistencies that can then provoke new questions, or corroborate coroner's reports.⁵⁵¹

The counter narratives produced through these investigations circulate as critical systems of information to challenge the state's narrative, and in many cases, working together with other autonomous sites of information exchange, including the *SF BayView* newspaper, have been critical in forcing the state to fabricate new explanations that expose its own counterinsurgency strategies.⁵⁵²

⁵⁵¹ Mesha Monge-Irizarry, oral history interview, April 2015. Also, author's notes, as I have participated in a number of people's investigations in the Bay Area over the years in collaboration with other groups and community members.

⁵⁵² Here I draw on Guha and Callahan's use of the "prose of counterinsurgency" as a strategy of the state, as explored more fully in chapter 2 of this dissertation. Some killings in San Francisco where this was made evident include Gustavus Rugly (2004), Asa Sullivan (2006), and Kenneth Harding Jr. (2011).

Produced through community-based investigations these reports specifically challenge details and official chronologies of events put forward by a mainstream media that works in service of the police departments. They also interrupt those representations advanced almost immediately following the community's confrontation with law enforcement. As investigations, they respond to attempts to cast those targeted by violence as criminal, violent, intoxicated, threatening, and somehow "deserving" of violent state intervention and outside of a community of care. In contradicting what the state attempts to impose as truth they expose those processes of criminalization that the state deploys to justify the violence.

The investigations also proceed in spaces where family members and supporters gather to articulate in community the myriad forms of violence that include not only the incident itself but the state's responses to the incident in the aftermath. Here, *testimonios* from families and the community bear witness, documenting violence against erasure.⁵⁵³ Drawing on the Latina Feminist Study Group, *testimonios* in spaces of collective reflection in the context of community struggles are moments of *relational testimonio*, where the reflections are co-generated and emerge from a space of shared dialogue.⁵⁵⁴ The spaces that Mesha has convened with families over time are spaces of ongoing relational *testimonio* that include extended families, friends, and partners where lives lived in deep bonds with others and with larger communities are shared through and in the

⁵⁵³ See Latina Feminist Group, "Introduction: *Papelitos Guardados*."

⁵⁵⁴ See Callahan, "UT Theses Clinic, Saturday, May 3, 2014."

context of the experience of collective violence. In many cases, families form informal clusters based on the timeframe when their loved one was killed—so many families would know each other who lost someone to state violence in say, 2006, but may not know other families who all lost someone in 2010. Mesha’s constant presence provides a continuity that has proved invaluable in the collective memory of the struggle. This is also true for families who have continued to fight, as is the case with Asa’s family, and in particular his mother Kat and brother Kahlil. Their sustained presence as they battled to bring Asa’s case to court insured that the memory of multiple losses, violences, and struggles, extended back through the community, recalling all those from the time that Asa had been lost.

The spaces where families gather following violence are also archived as vigils and shared anniversaries, and through transcribed conversations that Mesha has for over a decade posted on open source news sites like IndyBay, and other spaces and sites including the *SF BayView* newspaper, yahoo groups justice campaigns, and increasingly, Facebook.⁵⁵⁵ The archive has made these relations and struggles visible—an act of reclaiming the life taken as a collective process and constructing barriers to the attempted imposition of social death. Often they reveal a subject who is engaging and negotiating institutions designed to monitor

⁵⁵⁵ These convergences across a mobilized community with Idriss Stelley Foundation at the center can seen for example in the gathering for the anniversary of the killing of Cammerin Boyd, who was also relegated to the status of “suicide by cop”. See Mahtin, “Photos from Protest on Anniversary of Cammerin Boyd’s Death.”

and discipline them—the very institutions that insure that “they do not have the option to be law abiding.”⁵⁵⁶

Since the killing of Idriss and during the period that Asa was still living, Mesha was participating in a number of community forums across the Bay. These brought together groups fighting the police state with groups opposing death row, including from death row, Stan Tookie Williams, in a call for a new civil rights movement (San Francisco, April 30, 2005) as well as gatherings focused on community well-being that explored connections between the mental health system, the criminal justice system, the prison system and the youth authority (Berkeley, August 6, 2005). She also organized town hall meetings (San Francisco, January 25, 2006); barbecues and performance spaces that brought together the families of those killed by law enforcement, organizers with the Campaign to End the Death Penalty, the October 22 Coalition, as well as survivors of Hurricane Katrina (San Francisco, October 23, 2005).⁵⁵⁷

The killing of Idriss prompted two different kinds of trainings for the SFPD following intense community pressure spearheaded by Mesha. In the first instance, and in a familiar community appeasement gesture following an incident of violence that cannot be easily justified by the state, police were required by the lawsuit to undergo mandatory training when dealing with someone experiencing mental crisis. Following the successful lawsuit, all SFPD officers were required to

⁵⁵⁶ Cacho, *Social Death*, 8.

⁵⁵⁷ This is only a very partial list. These direct action spaces were also graphed onto a timeline in conjunction with police killings to as one way to construct an observable for an already mobilized community at the time that Asa was killed in June of 2006.

complete ninety hours of crisis training each year. The training was designed to train officers to recognize someone experiencing mental crisis and to develop strategies for desescalating the situation. The policy was eliminated in 2010 under Chief of Police George Gascon. According to MaryKate O'Connor who watched a video of SFPD killing of a man experiencing mental crisis after the trainings and policy had been eliminated, "The officers were in command-and-control mode...and if you're dealing with a person who is experiencing hallucinations in their head, they're not going to respond to commands. They're going to become afraid, and they're going to try and defend themselves."⁵⁵⁸ Carol Harvey narrates in the *SF BayView* newspaper that community members began responding with collective alarm to SFPD killings of people experiencing mental crisis in 1995–1996, and began pressuring for more officer training as officers were increasingly being dispatched to respond to people in crisis.⁵⁵⁹

The more disturbing "training" occurred several years later, in 2011 when police reconstructed the scene where Idriss was shot repeatedly in the Metreon as an exercise for teaching and assessing policing tactics and responses. As part of this reconstruction, SFPD invited local KRON news reporters to participate in the mock re-killing of Idriss in the theater. They then showed the reenactment of the killing on the evening news and posted it on youtube. This occurred as Mesha was connecting families, pursuing grassroots investigations, organizing direct actions in response to policing and other targeted attacks against the community, and

⁵⁵⁸ See Berton, "Gascón faulted," para. 15.

⁵⁵⁹ See C. Harvey, "SFPD facing people in crisis;" Berton, "Gascón faulted."

participating in community forums including the Oakland Tribunal on Police Repression and State Terror, organized by the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement (MXGM) bringing together a community organized around police killings, mass incarceration, deportations and detentions, and political repression and surveillance.

For many families who have lost a loved one to state or state manufactured violence, the continued struggle to confront the violence and the state itself often comes at costs that prove too high to bear for an enduring period. Following the highly visible video of the police killing of John Crawford III on August 5, 2014, in an Ohio Walmart another disturbing video surfaced of a police interrogation of Crawford's girlfriend, Tasha Thomas that included the police threatening her, providing false information, and degrading her repeatedly without telling her that her partner was already dead. The killing of Crawford occurred after a "concerned shopper" called the police with a fabricated a story that Crawford was aiming a gun at other shoppers. The gun was an air rifle sold in the toy department of Walmart. Similarly, following another police killing in Ohio of twelve-year-old Tamir Rice on November 22, 2014, on a school playground, Rice's fourteen-year-old sister was tackled and handcuffed and pushed into the back of a squad car for interrogation while her brother lay dying on the playground. Both videos confirmed police interrogation strategies that testify to the experience of families following police killings. These narratives form part of the insurrectionary knowledges that circulate across families as they fight back

against the state's efforts to criminalize them following an act of state violence.⁵⁶⁰ Yet it is not uncommon for other violences to follow in the wake of these killings, tearing at the social fabric of family and community. Within a few months after Crawford was killed by police and Thomas was threatened repeatedly as part of the investigation, Thomas died after her car crashed while traveling at high speeds, leaving behind three young children.⁵⁶¹ Tamir Rice's mother, Samaria Rice, became homeless after the loss of Tamir. Additionally, nearly six months after the killing, she was billed \$18,000—the fee for the housing of her son's body while the family awaited the results of the Cleveland Police Department and the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Office's investigation.⁵⁶² While the family was told a second medical examination of his body may be required as part of the investigation, the family made the decision after six months to cremate Tamir's body.⁵⁶³ Mesha bears witness to this, “murder destroys families on many levels and for many generations.”⁵⁶⁴

Often other family members are targeted by police violence or mass incarceration as families attempt to keep organizing. Stories of police stalking families circulate as “community knowledge” through vital systems of

⁵⁶⁰ For an analysis of these incidents woven together with local incidents, see Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Social Factory Ateneo 12-27-14.”

⁵⁶¹ Swaine, “Girlfriend of John Crawford.”

⁵⁶² King, “After six months of waiting,” para. 3.

⁵⁶³ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁴ Mesha Monge-Irizarry, oral history interview, April 2015.

information central to a family and even a neighborhood's survival strategy.⁵⁶⁵

Sometimes this occurs across generations in the community as well as across generations in a department among related police officers, for example, there are stories that circulate as community knowledge of a father and son stalking the same family for generations.

In some cases, the violence of losing a loved one disrupts a family so completely the family is paralyzed and cannot move forward, particularly given that often those families targeted have been marginalized across multiple registers and have faced a series of other attacks by the state that position them as always responding to crisis. Sometimes settlements are offered that can alleviate a state-produced problem elsewhere, and so families accept settlements rather than push forward to the courts in what is often a complex strategy of collective survival—to procure legal representation or make bail for other loved ones caught up in the carceral state, to retrieve vehicles from impounded lots that often were the result of the crisis, to pay medical bills also often related to the incident, to pay funeral and burial costs and to pay off fines that may have accumulated at the morgue while a family faced difficult decisions about what to do with a loved one's body, to pay off debt that in many cases accumulated while a family was traumatized by the violence and injustice and sometimes lost jobs or used up all their sick leave

⁵⁶⁵ Many of the *testimonios* that emerge from community gatherings document law enforcement agents stalking a particular target over the course of a day, or stalking a family, sometimes across generations. A prominent example of this is the case of James Earl Rivera, Jr. of Stockton, whom several community members witnessed being stalked by police earlier in the day before he was pinned by police cars in “pit maneuver” and killed. A “pit maneuver” is a technique for incapacitating a vehicle using a series of angles orchestrated by other vehicles to create a trap. See Boyette, “Whitewashing Police Murder.” See also Modesto Anarcho. “Stockton Police Murder James Rivera.”

but were still grieving and searching for answers. For many families, the struggle for justice for a loved one occurs in a context of tremendous hardship. They host car washes in local parks to pay funeral costs days after a killing while they are collectively still traumatized and reeling and may not have even been allowed access to the body and may themselves have faced grueling interrogations in spaces manipulated by the state. They organize fundraiser barbecues in corner store parking lots where a local storeowner may donate the cost of the water, a fee that would often be exorbitant if the car wash was held at home and the family was responsible for the subsequent elevated water bill. They lose jobs for lack of transportation while cars in which their children were shot remain in police evidence lots.

And yet families also convert these into powerful spaces of dissent and direct action, searching for answers, seeking out support networks, and learning from other families. In some cases, they organize skill shares with local community defense groups like copwatch or people's investigations sharing food when they finish washing cars to bury the dead. These are also moments where counter narratives begin to circulate across communities. Families who are able to remain in the struggle, often those in communities where support networks are able to remain intact, will learn of the new violences and come through to pay respects and connect—often wearing t-shirts that remember their own loved ones taken, with dates and sometimes the officers names who were responsible for the killing, if they have been able to access the names through pressure or luck. They wear justice buttons with images of loved ones, or produce postcards with details

of the incident to circulate across communities, or paint the names of those taken on their car windows, as Dionne Smith-Downes and Cary Downes did following the killing of their son James Rivera Jr. and they arrive together to share stories and strategies. The shirts and buttons themselves serving as powerful moments of remembering and reclaiming those taken, and also as community archives and systems of information. Families actively construct an archive that makes the patterns of killing visible and contribute to the formation of collective analysis and resonances across experiences.

This is particularly visible in the community spaces organized outside the state (and usually literally outside in a park as well) where family members arrive with framed photographs and snapshots of loved ones, sketches and drawings are propped up and hand drawn signs are placed about an area with care. This is different, for example, than the larger banners and more mobile and physically militant spaces of the marches and protests. The moments where communities gather outside the state can be related to what Gustavo Esteva describes as a “living hammock” as a network of different moments that is expandable as a support system but does not rely on the permanence and dependability created by institutions.⁵⁶⁶

In Vallejo following the police killing of Mario Romero in 2012, the Romero family held a car wash to pay for funeral costs. Towards sun set they relocated to the city park to gather for a Know Your Rights training organized by Berkeley Copwatch. As the family suffering from the most recent violent loss

⁵⁶⁶ Esteva, “Regenerating People’s Space,” 134.

arrived, other families were already present wearing t-shirts and buttons with their own loved ones as a way to share their own losses. In this context, the training served as a pretext for a space of relational *testimonio*.

In the summer of 2013, following the deadly beating of Columbian man by the OPD, a small collective formed across groups fighting against police violence to support the man's sister who had witnessed the killing and was on the verge of eviction. In addition to working with the man's sister to gather details about about the incident and organize documents in preparation for a court case, they established a phone tree for collective defense of the house over the course of a few days in case the landlord attempted the eviction before she could get her rental agreement papers in order. Working collectively, she was able to connect with grassroots legal support and tenant rights groups, and also with other families from across the greater Bay Area to share her experience in open spaces with others who had faced similar violences.

On the year anniversary marking the killing of Antonio Guzman Lopez by the San Jose State University Police on February 21, 2014, his partner, Laurie Valdez organized a picnic which families from across the Bay Area attended. Here too families organized to catch or to hold the family of Diane Showman, recently killed by San Jose Police and newly connecting with the broader struggles. The work of George Russell of the Bay Area has also played a critical role in creating sinews between these spaces, as he makes buttons that he circulates by the bag full for families, with a photograph of their loved one and an easily recognizable pattern as a backdrop that links families across regions. They

make immediately observable a number of things—most prominent is the scale of the racial violence, and the targeting of youth. In many ways, this can be seen as a reversal of social death advanced on the part of the community.⁵⁶⁷

But extending beyond the life taken what is also visible in these moments is the level of violence directed at the relations and bonds where communities reproduce themselves through love, laughter, care, trust, and a web of relations of mutual support and resilience. Reading this violence through the social factory provokes new reflections on relations between the state and capital.

Select Bay Area communities' struggles in confrontation with the police have long exposed the violence resulting from local class antagonisms.⁵⁶⁸ Analyses of class antagonisms that demonstrate the role of law enforcement can play a critical role in collective memory in histories of struggle. In the Bay Area, several salient moments circulate to expose a larger field of antagonisms. Among

⁵⁶⁷ Esteva's "living hammock" and Laurie Valdez's barbecue are explored in the Social Factory Ateneo. See for example, Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, "Social Factory Ateneo 2-28-15," para. 4. The Vallejo Park skill share and relational *testimonio* space in the late summer of 2012, as well as the picnic for the anniversary of Antonio Guzman Lopez in February of 2015, occur in the context of a larger community that is networked across various spaces in the Bay Area and form sites of critical grassroots mobilization efforts including community barbecues to raise funds to bury family members of comrades who were not killed by police, as well as fundraisers to purchase court transcripts for appeals in police killing cases, fundraisers for legal representation, fundraisers for surgery for children and for car repairs—in short, communities repeatedly targeted by the state mobilize as a community through carwashes, barbecues, and online fundraising campaigns while supporting justice struggles in their efforts to confront the state and demilitarize.

⁵⁶⁸ On class antagonisms, see Cleaver, *Reading Capital Politically*; on the origins of the police as slave catchers and strike-breakers, see CRCJ, *The Iron Fist and the Velvet Glove*; K. Williams, *Our Enemies in Blue*. Other studies, in particular Berry's *Black Resistance/White Law*, also elaborate through detailed research the role of militia in the early colonial period organized to crush slave revolts, exposing the ways that forms of early policing involved direct repression of an insurgent population.

them are the targeted attacks on labor including the infamous confrontation with the ILWU that proved deadly on the San Francisco Waterfront in 1932. The range of direct and indirect counterinsurgency strategies aimed at the Black Panther Party through local, state, and federal forces continue to inform strategies and coalitions in the present and many members of the BPP are active in the present across the Bay, many around prison struggles that focus on comrades in solitary housing units throughout California and beyond. The Native American occupation of Alcatraz Island from November 20, 1969 to June 11, 1971 used federal treaties against the government to reclaim a sovereign piece of land from the US government and held it for nineteen months, living in the shell of the former Alcatraz prison and providing free access to Indians from all tribes during that period. Federal forces shut off power and telephones to make self-organized living impossible. As evidence of this connection, during the Occupy movement in 2011–2012, the documentary “Alcatraz is Not an Island” which focuses on the Native American occupation of federal land was shown in movement spaces across the Bay Area, including San Francisco’s New Nothing cinema on November 15, 2012, where John Trudell, one of the original indigenous occupiers, introduced the film to connect struggles and highlight state repression not only of resistance movements, but self-organized community spaces where this resistance lives.⁵⁶⁹ The occupation of Alcatraz informs current mobilizations and decolonial strategies, and the yearly journey in defiance of the national Thanksgiving holiday to temporarily re-occupy the island continues to expose

⁵⁶⁹ James M. Fortier (Director), *Alcatraz is Not an Island*.

ongoing settler colonialism and the national forgetting enclosed in all holidays, not only Thanksgiving. Similarly, the collective effort and months of entrenched refusals among the primarily Filipino community living in the International Hotel that were finally forced out by the mayor accompanied by a brutal and destructive police force continue to be evoked and provide a ferment for anti-gentrification actions and movements, in present largely centered in the Mission but active across the Bay Area. The White Nights attacks in the Castro following the murder of Harvey Milk also expose dragnets of repression that descend on particular communities within geographic perimeters. These repressions are not readily forgotten as they are recalled to serve as key moments in a collective memory that reveal the excesses of a state organized through hierarchies of race, gender, and sexuality. Also critical to this discussion is the LA Rebellions in April of 1992 that followed the Rodney King verdict establishing a new reference point in public history. In San Francisco, the crack down in the streets was so severe during the LA Rebellions, it ultimately provoked the resignation of Chief of Police, Richard Hongisto, just a few months after he took office.

A conjunctural analysis of capital provides a reading of this violence in terms of the Bay Area as an economic enclave.⁵⁷⁰ Such an analysis must account for the movement (and forces of movement) of particular populations in relation

⁵⁷⁰ A more thorough analysis of the Bay Area as an economic enclave occurs in the previous chapter, where I draw on the ongoing theorizations of Callahan and Uni Tierra Califas; Bauer and Cleaver on the military-research complex in their “Minority Report;” as well as the work of Self, *American Babylon*; and Mario Barrera et al., *Action Research* to explore a history of BART and other transportation projects across the Bay in the context of economic centers, residential areas, and strategies of class composition and decomposition.

to urban, suburban, and periphery territories through forces of gentrification.⁵⁷¹

Situated within an enclave analysis, gentrification can be considered as one force acting within a context of a number of forces. An analysis of the Bay Area as an economic enclave provides a more complex understanding of capital's dependence on and deployment of race within a particular conjuncture. This demands an analysis of several factors, including the relationship between violence, terror and social control in the management of populations and explore relations of targeted abandonment and exclusion as both a biopolitical strategy and a strategy of differential citizenship.⁵⁷² It must take into consideration capital and the state's dependence on "illegality" as critical to the maintenance of both. Thus it would have to negotiate a necropolitical analysis in relation to the value to be produced (and continually produced in new ways) from particular bodies.⁵⁷³

While there are forms of "social death" and necropolitical management of

⁵⁷¹ For years, Bay Area struggles have exposed and fought back against forces of gentrification, linking costs of living, evictions, and city projects designed to remove particular populations and decimate neighborhoods to police violence. This includes several mapping projects in the present that make these connections explicit. Recent studies like D. Harvey's *Rebel Cities* explore capital and urban space in relation to capital accumulation and real estate not only as "property" but real estate as a site for the ongoing production of value, through massive urban renewal and building projects, as the construction of new buildings requires expertise, material, labor, a series of professionalized contractual arrangements, as well as logistics. See D. Harvey, *Rebel Cities*. Curiously, these texts and the fervor of "occupations" and urban space has also produced a call for a "right to the city" which, without a racial analysis of the violence of city building and city order and maintenance, remains dangerously incomplete as a strategy and theoretical claim.

⁵⁷² In the first three chapters, I lay a groundwork for an analysis of race in relation to the work of Dillon, Neal, Reid, Medovoi and others engaging an emergent conversation on security, biopolitics and war. See Dillon and Neal, *Foucault on Politics, Security and War*; Dillon and Reid, "Global Liberal Governance;" Reid, "Life Struggles;" and Medovoi, "Global Society Must Be Defended."

⁵⁷³ See Mbembe, "Necropolitics."

particular populations, the relationship between populations and specific regions, neighborhoods, and even streets must be read in a complex intimate relationship that exists within a carceral and militarized state. It is in this context that the production of enemies of the state occurs.

The targeting of Black and Brown communities through forms of criminalization and an increasingly militarized police force can be read as part of a larger, ongoing racial strategies through what Manuel Callahan has framed in the present in its relation to capital through Du Bois' concept of "democratic despotism."⁵⁷⁴ Such a reading enables an analysis of particular groups and particular locations to better map the movements of capital through which a series of racial strategies overlap—both in service and contestation of capital. Through the strategic category of "differential citizenship" it is possible to understand not only the production, for example, of a Black body in relation to a Brown body and their relationship to "whiteness" but to identify the production of a differentially laboring body and the processes and strategies through which this occurs.⁵⁷⁵ Identifying these racial strategies as they intersect in the social factory reveal the particulars of a low intensity war in both its local and broader manifestations.

Insurgencies arising from racialized conflicts have historically been linked to ongoing abuses by police in the communities and thus the confrontation in the

⁵⁷⁴ Callahan, "In Defense of Conviviality."

⁵⁷⁵ For Mezzadra and Neilson, one such mechanism occurs through "the border as method," see Mezzadra and Neilson, *Border as Method*. Similarly, Callahan theorizes the border, and the prison, as a *dispositif*, in Callahan, "Crisis and Permanent War." A critical aspect of this is the function of a *dispositif* in producing a particular subject. A more thorough elaboration of the *dispositif* occurs in the first two chapters of the dissertation.

streets mirrors everyday practices and experiences with police forces. Many scholars have documented the efforts of communities and particular groups to confront and simultaneously organize themselves outside of the state.⁵⁷⁶ These histories and struggles in the present necessarily chart the community's challenges in navigating forces of state and capital. They also expose the targeted attacks of low intensity conflict that have demanded creative and militant strategies and practices of self-organization in response to the presence of police and forms of state and state manufactured violence directed at them. In this way, communities use the streets in conjunction with other spaces, with the understanding that strategies and analyses learned collectively as a community struggles together are critical to the circulation of struggle.

The Trial

I saw him everyday. We slept in cars together. He told me, take care of yourself if something happens to me.

-Sangh's testimony, read out during the trial.⁵⁷⁷

At the trial, the community learned that it was Officer Cleary who was the homicide investigator who interrogated Asa's little brother Sangh the day after Asa was killed when Sangh went to the coroner's office to try to find answers and

⁵⁷⁶ From the Maroon colonies to the Great Depression to the Zapatistas and other forms of strategic "exit" and autonomy, engaging and documenting these insurgencies and confrontations between organized communities and state forces remains critical to our own prefigurative practices. For theories of exit, see Papadopoulos, Stephenson, and Tsianos, *Escape Routes*.

⁵⁷⁷ Author's trial notes, September 30, 2014.

his brother.⁵⁷⁸ It is Kahlil that documents that Sangh “was taken to a room and interrogated about Asa for six hours, like he too committed a crime.”⁵⁷⁹ During the trial, Officer Cleary, when asked about standard procedure in dealing with family members stated that, “conversations with the family are generally not recorded because they are usually basic information.”⁵⁸⁰ However, the police relied on the interrogation of Sangh to criminalize Asa first in the papers and later in the trial to sanction the state’s violence, claiming it was Sangh who confirmed their own alibi of “suicide by cop.”⁵⁸¹ According to the police who claimed that they did not record the conversation with Sangh, it was Sangh who told them Asa said to him, “If I die, it will be my own fault.”⁵⁸² It is unclear to which question during the six-hour interrogation this was given as a response, if at all. According to police statements, at some point Sangh also told police that his brother “did not want to go back to jail.”⁵⁸³ The trial revealed that many of the vague questions that were asked Sangh—during a period of intense duress, not knowing what had

⁵⁷⁸ Officer Thomas Cleary served as an SFPD officer from 1991–2007 and an inspector with the Homicide Division from 2001–2007, until he was promoted to Lieutenant in 2007 or 2008—at the trial he could not recall exactly. Cleary retired in 2014 as a captain. Biographical details from author’s trial notes from the testimony of Officer Cleary, September 30, 2014.

⁵⁷⁹ K. Sullivan, “In that attic,” para. 13.

⁵⁸⁰ Author’s trial notes from the testimony of Officer Cleary, September 30, 2014.

⁵⁸¹ According to dominant media reports, “in the suit, the family said police had falsely reported that Sullivan had been armed and shot first, then ‘seemingly manipulated and obtained statements from a (Sullivan family member) to the effect that Mr. Sullivan was suicidal’.” Van Derbeken, “Family of Man Killed,” para. 21.

⁵⁸² Author’s trial notes from testimony of Officer Cleary, September 30, 2014.

⁵⁸³ Van Derbeken, “Family of Man Killed,” para. 14.

happened to Asa—were taken out of context and amplified to criminalize Asa in the papers and justify the killing. The impact on Sangh was so devastating, together with the violent killing of Asa, that even eight years later, it was decided in collective conversation across the family that the family would attend on his behalf the trial proceedings.

Sangh understood that his own words would be used against him, and he was right. In fact, they were used to corroborate the timelines that the City and County of San Francisco’s defense team constructed on large poster board evidence sheets to demonstrate to the jury all the ways that Asa’s life was not worth living. One chart was a timeline titled, “Mr. Sullivan’s Criminal History and Suicide Attempts” that was used to show that Asa had spent time in jail and to confirm the state’s conclusion that Asa “was not turning his life around. His life was in a free fall.”⁵⁸⁴ The second chart titled, “Mr. Sullivan’s History the Month Before the Incident,” included documentation produced by the defense lawyers demonstrating that Asa’s former employers, Goodwill Industries, had “let him go” when he didn’t come in for a shift after several warnings over the course of several months.⁵⁸⁵ These “events” were used together with Sangh’s statements taken out of context to conclude of the shooting that, “it was what Mr. Sullivan wanted them to do. He forced the officers’ hand. They did whatever they had to

⁵⁸⁴ Author’s trial notes from Defense’s closing arguments, October 6, 2014.

⁵⁸⁵ Ibid.

do. This isn't what they wanted to do.”⁵⁸⁶ It was, the state argued, what Asa wanted.

It was not only Sangh's testimony that was used to corroborate this story. Asa's mother, Kat and the home she kept together with her family as they grew was also drawn into the criminalizing narratives of the chart—as documents were shown and graphed for the jury of all the moments where Asa's young life had intersected with state institutions to convey a history of inadequate parenting. No matter that the chart could just as easily be read as the intrusions of a disciplinary and punitive state in the discursive production of an “unruly” child. His mother was made to testify that yes, he had been taken by Child Protective Services, even though she had fought hard and won to get Asa back. The charts became a visual mechanism through which the family was criminalized to win the case. This despite the fact that when Khalil had filed a complaint with the Office of Citizen Complaints (OCC) for the City and County of San Francisco for a wrongful death case shortly after Asa had been shot in 2006, he received a response several months later that indicated a different conclusion had been reached. Kahlil documents, “I got a letter in the mail with two check-marked boxes with words beside them stating my brother's wrongful death was due to policy and training errors.”⁵⁸⁷

During the six hours of interrogation the day after Asa was killed, Sangh was not able to learn anything about the fate of his brother. According to Officer

⁵⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁷ K. Sullivan, “In that attic,” para. 17.

Cleary speaking on behalf of the police at the trial, “we are not authorized to tell him anything. It is the medical examiner’s duty to inform the family, not the police.”⁵⁸⁸ Yet, it is the police who determine when the Chief Medical Examiner’s Office can release any information about the body or the case, or whether the investigation is still “in progress” under which case a police hold restricts all release of any information. While most Departments are bound by policies stating that the police department’s hold on the release of information not exceed a certain time frame, it is often longer than this before information is released, with no explanation given by the police. In the case of Asa, we know from his family that it was a week and a half later before they were able to see Asa’s body at Duggan’s Funeral Home. When they saw Asa, they were forced to encounter a face where even the skin tone was unrecognizable as Asa, given the task of reconstructing Asa’s face after five police bullets had fragmented everything.

It was during this time, as Kahlil also documents, as the Chief Medical Examiner was in the process of checking for gun powder residue and conducting an autopsy, that the police version of the story, including the reports of Chief Heather Fong, kept changing—Asa had a gun, Asa had stood up and fired, Asa held a cylindrical object towards them. Seizing the court room eight years later as a site of community investigation, those present bore witness to a dynamic between now retired SFPD Captain Cleary and one of the officers present in the attic who had fired a portion of the seventeen bullets into Asa, and who, unlike

⁵⁸⁸ Author’s trial notes from Officer Cleary’s testimony, September 30, 2014.

Asa, was among those still living who knew how the evening had gone down. As the interrogation proceeded regarding the events of that night, Captain Cleary from the stand looked each time to Officer Keesor, seated with the City and County of San Francisco defense team, and before answering waited to see if Officer Keesor nodded his head slowly but decisively, yes or no. Only then did Retired Captain Cleary respond with gesture's verbal equivalent in his testimony.⁵⁸⁹

Over the course of the month long trial, several expert witnesses were called who were hired by the San Francisco City Attorney's office as witnesses for the City and County of San Francisco to defend the police. These included a forensic and blood spatter expert, police training expert, several psychologists and former police officers, and a criminal defense attorney (Anthony John Brass). One of the expert witnesses, Senior Crime Scene Analyst Alexander Jason testified under cross examination by Asa's family's lawyers that while he was uncertain of the exact amount, yes, it was accurate that thus far he had been paid over \$100,000 in this particular case by the City and County of San Francisco as the Senior Crime Scene Analyst to provide research and expertise in the case against Officers Keesor, Alvis, and Morgado. Jason also testified that in his many years of work as an expert witness in the San Francisco Bay Area, he "has never offered an opinion against the city of San Francisco."⁵⁹⁰

⁵⁸⁹ The author of this dissertation bore witness to this repeated exchange between Officer Cleary and Officer Keesor at the trial on September 30, 2014 over the course of Officer Cleary's testimony.

⁵⁹⁰ Author's trial notes from trial testimony of Officer Oshita, September 28, 2014.

Jason specializes in shooting incidents and is a member of the International Association for Identification (IAI), an organization which most people working in crime labs across the country work directly with on a regular basis. He is a member of the American Academy of Forensic Science and has worked with the US Army Wound Ballistic Lab. He is an expert on how bullets “perform” in the body and is also a blood pattern analysis expert. He confirmed during the trial that his first examination of the attic where Asa was killed was on January 30th, 2008, and his second examination was in June of 2008, highlighting that his initial visit to the attic crawlspace was over a year and a half after Asa had been killed, confirming that he had spent “more than two hours but less than six hours” in the attic each time. The trial exposed that according to the police’s own records regarding SFPD evidence room access, the only time that expert witness Jason reviewed the evidence related to the incident where Asa was killed was one day before he submitted his final twenty-six-page report clearing the police of all responsibility. Much of the police’s case, and the report itself, revolved around the scintillating moment of violence linked to a very specific piece of evidence where the police claim Asa aimed his eyeglasses case at the police as his definitive gesture of “suicide by cop.”⁵⁹¹

⁵⁹¹ In the initial reports that came out from the police themselves, there was no eyeglasses case; there was a gun. It later changed to an eye glasses case that was wielded in the attic, a fact which Asa’s family’s lawyers contest arguing, based on the blood pattern could have been in Asa’s pocket and later removed by police to fulfill the role of “weapon” to affirm the suicide defense. The lawyers for Asa’s family argue that while there was insulation fluff all over the attic, and there was a lot of sticky blood on the eye glass case, why wasn’t there any fluff or fragments of debris found stuck to the blood in the eye glasses case, if it had in fact dropped from his hand while over seventeen rounds of bullets struck Asa and ricocheted through the attic, with insulation flying everywhere? Asa’s family who knows his movements stated that he usually wore his glasses to watch

Seated in the front row family members were shown day after day for a month long period blown up glossy photographs of the patterns of Asa's blood—blood across his tattooed forearm and pooled on his jeans, blood caking in his hair and yet unable to mask the care that had gone into each delicate braid. Similarly, the contents of Asa's pockets that evening while he sat crouched in the attic were also produced as evidence. These included a series of blood soaked or blood spattered business cards—including one with the name and number of his probation officer. There was also a piece of paper stained in a pattern that marked how it had been folded. All were “read” according to a blood pattern made legible by the blood spatter expert to indicate position or action or bullet direction. Asa's keys were also removed from his pocket, with the key fob, *Bad Boys Bail Bonds*. Eight years later, the family had still not been able to access any of Asa's possessions from the night he was killed; it was the first time they were seeing the contents of Asa's pockets, including items familiar to them—the everydayness of Asa's keys.⁵⁹²

television or play video games, usually did not put the case in any pocket—because he didn't use them anywhere outside of a room with a television. Couldn't the glasses case have been brought from upstairs and placed in the blood, when no weapon was found? Why else does the expert blood spatter witness not review the key piece of evidence until the night before he submits the report? Why were no tests done by the Senior Crime Scene Analyst and the crime lab before he submitted his report? Author's notes from conversations with members of the family, the family's lawyer, and from direct testimony during the trial, September–October 2014.

⁵⁹² Author's trial notes, September–October, 2014.

“Community Caretakers,” Residency, and Property

Don Stewart Cameron was also among the expert witnesses hired by the San Francisco City Attorney’s office to defend the police. Based on his extensive background in training local and federal law enforcement agents, he testified that after carefully reviewing the case the role of the police in this instance was one of “community caretakers.”⁵⁹³ This is what gave them the authority to enter the building and to proceed with strategies for clearing a building. He elaborated on police training, naming strategies for clearing a building that include “third eye clear” and “slicing the pie.” This was affirmed in the testimony of Officer Oshida who was at 2 Garces and spoke to how the team of officers’ actions were in alignment with SFPD policy that evening: “When clearing an attic or a room you want to do it as quickly as possible. The attic needed to be cleared. That’s what we’re trained to do.” He spoke of the need “to locate potential victims or possible suspects.”⁵⁹⁴

When Officers Michelle Alvis and John Keesor of the San Francisco Police Department entered the 2 Garces residence in Parkmerced at around 8:30 p.m. on the June evening of 2006, it was on a Code 910 “well being check” and it was assigned Priority Level B. This is documented in the Event History Detail of

⁵⁹³ Cameron began work with POST in the late 1960s to train police across California and has trained a substantial number of officers in a career spanning over fifty years. Although not a comprehensive list, Cameron has expertise as an FBI SWAT instructor and chemical instructor, as well as expertise in crowd control, use of force and less lethal force including Tasers, long distance projectiles (beanbag rounds), and pepper spray.

⁵⁹⁴ Author’s notes from trial, September 28, 2014.

the department's CAD report specific to the June 6th event as it unfolded. These documents were presented during the trial.⁵⁹⁵

During her testimony at the trial, Sergeant McCray stated that she responded from the lineup to a "148 call" which is code for "resister" or "someone who isn't cooperating with orders."⁵⁹⁶ The trial also exposed that Sergeant McCray was not interviewed by anyone in any officially recorded capacity following the incident. Sergeant McCray gave only one statement, a month after Asa was killed, in July of 2006. She was never interviewed by homicide investigators, only by Management Control Division (MCD).⁵⁹⁷ Further, and in violation of SFPD General Orders requiring that testimony of all officers on the scene been taken immediately following an incident of violence, she was the only officer present that evening whose statement was not taken until a month later.⁵⁹⁸ Despite this, Sergeant McCray's testimony featured prominently in the trial.

Sergeant McCray testified that when she entered the residence she went into one of the bedrooms and saw a man cuffed on the bed. When he saw her, she

⁵⁹⁵ Including during Sergeant Tracy McCray's testimony on September 22, 2014. Author's trial notes, September 22, 2014.

⁵⁹⁶ Author's trial notes from testimony of Officer McCray, September 22, 2014.

⁵⁹⁷ Ibid. According to the SFPD, Risk Management Office, the Management Control Division (MCD) is a sub-division under the office of Risk Management. MCD "conducts internal investigations and maintains officers' personnel files in relation to discipline and use of force issues. This unit coordinates with the OCC [Office of Citizen Complaints], the EEO [Equal Employment Opportunity] section, and other investigative agencies." San Francisco Police Department, "Chief's Office: Risk Management Office," para. 3. Author's trial notes from testimony of Officer McCray, September 22, 2014.

⁵⁹⁸ Author's trial notes from testimony of Officer McCray, September 22, 2014.

testified, he called out “Tracy.” While she did not know his full name, Officer McCray explained that she knew his first name; they knew each other from the 7-11 down the street in what she described in the vernacular, saying they knew each other through a relationship of “smoke and joke.” When queried, she explained that this was the phrase used to describe conversations that occurred in the space of the parking lot or inside the convenience store that had led over time to mutual recognition, exchanges on a first name basis, and some degree of shared history in a given neighborhood between police and civilians. These moments of engagement with civilians are considered part of a central counterinsurgency strategy as officers on patrol engage members of the community in small conversations as they take note of patterns of activity across a community.⁵⁹⁹

What the trial revealed in this moment is not only that this occurs—but that as a strategy that puts forward the illusion of a web of relations across a community that include friendly police officers there to “serve and protect.” In actual fact, it reflects no actual community bonds of mutual protection, listening, or understanding. In other words, if these relationships are being built over time with the community and the call that the officers respond to is a “well being check” where no crime has been committed and there is no one who has been “injured,” and they are arriving in their capacity as “community care takers,” whose concerns of safety and care are central to the policing strategy and the “subject of policing”? In the moment when officers handcuff someone they recognize as

⁵⁹⁹ Author’s notes from trial testimony of Officer McCray, September 22, 2014. On counterinsurgency tactics, see K. Williams, “The Other Side of the COIN.”

equally as integral to the community and proceed through the house based on a vague speculation of another community member who has nothing to report of others in her community beyond a suspicion based on activity that she doesn't approve of or understand, whose well being is made central? The fact that both officer and resident exchanged names upon entering confirms that the man in the room was in fact recognized as a member of that community, including by the police that had just entered his space through an unlocked door, without a warrant.

Much of the trial and the instructions given to the jury focused on the purpose of the entry into 2 Garces and whether Asa and the other resident had the right to a reasonable expectation of privacy. To establish this, a substantial amount of documentation was procured and debated as well as witness testimony in order to put forward convincing arguments as to whether Asa had a legitimate right to be at the residence. Thus, in addition to having to establish Asa's criminality and prove Asa saw his own life as one without a future, the defense mounted by the legal team protecting the police had to establish a series of logical steps that would lead to a justifiable situation where as many as ten officers entered a residence without a warrant, tracked someone into an attic crawlspace, and opened fire.⁶⁰⁰ In fact, both Asa and John Martin had permission to be living at the apartment from the current tenant on the lease and were working to fix the apartment's interior in order to reclaim the security deposit. While the fact that the

⁶⁰⁰ The instructions to the jury were structured around a "burden of proof" that disadvantaged the plaintiffs, an issue which the lawyers attempted to address in the appeal. Author's conversation with plaintiff's legal team and family, March 2015.

tenant was facing eviction was brought up repeatedly at the trial, the web of criminality extended by the city's lawyers did not extend to the practices of Parkmerced landlords of suddenly raising the rents as high as 28.5% between at least 2004–2007, and likely before.⁶⁰¹

The entry was based on a neighbor who had called to report that she believed 2 Garces was a “drug house” and offered as evidence what she saw as an unusually high number of people going in and out of the house on a regular basis, often at late hours. While according to the SFPD, this justified their entry on a “well being check” such justification nonetheless still only puts the officers at the entrance of the house. They knock and find that the door pushes open and so they enter.⁶⁰²

Lisa Marie Cacho's notion of “social death” explores how the value of human life becomes legible through violence—racialized, sexualized, spatialized, and state-sanctioned. For Cacho, this scale of value cannot only be understood in racial terms, but rather, “social value is also contested and condoned through

⁶⁰¹ Purcell, “SF Rent Control Board Rules,” 5.

⁶⁰² The SFPD has a history of questionable entry practices. These include militarized early morning SWAT raids and illegal entries into Single Residency Occupancies. Two well-publicized cases reveal SFPD strategies of entering homes in relation to both of these practices. On October 30, 1998, the SFPD SWAT team under the command of Kitt Crenshaw raided the Western Addition Apartment Complex in San Francisco, terrifying its mostly Black community. In 2012, a lawsuit was filed against several SFPD officers who stole the key to the Henry Hotel SRO in San Francisco and illegally entered residences and stole from residents. Among the officers who were charged in the 2012 case and the far-reaching corruption and violence it exposed was Officer Ian Furminger, one of nine officers who repeatedly shot Idriss Stelley on June 13, 2001. See Roberts, “SFPD ‘shaken’ by Federal Indictments.”

legally inflected notions of morality.”⁶⁰³ Cacho writes, “because the law is presumed to be both ethical and irreproachable, the act of law-breaking reflects poorly on a person’s moral character.”⁶⁰⁴ Given this, she argues, for people relegated to a particular category of “social value” there is little that they can do to represent themselves as “moral and deserving”—not only of rights, but of life.⁶⁰⁵

Cacho builds her analysis through contradictory racial representations of people in the media following Katrina who attempt to locate food in the flooded wards of New Orleans. In these representations, African American residents were framed as “looters” when they were able to find food after days of being stranded by the state, but in the same activities, white residents were represented as “survivors.” In addressing this contradiction, Cacho names the transformative gesture that occurs through “refocusing the controversy by directing us to ‘see’ the Katrina victims’ conduct and contexts instead of their color.”⁶⁰⁶

During the trial many details of Asa’s life emerge in fragments, almost always fragments meant to convey a particular view about the way Asa lived his life, those things he grappled with and the choices he made. Asa together with his brother Sangh had spent some time living out of cars. During June of 2006, Asa was staying at 2 Garces and helping to fix up the interior of the apartment in the

⁶⁰³ Cacho, *Social Death*, 4.

⁶⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid., 3.

hopes of having a \$1,000 security deposit returned to the renters whose names were on the lease. Asa's name was not on the lease.

Read against his race, the state attempted to narrate Asa's life in a way that justified their killing of him. As soon as police entered the apartment in the retrospective gaze of the state that structured the space of the trial, it was confirmed that Asa was "criminal by being, unlawful by presence, and illegal by status."⁶⁰⁷ He did not have the option to be law abiding. This explains the shift that occurs discursively from a subject in need of their policing care to a suspect that posed a deadly threat.

Rents in San Francisco consistently rank among the nation's highest. Background checks, credit reports, proof of income, and substantial move-in rates that often include first and last months rent create additional obstacles. In some instances, a co-signer which is often a parent with property, savings, and provable income is required if younger people do not meet the standards of what is considered a reliable renter. Section 8 housing, or low income housing, is notoriously impossible to find in the Bay Area, with waiting lists that often extend several years into the future. Across the city, residents live in apartments on a lease where none of the original signers still live in the apartment. Precarious income and other obstacles to renting have demanded such negotiations in order to live in a city that is being constantly gentrified by the market forces of Silicon

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid., 8.

Valley and the military and university research system stretched across the University of California campuses.⁶⁰⁸

The collective ethnography produced in part through UT Califas' Social Factory Ateneo has documented various forms of violence directed at the social factory. As a community space of collective research producing and archiving a collective ethnography of struggle, the Social Factory ateneo exposes how state investigations and their impact on the family are also attacks on the social factory as a whole. Community stories converge. Families testify to numerous cases where police detain, sometimes in handcuffs, the friends and family of those named as "suspects" for long periods of time, even when they themselves are not considered suspects.⁶⁰⁹ The *ateneo* space has served to network critical systems of information and to archive community knowledges that include stories of "youth being removed from school and held for long hours in squad cars for questioning about the whereabouts of their parents, with no one present aside from the police and often with their families unaware of their whereabouts."⁶¹⁰ The space has also documented a state strategy that not only attempted to isolate Sangh and turn him into a site of betrayal to secure his brother's and family's collective social death, the Social Factory *ateneo* also documented how they directly targeted Kahlil, seeking to remove him from the space of the trial. In the

⁶⁰⁸ See Bauer and Cleaver, "Minority Report."

⁶⁰⁹ These details come from the *testimonios* that emerge in community gatherings and in the ongoing conversations among families and communities who participated in the Social Factory Ateneo between May 2013 and April 2014.

⁶¹⁰ Ibid. Author's notes.

Social Factory Ateneo November summary, the collective ethnography documents,

Additionally we learned that even when the state does not follow up with depositions or calling the witness to the stand, simply putting family members and friends on their witness list insures that the family cannot attend the court sessions. This also means that the jury cannot see the full extent of family and community support. Further, legal battles that extend for many years tax family resources in incalculable ways—and these resources are further depleted when families must travel, take time off work, and put into place everything necessary for trials that can last several weeks, even months.⁶¹¹

In the case of the killing of Asa Sullivan, the trial became a site of direct action both inside and outside the official judicial territory of the courtroom itself. The People's Investigation and presence of community discovered the different levels of state investigation which in turn revealed the changing story of the state. The community efforts exposed the layers of criminalization. This made observable an epistemology of criminalization as a process in place across police killings. The space outside the courtroom and the relationships that traversed the trial emerged as a site of autonomous support and networking from the site of the social factory. Several community members who had learned of the trial through Mesha and other moments in a larger Bay Area struggle showed up and brought healthy food so those family members present—always Kat and as much as her work would allow, Nicole—would have something sustaining on the breaks between the long brutal hours of the trial. These snacks were spread out in the

⁶¹¹ Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, "Social Factory Ateneo 11-22-14."

marble halls of the Oakland courthouse. Asa's mother no longer lived in the city and had to travel from Washington State to attend the trial. A month long trial in a city away from home requires tremendous resources and often the families that are targeted by the state are those already disenfranchised by capital. A clothing drive was set up autonomously across community networks extending from San Francisco to Oakland to insure Asa's mother had a court wardrobe to last a month of sessions. This was not only care in the form of clothing it was a strategic gesture in resistance to forces of social death. Other friends gathered funds to help sustain the stay and others offered small amounts for groceries for the transition back home, so the refrigerator would not be empty. Friends of Asa's from eight years back organized rides to the airport, and friends and family members shared their own beds and offered couches in already small spaces. In the conversations outside and beyond the space of the trial among those who knew Asa while he lived and those who knew him through the political fight waged to reclaim him, new relations were established and details and analyses collaboratively advanced. Community members converged in the space of the Social Factory *ateneo*, together with Asa's mother by phone and other mothers who had lost children to violence. These were collective moments that affirmed care each other's presence and projects and ongoing work. These small moments contributed to a circulation of struggle across diverse issues—anti-prisons, disability rights, community gardens, gentrification struggles and BART occupations. The struggle of the family, the love of Asa, and the efforts to build new relations to fight and live outside the state were archived and shared, through the *ateneo* summaries and in

articles published in the *SF BayView* newspaper, co-written by some of those at the trial together with Mesha. In another brilliant effort, a counter narrative was reclaimed through a series of court room drawings, also printed in the *SF BayView* newspaper, where portraits of the expert witnesses with their statements of the state appeared in sketches that seemed to erode both their credibility and power, while the family appeared with a humble grace in these same portraits, including of Asa remembered and Kat on the stand, testifying to how she cared for him, recalling the happy times against the lies of the state. Asa's name and the struggle of the family became part of the Chowchilla Drift Project, resonating inside the women's prisons from California to Pennsylvania, through the work of California Coalition of Women Prisoners, Uni Tierra Califas, and Decarcerate Pennsylvania. A song was written for Asa by Lisa Ganser and Nomy Lamm, "Stars Out," and performed by Lisa Ganser to launch the formal phase of the People's Investigation and the collective effort to raise funds for the transcripts necessary for the appeal. Through these moments, the struggle wove those who had come together into enduring struggles and new struggles—for Idriss, for Kayla Moore, for Alex Nieto and Kerry Baxter Sr. and Jr.

The trial exposed the confluence of forms of militarization targeting the social factory in a particular moment.⁶¹² The moment when the police respond to a well-being check by entering the premises without a warrant and securing the building quickly, floor by floor, is a militarized response. This militarized

⁶¹² On the confluence of militarizations, see Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, "Democracy Ateneo Summary 1-10-15."

response reveals several things. It is a moment in the militarization of care. It reveals a breakdown in the social factory supported by armed force and includes the element of neighborhood watch, a moment that marks the success of a counterinsurgency strategy that includes community policing programs.⁶¹³ The moment where the police shoot Asa makes observable counterinsurgency as a larger strategy of militarized policing. It also reveals new forms of policing at the intersection of democratic despotism and property. Who has a reasonable expectation of privacy? And what intersection of property and racialized social value does the killing of Asa reveal and uphold?

In September 2014, as witness testimony was being heard in the month long federal suit, *Kathleen Espinosa v. the City and County of San Francisco* for the San Francisco Police Department killing of Asa, a press conference was held in the plaza below the courtroom outside the Ronald V. Dellums Federal Building in Oakland to launch the Department of Justice's national Violence Reduction Network, a strategic plan introduced by US Attorney General Eric Holder to provide local departments in selected cities with "greater access to federal resources."⁶¹⁴ The federal anti-violence program prepared to allocate an astounding \$124 million nationwide to its Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program, including \$1.8 million to hire an additional fifteen officers for

⁶¹³ K. Williams, "The Other Side of the COIN."

⁶¹⁴ Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, "Social Factory Ateneo 10-25-14," para. 2. *Uni Tierra Califas'* Social Factory Ateneo announcement for October marks this intersection, charting charts the confluence of numerous court cases as families respond to police violence across the Bay. *Ibid.*

street patrol in Oakland. Part of a concentrated crime-fighting strategy, the plan highlights increased use of technology, specialized regional training, “smart policing,” and “evidence-based policing strategies.” It also commits funds towards improving prosecution strategies locally and at the federal level. Five cities across the United States have been targeted as recipients of aid by the federal grant program including Chicago (Illinois), Detroit (Michigan), Wilmington (Delaware), Camden (New Jersey), and Oakland and Richmond (California). As Holder inaugurated the latest national anti-violence project on the East Coast, California Congresswoman Barbara Lee announced that as part of this project and despite decreasing crime rates over the past decade, the grant money will directly bolster the size and presence of local police departments as part of a larger commitment from Lee to “get guns off the street” and “invest in community programs.”⁶¹⁵

Community safety is way of organizing ourselves outside of the state that resists the very premise of this, and claims its own regeneration through defense, justice, care, and assembly. The communities of struggle organized around Asa and Idriss are critical moments in this larger project. In her analysis of the Bay Area in the present, Mesha notes the prominence of three movements: those that push for revolution, those that advocate for reform, and those that pursue a kind of nihilism. In the numerous campaigns advanced through the Idriss Stelley Foundation over the years, some might be classified by some as reforms, including advocating training for officers to prepare them for encounters with

⁶¹⁵ Ibid.

people experiencing mental crisis. Others might be considered incremental abolitions that cannot hope to dismantle the larger structure of policing and militarization, for example the campaign to restrict the SFPD from adding Tasers to their arsenal—a campaign that Idriss Stelley Foundation, working with other community groups, has successfully fought down on three separate occasions in less than a decade.

Although enthusiastic and supportive of a range of strategies and tactics in challenging the state and seeking justice, Mesha believes in another way, beyond reform, revolution, and nihilism. Elaborating on what she terms “micro-revolutions,” she references Algerian neighborhoods and anti-colonial, self-determination struggles, including Basque struggles, which is the land of her own youth. “These are territories where we protect ourselves,” she says, “where we serve and protect each other and our ourselves.” She says this is close to what she means by micro-revolutions.⁶¹⁶ She looks to projects across the Bay that emphasize care, their own learning, gardening and food production, the raising of children and multi-generational spaces. In particular, she cites the projects of Homefulness in East Oakland, a project that claims roots in poverty and Indigeneous resistance, and the El Qilombo social center and adjacent Afrika Town community garden in downtown Oakland. Both Homefulness and El Qilombo are projects that emerged from communities of color.

These projects, together with others entrenched and springing up in urban spaces across the Bay Area, reflect nascent practices of communing linked to

⁶¹⁶ Mesha Monge-Irizarry, oral history interview, April 2015.

militant struggles for justice. As “micro-revolutions,” to borrow Mesha’s phrase, they are occupations and spaces of self-organized care. They are spaces that actively convene dialogues around decolonization, Zapatista autonomy, violence in Ayotzinapa, and resistances in Palestine, as well as Rojava and Kobane against Islamic Fundamentalism and Western-manufactured violence in the Middle East. They are spaces that support women’s and queer/trans struggles, struggles of political prisoners and mass incarceration, as well as struggles against extractivism—tar sands, fracking, mining and other forms. In these spaces of micro-revolution, communities gather to defend their own squatted gardens and those of others, collectively resist community evictions, provide trainings and alternative school lessons, while also confronting the state after each police killing and each arrest following a protest. The struggle against police violence in the Bay Area is not simply issue-based, rather, it marks a confluence of violences and resistances. It reflects an ongoing refusal against multiple forms of enclosure, expropriation, containment, privatization, and dispossession. Increasingly, it seeks ways to abolish the prisons and the police, and live in new relations together—reimagining families, genders, neighborhoods, sexualities, justice, safety, health, and community. It is a struggle with deep, deep roots, cultivated across generations.

CHAPTER 5: DEATH AT GAIA: KAYLA XAVIER MOORE

*my love for life will come again
and the beast will leave me free
-Xavier C. Moore, “death rumors”⁶¹⁷*

On April 17, 2013, on a bright afternoon a colorful gathering commenced outside the entrance of the Gaia Building in Berkeley. It spilled over the sidewalk as residents left the building and joined or passed through the crowd. A large purple cloth lettered, “Happy Birthday Kayla” was stretched above a portable speaker where family and friends stood up to read poems and share remembered moments. In between, some Lady Gaga and Michael Jackson set the beat as large chocolate cupcakes with multi-colored sprinkles were passed through the crowd. On another hand painted cloth, “Justice for Kayla Moore” reminded those gathered of the ongoing struggle of people refusing to forget. Mounted on an easel draped in flowers and a sparkling cloth was a blown up glossy photo where a beaming and corpulent light skinned Black woman held a baby and a cell phone, cradling both and smiling at the camera. Around the perimeter of the gathering that had spread to take up the entire street in front of Jupiter’s Bar in Berkeley—a birthday party which kept growing—people handed out leaflets as the crowd grew. Within this space, the questions emerged and circulated, “Where’s the police report?” “Where’s the coroner’s report?” “What happened to Kayla Moore?”

⁶¹⁷ This comes from a collection of poems signed by Xavier C. Moore likely written during Moore’s teenage years. The poems were shared by Moore’s sister, Maria Moore. See, Moore, “Untitled Manuscript.”

Kayla (Xavier) Moore was a transgender woman of color living with a dual-diagnosis of schizophrenia and a series of practices involving prescriptive and non-prescriptive drugs through which she managed this orientation to the world together with the steadfast care of her family and friends.⁶¹⁸ On the evening of February 13, 2013, she had had an argument with her girlfriend Angel, was talking a lot about dinosaurs, and was sitting in her Berkeley apartment with two other familiar people present with her, her friend and a state-approved caretaker who was making her food and fixing her hair as she began to calm down. This mid-February evening, she was approaching her forty-second birthday, and was in a state of confusion which those around her, both state agencies and the family and friends who loved her, were familiar. She was wearing, as she usually did, a bright flowing muumuu, and weighed well over three hundred pounds.

What happened next and how it unfolded deserves attention. In response to a crisis call placed by her caretaker, six Berkeley Police Department officers arrived at Kayla's residence and knocked at the door. The caretaker came out and

⁶¹⁸ In speaking with family and friends through the People's Investigation and in spaces of relational *testimonio* that I participated in with her family, a fluidity of pronouns and name choices emerged. Kayla identified as a woman and as Kayla among her friends and in her every day life. As early as her teenage years Kayla had embarked on a path of gender nonconformity which her family—including her father, her sister, her stepmother, her grandparents, and others—actively engaged, supported, and helped thrive. Given that Kayla had grown up as a child named Xavier, in many cases, she still chose to remain as Xavier among her family, as it was the name that she had grown up with in the family and remained an identity that she recognized and was filled with great love and care. In speaking with the family, their affection and support of her in all her creative variations is evident, and they move effortlessly between names and pronouns as the story or the situation seems to fit. For the purposes of this work, I refer to her using the female pronoun and the name she chose as an adult, Kayla, but I do this with an immense respect for the fluidity and openness the family has maintained around everything to do with their child as Kayla and as Xavier. This draws from a relational *testimonio* space convened by the author with Kayla's father Arthur, stepmother Elyse, and sister Maria on April 18, 2015, in Berkeley, California.

gave them the key. From there, the six officers under the command of Officer Gwendolyn Brown entered Kayla's home, ordering her caretaker out, and removing and then arresting her friend after running a check and finding he had an outstanding warrant. Without authority of a warrant and under no threat, Officer Gwendolyn Brown of the Berkeley Police Department made the decision to also arrest Kayla and remove her from her home. That process did not proceed without resistance from Kayla. Within a few minutes of the decision to arrest her, Kayla Moore was no longer breathing. She was pronounced dead at Alta Bates hospital at 1:34 a.m. on February 13th.⁶¹⁹

The death of Kayla Moore in police custody occurs in the context of a crisis of care, one where those services previously provided by the state or as “care work” provided within families and communities, have been increasingly eroded, displaced, or made impossible. The crisis of care has emerged as part of a larger project of securitization in the neoliberal state. This crisis, with our bodies and relations to each other at the center, reflects an escalating privatization and militarization in the current conjuncture as the state administers a version of “care” that has displaced the rhythms of family and community life.

⁶¹⁹ Details from the incident are culled from the People's Investigation into the in-custody death of Kayla Moore, including numerous spaces of collective analysis, and drawing on the final report produced by the People's Investigation. The People's Investigation, elaborated more fully over the course of this chapter, was a collective community-based research effort begun in February 2013 and extending over a year. See People's Investigation, *In-Custody Death of Kayla Moore*.

Crisis of care

Our lives are being militarized on a daily basis.
-People's Investigation: Kayla Xavier Moore⁶²⁰

In response to the social antagonisms that reached their peak in the late 1960s, three prominent moments of restructuring were set in motion in the early 1970s to shape a new conjuncture of capital. This restructuring can be organized in relation to shifts in criminalization, militarization, and privatization through which the current crisis of care can be read. Nixon's declaration of a War on Drugs in 1971 and the subsequent passage of the Rockefeller Drug Laws in 1973 signaled a legislative restructuring around criminalization, positioning the War on Drugs at the center of a national racial strategy of mass incarceration. At the same time, the militarization of domestic law enforcement and specifically the police was set on a new course to accompany the newly declared Drug War, a militarization ushered in with the creation of SWAT and other tactical teams, a rise in home invasions, and an overall increase in the numbers and presence of police nationally that had been set in motion in response to social antagonisms of the previous decade through legislative acts like the Law Enforcement Assistance Act of 1965. The shift on a national scale towards an increasingly carceral and militarized state was undergirded by the manufactured crisis of 1973 that

⁶²⁰ This statement emerged from one of the many spaces of the People's Investigation into the in-custody death of Kayla Xavier Moore that began in February of 2013.

translated into an immediate and severe dismantling of the social wage, including through the defunding of number of hard won social welfare programs.⁶²¹

Autonomist women's struggles emerging from Italy largely through *Lotta Femminista* and advanced through the work of Mariarosa Dalla Costa, Selma James, Silvia Federici, Leopolda Fortunati, Giovanna Dalla Casta and others focused on the work and relations of production and reproduction in the "social factory" to draw attention to forms of labor that were invisibilized and devalued through the mechanism of the wage. In the United States, the struggle for the social wage was waged primarily by Black women in the years leading up to and forming a critical catalyst for the Civil Rights Movement. These included networks of autonomous projects and informal mobilizations around food sharing, collective child rearing arrangements and other forms of inter generational care as well relations with more formal groups like the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) that supported families through a number of initiatives "to combat hunger, develop cooperative pig banks, [and] provided families with community freezers and showers."⁶²² These struggles marked a moment of class recomposition that renegotiated relations of capital and gave rise to the social Welfare State. The capitalist restructuring focused on dismantling these gains and at the same time producing a system of needs. Thus new conditions of capital were given shape as a strategy of decomposition designed to manage these social

⁶²¹ On the dismantling of the social wage, see M. Dalla Costa, *Family, Welfare, and the State*. See also Federici, *Revolution at Point Zero*, and Parenti, *Lock Down America*.

⁶²² National Council of Negro Women (NCNW). "Dr. Dorothy I. Height," para. 16.

antagonisms through fabricated crises. It is these class antagonisms that are at the root of the current conditions of precarious labor that shape the current conjuncture.

From these struggles, a proliferation of dynamic scholarship and research, much of it produced through struggles on the ground, continues to emerge at the intersections of capital and gender relations. This research maps conditions of precarity in relation to work and struggles in the social factory and in particular, in relation to care work. Here, the social factory functions as a site for reading the forces that intersect to shape a “politics of care,” emphasizing the labor necessary in caring for the worker whose labor is waged and outside the home as a critical component of gender discipline and oppression, a site of exploitation and expropriation, as well as a condition and form of violence. The labor of reproducing the worker and capital’s attempt “to displace the cost of reproducing the worker onto women, family, and the home” have been central to studies of the social factory and have advanced several key concepts including affective labor, invisibilized labor, and the feminization of labor.⁶²³

Militant feminist research collective Precarias a la Deriva identifies four categories in the crisis of care through which privatization and militarization can be read. Through a genealogical approach to care read through the social factory, Precarias a la Deriva is able to elaborate the terms of the crisis and at the same construct care as a strategic concept that makes these struggles visible. To

⁶²³ Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Social Factory Ateneo,” para. 1. See also Gill and Pratt, “In the Social Factory?”

understand the crisis of care in the present it is helpful to first situate care genealogically in relation to the social factory.

In their examination the current crisis of care, Precarias a la Deriva approaches sex, care, and attention genealogically as “social stratifications of affect, traditionally assigned to women.”⁶²⁴ In this context, they situate female sexuality within a Western epistemology shaped by Enlightenment ideals and a “growing preoccupation with the ‘hygiene’ of populations” emerging in relation to industrial capital and an urbanizing of populations.⁶²⁵ Sex and care, as well as feminine sexuality, become imbricated in the wage relation in an early phase of capitalism. Together, they became something to monitor, regulate and control in relation to configurations of bourgeois family life that established conditions favorable to the reproduction of the worker. These early processes of privatization and professionalism also severed “sex” and “care” and subsumed them within a capitalist division of labor “restricted to determinate spaces and subjects.”⁶²⁶ Precarias a la Deriva charts the ways that this functioned as a *dispositif*: certain

⁶²⁴ Precarias a la Deriva, “A Very Careful Strike,” 34.

⁶²⁵ Ibid., 35. Foucault traces the development of the police to a similar preoccupation with hygiene in 18th century France. See Foucault, “The Politics of Health.”

⁶²⁶ Precarias a la Deriva, “A Very Careful Strike,” 35. In addressing the individualizing imperative of neoliberal capital and the construction of the home as a space of control, Precarias a la Deriva asks, “How to construct bonds, and beginning from there, relationships of solidarity and care, if we are not able to spatially prefigure a “we”? Ibid., 38.

gendered subjects were produced through this division at the same time as the boundaries that excluded these subjects were also produced.⁶²⁷

In addition to the historical division between care and sex in the field of capital relations, Precarias a la Deriva also identifies the arrival of “attention” as a further differentiated activity in the current conjuncture of capital. Attention is indexed here specifically to listening and empathy, in particular in the realm of communication. In this moment attention is not only privatized it is “separated from incarnated communication, that which produces lasting relations, trust, and cooperation” and enters into the realm of the functional or, generic.⁶²⁸ Thus as “care” becomes differentiated and subsumed in the wage relation, a number of

⁶²⁷ Here I draw on Callahan’s elaboration of the US-Mexico border as a *dispositif* that produces particular criminalized subjects. See Callahan, “Crisis and Permanent War.” Precarias a la Deriva also notes that historically those subjects who did not have value in the “matrimonial market” were made vulnerable to lives lived in institutions or on the street. See Precarias a la Deriva, “A Very Careful Strike,” 35. The production of a gendered subject through the relations of capital is always at the same time a subject produced in relation to value. The subject is produced in relation to a scale of vulnerability vis-à-vis the state. Consider Foucault’s analysis of the life of Herculine Barbin, including the state’s need to “fix” Barbin’s gender—Barbin could live and indeed even marry (or, participate in the “matrimonial market”) on the condition that Barbin select a gender and remain that gender before the law. Foucault, *Herculine Barbin*.

⁶²⁸ Precarias a la Deriva, “A Very Careful Strike,” 35.

things happen.⁶²⁹ In its disaggregation, it becomes a site of profit and potential profit; it can be exchanged.⁶³⁰ At the moment where “care” exists in the field of wage relations as privatized, it obstructs and displaces other forms of nonremunerated, nondifferentiated care. These are then overwritten by a functional “noninvested” care. Additionally, care becomes open to regulation, and thus can be retracted, delayed and can become a site of control. If, recalling Illich, the state functions to manufacture “needs” then the state can also be read as an instrument of class composition and decomposition in service of capital.⁶³¹ The Welfare State while on some level a hard won institution resulting from the struggle for the social wage and a tangible moment of capitulation to working class power (and in particular to the power of women) also served as a mechanism to disrupt autonomy by providing services and support that could later be retracted. The manufacturing of needs is at the same time the manufacturing of

⁶²⁹ In order to re-aggregate these terms for the purpose of constructing a strategic category, Precarias a la Deriva refers to this as a “communicative continuum” of sex-attention-care” (Precarias a la Deriva, “A Very Careful Strike,” 36). Precarias a la Deriva also specify that “the nexus between sex, sexuality, and care” can be taken more generally to refer to reproduction (ibid.). Precarias a la Deriva is interested in this reorganization as they occur as part of the process of precarization (ibid., 44). Here, I also draw on the work of Esteva and Callahan in theorizing “the commons” as a site of struggle where the commons are defined not as a specific territory or resource to be allocated according to an alternate economy, but where the commons, or “commoning” refers to the relations established and obligations negotiated as a process. Similarly, in speaking of care here (or sex, sexuality, attention) care is not a resource but a way of identifying a specific way of relating to each other. It is this emphasis on relations that is at the foreground of a “politics of care.”

⁶³⁰ Precarias a la Deriva write, “capital fragments the social in order to extract value, we join together in order to elevate it and displace it toward other places.” Precarias a la Deriva, “A Very Careful Strike,” 36.

⁶³¹ This echoes Ivan Illich’s argument about the role of the state in the creation of needs, which I will return to in more depth in the next section.

dependencies and thus, the manufacturing of vulnerabilities and forms of exclusion and abandonment. In this way, the series of privatizations that occurred across the social factory in the wake of the dismantling of the Welfare State were about capital accumulation and enclosure of the commons. Having disrupted networks of care that had previously organized family and community life, the Welfare State in its structured beneficence then created a dependency on these services.⁶³² When retracted, those same services could be privatized as sites of capital accumulation and enclosed as way to manipulate, discipline, and selectively abandon the working class.⁶³³

For Precarias a la Deriva the reorganization of care is a result of changing contracts in the realm of reproduction that are based on both crisis and creativity. The Fordist nuclear family, they note, has been eroded and reconfigured through

⁶³² Again, this recalls the Frassanito Network's theorization of the links between precarity and migration as a condition of capital in the present. Capital both produces the need for migration as a condition of survival and yet these migrations erode the networks of family and community that support survival. In short, workers move to resist the vulnerabilities imposed by capital but in moving contribute to their own vulnerability given the demands to leave family and community systems behind. See, The Frassanito Network, "Precarious, Precarisation, Precariat?"

⁶³³ In different conjunctures, capital's attempt to capture reproductive power emerges as a different response to women's autonomy and their ability to exercise political power as a class. On housework as a site of primitive accumulation, as well as Caribbean and African women's resistance to these forms of reproductive labor, see Mies, "Colonization and Housewifization," 74–111, also 31–32; on women's bodies in the transition from feudal, peasant cultures to capitalism, see Federici's *Caliban and the Witch*; on the body in second wave feminism, see M. Dalla Costa and James, *The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community*; on women's challenges against control of their bodies in the present in Italy, see Galetto et al., "Feminist Activism and Practice: Asserting Autonomy and Resisting Precarity."

resistances and innovations in the ways people claim and re-invent families, relationships and structures and meanings of home.⁶³⁴

This is the context in which they elaborate four critical elements in the crisis of care: 1) the transformation of the Welfare State to “risk management” (or, “the containment of subjects of risk”); 2) the “externalization of the home” (which is a form of privatization as services previously reserved for the home are transposed outside of the home and can be exchanged for money); 3) an absence or shortage of “time, resources, recognition, and desire for nonremunerated care;” and 4) the “crisis (and destruction) of worker neighborhood[s]” and strong community bonds and the ongoing privatization of public spaces.⁶³⁵

Each of these elements produces a series of uncertainties that trace the lives of many and is constitutive of precarity as a condition of present life. Care, and the sex-sexuality-attention-care continuum, is interrupted, severed, obstructed, and recedes at critical times. This creates a context where for some, in the bodies that such a system makes visible or invisible, care is not only inaccessible at times, it can be administered from a point that is dislocated and trained to quarantine and eliminate.

Thus, the present crisis of care takes shape through a genealogy constituted by a series of ruptures (where rupture is the result of social

⁶³⁴ Precarias a la Deriva, “A Very Careful Strike,” 37.

⁶³⁵ Precarias a la Deriva clearly points out that as the home is externalized (which is a form of privatization and subsumption) care (as relations, practices, bonds, activities often carried out among networks of women) constantly exceeds, escapes, and refuses subsumption. Ibid., 38.

antagonism as class war). In the first rupture, women's struggles in the social factory that were theorized as "wages against housework" and which were fought as the battle for the social wage, simultaneously highlighted and disrupted relations of capital shaped by the wage.⁶³⁶ At the same time these struggles made visible the historical and present production of gendered subjects and gendered divisions of labor as part of the capital relation. It is worth recalling Zerowork Collective's assertion that "the division between the waged and the wageless" is the "fundamental tool of accumulation."⁶³⁷ They argue that "it is the political recomposition of the waged and the unwaged that imposes the crisis on capital."⁶³⁸ Thus, "the working class struggle against work is the source of the

⁶³⁶ Federici asserts that the wages for housework campaign should be seen as a political perspective, one that demystifies and subverts the position of women in relation to capital. Arguing that it is through the wage that the worker enters the social contract, it is then absence of the wage that communicates that the work that takes place in the social factory is not actual work. For Federici, the social contract cohered through the wage is one "you work... because it is the only condition under which you are allowed to live." See Federici, *Revolution at Point Zero*, 16. This is at the basis for the difficulty in struggling against the exploitative conditions of housework. For Federici, the emphasis should be on the process of the struggle to have the work in this realm recognized as work. The wages would never be given without a fight, so the struggle itself would be a revolutionary process in that it would change both family and social relations. *Ibid.*, 15. And this struggle must break from the private isolation of the home violating the arenas conscripted by waged and unwaged divisions and enter the streets. *Ibid.*, 18.

⁶³⁷ Zerowork Collective, "Introduction to Zerowork I," 12.

⁶³⁸ *Ibid.*, 13.

crisis.”⁶³⁹ For Zerowork Collective, “the ‘labor markets,’ as well as the so-called institutions, the kitchens and the assembly line, are all determined by the power relation materialized in the wage.”⁶⁴⁰

In the second rupture, the state (as an instrument of capital) responded to struggles waged from within the social factory in several critical ways: in order to placate resistance it advanced a series of reforms and the creation of new institutions to manage poverty; it positioned itself to disrupt critical networks of autonomous survival and community resilience by transferring services to the state; it created an intricate system of services that fostered state-dependency which could then be dismantled to decompose the class through a targeted attack on the social factory; and in “externalizing the home” it both created new conditions for capital accumulation by commodifying relations, services, and goods formerly provided and circulated as “commons” outside capital enclosure; and through this enclosure of the commons, created a tiered system of vulnerability and the conditions for selective abandonment. This can be read through Ruth Wilson Gilmore’s analysis of “the state-sanctioned or extra-legal

⁶³⁹ Ibid., 14. On the “working class”, Cleaver writes,

the real issue is not that of whether some (often ill-defined) ‘social group’ should or should not be classified as ‘working class’ but to recognize how a whole array of people in various unwaged situations find themselves suffering the capitalist imposition of work, and how their efforts to resist it, and sometimes move beyond it, can rupture capitalist reproduction.

Cleaver, “From *operaismo* to ‘autonomist Marxism’,” 29.

⁶⁴⁰ Zerowork Collective, “Introduction to Zerowork I,” 5.

production and exploitation of group-differentiated vulnerabilities to premature death” that is a key component of racial formation in the present.⁶⁴¹

To be more succinct, forms of nurturing, care, and resilience that may have once been shared across family and community bonds were transformed to the point where many were now only available for a price. The networks themselves, and the wisdoms necessary for their continuity, had been dismantled as the Welfare State was being constructed. After the fabricated crisis, these services were available to those who could pay. However, this wasn’t always an individual negotiation between a service provider with a service for sale for the right price and a client with a service with enough money to purchase the service. The services that were removed at the level of state and municipal budgets through funding reallocations were also in many cases services with complex and intricate imbrications across state institutions, agencies and the private sector. Some of these services that faced severe cuts were services that had over time become professionalized through licenses, certifications, and were restricted in their application by laws, codes, and policies. These services were often cut en

⁶⁴¹ Gilmore, *Golden Gulag*, 28.

masse.⁶⁴² And as social services continued to face more and more severe cuts, funding for military and security budgets continued to rise.

The People's Investigation: Militarization of Care

*Militarization of care is a strategy of occupation that allows and normalizes home invasion and internal, sporadic checkpoints in the home.*⁶⁴³

When Kayla Moore died in police custody on February 15, 2013, two months before what would have been her forty-second birthday, she posed no visible threat to the state or to capital. When Berkeley police entered her home late that evening, they knew they were responding to a “possible 5150,” a friend with Kayla in her apartment had phoned the police indicating that Kayla seemed to be experiencing a “crisis.” Police had been to her home on similar mental health calls in the past.⁶⁴⁴ Had it been within normal working hours, a Mobile Crisis Unit would have been deployed, but budget cuts to mental services in

⁶⁴² The most salient moment of this as a violent race project organized around abandonment was seen during Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans. This can also be witnessed on a large municipal scale in the elaborate process of privatization and the horrific denial of water to thousands of people, mostly Black and Brown communities, in Detroit that became a reality in the summer of 2014. The same can be seen in a pervasive form with the rise of cell phones and the removal of public phones. No matter how much money a person may have in their pocket, through processes of differential abandonment of specific populations, water or a public phone may not be readily available at a time when either may be urgently needed.

⁶⁴³ Callahan, Disseration Seminar, California Institute of Integral Studies, San Francisco, California. August 31, 2013.

⁶⁴⁴ “5150” is police code for an involuntary psychiatric hold and indicates that the subject of the call may be experiencing some of form of mental instability that the police may merit is worthy of them being committed on psychiatric grounds to a local facility.

Berkeley means that if a call comes in involving someone possibly experiencing crisis, the police are the first responders. When police arrived that evening and entered her apartment, they promptly removed Kayla's caretaker who was present in the apartment and made the decision, despite Kayla's clearly agitated state, to forcefully remove her from her home. She was not violent, armed, disturbing the peace in any way, or even interacting with anyone outside of her Gaia unit. By the time the police called for a spit hood to be put over her head to be brought up from the fire truck on the street below she had already stopped breathing. She had been forced onto her stomach and under the weight of six police officers, handcuffed. Her feet were tied at the ankles as she lay face down on a futon on the floor, half stripped of her clothes, her bare torso exposed. From the police's own reports it is clear, no attempts to supply artificial breathing were made. At times in the police report, Kayla is referred to as "it."⁶⁴⁵

⁶⁴⁵ This point is also made in the final report of the People's Investigation into the in-custody death of Kayla Xavier Moore, released by Berkeley Copwatch in October 2013. The report notes that, "the Berkeley Police Department's In-Custody Death Investigation: Xavier Moore (2013) includes a number of documents, including the Police Incident Report from the night of the incident, the Case Narrative, Police Report Supplementals from officers involved in the incident, narrative statements from individuals involved or present at the incident, the Case Report Summary, the Report Narrative, the Alameda County Sheriff's Office Coroner's Bureau Report, and transcribed interviews between BPD Sgt. Hong and the officers involved in the incident." For the purposes of reference, they note that the report refers "to the larger investigation report in which all these documents occur by page number in the overall Berkeley Police Investigation report, rather than naming each document in each reference." People's Investigation, *In-Custody Death of Kayla Moore*, 5.

Why did they die?

Eight Black women--why did they die?
-Combahee River Collective⁶⁴⁶

Before this incident occurred, if an architect had rolled out a map showing all the units in the building at 2116 Allston Way, and consulting this map a building manager filled in details of the renters who had signed leases for each of those units, it would likely have been possible, with near certainty, to determine who would be removed from that building on a stretcher, no longer breathing, after a routine police call. The building is structured around a large atrium on the edge of the UC Berkeley campus and home to students who have moved out of the dorms to live in a safe and independent complex. Like much of the new architecture in Berkeley, it is in the “Mediterranean Style,” boasts panoramic study room, a rooftop garden, a parking garage and close proximity to restaurants, cafes and nightlife, within a block of downtown Berkeley BART. Inside are

⁶⁴⁶ This is the title of a widely circulated pamphlet by the Combahee River Collective following the savage murders of Black Women in Boston beginning in January of 1979; the number eventually rose to thirteen. Enraged by the city officials lack of care or attention to these murders—or even an acknowledgement that the violence was occurring at the intersection of gender and race—the Combahee River Collective responded in a number of critical ways. They continued to collectively build and advance an analysis of the violence facing Black women as form of vulnerability to death (to borrow from Gilmore here) inherent in white supremacist patriarchal capital relations; they mobilized to raise awareness in the broader community that would situate the problem without further criminalizing those targeted by the violence; they charted possibilities for self-defense at both the individual and community level that refused to force women into a reclusive position out of the streets (i.e. in the home or under the “protection” of men); and they explicitly engaged the issue as a collective, community safety issue. People’s Investigations in the present as community safety projects organized around defense, care, justice, and linked to assembly are indebted to early initiatives organized around direct action and research. Here, I draw on this work to think through the People’s Investigation as a moment of convivial research and prefigurative politics. See, Combahee River Collective, “Why Did They Die?”

twenty-four hour surveillance cameras and a chess set on a table amongst many plants in the expansive foyer. According to students posting on Yelp! the building is “a pinnacle of luxury,” and the roof is great for parties. The reviewers note that while the units are overpriced they are convenient and modern, and also warn potential renters to exercise caution in dealing with a landlord who extracts a fourteen-month lease in the fine print of the agreement. From the sidewalk, it towers over downtown Berkeley, with large glass windows and a heavy glass door accessible by code.

Kayla’s unit was Section 8, or affordable city housing. In many cases across the Bay Area, such units are made available through agreements between the municipality and developers in line with legislated housing allotments in new buildings. This usually involves a series of incentives for the developers, who may not otherwise be able to build in particular areas based on tenancy rights and low income protections earned through earlier struggles for survival and against forces of gentrification and accumulation. Prior to moving to the new Gaia building, Kayla had found housing in the Tenderloin District of San Francisco, where she had lived in a series of “SROs” or “Single Room Occupancies,” over the years. These were often in run down hotels with shared bathrooms, where living was possible through a combination of state and federal aid, often also made through agreements that included incentives for landlords, for example tax breaks. Where the state and federal aid did not cover her living expenses, a complex system of support was in place. Her family continued to support her by working night jobs, taking out credit card loans, becoming certified as care takers

so that the money for caring for Kayla could be funneled back into the support structure in place. In addition, Kayla worked where she could, including as a phone sex operator, one of the few jobs available to her given her employment possibilities as someone diagnosed as schizophrenic at a young age and thus with scant employment history. With the help of her family, she had recently moved to Berkeley to be closer to her family who visited her daily with groceries and to provide other means of support. On the night that the police entered her home and removed her caretaker, Kayla had been living at Gaia for two months, and her family visited her daily, bringing her groceries and collectively making sure she was okay.⁶⁴⁷

To understand how it reached a point where armed state agents respond to mental health crises in certain communities, an analysis must consider a convergence of historical forces and the class antagonisms that the policing apparatus is designed to contain. Neoliberalism's dismantling of the New Deal state that began in earnest in the early 1970s certainly removed the "safety net" of social services that marked the end of the Keynesian Bargain, leaving people across the nation without critical services on which they had come to depend. In the absence of state services and the systematic removal of the social wage won over decades of working class struggles, those services previously provided by the state were left for the private sector to reestablish as a source of profit. This

⁶⁴⁷ These stories are culled from a relational *testimonio* I convened with the family in April of 2015 and included Kayla's sister Maria, her father Arthur, and her step-mother Elysse.

privatization insured that services remained available to those who could afford to pay for them but not guaranteed or consistent for those who could not.

Thus a restructuring of capital emerged where services previously available to large numbers of citizens was now only available to those who have access to dead capital, or a wage. But this lack of services does not account entirely for Kayla's death. She didn't merely starve to death in an unheated apartment. She was, in the words of her sister at a press conference organized by the People's Investigation, a perfect trifecta—Black, transgender, and schizophrenic.⁶⁴⁸ Her death ranks among the staggering number of Black and Brown people killed by police daily in the United States, among the high number of attacks by police on transgender people and among the increasing number of people suffering mental illness who are killed as a result of encounters with police in the United States. To understand how it is that a person experiencing crisis ended up dead as a result of that encounter despite no history of violence and no threat of violence in the present requires an understanding of citizenship as a project rooted in class composition, and labor regimentation as both a race and a gender strategy.

As a series of ongoing “spaces of encounter” in a larger community safety initiative, the People's Investigation was rooted in collective learning and produced a number of new tools. These tools emerged from a shared commitment to understand what happened the night of Kayla's death, including both analyzing

⁶⁴⁸ The press conference where Maria Moore spoke to the “perfect trifecta” was on October 16, 2013, in Berkeley. Author's notes. See Moore, “Copwatch to Release Findings.”

and naming the moment where police become first responders and how they escalated a situation to a point of extreme violence. In addition to critically reading state documents, the investigation created a taxonomy of officer involvement that made observable the way the violence unfolded. The People's Investigation exposed the intersection between an increasingly militarized police force and a politics of care.⁶⁴⁹ Through this investigation, the People's Investigation first approached militarization of care as an analytical category providing ways to understand how a member of our community becomes a target for annihilation by agents of the state and also to read our own resilience and autonomy as a community against this violence.⁶⁵⁰

An autonomous reading of any conjuncture is based on cycles of struggle defined by moments of composition, decomposition, and recomposition. These

⁶⁴⁹ Andrea Prichett of Berkeley Copwatch was instrumental in developing this taxonomy of officers actions in the form of a graph, and in one shared investigative space, relatives of Kayla and other members of the People's Investigation, worked collaboratively to cull officer's actions out from the police reports and to align their actions with the graph to determine what had happened, according to the state archives, on the evening when Kayla was killed. These tools become increasingly important as often agents of the state are the only witnesses to the violence they enact, and grassroots investigations must work to elucidate and expose contradictions and inconsistencies. Often, this also relies on community knowledge whether through witnesses who may have been present for some aspect of the incident or community members, particularly family, who know the patterns of their loved ones, including in their interaction with law enforcement and other services, and can read these against the state and its narratives of the incident.

⁶⁵⁰ In addition to the family, many groups participated over time in the People's Investigation, including from Berkeley Copwatch, CCRA, Critical Resistance, P.E.E.R.S mental health, Coalition for a Safe Berkeley, and others. Many groups continued to show up to speak and share information from across struggles at rallies, city council meetings, vigils, and other direct action spaces. These included supporters from Idriss Stelley Foundation; Justice for Alan Bluford (JAB); Communities United Against Violence (CUAV) which particularly confronts violence against queer and transgender people; Tsega Center in Oakland; the NAACP; 50.50 Crew in San Jose; Radio Autonomía and many many groups. A collective analysis was generated through the many direct action spaces of the People's Investigation as well as through Uni Tierra Califas' *ateneos* in San Francisco, Oakland, and San Jose from 2013 to the present.

cycles are rooted in working class struggles against enclosure and the imposition of work, as well as moments of subversion and creative, self-organized activity to live lives that retain control over our own reproduction outside of the command and control of capital. These are moments of self-valorization that precede a rupture with our relation to capital.

The current conjuncture is one still very much marked by the neoliberal project of restructuring designed to fracture a level of working class power that reached its apex in the early 1970s, as well as newly emergent strategies of decomposition that manifest through forms of low intensity war directed at the social factory and the commons. The current conjuncture that frames Kayla's death and Kayla's life as an autonomous subject can be read using the social factory as a category of analysis to understand how policing is a site of articulation for the demands of capital. Relying on what is made visible in the battles over the social factory, we can also recognize "the community as a principal site of struggle," one where women and other "urban marginals" are central to the subversion of capital's attempts to impose particular relations that will serve strategies of composition.⁶⁵¹

In this analysis, the militarization of care in the current conjuncture is read as a strategy of class war, one where class is understood in an autonomous sense as a relation of antagonism directed at the social factory and the commons. While it is necessary to review the ways that a decline in social services can be framed in terms of the rollback of the New Deal Welfare State, a focus on budget cuts

⁶⁵¹ Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, "Social Factory Ateneo."

masks a larger project of capitalist restructuring underway, including one that disrupts, interrupts, and seeks to sever relations that communities and families rely on for their own creative survival. To understand how care was militarized as a strategy aimed at working class power requires a more complex understanding of the social factory as both a target of violence and site of regeneration and autonomous resistance. And this demands a genealogy of those resistances provoked the category's emergence as a contested site from which a series of battles could be waged.

The Keynesian Welfare State and Struggles for the Social Wage

With its expansive agencies and institutions, the New Deal State was never beneficent by design. It was the product of Depression-era working class power and the demands wrested from the state during a period of recomposition. During the crisis of the Depression, people accessed state services in creative ways and configured new means of survival through pressures they were able to apply. At the same time, the Depression produced a proliferation of autonomous, self-organized activities and creative interlocking systems of survival. Much of this was collaboratively imagined and arranged by women in the home in their worker capacity as housewives, from garden collectives to food and clothing exchanges, they organized outside of capital and across networks and community bonds. Women and housewives were also behind massive protest and large scale picket projects against the high cost of food, particularly of meat, in demonstrations that made visible the charade of “shortages” in the crisis. In

Annelise Orleck's study of militant housewives during the Great Depression, she writes that, "by 1934, an estimated 80,000 people statewide belonged to exchanges that allowed them to acquire food, clothing, and shelter without any money changing hands."⁶⁵² The exchanges were largely organized by women based on their knowledge of the home and their involvement in shared systems of information on which their survival depended. Women also ran the commissaries where the goods were exchanged. These activities and strategies changed relations across families and communities and contributed to collective experience across communities that subverted the decomposition strategies of capital.⁶⁵³

Illich's analysis of "needs" reveals capital's role in manufacturing dependency as a strategy of composition. It is in this context that we can see the role of the Keynesian Welfare State in displacing the organizing and autonomy that was occurring outside of capital imposition during the Great Depression. The Welfare State responded to what people were already doing by themselves and attempted to replace autonomous support structures with state services. This dependency served to break what Cleaver refers to as "vernacular subsistence."⁶⁵⁴

⁶⁵² Orleck, "'We Are That Mythical Thing,'" 155.

⁶⁵³ Silvia Federici explores the collective bonds that sutured recomposition during the Great Depression in an interview with Marina Vishmidt, see Vishmidt, "Permanent Reproductive Crisis." Similarly, Mariarosa Dalla Costa's history of women's work and lives during wartime Italy advances a historical ethnography of collective, communal survival with women at the center. See M. Dalla Costa, "Reproduction and Emigration."

⁶⁵⁴ On vernacular subsistence, see Cleaver, "Inversion of Class Perspective," 122.

In 1970, the Third World Women's Alliance issued the Black Women's Manifesto that articulated liberation in terms of self-determination and self-valorization for “herself and all Black people.”⁶⁵⁵ These women had organized to “challenge the various structures they confronted in their everyday lives” to provide for their children and families.⁶⁵⁶ This struggle for a national wage provoked a national crisis.⁶⁵⁷ It was the dismantling of the Keynesian Welfare state which led, in Federici’s words, to “the disaccumulation of services in the home” to be replaced by the neoliberal model.⁶⁵⁸ Capital’s attacks on the infrastructure of the community through the Keynesian Welfare state gave way to conditions of precarity and the receding of services that people had come to depend on for their survival. As part of capitalism’s efforts to decompose the class through stagflation and fabricated crisis, it made the welfare mother and by extension any Black woman, an enemy of the state.⁶⁵⁹ Black mothers were criminalized as “welfare queens” in the 1980s when the burden of the manufactured crisis was shuffled onto their backs. This production of a criminal subject in the form of the “welfare queen” not only attempted to make Black women disposable through “dehumanization,” it served, as other criminalizing

⁶⁵⁵ Gayle Lynch, *Introduction: Black Woman’s Manifesto*, para. 1.

⁶⁵⁶ Orleck, *Storming Caesar’s Palace*, 5.

⁶⁵⁷ Orleck, *Storming Caesar’s Palace*.

⁶⁵⁸ Federici, “The Restructuring of Housework,” 47. For a discussion of the entrenchment of the neoliberal model, see Day, *Gramsci is Dead*, 7.

⁶⁵⁹ Caffentzsis, “From Capitalist Crisis to Proletarian Slavery.” On welfare queens as a “stereotype of dispossession,” see McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds*, 5.

processes do, to terrify the white working class into playing by the rules of social and material enclosure through various strategies of inclusion.⁶⁶⁰

The restructuring in the form of dismantling of social services marks a particular phase of the war on the social factory, especially aimed at Black and Brown communities who had always faced discrimination in employment, housing, and other services under previous racial regimes.⁶⁶¹ In the case of Kayla, the support structure that would sustain her in a larger community and to which she could also contribute had been systematically removed through a series legislative acts and funding cuts on both the federal and state level, many of them beginning under Reagan but continuing under the Clinton administration up through the present Obama administration. This paved the way for the privatization of services and availability and access to critical resources enclosed by the wage and one's access to it, including, critically, in Berkeley the Mobile Crisis Team whose hours of operation are 11:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.⁶⁶² Thus, more traditional family and community infrastructure that families and communities customarily relied on to support diverse forms of care required for reproduction was strategically interrupted by the services made available through the Welfare State. Then in its retreat, under the guise of "budget" shortfalls, a reliable

⁶⁶⁰ It is here that we can read Gilmore's "ideological surplus value" in relation to surplus value. Gilmore, "Globalization and US Prison Growth," 178. This concept of "terrifying the white working class" is one formulated in discussions in many collective spaces of Uni Tierra Califas.

⁶⁶¹ On discrimination in housing historically in Oakland, see Self, *American Babylon*.

⁶⁶² See, City of Berkeley Mental Health Division, "Hours of Operation," para 1.

response to crisis was no longer available, leaving these services privatized and increasingly, in the hands of the police, as emergency calls for assistance were routed to police departments who in many cases arrived before ambulances or mental health services. According to the People's Investigation report on the incident involving Kayla Moore, that cites warnings about the "preventable harm" that continues to occur as a result of police responding to mental health calls, "the city continues to under staff emergency mental health services while supporting increased funding for the number of officers hired and the level of 'less lethal' weaponry employed by the department."⁶⁶³ In the report's analysis, this marks "a clear demonstration of competing agendas." Further, the report observes that "the underfunding of mental health services and lack of mobile crisis team means that there is only police personnel available to respond who are inadequately trained."⁶⁶⁴

The care and raising of children, central to the analysis of women's struggles vis-à-vis capital and the state has maintained a prominent focus in research, theorizations, and direct action spaces in the struggle to expose and change the current precaritization of labor. In particular, the deliberate destruction of the social wage and the reduced buying power of the wage, both strategies aimed at decomposition or the attenuation of working class power have been a significant factor in the crisis around child care. As working class wages drop and social wages are systematically eliminated, the responsibility for the care

⁶⁶³ People's Investigation, *In-Custody Death of Kayla Moore*, 4.

⁶⁶⁴ Ibid.

of children becomes a contested site of struggle, witnessed in the rise of privatized child care as well as in the prolific struggles around child care collectives that confront privatization and forms of enclosure directed at workers' children.⁶⁶⁵

Accompanying the focus on childcare and social reproduction has been an expanding focus on elder care.⁶⁶⁶ Yet even as the dismantling of the social welfare state has meant severe cuts to services and institutions designed to assist families with a range of care taking responsibilities, in studies emphasizing the

⁶⁶⁵ See, for example, Barbagallo and Beuret, "Starting From the Social Wage." The care and raising of children has always been central to both the struggles and the feminist theorizations of women of color, as capital, together with colonialism, has imposed a particular relation on women of color at the point of their freedom to care for their own children. For many women of color historically and in the present, either through slavery or forms of wage slavery, the care of the children of others (read: white children) has been restructured as a priority over caring for their own children, and women have had to balance care in two households, while also waging battles against a system that produces structured breaks in family life and the freedom to care for one's own children. The care provided by women of color for the children of white women has also freed white women from certain kinds of labor and allowed them to choose other kinds of labor or leisure, in many cases providing for an accumulation of wealth and property that further secures white privilege. Struggles against this relation of antagonism and the experience of the social relation as a point of intersectional oppressions and powers has always been at the base of women's struggles and feminist theory, whether white women or white feminism chose to recognize it and align with these struggles or not. See Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*. In the US context and globally, the task of caring for the children and households of others increasingly falls on Brown women from the Global South, with significant struggles emerging from these conditions of low-paid, precarious, and exploitative conditions of labor, including recent mobilizations across the US to craft and fight for legislation like the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights.

⁶⁶⁶ See for example, Fantone, "Precarious Changes." Also Glenn, *Forced to Care*.

changing role of care work and social reproduction, less attention has been paid to a politics of care surrounding mental health and mental illness.⁶⁶⁷

The movement for a national wage in the United States organized primarily by Black women and women of color catalyzed a larger women's movement that confronted a state organized around "democratic despotism" and exposing forms of exploitation, expropriation, enclosure, and capitalist accumulation.⁶⁶⁸ Critically, these included issues of reproduction—including the care of children and the labor in the home—that were organized around race.⁶⁶⁹ Anti-colonial struggles and Third World Strikes made visible the role of colonial institutions in providing an architecture of oppression and exploitation. They also revealed patterns and strategies of ongoing accumulation, often through forms of settler colonialism that then allowed for a more expansive theorization of colonial capitalist projects based on the development of some areas against the

⁶⁶⁷ There are of course exceptions. In addition to elder and childcare, Evelyn Nakano Glenn also takes up the issue of mental health care in relation to debates around the politics of care, carework, precarity, and the feminization of labor. See Glenn, *Forced to Care*. For the most part however, much of the struggles on the ground and in autonomous circles to support women in their relation to care work are still dominated by questions of childcare when it comes to the question of caring for others. Both struggles against prisons and against police violence have been instrumental in exposing the impact of the Carceral State on the heels of the rollback of the Welfare State and the violent and inhumane effect this has had on people with different mental orientations to the world.

⁶⁶⁸ For an autonomous reading of the welfare movement in the US and the role of Black women, see Caffentzis, "From Capitalist Crisis to Proletarian Slavery."

⁶⁶⁹ A. Davis, *Women, Race and Class*.

underdevelopment of others.⁶⁷⁰ Such uneven development carves a “border” between developed areas and underdeveloped areas. In the case of the Gaia building on the night of Kayla’s death, the border carved by this development became observable from one housing unit to the next.

H.L.T. Quan analyses neoliberal development through the strategic concept of “savage developmentalism” at the heart of which lies a “structured otherness.”⁶⁷¹ The central features of this development are “expansionism, order and antidemocracy.”⁶⁷² For Quan, the concept of savage developmentalism

⁶⁷⁰ These struggles dramatically reconfigured traditional, Western, orthodox Marxism’s understanding of resistance (as explored in the work of Cleaver, Negri, and others), as well as articulated new spheres of political activity and in so doing advanced trends begun through formations including workers councils in the 1930s and thinking that contested much of the homogenizing influence of Marxism’s most visible translation in the West, socialism. This drew on the work of groups like the Johnson-Forest Tendency (including the work of C.L.R James and Raya Dunayevskaya) as part of a larger demand coming from the multitudinous struggles themselves in their various resistances to the command and capture of capital, including creative practices to avoid the attempted imposition and discipline of work, and challenges that continued to reveal sites of exploitation previously invisibilized by capital through a variety of mechanisms employed by the managerial class coupled with neoclassical economic theorists. In revealing what dominance had legitimated to the point of obfuscation through an emphasis on surplus value, profit, efficiency, and the manufacturing of crises, these interventions reclaimed Marx’s *Capital* as a political tool and as a weapon in the hands of the working class, dramatically altered understandings of the working class capital composition, and contributed to the process of revealing the instruments, techniques, and mechanisms through which capital not only continued to extract surplus value from the labor power of workers, but how capital functioned through an always shifting regimentation of labor to govern all workers and maintain control. Workers examined capital historically and in the present according to dominant approaches at the same time that they inverted the class perspective to shift the emphasis away from the means of production as the primary site of both dominance and resistance. Through careful readings of Marx, and an ethnographic interrogation of the particulars of everyday life as well as their own present conditions, workers began to collectively develop tools not only for understanding resistance to capital, but to develop a set of strategies for advancing autonomy and organized self-activity towards a postcapitalist politics in the present. See Cleaver, “Inversion of Class Perspective,” “On Self-Valorization.”

⁶⁷¹ See Quan, *Growth Against Democracy*, 4.

⁶⁷² Ibid.

becomes a tool for illuminating the savagery of neoliberal capitalism, with its roots in colonial exploitation and violence. Drawing on the colonial frame of “othering” and representation, Quan also uses the term to illuminate capital’s biopolitical mechanisms at play in determining which lives are “livable,” pointing to what remains “ungovernable” or “uncontrollable” under the current order of development (often named “progress”).⁶⁷³

Urban Marginals and the Dispossessed

One thing is certain: capitalism has also learned to tolerate and to take advantage of other sexualities, but always when it can limit them and assure their intelligibility in some fashion.

*-Precarias a la Deriva*⁶⁷⁴

The violence that ended Kayla Moore’s life occurs at the intersection of several competing strategies of capitalist command and capture. In order to analyze cycles of struggle that determine the form of capital’s current conjuncture, Silvia Federici begins by assessing which subject poses the most significant threat to capital at a particular moment. For Federici and Gustavo Esteva, that position is occupied by what they categorize as the urban marginal. The urban marginal poses a threat not for who they are in terms that inscribe an essentialized identity, but for their refusal to submit to enclosure and capitalist subsumption—their ungovernability. The urban marginal in many ways is the autonomous subject that is targeted by police violence. Harry Cleaver draws on

⁶⁷³ Ibid., 1–23.

⁶⁷⁴ Precarias a la Deriva, “A Very Careful Strike,” 39.

the work of Esteva and Illich in an exploration of vernacular subsistence and self-valorization, asserting, “absolutely central to what dynamism exists within capitalism is its ability to absorb, co-opt, or instrumentalize the ever resurgent autonomy of those it has impressed into its ‘working’ class.”⁶⁷⁵

For Mitropoulos, capital’s failure in the post World War II period involved an inability to successfully restrict space in a way that would fix people’s movements. Capital was not able “to accomplish a repartitioning of the world into spaces of exception and spaces of norms that was once constitutive of the distinction between ‘First’ and ‘Third Worlds’” and this has “precipitated the more recent resort to a seemingly permanent global war.”⁶⁷⁶ Nor was it able to “fix” certain subjects, particularly in relation to gender and sexuality, as much excellent queer scholarship and grassroots struggle has continued to expose. These subjects, and the positions they refused to fully inhabit as recognizable subject positions—including migrants as well as gender queer subjects and particularly those disenfranchised by capital, become part of this war.

Cleaver discusses the project of categorizing those autonomous subjects who reflect spaces that refuse the stretch of capitalist valorization,

The second, more overtly repressive, side is also important for capital because that which it cannot digest it must purge or be poisoned by.

⁶⁷⁵ Federici, Lecture at California Institute of Integral Studies (CIIS), Fall 2012; Esteva also frequently references the “urban marginal” in various articles and editorials, and Cleaver draws on both Esteva and Illich (125) to theorize specific subjects who resist normalization as an aspect of vernacular subsistence and self-valorization, Cleaver, “Inversion of Class Perspective,” 123–125. See also Zibechi, “Subterranean Echoes.”

⁶⁷⁶ Mitropoulos, “Autonomy, Recognition, Movement,” 7. For Mitropoulos, migration is a strategy that is “undertaken in and against the cramped spaces of the global political economies of work, gender and desire, among other things.” Ibid, 8.

Therefore, in mainstream bourgeois social theory there have been many terms to characterize unintegrated, unmanageable working class autonomy: deviant, delinquent deficient, uneducated, primitive, backward, underdeveloped, criminal, subversive, schizophrenic, infantile, paranoid, sick, and so on. In the struggle against the repression such terms justify, we must investigate the nature of such autonomy and its relationship to capital's own valorization with great care.⁶⁷⁷

Kayla's death can be read within a conjuncture of capitalism that requires new technologies and tactics of policing bodies and space.⁶⁷⁸ Why did a police response to a possible mental crisis call end with a woman dead in her apartment in an expensive residence in downtown Berkeley? Positioning Kayla and the police response to her that night at the convergence of historical forces in the cycle of composition, decomposition, and recomposition what emerges is an understanding of policing that involves situating her within a particular conjuncture of capital informed by cycles of struggle. This approach provides possibilities for recognizing Kayla's autonomy as a subject, and the possibility for theorizing this autonomy as a site of struggle. This simultaneously invites new thinking around the militarization of care as a strategy to disrupt the social factory.

People's Investigations as Institutions of the Commons

People's Investigations emerge in different forms, more or less formal, as an insurgent and regenerative practice whenever communities experience

⁶⁷⁷ Cleaver, "Inversion of Class Perspective," 124

⁶⁷⁸ The policing of bodies and space in relation to cycles of struggle and the conjunctures they determine is covered in earlier sections and will continue to be developed more fully in relation community safety and practices of autonomy in the subsequent chapters.

violence. Some begin with *chisme* or the first annunciations of what was seen or speculated. Cobarrubias They begin with a question, as in the case of the Combahee River Collective's "Six Black Women: Why Did They Die?," a question in response to a disappearance or a lie in plain view that the community disavows. They confront forms of state manufactured violence that are shifted onto the community as poverty, internecine conflict, or the community's own "devaluation of human life." These inquiries begin and exist in the moment where witnesses come forward to share *testimonio*—of violence as event, as something lingering, something lived and remembered. They arise to elaborate the violences before the violence as event and they contest those who the state or media names as the authors of the violence. As sites where counterknowledges are produced, circulated, and claimed, they challenge the epistemological frames that attempt to secure, through a prose of counterinsurgency, how it was that a particular situation unfolded. In Holloway and Callahan's terms, these inquiries in their initial forms or as a more advanced part of a larger community process are assertions of dignity. They are also a call to justice. As these initial inquiries and refusals that emerge from a particular community take form, they produce new knowledges about a situation and increasingly become sites of learning and collective action. Theory is generated about what happened and what should be done.

As an enduring collective process, these investigations are often initiated by women, and in particular by women from communities targeted by violence, racialized communities systematically cordoned into the extreme peripheries of

urban financial and tourist centers, the ghettos, the *barrios*, the *favelas*, the Bantustans. In many cases, these women share an intimate and deep experience of violence—they have lost children, grandchildren, brothers and sisters, parents, lovers to the violence enacted by state agents or manufactured by the state, increasingly through the criminalization and militarization of all aspects of community life. They are initiated by the same women that struggle to maintain connections across the distances engendered by capital and the state—migrations, deportations, and mass incarceration.

The Bay Area draws on a long history of community-based monitoring, documentation, and investigative practices, including community defense projects like those carried out by the Black Panthers in Oakland to monitor police presence in their communities and respond collectively to forms of occupation organized around colonial logic. In more recent history, investigative efforts have emerged out of groups organized to respond to killings by police officers and in most cases, these investigations are spearheaded by Black and Brown women who are striking back against these tremendous losses, not just those losses allocated as “their own” but those that aim at the bonds and relations that hold communities together. Following the murder of her son Idriss Stelley by San Francisco Police officers in the Metreon I-Max Theatre off Union Square, Mesha Monge-Irizarry of the Idriss Stelley Foundation conducted many independent investigations into

police murders across San Francisco.⁶⁷⁹ In another recent and remarkable effort, a subcommittee of the Oscar Grant Committee, comprised of the founding members of the People's Community Medics, responded to a reported shooting of an unarmed man by police on Cherry Street in Oakland. After traveling out to the neighborhood to speak with people who had witnessed the shooting, members of the subcommittee constructed an alternative narrative that reflected what the people who lived in the community and witnessed the incident saw, experienced, and know.⁶⁸⁰ These efforts contradict the official state narratives advanced through official police reports documenting their own actions in the service of preserving law and order. They contradict the context and the perception of threat to reveal a texture of ongoing militarized violence, part of new forms of colonial

⁶⁷⁹ Idriss Stelley was a student, activist, artist, and community member who at the time the police arrived in the Metreon Theater in response to a crisis call, was experiencing a state of mental and emotional disorientation. San Francisco Police officers proceeded to empty the entire theater and shoot Idriss over twenty times, supposedly on the threat that he had waved a small pocket knife in their direction. His primary caretaker and partner was removed from Idriss's side when the police arrived and order out of the theater before he was killed. His story is told earlier in this work.

⁶⁸⁰ This report was later published in the *SF BayView* newspaper by Anita Wills and Cynthia Morse. See Wills and Morse, "Unnamed young Black man killed by Oakland police."

occupation that structure the lives of entire communities both prior to, at the moment of, and beyond the violence as event.⁶⁸¹

Other forms of grassroots investigations take place at the sites where community members monitor, document and archive violence and struggles. These include groups like PUEBLO (People United for a Better Life in Oakland) and other collectives and groups across the Bay Area, including numerous copwatching groups from Berkeley to San Jose and beyond. The community archive serves as a site of knowledge production, “space of encounter,” and direct action and is critical to the convivial research projects that this work engages through its ethnography. Groups often link research with direct action casework, including collaborative community efforts organized around refusal, accountability, and autonomy. In Northern California, groups like Redwood Curtain Copwatch have launched their own inquiries through connections with the families, refusing to let violence go unmarked and making visible the excesses,

⁶⁸¹ These often include stories that reveal patterns of police stalking individuals or focusing inordinately on particular homes or street corners prior to the event; the seizing of evidence, including footage recorded by cameras and cell phones at the time of the incident or immediately following it; as well as forms of witness and family intimidation in the aftermath of the incident. In the case of Cherry Street, investigators learned that there was a child who witnessed the killing from a second story window and confirmed that the person who was shot had his hands up in the air and did not have a weapon when the police fired on him. The police visited the child at his school and renarrated for the child what he saw. Similar stories of police intervening at school to threaten children has arisen across other incidents in the Bay Area investigated by People’s Investigations as well.

strategies, and actions of state law enforcement agencies, including specific officers within departments.⁶⁸²

The People's Investigation into the death of Kayla Moore arose from these many histories. At the center of the investigation was Kayla Moore's family—in particular Kayla's sister Maria who was a few years younger than Kayla, Maria's partner Carl and Maria and Kayla's father Arthur, a long time resident of Berkeley and in younger years, an active part of Berkeley's vibrant political life. Kayla's stepmother, niece, and other family members and friends were also

⁶⁸² Redwood Curtain Copwatch has facilitated several significant and effective People's Investigations responding to violence in Northern California, including in particular the case into the beating to death of Martin Cotton, Jr. by officers of the Eureka Police Department. At the time the officers bludgeoned Martin in broad daylight on a sidewalk in the middle of town, he was experiencing some form of mental and or emotional crisis and had been surviving without a stable and safe living situation for an extended period of time. The killing left Martin Cotton's young daughter without a father. Redwood Curtain Copwatch, together with People's Action and Resource Center (PARC) also participated in a People's Investigation into the deliberate burning to death by the Eureka Police Department of Peter Stewart of Hoopa Territory. Following his recent release from a mental care facility in Northern California, Stewart became disoriented, possibly as a result of an inappropriate dosage or application of medical treatment from the facility, or an early discharge. Stewart was at a friend's house and appeared confused but was calming down in the presence of his friend. In response to a call for care placed by Stewart's mother, Eureka Police, together with a Pelican Bay SWAT team arrived and instigated a standoff that lasted many hours. After ordering Stewart's friend out of the house, the police officers, under the authority of and including officers introduced a series of explosive devices into the house where Stewart had barricaded himself. Stewart's mother was cordoned from the area further down the road and unable to reach her son. Eventually, the house caught fire, and while a fire truck was present on the scene, despite pleas from members of the Fire Department who knew Stewart and wanted to extinguish the now flaming house with Stewart inside, the police department forbade all efforts to reach out to Stewart or save him from the burning house. Following the almost total incineration of the home, Stewart body was found in the bathtub, where he had retreated, wrapping himself in wet towels. Although brought to trial in the 9th circuit the jury found no officers were at fault for the murder of Peter Stewart. The information above on Martin Cotton Jr. is from Redwood Curtain Copwatch, and also from my notes from a mobilizing meeting in Berkeley as part of Berkeley Copwatch when members of Redwood Curtain Copwatch traveled to the Bay Area to mobilize for the upcoming trial, as well as from a community rally outside the Federal Courthouse in Oakland marking the beginning of the trial. The information on the killing of Peter Stewart comes from my own notes during the trial for the wrongful death of Peter Stewart that took place at the Federal Courthouse in San Francisco.

present for several of the activities over the course of the investigation. The family members were among the primary strategists throughout the investigation and also took on a prominent public role vis-à-vis the state and the press. Across gatherings, spaces, and in confrontation with various institutions the family through the tool of the People's Investigation continued to give voice to the unanswered question, *What happened to Kayla Moore?*

The Birthday Party as *Escrache*

*The escrache is a call to struggle.*⁶⁸³

The birthday party was a critical moment in the People's Investigation. As a community-based justice project organized around research, direct action, and community speak-outs convened together with people from across the Bay Area—Berkeley, Oakland, San Francisco, San Jose, it served as the site to demand that the Berkeley Police Department release the official police investigation findings into the death in custody that had occurred at the Gaia building two months before. With this and other demands, the celebration and memorial was constructed as a site of direct action organized with Kayla's family at the center. It was a particular moment of justice and community research where knowledge was generated collectively about the incident that had occurred, the context in which it had occurred and the investigative process taking shape. The “space of encounter” carved out through the celebration and direct action

⁶⁸³ Colectivo Situaciones, *Genocide in the Neighborhood*, 44.

functions in this instance as a site of “living theory,” in what Uni Tierra Califas advances as “an effort to document and examine the forces arrayed against us as a proposition to change the condition we find ourselves without imposing a fixed already determined future.”⁶⁸⁴ Through the birthday party encounter, stories were shared of police abuse, mental health targeting, racism, transphobia, community focused care, and what it means to be a community experiencing violence at the hands of state agents while working to understand justice and community safety on our own terms.⁶⁸⁵

In the ateneo spaces of Uni Tierra Califas’ over the year of the People’s Investigation, the birthday party was theorized in relation to the many spaces that unfolded as part of the investigation. To think the birthday party as a site of direct action, we drew on the *escraches* of HIJOs, a political space to confront the forced disappearances that formed a critical strategy of state-sponsored terror during Argentina’s Dirty War. For HIJOs, the children of the disappeared, “the *escrache* only exists as a response to the demand for justice.”⁶⁸⁶ It is a process that recognizes that the demands for justice have not, and cannot, be met by the state and it refutes the possibility of a state-organized justice. It emerges in the absence of justice and recognizes that “the struggle expressed by the *escrache*

⁶⁸⁴ Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Democracy Ateneo Announcement 11-16-13.”

⁶⁸⁵ CCRA’s community safety project and theorizations highlights defense, justice, and assembly and places the family at the center of defense and justice projects, including people’s investigations.

⁶⁸⁶ Colectivo Situaciones, *Genocide in the Neighborhood*, 44.

goes beyond the State of Rights and can't be absorbed by it.”⁶⁸⁷ While it functions to expose and reveal, “essence of the *escrache* is lost if trapped within the logic of negotiation.”⁶⁸⁸ Instead, the articulation of demands circulate as a system of information in the community, and the space of the *escrache* is a TAZKP. While some scholars focus primarily on the shame and the “outing” made possible by the *escrache*, this is one tactic of the *escrache* but it is not the *escrache*'s totality. Other elements of the *escrache* include community organized boycotts that can function to exile the perpetrator of state violence from the neighborhood where he or she resides and have lived in relative obscurity despite his or her violent deeds. The *escrache* is also marked by a vibrant street party, often the culmination of many months of organizing. In the words of HIJOs, “*escraches* are situations of resistance and of new forms of existence: situations where autonomous forms of existence (which are different than those of Power) are produced and then spread to every area of life.”⁶⁸⁹ The *escrache* serves as a site of living theory for understanding the within, against, and beyond the state. In responding to brutal violence authored by the state and which the state has refused to acknowledge as a site of injustice, it remains in militant confrontation with the state's violent history. Yet, at the same time, the “*escrache* is not inscribed in a frustrated desire for inclusion but in its opposite: a desire for justice that persists

⁶⁸⁷ Ibid., 45.

⁶⁸⁸ Ibid., 48.

⁶⁸⁹ Ibid., 102.

in spite of this frustration.”⁶⁹⁰ The *escrache* is a desire for justice that lives beyond and outside the state.

Like the *escraches* following state violence in Argentina, Kayla’s birthday party marked both a refusal and relocation.⁶⁹¹ In the first instance, while we collectively demanded the official documentation of the events that led to Kayla’s death and the state’s own summary of how she died, in the act of convening a People’s Investigation conceived as a site of community knowledge production organized through an ongoing series of open gatherings, it was a refusal to concede responsibility or articulate justice through the terms and institutions of the state.⁶⁹² In the second, the space of the party was on one level a site of open mourning in the neighborhood and at the same time celebratory, strategic and intimate. Working together with Kayla’s family and friends throughout the investigation was instrumental in generating a relocation of both the site of struggle and possibilities for a shared justice into the neighborhood through the shared “space of encounter.” The birthday party was not merely a tactic. It was above all else, a moment where together we could come together to remember the loss of a member of our community outside of the production of her death by the

⁶⁹⁰ Ibid., 105.

⁶⁹¹ For a more thorough discussion of the *escrache* as a direct action “space of encounter,” see Colectivo Situaciones, *Genocide in the Neighborhood*. See also the final report of the People’s Investigation, *In-Custody Death of Kayla Moore*, 21. The sites of collaborative knowledge production convened through Uni Tierra Califas and CCRA offered space for collective theorization on resistance, autonomy, and movement building in relation to community safety throughout the process of the People’s Investigation. I am particularly indebted here to Manuel Callahan, Elisa Ocegüera, Ricardo Agredano, and James Braggs.

⁶⁹² See Thomas Nail, *Returning to Revolution*; Day, *Gramsci is Dead*.

state, which we had been in the process of responding to since the day after her death in February. In this way, it was in its immediate sense, convened outside the state.⁶⁹³ At the same time, it functioned effectively as a direct action moment that advanced our militant research strategy given that part of our efforts towards justice were centered on a desire to know what happened the night of her death.⁶⁹⁴ Thus, the party provided an opportunity to exercise a civic demand through the Public Record Act Request (PRA), a legislative act compelling disclosure in response to public demands for transparency and information.⁶⁹⁵ This would allow us to hold the state accountable across a series of institutions and to make visible a number of emerging issues of concern that coalesced in the moment of her death in custody. The police report containing the primary testimony by police as part of the internal investigation (in other words, as interviewed by other police) immediately following Kayla's death would provide a reading of the state's efforts to contain and justify Kayla's death, thus providing a site of elaboration for those "urban marginals" that capital deliberately leaves stranded.⁶⁹⁶ Policing power in relation to capital and the racial formation that it

⁶⁹³ Here I draw on the work of Esteva and Prakash in *Grassroots Post-Modernism* to think about what it means to have our struggles engage those practices that "get the state out" of our most intimate moments, both individual and in our relations. See Esteva and Prakash, *Grassroots Post-Modernism*.

⁶⁹⁴ My thinking on the role of militant research in relation to resistance and movement building draws from the work of Colectivo Situaciones, *19&20*, and also in particular, their essay, "Something More on Research Militancy," as well as the work in thinking through ethnography in Juris and Kashnabish, *Insurgent Encounters*.

⁶⁹⁵ The Public Records Act Request was signed into law in California in 1968 at the height of struggles for greater transparency into government policies and actions.

⁶⁹⁶ Cleaver, "Inversion of Class Perspective."

articulates in the present conjuncture can then be read through the construction of Kayla as an “urban marginal,” or what JanMohammad refers to as “a death-bound-subject.”⁶⁹⁷

The Public Records Act Request was drawn up on a piece of extra large sheet of posterboard as a finale to the party, we travelled en masse with music to the Berkeley Police Department, where the theatrically sized request was taped to the front door by Kayla’s family.

The birthday party and its PRA request in the absence of any official inquiry simultaneously made visible that there was no independent inquiry initiated through the municipal, county or state officers following a death at the hands of the police. This prompted a larger critique of the Civilian Review Board, an institution designed to monitor the police that had emerged from the struggles of the early 1970s in response to the policing tactics used to repress the revolts and rebellions of the 1960s and the sudden escalation of a militarized police force. Six months later, the results of the People’s Investigation were delivered to the Berkeley Civilian Review Board, orchestrating the space to deliver the results to the large gathering of people who had participated in the struggle for justice for Kayla over the course of the past eight months. The tables were turned. The report of findings was shared with the crowd, a room filled with posters and slogans. The result was a refusal to acknowledge the authority of the impotent and coopted review board and instead listening to each others experiences at the intersection of care and policing.

⁶⁹⁷ JanMohamed, *The Death-Bound-Subject*.

The People's Investigation relied on both militant research and convivial research approaches to theorize and act both against and outside the state. The direct action tactics of the birthday party provided an opportunity to challenge the state and make its violence, and Kayla as the target of that violence, visible. It allowed us to reclaim space without police censure and to obstruct a street without having to call in advance for a march. It made it possible to disseminate large amounts of information that were critical of the police response and what we named through collective discussions as "the militarization of care."

Harry Cleaver draws on Antonio Negri's formulation of "negative" and "positive" resistance to differentiate those forms of resistance which directly engage and challenge the imposition of capital (for example, the wage strike) versus those processes that advance autonomous, self-organized activity.⁶⁹⁸ A convivial research approach as advanced through the research projects of The spaces of UniTierra Califas and CCRA begin at the moment that communities come together outside of the state to reclaim their own knowledge. This decision to make learning central to our struggles for autonomy is informed by an urban Zapatismo, one where systems of information are central to those self-valorization processes that disrupt the relations that capital attempts to impose.⁶⁹⁹ In the instance of Kayla's birthday party, while the demand for information was

⁶⁹⁸ See Cleaver, "Inversion of Class Perspective," and "On Self-Valorization."

⁶⁹⁹ Here I draw on the conversation in Manuel Callahan's Activist Ethnography class at the California Institute of Integral Studies, San Francisco, with John Holloway in March of 2012, centered on the question of urban Zapatismo and its relation to "civic pedagogy."

addressed to the Berkeley Police Department, this demand was contextualized within the framework of an autonomously organized, open process named the People's Investigation. In the same way that the *escraches* that made visible state violence in Argentina, Kayla Moore's birthday party marks a moment where stories, witness accounts, and perspectives are shared across various connections and conversations throughout the gathering as residents leave the building and inquire about the party, family members and friends offer a history that speaks to the life lived over time and the community's loss, and community organizers and others loosely identified as the investigation collective circulate with flyers and questions. The sidewalk becomes a space for sharing information or collective research about what happened and why it happened the way it did. As event, it is situated within a longer struggle stretching over months that is the People's Investigation.

A few weeks after the police killing of Kayla, a collection of Oakland organizers from across several groups came together in a temporary and largely anonymous configuration, calling themselves Against Hired Guns and calling a Bay Area wide meeting in the basement of one of downtown Oakland's decaying

department stores just a few blocks off of 14th and Broadway.⁷⁰⁰ The campaign centered on the OPD execution of Alan Blueford from earlier in that spring was entering into new legal territory, and new information was surfacing about the evening Raheim Brown was shot to death in a car just off Oakland public school district property. Many people were recognizable to each other in the meeting in the department store basement as organizers and community members from across networks gathered and shared experiences from different corners of the struggle against the militarization of our communities. It was mutually affirmed that while as a movement or cluster of networked spaces we must continue to respond to each death in the community that we also must find ways to organize ourselves that do not lock us into a reactive position vis-à-vis the state. At this

⁷⁰⁰ Against Hired Guns had formed in part as a response to a series of Oakland killings by police officers of young Black and Brown youth, and in particular as a way to circulate information and documents that were emerging following the killing of Raheim Brown in Oakland on January 22, 2011, by Oakland Unified School District Officer Barhin Bhatt who had been hired by the school district after being fired from the OPD for brutality. Members of this loosely identified configuration had also begun distributing leaflets across neighborhoods in Oakland following police killings. The leaflets included a reproduced sketch of a figure holding a spear and wearing a t-shirt with the words, *I am Oscar Grant* and a short analysis of the role of police in society. The goal of the tactic was to respond quickly to incidents of state violence alerting the community that the violence had occurred, not to offer a substantial counternarrative of the event. Rather, the leaflets can be seen as part of a larger strategy against the invisibilization of those targeted and violently removed from the community and as a provocative tactic in instigating grassroots inquiries that can then develop into more sustained People's Investigations. In many cases across the Bay Area, even community members who know or have heard that a police attack took place in their midst are unable to track down information regarding the name or any history of the person. In this sense, the Against Hired Guns leaflets simultaneously served as markers against erasure, listing street intersections and the time of the incident that could be traced later and read against reports that the police posted annually under mandatory transparency legislation. In some instances, community members would not learn the name of the person who had been killed until the police departments published these annual records, often many months after the incident when the loss to the community was no longer so immediate and raw. Since the beginning of Occupy Oakland's encampment in Oscar Grant Plaza in October of 2011, the Raheim Brown Free School and Library formed a critical part of the landscape of self-organized, community spaces.

meeting, members of the People's Investigation into the in-custody death of Kayla circulated preliminary information about the incident, speaking with other groups and passing out leaflets.

Kayla's body as a target of state violence had first surfaced in a Berkeley newspaper the day after she was killed. *The Daily Californian* reported that a forty-one-year-old man with "possible mental health issues" had died in police custody on the 2000 block of Allston Way. Her race was not noted. The newspaper quotes a press statement released by the Berkeley Police Department that continued to refer to Kayla as a man. According to the police statement, quoted in the paper, "(he) became increasingly agitated and uncooperative to the officer's verbal commands and began to scream and violently resist," and "after struggling with officers, they were able to gain control of the subject and place him in restraints."⁷⁰¹ The statement noted that after the officers had placed the man in restraints and on a gurney, at some point they realized he was no longer breathing. After the officers attempted to perform CPR, the statement continues, he was taken to a nearby hospital and pronounced dead. Thus on the day following the incident the state, supported by the media, launched its first erasure of the incident, if not the first erasure of Kayla. A person with possible mental illness had simply expired while resisting police care. This fact of an in-custody death following an "involuntary psychiatric hold" at the hands of the police provoked the first interrogation from the community that marked the onset of the People's Investigation. Within the next few days, a few members of Berkeley

⁷⁰¹ Nguyen, "Berkeley man dies after being taken into police custody," para. 4.

Copwatch went to the address listed in the paper and located the Gaia Building, a new Mediterranean-style apartment complex towering over downtown Berkeley, with a locked door only permeable by code or permission. The investigation began questioning residents as they came out of the building and learned that while the papers had listed the subject of the in-custody death as a man, that every resident engaged referenced a woman who had been killed. Several of the witnesses had seen the police in the building, had heard screams at some point late in the evening after the police arrived, and several had seen police emerging from Kayla's apartment and described officers outside the apartment that they described variously as "sweaty," "limping," and including one with a torn shirt. They described Kayla as not white, largely proportioned, and friendly. Several noted that she had only recently moved into the building within the past few months, and that she had sometimes approached people about buying and selling drugs, and that they knew of several people in the building who had bought drugs from her, though they were unspecific about the type of drugs that were circulating through the building. Thus the first phases of the investigative effort involved tracking down information about what happened on the night that Kayla was killed. From the initial queries of the investigation, members of the investigative team were able to learn Kayla's name and connect with her family. From here, a number of moves were launched in the People's Investigation. Within the first few weeks, a series of Public Records Act (PRA) requests were submitted to the Berkeley Police Department requesting state produced information from the evening when Kayla was killed. Investigators also called the

coroner's office (which is the Alameda County Sheriff's office) and learned that a hold had been placed by the Berkeley Police Department, barring any information from being released. This hold extended to Kayla's immediate family who were likewise unable to access any information regarding Kayla's body and the in-custody death that resulted from the intervention of six police officers into her apartment on the evening February 15th. The People's Investigation, organized with the family at the center of the investigative efforts, called a series of meetings at the Grassroots House in Berkeley and began assessing how to proceed in finding out what happened to Kayla Moore.

We began gathering at the Grassroots House in Berkeley a few blocks from where Kayla had lived prior to this last contact with the police. Members of Berkeley Copwatch who had initiated the People's Investigation had worked out of the Grassroots House, a community space, for many years. Much of the People's Investigation took place on the sidewalk in front of the Gaia Building and in the backroom of the Grassroots House. Other spaces, including Uni Tierra Califas' Democracy Ateneo and Insurgent Learning Ateneo functioned as spaces of reflection and knowledge production alongside the spaces of direct action. The People's Investigation relied on both militant research and convivial research approaches to theorize and act both against and outside the state. The direct action tactics of the birthday party provided an opportunity to challenge the state and make its violence, and Kayla as the target of that violence, visible. It allowed us as a community to reclaim space without police censure and to obstruct a street without having to petition in advance for permission to march. Through the

festivities of a warm April afternoon, it was possible to disseminate large amounts of information including hundreds of flyers that were critical of the police response and what we named through collective discussions as “the militarization of care.”

The birthday party was one of several networked spaces of reflection and direct action as part of the People’s Investigation. These also included a community speak out organized together with anti-police groups, mental health providers and community organizers that focused on the question of whether cops or counselors should be responding to people in crisis in the community. Working together across groups, the People’s Investigation was able to learn and imagine collectively autonomous possibilities for community care and safety that did not rely on the police or the state. We learned that some groups used “safe house” models that were available in certain areas for people experiencing crisis, and that central to these spaces was the commitment that those in crisis retain autonomy over their decisions to rest and stay there. These were organized as non-punitive spaces. We were also able to generate a community wide conversation around the possibility for first responders that had been trained in Emotional CPR (or E-CPR). In this model, advanced by PEERS Health group, a nonprofit comprised of people living with forms of mental variance and mental illness, community members would be trained to respond to people in mental crisis in a safe and adept way. Others from various nursing backgrounds shared valuable information about their own experiences with people in mental crisis, confirming that there were a number of safe alternatives for calming people down and that police and

violent force were not required. In many ways, these gatherings functioned like spaces of assembly, where community members shared their own struggles with mental illness for themselves and their families, and together discussed a number of programs and practices that offered ways to support each other without relying on the police. The investigation also included numerous rallies at City Hall and City Council meetings as well as press conferences, and shared spaces with other families from across the Bay Area who had lost loved ones to the violence of low intensity war.

Six months after the birthday party, the results of the People's Investigation in the form of a final report were delivered to the Berkeley Police Review Commission on October 23, 2014, who had not advanced their own investigation in any serious capacity. This orchestrated the space to deliver the results together with the large gathering of people who had participated in the struggle for justice for Kayla over the course of the past eight months. Despite the commission's attempts to manage the space in order that the report be delivered to them as if presenting evidence, after an awkward scuffle, the tables were turned to face away from the commission and the police. Facing the many people who had participated in the many gatherings, conversations, and across struggles, members of the People's Investigation, as a collective subject, shared the report of findings with the crowd in a room filled with posters and slogans. The result was a refusal to acknowledge the authority of the impotent and coopted review board and instead listening to each other's experiences at the intersection of care and policing. The commission was forced to concede the entire agenda to the People's

Investigation, as community members spoke to each other about their experiences with police violence, truncated services for those in mental crises and increasing cuts to disability services. Motley and powerful, the statements from the community to the community lasted over three hours. As a backdrop, the police and the commission attempted to maintain an absurd pose of authority in order to communicate an intact jurisprudence.

Marking the anniversary of Kayla's death and coinciding with the PRC meeting on February 12, 2014, the People's Investigation held a candlelight vigil outside the Gaia building where Kayla was living at the time she was killed by Berkeley Police officers. Community members together with the family gathered on the sidewalk and then walked with LED-powered tea light candles and banners down Shattuck Avenue to the Berkeley Police Review commission meeting. When community members who had marched from the vigil to the PRC entered the meeting room, they did so to the shouts of "fuck the pigs!," hoisting massive painted "Justice for Kayla" banners on poles that were stomped noisily against the ground. The PRC, and the attendant row of uniformed police officers, including Berkeley Chief Meehan, were unable to speak or commence the meeting while the procession filed loudly into the room and delayed the start of the meeting amidst shouts, stomping, with much whooping and sharp comments aimed at the commissioners and the police.

It had been a year since the murder of Kayla by the BPD and four months since the release of the sixty page People's Investigation report, and the independent civilian review still had not released any information about the

investigation they had announced they, too, were launching a year ago into the death at 2116 Gaia. Many of the folks present did not conform to gender norms, several wore the balaclavas of the Black Bloc, and many clustered around the edges of the room, badgering the commission about the results of their investigation, demanding the civilian review report, and inquiring about the status of one member of the PRC in particular, Cardoza. Cardoza, a member of the independent commission was the father of Sergeant Cardoza who participated in the home invasion that ended Kayla's life. Kayla's sister, Maria Moore, convened the room gracefully with the support of the procession behind her, demanding to know why the commission had yet to respond to the incident or address in any way what happened to Kayla. The family also demanded to know the status of Cardoza on the investigation. During the lulls where questions were directed at the commission before the cacophony resumed, often initiated by the person who held the floor with their question, the community gathered pushed for details about the work of the commission. The commissioners were livid, and tried to call out people they recognized from the community in an attempt to elicit unilateral negotiations and through this relation to control the crowd. The inadequacy of the commission, and its role in protecting the police by serving as a buffer between the community and the department, was completely revealed.

After close to two hours of mayhem, jeers and enraged and informed questions from the floor, a group of Kayla supporters clustered by the exit door shut down the lights in the meeting hall. Everyone was left in total darkness, with the police asking that the lights please be turned back on, to roars of laughter

echoing through the dark that had gone silent. Finally, one officer walked through the dark room to turn the switch back on and then returned to his seat flanked by the rest of the department, only to have the lights go out again, amidst peels of laughter. This time, the police had to station an officer by the light switch. The meeting was effectively over, and the procession filed back out into the streets, sharing insights and reflections before dispersing across different points in the night—on bikes, in cars, on foot, and on BART, back to homes in Berkeley, Oakland, San Francisco, and beyond.

CHAPTER 6: THE JUSTICE CAMPAIGNS

Walk them pigs around the park!
-Dionne Smith-Downes, Stockton barbecue, April 2014

In Stockton in late April of 2014, families and community members arrived at a local park for a barbecue.⁷⁰² There, they unfurled banners with photographs of their children, killed by various law enforcement agents often acting in collaboration across federal, local, and county agencies, or targeted by other forms of state-manufactured violence, or incarcerated with sentences as long as their lives, often based on questionable policing practices that were upheld and advanced by the courts. Large banners were stretched taut between trees, tables were washed down, and people arrived with cakes and salads, coolers of soda and beer. A barbecue had been started earlier in the morning, and people moved through the line of smoke where chicken was cooking on the grill. Music played

⁷⁰² Families and organizers from Stockton also regularly travel to direct action spaces and community gatherings in Oakland and San Jose where we have participated in rallies and marches following prominent incidents of state violence including the killing of Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown in the summer of 2014. This circulation across periphery zones and urban centers has provided a sustained engagement between communities of struggle based in Stockton and others in the Bay Area. For many of us at the Stockton barbecue and connected to the struggles there, Uni Tierra's Democracy Ateneo in San Jose functioned as a critical space of reflection and action to process collectively and generate a shared analysis of the barbecue as a site of autonomous struggle. The *ateneo* deliberately constructs three spaces of reflection around each consistent "space of encounter"—the announcement (collectively written by participants in the Stockton barbecue and who share a community of struggle); the *ateneo* space itself (organized through agreements and collectively generated questions); and the summary produced following the *ateneo* (collectively written and circulated among those present before archived on the CCRA web infrastructure that include the projects of Uni Tierra Califas as well as the Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning *taller*). Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, "Democracy Ateneo Announcement 4-19-14."

from a large portable speaker propped next to a canopy erected that morning for shade.

In addition to the lives represented on the more stylized banners, other lives were commemorated in hand lettered statements on poster board. Sturdy pieces of paper were tacked onto trees with photos in the center, including a poster with a portrait and the phrase *Long Live Champ*. One life was commemorated on a deconstructed cardboard box propped on a park bench with a person's name scripted in graffiti-style calligraphy. From a mini-van that had just arrived from Oakland, people unloaded boxes containing thousands of glossy postcards bearing photographs of several young men who had been killed and text with details of the killings. The postcards highlighted a life taken, often including the weapon used in the killing, the various law enforcement and state agencies involved, and when known and available, the names and photographs of the officers present and responsible for the killing. Almost always, the postcards counted the number of shots fired into each body. Some included the number and location of dog bites that had mauled a body before it was shot. These were the descriptions written by families about the bodies of their children, their loved ones. In some cases the family's assessment, including the number of bullet holes counted on the body once a family was finally able to see it at a morgue, stood in contradiction to the police and/or coroner's report, the discrepancy alone opening up the chasm between state narratives and community knowledge as counter-narrative.

Sometimes two lives were remembered side by side on the same postcard, encouraging parallels between killings that may have been separated across time, or simply and starkly functioning to connect a department's acts of violence, a refusal to forget. One postcard that was particularly striking in this regard contained two state murders that took place in Stockton: the murder of James Rivera Jr. and Donnie Hayes, both of whom are Black. James Rivera was sixteen when he was killed, making him among the younger targets of police violence in the Bay Area. He was also small in stature. Donnie Hayes, on the other side of the postcard, was older and based on his age as well as his more muscular size and stature, could be more visibly cast as "threatening" in the justifying discourse of the state. As families face the criminalization that occurs through the proliferation of state misinformation and disinformation following a police killing, their first moves are often ones that attempt to confront or resist these strategies. A response from families nationwide is frequently one that advances a counter-narrative, reclaiming an innocence or a sense of promise, witnessed through the repeated assertions at rallies and in grassroots statements and independent media that a loved one was unarmed, or had never had a criminal record, or was enrolled in college or held a full time job, or was a father or mother. These become critical details to circulate and serve to contest police representations of the incident itself and to refute technologies of criminalization that invariably appear across dominant media sources, most often circulated by police departments themselves, following a killing. However, communities also organize effectively to circumnavigate the strategies put forward by the state and the media that attempt

to divide the community around an axis of innocent/thug or unfortunate victim/deserving victim, etcetera. The postcard that places a very young looking James Rivera Jr., who was in death nonetheless still in danger of being framed by the state as a “gangbanger,” next to Donnie Hayes who was much more readily legible as a threat (due to his age, clearly visible tattoos, etc.) marks a profound moment of dignity on the part of the community. In other words, there is a refusal to accept that the escape from social death demands an exceptional status to win inclusion “back into the fold” of the lives, and loss of life, that “count.” Such a bid for inclusion via the construction of an innocent or undeserving subject may be necessary and have meaning in the construction of a counter narrative for example in the instance of a trial. Yet it is one that communities both advance strategically and also abandon, recognizing that this imperative to differentiate a good subject through a differential process of subjectification in death marks the forces at play that create a certain desire for families to insure their loved one is, even in death, “counted among the living.”⁷⁰³ Rather, the postcard circulated at the Stockton barbecue in remembering two lives is a moment where a community mobilizes in a collective refutation of social death, hoisting the responsibility of violence back onto state.

Some post cards were almost entirely organized around reprinted photographs captioned with short biographical information on the law enforcement agents involved in the killings. In one case, the postcard included a

⁷⁰³ Foucault, “Right of Death and Power Over Life,” 138. This recalls the function of biopower in producing a desire to be “counted among the living.” Ibid. This is an assertion against the state’s apportioning of “social death.” See Cacho, “Social Death.”

photograph of the local medical examiner. Through its own research processes, communities had exposed the ways this office, too, was complicit in reproducing and justifying the state's narrative of the necessity or justifications of its violence.

Others at the barbecue wore t-shirts screened with the faces of the loved ones that they had lost, many scripted with the phrases *Rest in Peace* or *Rest in Power* followed by the dates spanning the person's life. Often, the address of where the killing occurred was also printed on the shirt. In many cases, the address was an intersection of streets that marked the specific spot in the city where the person had been gunned down. In this way, it was possible to see that many cities and towns were present in the space. There were buttons as well, a photograph transposed into a circle the size of a coaster to mark each killing.⁷⁰⁴ These were handed out from a large clear plastic bag among those gathered at the barbecue. The buttons were sometimes updated on a weekly basis to include the most recent killings from across the Bay Area and also across the United States.

The park in Stockton reflected the justice campaigns: Justice for James Earl Rivera Jr., Justice for Donnie Rae Haynes, for Alexander Fontau Mahan, for Mario Romero, for Alan Blueford, for Raheim Brown, for Kayla Xavier Moore, for Alex Nieto, for Oscar Grant. The justice campaigns were reflected in multiple systems of information through banners and signs, post cards and t-shirts, buttons

⁷⁰⁴ The buttons were designed by George Russell of Oakland who initiated and maintained their distribution and circulation. This was one of many focused strands of consistent and dedicated direct action. Another similar example is the dedicated chalk work of Lisa Ganser of San Francisco. Ganser would arrive to direct action spaces early in order to begin sketching a collection of names on sidewalks, remembering the losses collectively in bright colors and chalk. This is not to say that this was the only method or site of direct action of either Russell or Ganser, but that they created a consistent strategy that functioned as both of system of information and a form of alternative media.

and chalk drawings. While the majority of the articles reflected a commemoration of lives taken by law enforcement, some remembered lives lost to state-manufactured violence—young people whose lives were taken on city streets, in parks, on the porches of their own homes by stray bullets, and other sites of violence. The barbecue can also be considered a space of research and or a system of information similar to a grassroots think-tank. In this way, it stands against sites that produce and circulate hegemonic discourses of security and criminalization, for example, RAND Corporation or the Cato Institute.⁷⁰⁵

The justice campaigns are spaces of convivial research where grassroots investigations are honed and explored and communities are in control of their own knowledge production. They are spaces where research and strategy is circulated among the community. In these community spaces, information is tracked about different incidents that had been released by various state agencies and the investigations conducted through various departments—coroner’s reports, police reports, morgue photos, CAD reports, and other forms of state documentation. Through the collective investigations, gaps are assessed and calls formulated for pieces of information that remained missing or which remained unaccounted.

⁷⁰⁵ The RAND Corporation (an acronym for Research ANd Development) is a global think tank in service of the U.S. military. RAND considers itself nonpartisan, and states, “our research is sponsored by U.S. government agencies; non-U.S. governments, agencies, and ministries; international organizations; U.S. state and local governments; colleges and universities; foundations; industry; professional associations; and other nonprofit organizations.” See RAND Corporation, “How We’re Funded,” para. 1. The Cato Institute, which also considers itself nonpartisan, is a think tank committed to public policy research committed to advancing individual freedoms, the free market, and minimal government. It accepts no funding from the government, instead relying on private individual contributions and corporate funding. See, Cato Institute, “About Cato,” para. 1, 3.

Incidents are narrated and demands issued: “Stop the Cover-Ups!” “Release the Dash Cam Videos!” Many called for an independent Department of Justice or FBI investigation into the corruption and brutality that the community knows plagues departments.

The investigations deliberately convened “spaces of encounter” that functioned as TAZKP where the community shared, compared, and filtered information that they had about the incident.⁷⁰⁶ As TAZKP, they are always linked to other spaces. As justice campaigns and community-based investigations, they make visible those stories of the violence that communities continue to face. They also revealed information about specific officers, often a history of criminal or violent behavior that the community is able to surface and which is largely sealed from public access. Even in the rare event that a state killing makes it to trial, there is no guarantee that an officer’s past history will come out as part of a public archive, as this information is often restricted in court proceedings.⁷⁰⁷

⁷⁰⁶ On TAZKP, see Callahan, “In Defense of Conviviality,” 14–16.

⁷⁰⁷ Although the figure is informal, in conversation with a local lawyer whose office handles hundreds of police cases from across the Bay Area, the lawyer estimated that fewer than ten percent of cases involving police make it to trial. The lawyer asked to remain anonymous. It is important to note that while the past history of a person targeted by the police or charged with a crime is readily allowed into court proceedings as relevant to a case, it is almost the case that reciprocally, the past history of an officer is allowed into the court record or proceedings. This is true even the officer has a past history of convictions for lying under oath or falsifying documents. It is also the case that an officer who has been fired from a department may testify in court as an officer, without it being shared that the officer is no longer employed by a department. Author’s notes from conversation with a lawyer who represents clients in civil and criminal suits involving the police, April 2015. The civil trial in the Fall of 2014 for the SFPD murder of Asa Sullivan evidenced these practices.

Additionally, stories are swapped getting to the barbecue, preparing for the barbecue, and during the barbecue—for some, on the two-hour drive from Oscar Grant Plaza in Oakland to Liberty Park in Stockton, or while washing down tables, or as food is prepared for serving, or errands are run in the morning to fetch this or that, as car pools are organized to find restrooms at fast food restaurants close to the park because the local park’s public restrooms remain locked despite requests from the families to the city weeks in advance for access. During these errands, one woman speaks about a home raid her family had just experienced under the justification for a uniform probation check on her partner’s minor son. The conviction was not a felony, yet she describes how a few days earlier as part of this routine probation check her house was surrounded by police cars with numerous armed officers entering her house, and then every room was “cleared” in a room-by-room military style. Her family was made to stand together surrounded by police in the center of the living room while her stepson’s room was searched. In addition anger and even a measure of fear each time their home is raided, she speaks of the embarrassment and shame of this regularly occurring situation in relation to her neighbors.

In this way, the justice campaigns and community-based investigations are woven together in “spaces of encounter”—convivial research spaces where knowledge production and community regeneration are merged in service of a community’s survival—within, against, and beyond the state. The barbecues themselves are systems of information, circulate and generating new possibilities in the struggle to demilitarize and decriminalize community life. They also mark a

prefigurative moment in community-based justice that refused the enclosure offered by the courts.⁷⁰⁸

The Stockton barbecue in April of 2014 emerged from a collective struggle that spanned the Bay Area with families targeted by the state at the center of the mobilizing efforts. Dionne Smith-Downs of Stockton had been waging a protracted and militant battle against the state together with her family and as part of the ICMC, of which she was a co-founder together with Anita Wills of San Leandro.⁷⁰⁹ Each woman had lost family members to state violence, state-manufactured violence, or incarceration. According to several witnesses, Dionne's son James Earl Rivera Jr. had been stalked earlier in the morning by Stockton police officers and then shot over thirty-eight times on July 22, 2010, the day before his seventeenth birthday by Stockton Police officers Eric Azarvand and Gregory Dunn, and San Joaquin County Sheriff John Nesbitt. Anita's son Kerry Baxter Sr. had been dealt a sixty-six year prison term in 2003 when he was thirty-years-old in a trial that marked by judicial and juridical bias. Anita's grandson, Kerry Baxter Jr. had been killed on the streets of Oakland in January of 2011 after being stalked by Oakland police the week prior. He was also

⁷⁰⁸ Callahan, "In Defense of Conviviality." See also, Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, "Social Factory Ateneo 10-25-14."

⁷⁰⁹ Following the state killing of James Rivera in July 2010, Dionne and her partner Cary, together with their children and a militant community mobilized around a number of justice struggles in Stockton continuously led marches that blocked freeways, shut down the Stockton court house, stopped traffic and both confronted and evaded police at various intersections and features across the urban geography of Stockton.

sixteen.⁷¹⁰ The ICMC collaborated in the Justice for James Rivera campaign that included many youth and family members in Stockton and Oakland, and across the Bay. More importantly, the convergence of these women's struggles reflected similar convergences among families across the Bay to organize themselves against forms of state violence that were both directly and indirectly authored by the state. While many movement spaces were more readily accustomed to challenging police murders, some reflected a hesitancy when it came to responding to violence within communities not directly traced to law enforcement. In Stockton and through the ICMC, families came together through a shared commitment to militant forms of care that refused to exclude families whose children were not killed directly by the state. This was also a recognition of the contours laid by the state.⁷¹¹ In refusing to exile certain community members, the justice struggles advanced a collective and communal care, one that was not separate from their confrontations with the state and its responsibility for the production of violence. They shared resources, supported each others' direct actions, and press conferences, and in many cases, organized around other issues impacting the family and networking across families and

⁷¹⁰ Author's notes. Both Dionne and Anita retell the stories of the violence that targeted their families at many community spaces, including barbecues, rallies, protests, and other gatherings. Both women share details of members of their families being stalked by law enforcement prior to being killed.

⁷¹¹ In many counties throughout California, the state strategically divides families whose children's deaths were not explicitly authored by the state, for example homicide victims, from those whose were killed by police. The families whose loved ones were killed by police do not receive any form of compensation or counseling, with the message being that the killing of their child by police confirms that their child was criminal and the family is not worthy of attention or compensation from the state.

geography in sustained moments of self-organized activity—setting up fundraisers for medical expenses for other children or funeral costs as family elders passed, showing up at court dates, and managing information on each other’s behalf in relation to a larger extended community to keep families safe and surviving.

While the common experience in many of these collaborations across families was the loss of a loved one to violence, these convergences across families were not organized around grief, though in many spaces they did claim collective healing as part of their efforts towards justice. These alliances and convergences provoked a more complex analysis of violence, particularly as families struggled to represent the complexity of the ways that they were targeted by the state over an extended period and across multiple family relations through *testimonio* and in spaces of relational *testimonio*.

At the Stockton barbecue, amongst tables piled high with summer foods and clean paper goods arranged in lines in preparation for the community feed, people pulled chairs into a semi circle on the grass or leaned under the edge of a small canopy and listened as different mothers and others from the community spoke. Here, they retold the stories of how their children were killed. For some, this was a story they had told many times. For others, it was so recent they struggled in their narration, receiving support from others who stood with them in the circle while they pressed forward with the story. Some of the cases had endured for many years. Those close to the cases shared updates and new

information that had emerged, almost always produced through their own investigative efforts. Fathers and other family members spoke too.

In the circle, the stories shared reflected a range of issues facing the community. People spoke about evictions and the forced distances between families, as many of those present had already been pushed out of Oakland over the years by forces of dispossession and gentrification. Many have relocated to Stockton where housing is cheaper. Others were on the verge of being pushed out of Oakland, and others were commuting from Stockton to Oakland or San Francisco to work, while still others had moved back to Oakland and were commuting to Stockton to work.⁷¹² In a 2013 op-ed in *Viewpoint Magazine*, Inderbir Singh Grewal reflects on the circulation of struggle and family bonds across the Bay Area: “It is not just that many working-class communities in the suburbs and cities are locked in the same struggles. One of their struggles is precisely that urban residents are being evicted from their communities and suburban residents are losing economic security. And this has been reflected in resistance.”⁷¹³ Grewal notes the social antagonisms that are negotiated in relation to capital, reflecting that, “as more low-income and working-class people move into the suburbs, their struggles are bridging the gap to the bigger cities; and the

⁷¹² While the distance between Stockton and Oakland is roughly 75–80 miles traffic during peak commute times can easily extend this trip to two or more hours one way. The distance from Stockton to San Francisco is roughly 80–90 miles, and also experiences high traffic during peak commute times. There is a train from Stockton to Richmond, and then one could take BART or a bus to Oakland, but these become costly trips in terms of time and money.

⁷¹³ Grewal, “Class War is Not Contained,” para. 4.

urban proletariat has similarly established ties with the neighboring communities.”⁷¹⁴

Yet Stockton was also targeted by the orchestrated housing crises. For the majority of 2007, Stockton topped Detroit in the number of home foreclosures.⁷¹⁵

In the community barbecue speak-out, people spoke about trying to survive by piecing together meager strands of social welfare—unemployment checks, disability checks, and food stamps. These checks rarely added up to a monthly income that was even close to the poverty line for survival, and the funds remained precarious, easily and suddenly revoked by state bureaucracies whether justified or not, and involving a continuous and complex navigation of state bureaucracies and forms of state monitoring and surveillance that consistently

⁷¹⁴ Ibid. While an autonomous reading would not differentiate sectors of the working class as belonging to an urban proletariat but rather would emphasize the divisions within the working class as a relation of antagonism and in relation to cycles of recomposition, Singh Grewal’s insights offer much for thinking through the complex relations of community and family across geographies in a Bay Area organized through economic enclaves.

⁷¹⁵ Stockton regularly ranks high on the Forbes list of America’s most dangerous cities, a status arrived at through an analysis of the FBI’s Uniform Crime Reports. Oakland and Stockton exchange places from year to year as the city with the highest violent crime rates in California. Stockton has a population of roughly 300,000 people though the greater metropolitan area of Stockton is over double that at roughly 690,000. According to a report from 2008, despite a \$500 million dollar downtown revitalization project, growth in Stockton “was based on the booming housing market, which was spurred in large part by relocating Bay Area residents looking for a home they could afford.” Johnson, “City of a Thousand Foreclosures,” para. 6, 8. Roughly ninety minutes outside San Francisco, Stockton boasted higher wages and a lower cost of living. But this was only true for certain sectors. Following the “dot-com” crash in the early 2000s, Stockton’s population expanded by seventeen percent (ibid., para. 10). By 2001, eighty percent of home buyers were coming from the Bay Area, priced out of Oakland and San Francisco. By 2006, home ownership tripled in San Joaquin county to an average of \$385,000 (ibid., para. 14). Yet, average families couldn’t afford ninety-five percent of the homes on the market (ibid., para 15). And by 2007, one out of twenty seven homes was foreclosed in Stockton, a two hundred fifty six percent increase from 2006 (ibid., para. 2). After the housing crash, many families defaulted on mortgages, sending some renters back into the city. All figures taken from Johnson, “City of a Thousand Foreclosures.”

accompanies even the most truncated forms of the social wage.⁷¹⁶ People shared updates on current labor battles in Stockton, police and other attacks on houseless people throughout the city, and the struggle for safe, healthy food for families to eat. For many members of the community survival was based on a balance of some sort of minimal state subsidy and some form of underground economy that made them vulnerable to the state.

As the circle continued throughout the early afternoon, people gathered for the barbecue alternated between cooking and setting up for the meal, as well as speaking and sitting and listening. The numbers shifted between maybe one hundred, two hundred people throughout the morning and early afternoon, including many young children and many women and older people. Several folks navigated the rooted and grassy park in motorized wheelchairs that facilitated access to the speak-out and park.

Before the barbecue was scheduled to start, a march was planned from the park to the police station with the banners and signs from the justice campaigns. A line formed for the march with several smaller children gathered at the edge of the park holding the justice banners and prepared to lead the group. Several of the children were the brothers and sisters of those who had been killed by police. As

⁷¹⁶ Forms of survival in Stockton are visibly linked to the social wage with many retail stores advertising that furniture, food, household goods can be purchased through plans that include social wage schedules of fund disbursements. In 2008, Vallejo, California, a city of 117,000 people and roughly about equidistant from both Stockton and San Francisco, declared bankruptcy. Following the bankruptcy of Vallejo, the California state legislature passed a law requiring greater austerity cuts before other cities could file for bankruptcy. The City of Stockton cut \$90 million in workers wages, appropriated another \$20 million from workers, and then cut health care for retired city workers during mediation. Kevin Kearny, "Pensions and health care slashed," para. 1, 5–6. Stockton then filed for bankruptcy in June 2012 as the largest municipal site to file in the state.

the children assembled at one corner holding a banner, suddenly the doors to several parked police vans that had been stationed silently on a side street adjacent to the park swung open. Stockton Police emerged in full riot gear. Over sixty officers poured into the streets in a militarized jogging formation, two by two. They descended onto the park in a mass of hardware and display of force. In an organized line, they surrounded the corner of the park in a right angle that flanked both sides and stood there shoulder to shoulder with windshield screens down over their faces. With the perimeter contained, they refused to let anyone leave the park.

Several young children began crying and screaming. Some mothers and fathers and family members scooped them up and moved to the interior of the park. Others stood behind the children glaring at the lines of police. Others attempted to leave the park in small numbers to get to their parked cars, unsure of what orders had been given on this day as a policing strategy, and distrustful of how the police were prepared to respond to the community barbecue that lay before them. Each time that more than a few people attempted to leave the park, the militarized formation shifted to contain them. Refusing this enclosure and the fear it was meant to elicit, a group from the barbecue was able to push into the street and continue part of the march. The street was then sealed off by the police and the group was forced out of the street and beaten with clubs onto the sidewalk. A line of jabbing police officers pushed them back into the park, and refusing to let anyone leave in a collective formation under penalty of more beatings and arrest. For those from Stockton, to continue to attempt to reach the

police station and challenge the police exposed them to a visibility that could likely lead to increased harassment—even death—after the protection of the extended community gathering dissipated as folks spread out to return across the greater Bay. For those not from Stockton, the threat of multiple court dates, sometimes taking up to a year to resolve, in a periphery city two hours from the Bay Area center, was also daunting.

At that point, those inside the park began to realize that there were not enough police to surround the entire park, and that as the crowd shifted inside the park the police had to continuously move and establish a new perimeter in order to contain them. Further, it was cool inside the park, under the shade of the trees. In the street, where the cops stood in formation in full gear, it was under direct sun and hot. Realizing this dynamic Dionne Smith, who lived in Stockton and faced the same police every day that had killed her son, collected her other young children around her and began to walk the perimeter inside the park and study the police. Picking up the pace inside the park and watching the officers shift to hold down the perimeter, Dionne began shouting repeatedly at the officers, “walk them pigs around the park!” and the collective inside the park moved continuously along the edges in a group until the police on the outside were hunched over gasping for air.

Under this guard, the barbecue resumed, surrounded for several more hours by sweating police, until into the evening when everyone finally trickled home. Those residing in Stockton were well aware of the violent reprisals that the Department was prepared to exact following these victories. They had other

children that knew would have to encounter these same officers as they moved about their neighborhoods and the streets of Stockton. Others left for the two hour drive back to Oakland and San Francisco, affirming that they would come back, or see folks soon in the Bay, in a shared commitment to maintain the connections between the struggles.

The barbecues organized by mothers are strategic spaces of insurgency. They are also critical “spaces of encounter” where systems of information are generated and networked. Stories are shared in these spaces as part of a larger effort to build a collective analysis of the conditions communities collectively face. The community speak-out functions as a tool that recognizes the sharing between families as critical to understanding and also regenerating the community. Surrounding the speak-out are multiple moments where these complex systems of information are exchanged and further developed throughout the barbecue.

Several of those gathered and quarantined at the Stockton barbecue, including among the mothers, were present the following weekend to engage Uni Tierra Califas’ Democracy Ateneo in San Jose and to reflect together on the struggles circulating across the Bay Area through networks of families. The collectively written announcement relied on the writing of H.L.T. Quan to frame the “living theory” emerging from Stockton, noting that “as mothers take a prominent position in the struggles against militarization across the Bay Area, we can understand ‘gender as an infrastructure of resistance...[one that] provides the beginning of a vocabulary for the under analyzed feminist politics of

articulation.”⁷¹⁷ Here, the barbecues are theorized as spaces of rich collective learning as well as spaces of assembly, where the articulation of a feminist politics is “based on listening as much as speaking.”⁷¹⁸ In assessing Stockton in its position as the frontline of resistance to militarization, and at the same time as a space where assemblies are being convened against the onslaught of tremendous state and state manufactured violence, the moment of collective ethnography produced through the networked spaces of the barbecue and the *ateneo* offers the following reflection: “Rather than pleading with the state, making demands of the state, or organizing around media awareness and ‘consciousness raising’ that the masses simply must respond to, communities organized around their own learning and assembly are engaging the prefigurative. In these spaces, systems of information form a critical component to community convivial research projects and investigations. Convivial research can be seen as a research praxis that constitutes the desired change.”⁷¹⁹

In 1974, The Combahee River Collective drew on the work of Angela Davis to situate their collective practice as Black women and their collective statement within a legacy of militant Black feminism. The Collective quoted Davis to recall that “women have always embodied, if only in their physical

⁷¹⁷ See Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Democracy Ateneo Announcement 4-19-14,” para. 5. The quote from Quan originally occurs in Quan, “Geniuses of Resistance.”

⁷¹⁸ Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Democracy Ateneo Announcement 4-19-14,” para. 5.

⁷¹⁹ Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Democracy Ateneo Announcement 4-19-14,” para. 5.

manifestation, an adversary stance to white male rule and have actively resisted its inroads upon them and their communities in both dramatic and subtle ways.”⁷²⁰ The barbecues can be situated within this trajectory of community struggles waged by women of the Global South, including the Global South within the Global North. The lessons learned through insurgent moments and the repeated repressions in Stockton in the Spring of 2014, for example, were evoked as a point reference and moment of collective memory following the rebellions emerging from Ferguson later in the Fall of 2014 that had heightened into an moment of prolonged insurgency. Stockton was one of many moments that provided a way of seeing the police response in Ferguson as part of a larger effort at counterinsurgency aimed at Black and Brown communities as patterns across the United States. The military technology and military-grade weaponry on display in Ferguson were also familiar from the Oscar Grant and Occupy protests. And they were familiar in certain neighborhoods of Stockton too.⁷²¹ In both

Stockton and Ferguson and in the many protests across the United States leading

⁷²⁰ Combahee River Collective, "A Black Feminist Statement," 210.

⁷²¹ Black and Brown communities are frequently exposed a militarized presence of police in ways that white communities are not. In the periphery zones and in urban centers, armored vehicles are increasingly brought out to police protests and other “spaces of encounter.” Stockton remains on the front lines of militarization as a periphery zone yet despite its position on the periphery in relation to the larger urban centers of Oakland, San Francisco, and San Jose, Stockton also reflects its own racialized cartography where apartheid is organized in part through property values and white, wealthy communities. In one example of the community struggle’s efforts to expose differential militarization, when Stockton police arrived with an armored vehicle to a protest, those gathered made the deliberate decision to take the march directly into the wealthy white zones of the city on the outskirts of the university, thus forcing the militarized vehicle usually reserved for the Black and Brown communities directly into the neighborhoods where such militarized presence was uncommon. This story emerged in a space of collective storytelling with Dionne Smith Downes and other Stockton groups and members of ICMMC and AZ during the Spring of 2015.

up to Ferguson, the repression was clearly visible. They both provided arenas where the people could read their own power.

State–Manufactured Violences

We would like to affirm that we find our origins in the historical reality of Afro-American women's continuous life-and-death struggle for survival and liberation.
-Combahee River Collective Statement⁷²²

Not all justice struggles are organized around such clear incidents of state violence as a police shooting that takes a Black or Brown life. Families also struggle to expose and analyze the role of the state in producing and perpetuating violence in Black and Brown communities. These struggles aim to make visible, and make collective sense of, a number of vectors of violence emanating from the state and targeting a particular family or community. The state manufacturing of violence can be graphed through a series race projects that emerge in particular conjunctures and are facilitative of capital accumulation.⁷²³

The War on Drugs can be read as one such race project, one that intersects with the War on Gangs, the War on Migrants, the War on Black and Brown Youth and the War on the Social Factory. For Marta Malo de Molina in her analysis of the role of research vis-à-vis the state, the current conjuncture is one formed through “the affirmation of a state-form based on war as a vector of

⁷²² Combahee River Collective, “A Black Feminist Statement,” 210.

⁷²³ It is important to note that, following the work of Omi and Winant, race projects do not operate as either “good” or “bad” but rather as forces that give shape to a conjuncture. See Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*. On conjunctures, see Rolph-Trouillot, “Culture on the Edges.”

normative production.”⁷²⁴ The rise of militarized policing in response to Black, Brown and Red Power movements and other powerful social justice struggles occurred within an epistemology of security that organizes these wars. Largely initiated with the Rockefeller Drug laws of 1973, the War on Drugs advanced punitive sentencing laws, insuring that police militarization was accompanied by the emergence of mass incarceration. Both the militarization of the police and the rise of mass incarceration were supported by a juridical apparatus that moved forward based on legislation aimed at stricter sentencing for populations criminalized and cast as “enemies.”⁷²⁵

An entire conjuncture of policing and incarceration in relation to state manufactured violence and the targeted decimation of communities can be seen in the moment where crack cocaine was purposefully flooded into Los Angeles in the 1980s, immediately connecting urban neighborhoods through the circulation of drugs and quickly expanding across the United States and including central urban areas of Oakland, San Francisco, and San Jose. This deliberate introduction of crack into Black and Brown communities across US cities as part of the Iran-Contra deal not only insured high levels of addiction that decimated families, it stimulated an illegal economy with the the sale and circulation of the drugs accompanied by high levels of profit along a chain of people “moving product”

⁷²⁴ de Molina, “Common Notions, Part 1: Workers-Inquiry,” para. 2.

⁷²⁵ Increasingly, military strategist analyzing current insurgencies and violence within particular communities situate gangs as “non-state actors” vying for political power and organizing to challenge the government and seize the state. See Manwarring, *Street gangs: The New Urban Insurgency*.

across streets and through homes, and also oceans, mountains, skies, borders.⁷²⁶

The presence and circulation of crack as part of what became known as the Iran-Contra Scandal was a key moment in the manufactured War on Drugs that produced violence among communities already disenfranchised and excluded from many sectors of the state's legitimate economy. It also targeted communities already attacked by COINTELPRO in response to the powerful movements that had emerged from the 1960s and 1970s. The crack cocaine "epidemic" and the manufactured War on Drugs that began with 1980s provided traction for the expansion of a carceral regime in service of an apartheid state.⁷²⁷ Michele Alexander's work, for example, demonstrates how by isolating out crack cocaine as distinct from "powder" cocaine in sentencing legislation, the state was able to advance disproportionate sentencing laws that targeted the very populations where the state itself had introduced a particularly addictive form of the drug.⁷²⁸ Other studies have focused on the role of the state in producing violence within communities, pointing out that the vast surplus values that accompany the drug

⁷²⁶ The seminal research on this remains the dedicated journalism of Gary Webb, who exposed these connections over a series of stories in the *San Jose Mercury News*. Webb's work revealed the complicity of the federal government in manufacturing violence (as well as supporting regimes favorable to US capital interests) across three continents—Nicaragua, Iran, and the United States—as drugs, guns, and large sums of money were exchanged across multiple players. See Webb, *Dark Alliance*.

⁷²⁷ The term "epidemic" is part of a discursive strategy that names social problems as belonging to and pervasive across a particular community without naming the role of the state in manufacturing this violence. In this instance, casting the proliferation of crack cocaine as a "disease" masks the multiple forces acting in complicity with the state and instead makes the epidemic endemic to the community itself and occurring as another form of "blight." This also rise to theories of addiction that are largely located in the individual rather than contextualized within the antagonisms of a particular conjuncture.

⁷²⁸ Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*.

trade form a critical component in the manufactured war on drugs. In this reading, the drug trade has spawned alternative street economies that are at the root of the gang wars that rose to new heights in the 1980s and 1990s. Thus, the LA Rebellion following the Rodney King verdict of 1992 emerges in large part as a community response to the state's perpetuation of permanent war across Los Angeles. The rebellions are part of a community wide effort to call attention to the state's deliberate obstruction of gang truces initiated from within communities by the gangs themselves. The rebellions mark a community's struggle to expose the state's investment in destabilizing communities and maintaining violence as part of its larger project of "security."

Several excellent studies have situated the rise of a militarized police force alongside the rise of mass incarceration in the context on the War on Drugs and vast surplus values that it generates through "illegal" or alternate economies across communities excluded from a legitimate capital economy.⁷²⁹ As the court system faced an onslaught of drug related cases, new strategies were developed to circumnavigate previous juridical practices, including the emergence of the plea deal as a fast-track "solution" to the high volume of cases. Police departments also leveraged new practices to accommodate these shifts, including the rise of the "no knock raid," which essentially accelerated the process of securing a search warrant by minimizing the role of a judge. At the same time the escalating drug war provided a justification for increased border security, particularly along the US–Mexico border but also along the US–Canada border. The War on the Border

⁷²⁹ See M. Davis, *City of Quartz*; Gilmore, *Golden Gulag*.

led to the emergence of task forces, including new or reimagined or amplified collaborative initiatives between local and federal agencies, often in the form of task forces. These task forces, often referred to as the “alphabet soup” for their use of acronyms designating the mandate of the agency, helped facilitate the transfer of technologies and training between federal and local agencies working together on specific operations. The escalating War on Drugs and the penal structure that emerged in its wake came to function as the basis for both an increase in street level policing including the rise of stop and frisk, as well as the rise of SWAT and the drastic increase in militarized home raids over the last several decades. The mere speculation on the part of the police of the presence of drugs or drug related activity and the criminal subjects including gang members that were spawned in the wake of the drug war produced greater justification for any form of intrusion, on the street and in people’s homes. New legislation meant more activities were categorized as felony violations than in the past and the expedited process of police obtaining search warrants meant greater ease of entry into homes. Further, the sprawling advance of convictions primarily among targeted populations of color gave rise to a web of parole and probation restrictions many of which proved impossible for people to manage vis-à-vis the state as parole officers missed appointments and those struggling under penal restrictions paid the price for missed meetings, or families were restricted from residing in a shared home based on multiple felonies. All of this provided a justification for increased state intrusion in those spaces where the community produces and reproduces itself on a daily basis.

Through this convergence of wars with the drug war at the center, the state advanced forms of differential policing organized through reestablished racial regimes. In addition to disproportionate and racially biased sentencing laws, an apartheid regime was inscribed spatially as police presence became amplified in particular areas, leading to a widespread militarization of society predominantly focused on Black and Brown communities.⁷³⁰ This militarization and mass incarceration also occurred against capitalist restructuring begun in 1973 and organized through the dismantling of the Welfare State. If the War on Drugs can be read as a race project that deliberately criminalized particular populations, providing a basis for massive prison expansion that has continued at a phenomenal rate since early 1970s, it can also be read as a race project that continues to organize the War on the Social Factory. Placing the Social Factory at the center of analysis of an ongoing low intensity war provides alternative (and complementary) reading of anti-gang legislation, increasingly draconian sentencing laws, including legislation directly targeting youth through a counterinsurgency designed to control populations through violence and knowledge production.

As with strategies of occupation advanced by settler colonial, colonial, and imperialist states, counterinsurgency strategies in the present combine acts of terrorizing violence with research efforts that focus on knowing, categorizing, and eventually controlling the population. Similarly, they serve to proliferate the

⁷³⁰ The role of spatial policing and apartheid is taken up with more detail earlier in this work.

dispositif of security, as statements, institutions, archives, and so on are advanced within a field of forces and relations.⁷³¹ In the struggle to manage populations, including forms of strategic abandonment and differential inclusion of some populations, the state seeks to produce knowledge about populations in order to strategically divide populations. Thus, in the War on the Social Factory, “home invasions” are not only literal. They can be understood as the profilation of information that the state constantly produces about particular subjects and populations. They can be understood as the continual attempts at intrusion in the relations and functioning of families, households, neighborhoods, and communities. In this sense, a kind of guerrilla war against counterinsurgency is advanced through a community’s efforts to refuse the fragmentation and isolation that the state’s knowledge and control practices attempt to produce. Here, a politics of care can be read through a community’s resilience as a collective subject.

The Social Factory Ateneo as Convivial Research Space

As a consistent, horizontal space of reflection and direct action, Universidad de la Tierra Califas’ Social Factory Ateneo was convened in the context of a low intensity war directed at Black and Brown communities and organized through counterinsurgency strategies. The *ateneo* is a convivial research space that advances the possibilities for the emergence of a collective

⁷³¹ Foucault, “The Confession of the Flesh.”

subject.⁷³² It is a space of community regeneration as community members gather to collectively co-generate knowledge that disrupts the knowledges being produced about the community through counterinsurgency strategies that articulate with a larger *dispositif* of security to cast the community as criminal, degenerated, and dangerous. As a project of the autonomous learning space of Uni Tierra Califas, the *ateneo*, like Uni Tierra Califas, exists through relations—it exists when people come together to share in the process of research and learning together. Situated alongside movement spaces, the *ateneo* is a space of collective struggle. It is in many ways a stationary drift, an open space where experiences and knowledges are exchanged from across different actions, resistances, confrontations, and moments of care and survival.⁷³³ It is also a space of relational *testimonio* as the questions and stories of those present evoke new questions and stories, creating a conversation that is woven and unraveled and rewoven through the experiences, insights, memories, and reflections of those engaged in the space together.⁷³⁴

⁷³² Callahan, “In Defense of Conviviality.”

⁷³³ Here I rely on the elaboration of the “drift” as outlined earlier in this work, drawing on the work of Precarias a la Deriva, “A Very Careful Strike” and “Adrift Through the Circuits,” as well as the elaboration of the stationary drift in Casas-Cortes and Sebastian Cobarrubias, “Drifting through the Knowledge Machine.”

⁷³⁴ The following chapter explores the Social Factory Ateneo at greater length, including its history, its function as a tool in a convivial research approach and its relation to other TAZKP in a network of spaces that include *tertulias*, *mitotes*, direct actions, and other autonomous moments where knowledge is co-generated across a community. I also elaborate more fully on the role of the announcements and summaries as a space of reflection and archive of struggle.

The *ateneo* is one of several spaces of convivial research in a larger collective research project organized around community safety. The stories, investigations, and collective analysis that emerged from the Social Factory Ateneo exposed counterinsurgency strategies that targeted family and communal bonds. A number of community-based investigations emerging from and connected to the *ateneo* space revealed strategies to map the state and its invasive moments. It also served as a site through which the investigations and moments of insurgency from the peripheral zones were relayed and connected to other investigations and direct actions. What also emerged was a collective resilience mobilized from within families and communities to confront and negotiate this violence, organized through a complex politics of care.

Counterinsurgency, Care, and the Social Factory

Someone is bringing guns into this community.
-Anita Wills in *Love Balm for My Spirit Child*⁷³⁵

When a call is placed to the police regarding a violent crime in Black and Brown communities, the state responds with a full repertoire of officers, investigators, crime scene analysts, and paramedics, often from both the fire department and eventually, from a hospital as an ambulance is deployed that may

⁷³⁵ Brown, *Love Balm for My SpiritChild*. Explored in greater depth in the following chapter, *Love Balm for My SpiritChild* was a play conceived and directed by Arielle Brown. The quote is part of a longer *testimonio* from Anita Wills, and occurs in various iterations of the play, including at La Pena in Berkeley in May of 2013 and the Brava Theater in San Francisco in July of 2014. Ibid. Anita Wills, in conversation with author, July 2014.

or may not be allowed to cross the crime scene to assist a victim in a timely way. Witnesses are isolated and interviewed by homicide investigators or their contact information is taken for future follow up.

Any situation of violence in a community generates significant paperwork on the part of the state. As an event, it provokes a number of police incident reports, witness statements, search warrants, ballistics reports, hospital reports, coroner's reports, a death certificate, hearing notices, subpoenas, court documents including transcripts of depositions and testimonies, and later, appeals, and often transfer documents between prisons.⁷³⁶ Each incident leads to a series of queries led by the homicide investigator assigned to the case. These queries initiate further interrogations, provoke search warrants, and direct officers to conduct searches of homes and cars, and the homes and cars of relatives, friends, neighbors, and intimate partners that may be current or date back several years. In this process, it is common for prior felony convictions to be exposed and old warrants to surface, together with previous infractions and in some cases firearms and drugs. These interrogations and searches make visible to the state a web of familial relations and at the same time make intelligible vectors connecting families and neighbors and a myriad of relations and bonds in a complex series of protections through which a community is organized around its own survival against the unrelenting onslaught the state—its laws that determine what is considered a crime and what is considered illegal, its courts that determine sentencing and inscribe restrictions on relations and space; its acts of extreme

⁷³⁶ Guha, "Prose of Counter-Insurgency."

violence, deadly and sadistic; its prisons, colonial schools, juvenile halls, detention and deportation centers; its largely unavailable hospitals and its mental institutions; its services that protect children by removing them from homes and its community centers that dispense pills after perfunctory or no counseling.

The searches of homes by the state in turn produce various confiscations that may or may not have borne a connection to the incident that initially sent the investigators and officers into the home. Cell phones may be confiscated and also computers from homes where a suspect may never have lived. In many cases, their contents are later erased and then returned. Community members report that welfare checks and other checks from various state agencies that families depend on for survival have been taken from their envelopes from piles of mail by police and not returned, leaving families without vital month-to-month resources.⁷³⁷

An incident of violence exposes a network of relations, intimacies, and a community's meticulously developed strategies organized around its own safety. It also lays bare impossible decisions around care. The state archives contains police reports, witness statements, depositions, and court testimonies that reflect heartbreaking decisions made by family members when for example in a search, a gun is dragged from under a bed in a home loosely connected to those labeled suspects. If a search of a home produces a gun and someone in the home is on felony probation and restricted from the proximity of firearms under threat of

⁷³⁷ Many of these details come from the collective space of research convened through the Social Factory Ateneo space spanning the year of May 2014–May 2015. For a description, listing of announcements, and summaries, see Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, "Social Factory Ateneo."

returning to prison, what story emerges about the presence of the gun? If a mother is incarcerated or institutionalized, and the conditions of guardianship of her child by another family member is contingent on no one in the home having a police record, what decisions must be made when answering to the state to explain something illegal found in the home?

In these moments a family must decide who will face the force of the state following a raid or a search. Under threat of false information that impacts their entire family and their own position in relation to the juridical system, families are confronted with situations where they must collectively decide to whom to attribute a weapon or any other illegal possession that may have been turned up. This includes calculations about each family member or neighbor's position vis-à-vis the carceral state and under threat of the loss of their children. Undergirded by draconian sentencing laws and forms of incarceration and surveillance that will quite possibly sever family and community bonds forever, families are forced to choose between, for example, identifying a gun as something that belongs to a son who may be on felony parole, or attributing it to a son-in-law, who may be the father of two young children, or claiming it as their own.

In the first instance, if the gun is attributed to the son who has a previous felony, the son may return to jail for what could be a severe sentence for the parole violation. This could then also easily lead to any number of situations once inside that could result in solitary confinement, which could last for months, years, or decades.

In the second instance, if the gun is attributed to the son-in-law who may not have a previous felony and may have a clean record with no strikes, or claimed by the family, it may avoid catalyzing the parole violation of another family member. Yet, it may turn out when the gun is registered with the police department that the serial numbers on the gun match those on a gun reported as stolen that was used in commission of a violent crime, possibly a homicide. If, for example, the son in law is then charged in relation to the crime for which the gun was purportedly involved, for the family and the community to fight the case takes up tremendous resources, both financial and in terms of time (days off work to appear before the court, childcare costs, transportation costs, legal fees, etc.). This process alone can cause a primary earner to lose their job and destabilize the entire family.

If the son-in-law is convicted, he faces incarceration and the children are left without a father. If the mother of the children has been arrested, institutionalized, or is not present to take care of the children, the family must fight for the responsibility of guardianship to maintain the children.

This begins another long process—if one of the grandparents has a past history of convictions, it is likely that the children will not be able to stay in the house of the grandparents. If there are other relatives, for example an aunt who is employed and willing and able to take the children, if she is unmarried, anyone who occasionally or regularly stays at the house—lovers, partners, friends, another teenager under the care of the aunt—must be willing to submit to a background check by the state as well to determine if there is a history of

convictions. This may eventually exclude the aunt from taking the children, while offering up another point of state intervention and surveillance beyond the immediate family.

In the case of relatives that do not have prior convictions and are in relationships that the state recognizes as stable (i.e. married) and also have children of their own, there must be enough rooms in the household that is willing to accept the children to insure that the children are separated in their sleeping arrangements in relation to the genders and ages of the other children already living in the home. For example, in many cases, there are restrictions imposed by the state that a young male child cannot share a bed or even a room with a female teenage child, and vice versa.

So for a relative to take the children they must have adequate space—extra rooms and beds—in other words, property of a certain size and spatial configuration to accommodate privacy in relation to state classifications of gender in order for the state to recognize the home as “safe.” It may be that based on these restrictions, these relatives are only eligible to take one child, and the children must be split across families or worse yet, one may stay and the other must be given up to the state. It may be that in order to avoid this, the grandparents, whose original house was searched, have to choose whether to give up one or both children to the state in order to keep them together. Or they may petition for guardianship of both children. However, if one of the grandparents also has a prior conviction, it may be that the only way to keep the two children together and under the care of the family involves the grandparents moving into

separate residences to isolate the family member with no convictions away from those that have convictions. And then, in this new residence, there must be adequate space. And so on.⁷³⁸

At the moment where a raid produces a gun, the scope of the consequences that a family must navigate before the state is intricate across relations, histories, and geographies. The protections and carefully reasoned care that are required in this moment are often not readily understood as care. How are these stories heard, for example, when they are on display as messy and raw before an all-white jury in the absence of a larger analysis of racialization and the presence of a punitive, carceral state—one that includes the invasive mandate of Child Protective Services? Additionally, the extreme consequences can pit diverse survival and collective survival strategies, as well as family members and extended communities, against each other. In low intensity war, the bonds of community are targeted—the very bonds that would protect and nurture both resistance and autonomy, and the bonds that are critical to a community’s ability to regenerate itself and maintain itself as intergenerational. Here autonomy is as basic as the space for a community to maintain the right to raise its children.

⁷³⁸ Consider even though many of these require warrants, they are frequently done without a warrant or they are made possible through a policy of “no knock raids.” Any violation to a family’s right to privacy would have to be fought through the courts—costly, time consuming, and difficult to challenge the respectability of police officers in the eyes of the court. This information draws on multiple networked spaces where systems of information circulate and in particular in the ongoing space of the Social Factory Ateneo, as well as in my conversations over the past seven years of research with mothers, grandmothers, aunts, and sisters in various spaces as they struggle with tremendous resilience and ingenuity to find ways to hold their families together against the intricate web. All details have been modified and made general to obscure any details that may point to a specific incident.

In many instances, state records reveal the fortresses a community has erected against the state. In Oakland for example, the police themselves complain that it is very difficult to police a population that refuses to speak. State documents reflect a series of stances taken, including in many cases an unwavering testimony before the state that a person who was clearly present on a scene neither heard nor saw anything related to the incident. These positions are often steadfastly maintained against the onslaught of a state manufactured “snitch culture” as people refuse to bend or speak against family and community—defying court subpoenas against partners, family and community, declining to bear witness to what might have been seen or refusing to be conclusive about anything about which one is being interrogated.

Thus, when gunshots reverberate across a disenfranchised community, they reverberate throughout the social factory. In their wake, state agents enter homes and schools. It is not uncommon to hear stories where police officers remove children and young people from classes and hold them illegally in the back of squad cars for hours without notifying anyone of the child’s whereabouts, interrogating them with no adults present and often threatening them as well. In some cases, they confiscate cell phones, which may have compromising information on them or at the very least which generally serve as a map to a field of relations among youth. Officers have been known to illegally detain a partner of a suspect, for example, a partner who is also a mother, care taker, or legal guardian of a child or multiple children. In some cases as a result of this illegal detention, she may be out of contact with her very young children. There are

stories of people perceived to be related to a suspect being handcuffed and interrogated in squad cars or at department precincts for anywhere between two to twelve hours. In addition to the many dangers associated with these illegal detentions, a number of problems can result. A person may miss work without having time to give notice, or they may miss a job interview. If Child Protective Services (CPS) has an appointment or reason to visit the house during this time and finds no one home but the children, this opens up a new line of invasion by the state.

In instances where a case is brought to trial past histories are brought to bear on the incident in an attempt to narrate a criminal subject capable of committing the current charge. Many cases involve people from the same community that the state has opposed to each other as defendant and plaintiff or as co-defendants in the same incident.⁷³⁹ In many cases, the legal strategy on the part of both lawyers is marked by an attempt to demonstrate that each lawyer's client is innocent, and to do so, each must prove that the other client is the more dangerous of the two. In the case of a violent crime, each lawyer's efforts are often concentrated on demonstrating that their client acted in self defense and fearing for his or her life, and an entire landscape of violence and community relations are called forth into the court room, pitting community members and often families against each other. The testimonies in court mark the prodding of

⁷³⁹ One example of the state producing plaintiffs and dependents can be seen in domestic violence legislation that mandates that calls placed in cases of domestic violence must be prosecuted through the courts.

the state—for example, to retell stories of violence sometimes decades old involving community members that have lived together for generations.

The space of the court is constructed to support and weave complex processes of criminalization. It documents and archives the relations and networks across a community. The documentation, explanation and elaboration that takes place through the juridical process gives shape to the criminalization practices that articulate racial regimes. Their documentation becomes embedded in a media apparatus that then constructs specific subjects. Those asked to testify become “gang bangers,” or multiple felons, or aggravated assaulters—dangerous criminal subjects responsible for the violence flaring out across urban streets. The entire police force—with its technologies of surveillance and repression, its necessary violence and packaged falsehoods—is continuously rebuilt around the gunshots, armed robberies, drug exchanges and sex economies that emerge in the courts in any given year, framed by particular acts of legislation, much of which is authored and lobbied by private companies that continue to profit from the prison industrial complex.

Violence destroys families—both the families of victims and the families of those convicted. As cases wind their ways through the courts, many children, young and older, lose parents to incarceration as a result of increasingly punitive sentencing laws. Homes are split and histories and lessons that would have been passed on are truncated as parents, siblings, and grandparents are locked up. Care and wisdoms are lost.

Once incarcerated, many people lose the ability to connect physically with their family; connections are severed as those convicted are placed in institutions in remote areas of the state, and often moved multiple times to different correctional institution. It is not unusual for a family to spend several hundred to a thousand dollars to traverse the state to try to visit a loved one for a few hours. Because of the remote location of prisons across California and the size of the state, public transportation is often not an option for the totality of the journey. So even after a long train ride, for example, families must pay hundreds of dollars to secure a taxi from an urban center to a more rural prison, and often the trip is so long that the family must spend the night before starting the return voyage home. For many families, the cost of visiting an incarcerated loved one is so prohibitively expensive, they are unable to visit more than once a year or every few years, and sometimes after traveling they are denied visiting privileges at all, for any number of reasons. A prison yard may be on lock down and no one can accept visits, or a person may have been disciplined for something—including an unfounded allegation by another incarcerated person that may later turn out to be false, and is restricted from seeing their visiting family. In some cases, one member of the family may be allowed to visit, but another, sometimes a child, may not be cleared once they arrive. In other cases, a visit that may cost a family upwards of a thousand dollars may only be allowed to take place across a glass wall.⁷⁴⁰

⁷⁴⁰ These stories emerge from many conversations with families over the years, including through my work with the California Coalition for Women Prisoners since 2010.

The struggles of mothers and families have emerged from these injustices and restrictions as much as from moments of extreme violence. In many cases, family members have found each other through losses that they have explicitly linked to the state. In these struggles, certain refusals are sharpened and explored. In a movement that often remains focused on police killings as the most salient moment of state violence, connections across families as they grapple with a spectrum of state violence provides a context for a certain analysis to emerge about militarization articulated across the relations and bonds of community.

These become struggles to find meaning about how the state and capital is functioning in a particular moment and geography. These merge with larger community struggles. In many cases, this is also a struggle to advance a counter narrative, to build a collective analysis. Tracing the struggles of these families and the reverberations produced through moments of violence has proved critical in situating the social factory as a category and a site of struggle. This involves an interrogation of the state manifested locally.

Investigations, Legislation, and the Courts: A View From Oakland

Each conviction can be considered an observable moment where the criminal justice system is exposed as a racializing apparatus. Those institutions which form its primary pillars—policing, courts, prisons and detention centers—are not merely built on racist views and racist practices that can then be examined through a focus on structural racism, though certainly this is the case. The institutions of the criminal justice system stand at the intersection of numerous

race projects that range from the local to the global. From police patrol practices and investigations, to court orders and trials, to incarceration, parole and probation restrictions, the institutions of the carceral state are not only sites where racism is embedded, as institutions, they manufacture race at the same time that they manufacture violence. Drawing on Manuel Callahan's work on the US-Mexico border that situates the border as a *dispositif* in service of W.E.B. Du Bois' democratic despotism, the various moments of community-based investigation that occur in multiple sites from sidewalks to parks to autonomous learning spaces interrogate criminalization as sustained racial strategy supported by the criminal justice apparatus.⁷⁴¹

Counterinsurgency strategies are effectively woven into state legislation as well as the policies and practices of the police departments in managing the production of knowledge about particular communities and populations and investigating what the state has delineated as crimes. In particular, it revealed the way COIN strategies were incorporated into laws that both continuously produced knowledge about the population governed by policing that could then be used to further criminalize the community and manage social antagonisms by dividing and fracturing communities at the site of social reproduction. It also revealed a series of policies and practices that accompanied state violence as a strategy that attempted to turn the community against itself.

⁷⁴¹ On apparatus and *dispositif*, see Foucault, "The Confession of the Flesh." On the border as *dispositif*, including his use of Du Bois' concept of democratic despotism, see Callahan, "Crisis and Permanent War." See also Du Bois, "African Roots of War."

Relying on the tool of multiple timelines, one community investigation situated a particular conviction in relation to peak homicide rates and conjunctures organized by police chiefs. This mapping situated convictions in Oakland in the context of external pressures (rising homicide rates and the need to “clear” cases by demonstrating that they had been resolved) and a corrupt and brutal department during the period of militarization made possible through the rise of the War on Drugs. Beginning the map with the tenure of OPD Chief George T. Hart from 1973–1992 during a span of nearly twenty years in which police departments nationally became increasingly militarized in connection with the rise of the neoliberal state made visible steadily rising homicide rates in Oakland during Hart’s tenure. These homicide rates skyrocketed to 175 murders for 1992 at the time Hart left office.⁷⁴² These can be situated in relation to the LA Ramparts Scandal in 1999 and the Oakland Riders Scandal in 2000.⁷⁴³ Both the LA Ramparts and the Oakland Riders scandals exposed a culture of racist policing

⁷⁴² These figures were established as a result of People’s Record Act requests I submitted to the OPD in 2014. I also am indebted here to the ongoing comprehensive journalism of Ali Winston, in particular during his time at the Center for Investigative Reporting.

⁷⁴³ Within five years after the LA Rebellion, the Ramparts Scandal broke in Los Angeles and charges were issued on a significant number of officers of the LAPD for corruption and violence that had been ongoing in the LAPD for years. This included numerous cases where officers were accused of planting evidence and falsifying information related to investigations to resolve cases, secure convictions and populate the expanding prison system. The department was placed under federal censure but many officers charged with brutality and corruption were not convicted nor were they removed from the force. In Oakland in 2000, a newly hired officer assigned to patrols with senior officers came forward to reveal brutal patrol units terrorizing Black and Brown communities across Oakland in what became known as the Riders’ Scandal. The impact of the Riders’ Scandal would define the OPD for well over the next decade, as the department was forced to accept external oversight into its functioning. Hoping to avoid the federal oversight that the LAPD faced after the Ramparts scandal, the department entered into a negotiated settlement monitored by civil rights lawyers who had long pursued brutality cases against attacks on Oakland’s Black and Brown communities.

and pervasive brutality. When the scandals revealed practices in concrete form in the public eye, they also exposed what had been well-circulated in community spaces through various knowledge sharing practices that produced complex systems of information. In the case of the Riders, the sudden visibility and court processes confirmed not only the violent policing practices that the community had experienced and collectively archived through its own systems of information for many years, including incorporating this knowledge into its own survival strategies, it revealed that the police department had operated for a sustained period with a unit that was training rookie cops to brutalize, terrorize, and fabricate evidence to secure convictions.

In the wake of the Riders' Scandal, as the community pushed back against the abuses that it faced, they were able to reveal that accompanying the violence and brutality of the OPD patrol units was a structure of questionable investigative practices within the Department, including in homicide investigations and the functioning of internal affairs.⁷⁴⁴ Taken together as one aspect of the grassroots investigation, these timelines exposed homicide rates that continued to rise in a department that now had a confirmed and visible history of police misconduct and violence. At the same time, the department was seen as neither effectively deterring violent crime nor bringing perpetrators to court and securing

⁷⁴⁴ This is reflected in the summary monitoring reports, which point to the department's inability to successfully "clean up" the functioning of its internal investigation processes, in particular the functioning of internal affairs. For further reference, see Oakland Police Department, "The Negotiated Settlement Agreement: Message From the Chief." In short, the point at which the department investigates itself remains one of the key points that has insured the OPD is unable to extricate itself from the monitoring of the settlement agreement for over a decade.

convictions. This paralleled a rising clamor around the rate that evidence was being processed in the OPD's crime labs.⁷⁴⁵ During this period, OPD Homicide Investigators were responsible for more than double the investigations of other major cities. A primary task of the homicide investigator is to follow up with witnesses, a time consuming activity. What was revealed in relation to a series of timelines constructed to respond to community-based investigations was that at the time of the Riders Scandal, homicide rates in Oakland were the highest they had been since the early 1990s.⁷⁴⁶ Evidence in the OPD crime lab was backed up by thousands of cases. Homicide detectives were managing a staggering number of cases, and officers openly complained about the tight-knit community of Oakland that refused to bear witness against each other.

Police Departments and courts have come to rely on several tactics to respond to the demands of a public concerned with crime and insure that convictions are still secured and cases are resolved. These tactics prioritize

⁷⁴⁵ In 2000, an Alameda County Civil Grand Jury recommended that Alameda County law enforcement agencies collaborate in establishing a consolidated crime lab with the goal of combining resources to help reduce the evidence backlog facing the OPD. This reflected a national scrutiny of forensic labs that would result in more federal resources being directed to police departments as a way of analyzing greater amounts of evidence more efficiently and ostensibly contributing to a more just system through increased technologies made available at the local level. One impact of the Civil Grand Jury recommendations in Oakland was that they heightened the sense that the police department under its current leadership wasn't able to successfully prosecute for violent crime. The OPD under Chief Word appeared to be a police department that could not bring crime rates down to make Oakland a safe place. By 2005, Jerry Brown would replace Word with Chief Wayne Tucker for this very reason.

⁷⁴⁶ The percentage of unresolved cases was well over 50%, a figure much higher than the rest of the state. These figures are drawn from the OPD response to the author's PRA request for homicide rates, including resolved and unresolved figures, between 2000 and 2009 (August 2014). I also rely on the work of Ali Winston, in particular, "Getting Away with Murder."

incarceration as a legible solution. In the police arsenal, tactics like searches and raids can turn up forms of evidence that can stand in for evidence gathered from the scene that may be of critical importance to the case and the fate of those charged, but may require more extensive and costly processing to be effective in court. Crime-fighting tactics that highlight finger print analysis, gun residue analysis or DNA tests are time consuming and costly forms of evidence requiring specific technologies and expertise to process. In other words, home raids and other practices like coerced confessions can produce evidence that can function to replace other forms of evidence awaiting processing in the thousands of cases represented in the backlog of the crime lab.

In this context, homicide investigators working together with their departments and the courts deploy a number of strategies for clearing cases, particularly in a city like Oakland where community members often refuse to bear witness against itself in cases of state-manufactured violence. Sometimes tactics are combined, for example, “blanket immunity” may be combined with a structure of plea deals to expedite processing and clear cases. Plea deals are extended in an attempt to minimize the number of cases that go to trial. In the absence of evidence and witnesses, prosecuting attorneys also rely on other tactics. For example, they may rely extensively on expert witnesses paid by the state to interpret everything from childhood trauma as a contributing factor to violent actions; to criminal behaviors and patterns of thinking and actions that may predispose someone to act violently; to policing procedures and the soundness of officer decision making in a particular moment as if from an

objective position. While often repeated, it cannot go unmarked that juries are also deliberately constructed and manufactured through legislation that determines who can and cannot vote to insure African American or Latin@ jurors are rarely present as part of a functioning jury.⁷⁴⁷

Under blanket immunity someone whom the police have linked to a crime, for example, may be offered immunity from any prosecution by the courts in exchange for information about a case that may lead to a conviction. Blanket immunity works in the context of a carceral state as a mechanism for leveraging testimony towards securing convictions. It effectively produces and relies on a snitch culture that pits families, friends, and neighbors against one another against the backdrop of the prison system. This tactic is particularly effective in the context of communities who have been incessantly targeted through the various institutions of the criminal justice system. As explored earlier in this chapter, blanket immunity can become a point of leverage if for example, a gun is found at a particular residence, or someone is linked to a crime scene who may have an outstanding warrant, may be in violation of their probation by being in a certain area or around particular people or categories of people with whom they have been restricted from any contact, or if an incident has put them in the proximity of drugs or weapons, or any number of factors that may result in the terms of a person's probation being violated which could result for example in a fine, another strike closer to the three strike maximum, or an immediate return to incarceration.

⁷⁴⁷ For more on plea bargaining, see Vogel, *Coercion to Compromise*.

In many instances, those charged with a crime refuse the protections of blanket immunity. In this instance, a plea deal may be offered, or, a plea deal may be offered to one defendant while blanket immunity is offered to another. While the plea deal provides an opportunity to have one's sentence reduced in exchange for an admission of guilt, it also demands that person relinquish their right to trial. The plea deal also functions as a strategy for foisting an accumulation of strikes onto a person, a process that can occur in the absence of a trial. In many cases community members report feeling that the refusal of the initial plea deal in favor of going to trial brought on more severe forms of retaliation in terms of convictions and sentencing than if the plea deal structure was not in place.⁷⁴⁸

As tactics, blanket immunity and plea deals must be situated in the context of the extensive criminal justice apparatus. This includes an intricate combination of legislation primarily passed in relation to the War on Drugs that began to form a dense web of entanglements beginning in the 1980s with the laws like the California Street Terrorism Enforcement and Prevention Act (STEP Act) of 1988 that laid the groundwork for gang criminalization, including categorizing certain types of crimes as "gang offenses" and providing space for sentencing enhancement for felonies that could be assessed by the courts as related to gang activity. Also part of the legislative apparatus that emerged in response to the Drug War were Proposition 184, passed in 1994 (the notorious "Three Strikes"

⁷⁴⁸ These stories of retaliation are common across many spaces where communities gather to share their experiences facing the court system, and emerged repeatedly in the many networked spaces of this collective ethnography, including in the ongoing conversations of the Social Factory Ateneo.

law), and Proposition 21, passed in 2000. Prop 184 created a space for draconian sentencing, including mandatory twenty-five years to life sentencing for felony convictions when a defendant had two or more prior convictions. “Three Strikes” legislation (Proposition 36) has given way to a range of abuses that communities have continued to organize against over the past 20 years since it was passed, with some points of erosion in recent years.

Prop 21 made provisions for increased sentencing and penalties for youth, including enhancements for gang related activities, indeterminate life sentences for home invasion robbery, carjacking, witness intimidation, and drive by shootings. It also made possible the death penalty in instances that the court determined were gang-related murders, and initiated life without parole sentences (LWOP). Legal critics understood Prop 21 as legislation that anticipated a rise in juvenile crime and thus was passed to cover gaps in the Three Strikes legislation. In short, Prop 21 responded to the fear that Three Strikes legislation, in offering multiple “chances” would not be an effective enough method for removing “violent” young people from the streets quickly, and thus Prop 21 served as the guarantee that young people could be incarcerated for their entire lives following one conviction, rather than having to wait for the strikes to accumulate. It should be noted however that Three Strikes was interpreted by some courts in a way that allowed a person to accumulate all three strikes in one incident, an interpretation that was fought and successfully overturned in 2013. There has been significant community organizing around Three Strikes and excellent research compiled

assessing the impact of this legislation as it targets communities of color.⁷⁴⁹ Less attention has been paid to the role of this legislation as part of larger race project and counterinsurgency strategy aimed at the bonds of the social factory.

Case studies were also mapped in relation to Measure Y, the Violence Prevention and Public Safety Act which was passed in 2004. Measure Y marked an emphasis in securing the neighborhood by increasing the number of “cops on the street” in tandem with developing more violence prevention programs. In Oakland for example, Measure Y provided for sixty three more officers patrolling “crime-ridden” neighborhoods. Like the legislation that came before it, it was aimed primarily at Black and Brown men. But while the STEP Act (1988), Prop 184 “Three Strikes” (1994), and Prop 21 (2000) primarily addressed sentencing enhancements, Measure Y increased the presence of police in the community. Community timelines revealed that the passage of Measure Y paralleled a rise in officer-involved shootings across Oakland. Within a year of the passage of Measure Y, Crime Reduction Teams or (CRTs) and later “hot spot policing” as a strategy that targets particular areas for denser patrols and arrests were employed as a strategy for policing Oakland.⁷⁵⁰

⁷⁴⁹ See for example Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*.

⁷⁵⁰ These teams were created under Chief Wayne Tucker, Chief Word’s successor. Although Word was removed by Governor Brown for his inability to keep crime rates down, strategies under Word nonetheless gave the Department increased traction for further militarization. The CRTs, for example, follow the organizational structure of a paramilitary unit and sergeants who were known killers in the community were placed in charge of units.

For legislation like Measure Y to pass the public has to believe that the streets are dangerous and that violent criminals roam unchecked. While the law was passed in 2004, the mobilizations necessary for its passage begin prior to 2004. In this context, court trials provide opportunities to secure convictions and thus “clear cases” allowing the state to demonstrate a drop in unresolved homicide rates while at the same time affirming the need for an expansive prison system.⁷⁵¹ Similarly, cases that do make it trial offer opportunities through the dominant media to construct dangerous criminal subjects, ones whom the police have successfully and permanently removed from the community, with the hint that unaccounted for others may still be out on the streets and posing an unknown threat.

Police investigations and the juridical spaces convened in relation to the courts produce a context for the state to create their own maps of relationships, networks, and connections across a community or a neighborhood and across generations. In the interrogations, people are archived in their relations to each other and to particular geographies. Each incident that the state frames as a crime produces witness statements, police reports, depositions, and court testimonies. Through collective research processes that engage state documents, certain patterns emerge. Law enforcement repeatedly interrogate community members about how long they have known people, in what capacity, and ask them to categorize and qualify the relationship for the state records. They ask who else

⁷⁵¹ Much excellent work has been done on the profits related to the prison system through analyses of the prison industrial complex. See for example, Gilmore, *Golden Gulag*.

travels and associates with whom. In a review of these interrogations across multiple state documents, police and lawyers also continuously attempt to link people with particular neighborhoods, intersections, and streets. These archives bear witness to residual colonial methods aimed at knowing and controlling populations through a combination of administrative processes and force or threat of force. They reflect counterinsurgency strategies that circulate between domestic policing agents and military occupations abroad designed to produce knowledge about populations in order to divide, isolate, and manage populations. These interrogations also provide traction and a mass of data that allow departments to create compelling arguments for the presence of gangs and the arsenal of methods to fight these gangs—including technologies that classify, and criminalize populations and neighborhoods even further. They form the basis for departments to apply for federal funding to combat gangs and other networks of criminal behavior that can be used as evidence in service of increased security funding.

It can also serve as the basis to attempt to implement injunctions where forms of differential and highly militarized policing can be deployed to restrict and monitor activities, behaviors, ways of being, and relationships in particular communities and areas. The information gathered through these endless interrogations of the state against the community can be organized as data to provoke the “need” for new technologies to survey, classify, and accumulate information about populations. This in turn can also be used to justify legislation that puts forward ever-longer sentences and demands for new and more prisons.

Laurie Valdez's San Jose Barbecue

On a February 21st, 2015, on a Saturday afternoon in San Jose, Laurie Valdez hosted a memorial barbecue for the one-year anniversary of the shooting death of her partner, Antonio Guzman Lopez, by the San Jose State University Police. Antonio had been shot in the back while carrying a dry wall saw on his way home from work. Laurie hosted the anniversary with her recently orphaned children, Josiah and Angelique, as families from across the greater Bay Area came through to the barbecue—Tony Garcia, brother of Yanira Serrano-Garcia of Half-Moon Bay; Cadine and Angela Evans and Raheim, family of O'Shaine Evans of Oakland; Dionne Smith and Cary Downs, parents of James Earl Rivera Jr. of Stockton; "Uncle Bobby" and Sister Beatrice, family of Oscar Grant of Oakland; Denise and Gregory Johnson parents of Gregory Johnson, Sr. of San Jose State University; Vickie and Jim Showman parents of Diana Showman of San Jose; Elvira and Refugio Nieto, parents of Alex Nieto of San Francisco; as well as Al Osorio representing the Kenneth Harding Foundation of San Francisco on behalf of Denika Chatman and the family of Kenneth Harding Jr. Several of those present had arrived at the barbecue after spending the morning at a direct action organized through the Anti-Police Terror Project (APTP) in Oakland to shut down the Home Depot in Emeryville. A few weeks earlier on February 3rd, Yvette Henderson had been shot to death by Emeryville Police after a security guard for Home Depot reportedly called the police to alert them that he suspected Yvette might have shoplifted from the store. She had been gunned down in the

street. Families from Stockton had grown up with Yvette's family. They returned to Oakland in support and protest—called back by police violence and understanding the experience of loss at the hands of the state.

The park was arranged with justice banners, drawings and photos of loved ones, and also a *piñata* for the children, face painting, and generous helpings of food spread across the tables in the warm spring air. The families were mostly Black and *Mexicano* but also White. At least one family was encountering the other families in the justice struggles for the first time, their own loss recent and devastating. During the space of the community speak-out, the Nieto family announced that the San Francisco police officers who had killed their son would not be indicted. The family of James Rivera shared the results of their ongoing inquiry into their son's murder, revealing that a new witness had come forward, corroborating other research that six agencies and twelve officers collaborated to execute a well-orchestrated "pit maneuver" trapping Rivera's vehicle between their own state vehicles. Although they claimed that Rivera posed an immanent threat, Stockton Police officers Eric Azarvand and Gregory Dunn and San Joaquin County Sheriff John Nesbitt retreated to the back of their patrol cars to retrieve assault rifles that they then used to fire repeatedly into Rivera as he cried and pleaded for his life. The family of Gregory Johnson were present as well. Johnson, a young Black man studying at San Jose State University, died in a suspicious "hanging" at a campus fraternity. The SJSU student had a cracked skull and other wounds, but his death was ruled a suicide by the police investigation. They confirmed that San Jose Police officer Dote who had

responded to the incident on campus involving their son had been involved in the recent police shooting of Phillip Watkins, also Black, in San Jose on February 11th. Additionally it was shared that two of the officers from the San Jose State University Police Department that had been named in the federal lawsuit regarding the death of Gregory Johnson, Officers Santos and Van Der Hoek, were also named in the federal lawsuit filed against the SJSUPD by Laurie Valdez in the fatal shooting of Antonio Guzman Lopez. Several families shared that their calls for support for a loved one experiencing crisis had instead resulted in a deadly shooting by law enforcement when they arrived at the family's home.⁷⁵²

The gathering hosted by Laurie Valdez reflected both the expanding network of interconnected families, and their use of community spaces outside the state to celebrate, grieve, support each other, and share vital and often interrelated information gleaned from their ongoing investigative efforts and any updates from lawyers. The space of the barbecue works as a space of regeneration. Drawing on Gustavo Esteva's "living hammock" the barbecue creates a living theory around "expandable points of connected support" that families rely on to "weave together shared struggles and collective experiences of grief and resilience."⁷⁵³ As families crisscross hundreds of miles to be together from across the Bay Area, "they are

⁷⁵² The details here are part of a public community speak out, and also circulated in newly updated postcards as part of the ongoing systems of information that form the critical backbone of the justice campaigns.

⁷⁵³ On "living hammock," see Esteva, "Regenerating People's Space," 34. All other quotes in this sentence are taken from the Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning taller, "Social Factory Ateneo 2-28-15," para. 4.

constructing a mesh formed of care and forms of justice outside the state, a mesh prepared to catch new families who are targeted.”⁷⁵⁴ The barbecues are always

...anniversaries of violence, and difficult for those who must host them and difficult as well for those for whom the anniversary recalls their own family anniversaries. Stories are swapped and new plans discussed as the community reflects itself back to itself in its strength and dignity.⁷⁵⁵

This resilience across these geographies and collective experiences of violence offer new ways of struggling against militarization, and new ways of being together.

⁷⁵⁴ Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Social Factory Ateneo 2-28-15,” para. 4.

⁷⁵⁵ Ibid.

CHAPTER 7: “SPACES OF ENCOUNTER”

Thus the space we live in is something intimate which constitutes our subjectivities at the same time that urban space—the streets, the squares—are “the public” par excellence, precisely that which is recognized as political.
— Maria Serrano and Silvia López⁷⁵⁶

In the spring of 2012 the People’s Community Medics appeared across the Bay Area providing a series of free first aid skill shares focused on best practices for responding to seizures, bleeding traumas, and gunshot wounds. Speaking before crowds gathered in auditoriums and high school gyms, parks and recreation centers, on street corners, sidewalks, and parking lots, the People’s Community Medics physically acted out life saving techniques while narrating incidents of violence. The trainings proceeded much like guerrilla street theater—a dash of bright blood-like paint was cast onto a living volunteer while the two women who form the base of the Community Medic team, both of them Black and from Oakland, explain how when responding to someone who has been shot, it is critical to cover both the bullet’s entry and the exit wound to stop the bleeding. They then demonstrate how to swap people when fatigue sets in so that direct pressure applied to an open wound can be maintained for over thirty minutes at a time.

At one gathering as clusters of families and community members were circled together on an asphalt basketball court, one of the women speaking lifted her purse above those gathered, removing a tampon from the purse which she held

⁷⁵⁶ Serrano and López, “Positions, Situations, Short-Circuits,” 3.

up in the air, unwrapping its packaging, and flaying the bright white cotton with her fingers as she explained how to treat gunshot wounds with common items often found in a pocketbook or backpack. Speaking from the slightly elevated makeshift platform that formed the training stage she reminded the standing crowd of the “golden hour,” explaining that, if the bleeding can be stopped and a person can be delivered to a hospital within the first hour after they’ve been shot, there’s a strong chance they can live. Those gathered interjected with questions or silently communicated with each other during the performance, exchanging nods and murmurs of recognition of shared losses. Often when the skill share was over the crowd remained with more questions that then turned into stories that revealed shared experiences of violence across communities.

The space convened through the trainings of the People’s Community Medics is one of several spaces organized around care and knowledge production that emerged from within communities across the Bay Area as struggles for dignity in response to specific police shootings and community violence in the Bay Area.⁷⁵⁷ They mark moments of autonomy organized as spaces of shared learning and collective care and mark mobilizations to confront an ongoing low intensity war aimed at the site of reproduction and particularly targeting Black and Brown communities.

This chapter will explore a series of interrelated projects that unfolded in response to specific moments of state and state-manufactured violence to

⁷⁵⁷ Here, I rely on Holloway’s use of dignity in relation to class struggle in “Dignity’s Revolt,” developed in an earlier section of this work. See Holloway, “Dignity’s Revolt.”

challenge militarization and advance community regeneration as part of a larger community safety effort underway across the Bay Area: The People's Community Medics, a grassroots life-saving skill share project launched in Oakland in 2011; The Love Balm Project, a series of theatrical performances and workshops based on mothers' *testimonios* for their children murdered across Oakland, San Francisco, and San Jose; the Bayview Community Feed, a monthly convergence and food give away organized by the mother of a young man who was left to die on a public plaza after being shot by San Francisco Police; and Uni Tierra Califas' Social Factory Ateneo, a space of convivial research and insurgent learning convened once a month in East Oakland. Each project functions as a "space of encounter" where the community collectively builds a shared analysis of the violence that permeates and the struggles that emerge from the social factory.⁷⁵⁸ The projects explored here make use of various convivial tools including performance, skill share, community speak outs, relational *testimonio*, collective remembering, and convivial research approaches to reclaim and construct communal spaces and "reweave the social fabric" of community.⁷⁵⁹

The direct context of these projects' emergence can be traced to two specific killings by law enforcement occurring within an already mobilized community in a protracted struggle against state violence extending across the

⁷⁵⁸ See Callahan, "Why Not Share a Dream?"

⁷⁵⁹ This is a concept to which Esteva returns throughout much of his writing, including throughout "Regenerating People's Space" and, Esteva and Prakash, *Grassroots Post-Modernism*.

Bay Area.⁷⁶⁰ The first three of the four projects highlighted—People’s Community Medics, the Love Balm Project, and the Community Feed are autonomous projects organized with Black women at the center.⁷⁶¹ The fourth project, Uni Tierra Califas’ Social Factory Ateneo in Oakland, is part of a networked space of autonomous learning extending from Chiapas to Oaxaca to Califas, and takes shape through an engagement with an urban Zapatismo emerging from Zapatista solidarity struggles extending back to 1994.⁷⁶² As moments of self-organized activity, the projects examined in this chapter critically expose a militarized response on the part of the state to the current crisis of capital. They reflect a complex confrontation with the immediate, corporal violences of the state in service of more expansive strategies of racial apartheid and population management. And, as “spaces of encounter,” they also point to the

⁷⁶⁰ The first of these was Oscar Grant shot by BART transit police in 2009 and the second was Kenneth Harding, Jr. shot by San Francisco police in 2011. Both incidents will be narrated more fully in relation to the resistances they provoked over the course of this chapter.

⁷⁶¹ There has always been strong tradition across the United States of Black women’s autonomous organizations and projects, though Julia Sudbury examines how too often historically these efforts have not been archived. This parallels the invisibilization of violence that targets women of color and in particular Black, Brown, and Indigenous women, as well as trans women and trans people in general, as many feminist, and especially women of color and queer collectives, scholars, and community efforts have continued to make visible. See Julia Sudbury, *Other Kinds of Dreams*, 9–12. Scholars including Beth Richie, Jodi Byrd, Rosa-Linda Fregoso and Cynthia Bejarano have continued to produce scholarship against this erasure both in the present as state and state-manufactured violence, and as a consequence and strategy of ongoing settler colonialism, particularly targeting Indigenous women. See Richie, *Arrested Justice*; Byrd, *The Transit of Empire*; Fregoso and Bejarano, *Terrorizing Women*.

⁷⁶² Each *ateneo* space rehearses the history of its becoming, as part of its agreements, though the story is different each time.

importance and power of collective knowledge production emerging from community struggles as key sites of rupture in a global “epistemicide.”⁷⁶³

Two Incidents in a Low Intensity War

In the very early hours of New Year’s Day 2009, Oscar Grant was removed with his friends from the BART train at the Fruitvale stop in Oakland by BART police, and made to sit with his back against the cement wall platform. Moments after being instructed to lie face down and then handcuffed he was shot point blank in the back by BART police officer Johannes Mehserle. On order of the police, ambulances called from Highland Hospital were instructed to wait several blocks away, restricted from responding to the young man dying on the platform.⁷⁶⁴ By the time Grant received medical attention the medics neglected to cover both the entry and the exit wound, allowing him to bleed out. Grant was no longer able to fight his way back to living and was later pronounced dead at Highland Hospital in Oakland.

Two and half years later on the other side of the Bay on the afternoon of July 16, 2001, Kenneth Harding Jr. was approached by San Francisco Police to provide proof of payment for a transit fare while riding a public bus. He was

⁷⁶³ The concept of “epistemicide” was generated by Boaventura de Sousa Santos, who links forms of epistemological dominance to forms of genocide. I am grateful for Manuel Callahan’s elaboration in its specific political context of racism in the neoliberal university, which I draw on in my thinking here. Callahan further develops this term in “In Defense of Conviviality,” 13. On “epistemicide” see, de Sousa Santos, *Another Knowledge Is Possible*, xix; see also de Sousa Santos, *Epistemologies of the South*.

⁷⁶⁴ Gansett, “Interview with the People’s Community Medics,” para. 2.

removed from the public transportation and detained on the street in Bayview-Hunter's Point. After being held and harassed for a period by SFPD officers over the \$2 fare, Harding stood and bolted from the curb. Officers fired at him as he was running away, shooting him five times in the neck and dropping him to the street in the plaza at 3rd and Oakdale in Bayview-Hunter's Point. Police officers cordoned off the area around the young man's body for twenty-eight minutes while Harding lay dying. Securing the area around Harding's body as a crime scene, officers let Harding die in preventing any aid to the young man who from time to time tried to raise himself from the sidewalk. During this time, police officers refused to allow any permeation of the boundary by neighbors and others passing by on the street that had gathered in a ring around the dying young man. Many observers repeatedly tried to provide water, pleading and demanding to be allowed to offer some sort of care or solace. No one from the community was allowed near the young man. The police refused to perform any life saving measures, and no medical help arrived to assist Harding.⁷⁶⁵

To different degrees and across different but connected communities of East Oakland and Bayview-Hunters Point, both violent events provoked immediate and enduring direct actions and acts of insurgency spreading from Oakland and San Francisco to across the larger Bay Area and beyond. People's rage and demands for justice took over streets and plazas through protests, rallies, vigils, and blocked intersections. In a battle sustained over time that included organized demands at city hall, gatherings at churches, campus panels, and

⁷⁶⁵ See, Kenneth Harding Jr. Foundation, "Two years since SFPD murdered."

numerous gatherings, community members from across the Bay organized a complete port shut down of the Port of Oakland organized in collaboration with the ILWU Local 10 in support of Grant, and in San Francisco, MUNI shutdowns in support of Harding.⁷⁶⁶

In both cases, the state responded with a broad arsenal of counterinsurgency tactics relying on varied forms of militarization and community policing strategies pursued by local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies. These brought together a diversity of agents in task forces and other inter-agency configurations and deployments, putting to use the full range of the federal “alphabet soup.”⁷⁶⁷ Before the shots were even fired into each young man, a process of criminalization was already in operation that framed their actions, possible intentions, threat level, and terms of citizenship.⁷⁶⁸ Immediately following each shooting, this representational machine was activated and deployed across the dominant media and served as the motor for the state’s

⁷⁶⁶ MUNI or SF MUNI stands for The San Francisco Municipal Railway and is the public transit system serving the city and county of San Francisco.

⁷⁶⁷ “Alphabet soup” is a common phrase used to refer to federal departments and agencies identified by their acronyms, ranging from the larger departments like the Department of Justice (DOJ) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to other agencies like the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA); Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco Firearms, and Explosives (ATF); U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) as well as multi-agency and other task forces like Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTFs) or Crime Reduction Teams (CRTs). It can also include intelligence and surveillance configurations, databases, data centers and hubs, and funding support programs and can include for example, the discontinued Threat and Local Observation Notice (TALON); Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI); Domain Awareness Center (DAC), and many others.

⁷⁶⁸ See, for example, Cacho on “social death” and citizenship. Cacho, *Social Death*.

own investigative methodology.⁷⁶⁹ Old warrants, pending or missed court dates, or time spent in a carceral or juvenile institution outside of school immediately surfaced to frame both young men targeted by the police shootings.⁷⁷⁰ Among the first responses from the resistance were efforts to present both young men as securely embedded in family and community life—photographs began circulating in both independent and dominant (or state-run) media showing Grant smiling with his daughter, Tatiana and Harding with his mother, Dennika Chatman.

The counterinsurgency strategy in place through a complex play of signifiers already established *a priori* and quickly activated by the media was just as quickly accompanied by a range of repressive measures from intelligence-gathering to direct physical response. An immediate enraged street presence was met with surveillance, seizure of property including journalist's cameras, and cordon and kettling tactics to funnel protestors into neighborhoods and *cul de sacs* and encircle “swarming” crowds, followed by mass arrests and jail time coupled

⁷⁶⁹ This process of representation forms a central component of a counterinsurgency strategy that depends on processes of criminalization to both justify its violence and its allocation of aid and support services.

⁷⁷⁰ I use the term “surfaced” here with the full awareness that “surfaced” often means “fabricated” as in the information that “surfaced” and was quickly exposed by community investigations following the recent brutally violent death of Freddie Gray at the hands of the Baltimore Police where his spine was 80% severed as a result of a “rough ride” in the back of police van. Originally, reports of a lawsuit surfaced stating that Freddie Gray had previously be awarded a settlement for a broken back. It was then proven that this report had been altered from a lawsuit settlement for lead poisoning not a broken back. A similar incident was exposed following the shooting of Michael Brown, where originally a report with images had “surfaced” that Officer Darren Wilson’s eye socket had been crushed by Michael Brown in an apparent scuffle. It was later revealed that the image of the broken eye socket was from a different person and was from 2007, seven years before the incident where Officer Wilson took Brown’s life.

with numerous mandatory court dates stretching over many months, along with other forms of harassment.⁷⁷¹

Such repressive practices on the part of the state focused on crowd management were then paralleled by other less overt strategies that unfolded to span the course of the sustained rebellion, heightened at particular moments to coincide with developments in the court battle. Organizers and community folks who had been active in the protests and rallies faced repeated traffic stops, frequent “tailing” by police in Oakland and other forms of low-level harassment accompanied by questioning that identified the officers as familiar with those they were targeting, speaking directly to their roles or assumed roles in fomenting the insurgencies. These strategies were supported by a broader focus on “soft counterinsurgency” aimed at deactivation, institutionalization, and containment from the nonprofit sector.⁷⁷²

The murder of Oscar Grant and two years later of Kenneth Harding prompted lawsuits from both families. As in the case of many police killings across the Bay, the struggles to respond and seek justice while in many cases supportive of the suits with calls to “Jail All Killer Cops” at the same time refused the enclosure of a state-organized justice determined by the courts. With both Grant and Harding, the prolonged exercises of state violence that ended each

⁷⁷¹ For an excellent study of the role of the courts in disrupting movements, see Balbus, *Dialectics of Legal Repression*.

⁷⁷² K. Williams, “The Other Side of the COIN;” George Ciccariello-Maher, “Introduction” (*Raider Nation I*).

man's life were recorded on video by numerous witnesses.⁷⁷³ Yet, while recognizing the importance of the documentation of state violence and the indisputable impact these recordings of state executions have had on the public, entrenched and mobilized communities refused to limit the value of the recordings to mere "evidence" seeking valorization in the courts. Instead the recordings were circulated widely and globally, exposing millions of people to two instances of extrajudicial killing accompanied by deliberate forms of securitized abandonment, a strategy well known across Black and Brown communities as bleeding out.⁷⁷⁴ Beyond simply circulating a "truth" of what happened, the recordings prompted a number of questions and reflections that continue to shape anti-militarization and self-determined safety discourses and projects into the present.⁷⁷⁵

The shootings and the militarized perimeters of securitized abandonment put into place by law enforcement and on clear display pushed to the surface collective interrogations of race and state violence. The undeniable facticity of

⁷⁷³ It is critical to note that in such incidents, police attempt to confiscate cameras, as was well documented in the case of Grant, where some witnesses refused to surrender their cameras and despite risks and threats, made this information public.

⁷⁷⁴ Across these communities of struggle, the term usually implies intentional negligence or marks, for example, an absence of life-saving services available in disenfranchised communities. I am grateful to ongoing conversations with James Braggs and Manuel Callahan on abandonment as "differential abandonment."

⁷⁷⁵ For example, this provoked discussions on police cameras on uniforms of lapels across a broad range of experiences, positions, and reflections. Many wondered collectively, for example, what the emphasis on recordings meant for those killings by police for which there are no recordings, or whether struggles for "evidence" should be linked to community struggles for justice. Questions were also raised about the role of copwatching in relation to mobilizing and collective community defense projects.

two young Black men shot point blank in front of numerous witnesses and purposely left to die had exposed a blatant system of racial apartheid enforced through acts of extreme state violence.⁷⁷⁶ These incidents also exposed a crisis of capital. Out of the rebellions that raged across Oakland and the rallies and protests through the streets of San Francisco, a new imagination of insurgency arose to insure the rebellions flowed into spaces of sustained insurrection.⁷⁷⁷ Working from within the terrain of a racialized and militarized landscape, a diversity of projects responded to the shootings as evidence of the urgent need to understand and confront the many violences aimed at communities marginalized by and racialized through capital. Many of these projects were deliberate in not only reclaiming space, but in their construction of spaces where communities of struggle could engage these questions and imagine alternatives collectively.⁷⁷⁸ They also provide a way of seeing a collective desire across communities to strengthen and create spaces of autonomy currently advanced as part of a larger

⁷⁷⁶ I am grateful to M. Callahan for his naming of apartheid in the US present.

⁷⁷⁷ Here I draw on Gustavo Esteva's analysis of the Oaxaca Commune to consider revolt and rebellions as they transform into insurrection. For Esteva, the events in Oaxaca in 2006 can at certain stages be considered a revolt in "the tradition of popular outbreaks that occur in the face of an unbearable oppressor or of a measure that constitutes the 'last straw'." The events can also be read as a rebellion, if one applies an understanding of a revolt being "an uprising of indomitable people affirming their dignity." But for Esteva, the events in Oaxaca in 2006 superseded a revolt and rebellion become "This insurrection did not subside." For Esteva, the insurrection is also not a "mass movement," which he notes is often controlled "from above" and often can demobilize people. See Esteva, "The Oaxaca Commune," 980.

⁷⁷⁸ Callahan, "In Defense of Conviviality."

community safety effort underway across the Bay Area.⁷⁷⁹ This community safety effort can be seen as part of a “new social paradigm.”⁷⁸⁰

Reading the Crisis: Community Safety

Manuel Callahan’s recent work argues that in order to further facilitate the emergence of this new social paradigm we must “agree somewhat on how we are reading the current conjuncture in relation to ‘crisis’.”⁷⁸¹ Callahan draws on the work of the Midnight Notes Collective in differentiating between crisis as a normal, disciplining form of capitalist “crisis” versus the crisis of social instability that marks the break down of the system. In Callahan’s approach, the current moment is defined by numerous fabricated crises as well as an epistemological

⁷⁷⁹ I am grateful to UT Califas ateneo for this theoretical framing around the issue. While this chapter focuses on a particular configuration of projects linked to these executions, the responses across the Bay Area were varied and vast, demonstrating profound refusals, support for struggles for profound change across society and forms of governance, commitments to collective care and healing, and a range of other desires and dreams. UT Califas Social Factory Ateneo summarizes one such project: “Against other, more everyday forms of surveillance and control which are also the sites of extreme violence, there are the actions of collectives like Casa de Pace in Fruitvale. Casa de Pace’s BART to Heart project is a sustained act of remembering and collective healing facilitated through collective meditation at the Fruitvale Station on the spot where Oscar Grant was killed by BART Officer Johannes Mehserle on January 1, 2009. With this act, they also have re-negotiated or fractured the perimeters of the privatized BART enclosure by convincing the turnstyle guards that they wish to go inside the station but not ride BART. Thus, they refuse to pay the ticket even as they pass the line of enclosure and exist in a space otherwise defined by its ability to generate value enforced by the gate.” Social Factory Ateneo summary, October 2014.

⁷⁸⁰ Callahan, “In Defense of Conviviality,” 1.

⁷⁸¹ Ibid.

struggle.⁷⁸² These crises are organized through several intersecting wars—the War on Drugs, the War on Migrants, the War on Terror, the War on Black and Brown Youth, and the War on the Social Factory. Crises organized as “war” fuel the demand for an ever-expanding securitization state.⁷⁸³

Community safety as a critical component of a new social paradigm emerged as a response to the crises and wars in the present. It is a broader strategic concept and practice of autonomy comprised of various projects and spaces organized around the central categories of care, defense, justice, and assembly.⁷⁸⁴ As a strategic concept it serves to advance critical epistemological questions by recognizing the role of knowledge production in shaping the conditions of our existence and our struggles. In alignment with the work of Jorge Gonzalez, it is a way of drawing attention to the way we produce knowledge and the way knowledge is produced about us, as well as what kinds of subsequent strategic knowledges we are able to produce in struggle. For Callahan drawing on Ruth Wilson Gilmore, community safety as a larger project involves a recognition that “knowledge production is integral to capitalist command.”⁷⁸⁵ It offers a structure within which to assess and engender new possibilities in militant and

⁷⁸² See also Bonaventura de Sousa Santos on epistemology and the public sphere of Western politics, in particular in relation to self-valorization and non-scientific knowledges in “Public Sphere and Epistemologies of the South.”

⁷⁸³ See Appendix 2, “Border War Convergence” (schematic).

⁷⁸⁴ The history of community safety, particularly in relation to FrayBa Human Rights Center in Chiapas has been traced earlier in this work.

⁷⁸⁵ Callahan, “In Defense of Conviviality,” 6.

convivial approaches to autonomy and regeneration.⁷⁸⁶ As a strategic concept, community safety provides a theoretical framework through which to read struggle, an architecture for understanding relations of force, and a space of learning coordinating “zones” and projects towards advancing autonomy as a process.⁷⁸⁷ Each of the projects examined here in this chapter can be read through the category of community safety. As convivial tools developed in response to violence, including epistemological violence, these projects expose a crisis of care that cannot be understood only through the framework of privatization and the dismantling of the Welfare State.⁷⁸⁸ Each project situates community mobilizations with a politics of care at the center. Collectively they refuse the enclosure of state organized justice and reclaim forms of defense, taking as a first point of recognition that the separation between these realms is one that traditionally has been imposed by the state. The projects here hold the seeds and shape the practices for larger moments of assembly—the critical coming together of the community to organize itself on its own terms.

Struggles to reimagine community safety against a hegemonic, neoliberal security and as a practice of autonomy necessarily negotiate and transform the

⁷⁸⁶ On militant approaches see *Colectivo Situaciones*, 19&20. Also, see Cleaver’s discussion of Negri’s negative and positive forms of struggle, in Cleaver, “On Self-Valorization.”

⁷⁸⁷ On the strategic concept, see Callahan, “Rebel Dignity.” On autonomy as a process, see Nasioka, “Communities of Crisis.”

⁷⁸⁸ See Nasioka. “Communities of Crisis.”

institutions and relations that give definition to the social factory. The sites where we reproduce ourselves are central to community safety struggles.

Increasingly, insurgent scholarship and grassroots investigations situate knowledge production and care at the center of analyses of struggle. As explored in a previous chapter of this work, the autonomist feminist collective Precarias a La Deriva of Spain offer both a critique of the privatization of care and new ways to think about collective care.⁷⁸⁹ Uruguay's prominent public intellectual Raul Zibechi cites both physical structures and relationships where systems of information and care are exchanged as critical components of self-defense. Zibechi recalls a meeting where, "Father Alejandro Solalinde spoke of how his shelter works to protect Central American migrants in their passage through Mexico. The establishment of shelters and counseling services plays a role in collective self- defense."⁷⁹⁰ In the current conjuncture, struggles waged from within the social factory offer creative possibilities for different kinds of institutions and relations. They also carve out space for collective analysis and generate new tools out of struggle. It is in these spaces outside of the space where we are able to imagine and practice new politics.⁷⁹¹

The projects are elaborated here through a convivial research approach advanced by CCRA and draw in particular on the work of Manuel Callahan. They are spaces of direct action; they are convivial tools that emerge from the

⁷⁸⁹ See, Precarias a la Deriva, "A Very Careful Strike."

⁷⁹⁰ Zibechi, "Subterranean Echoes."

⁷⁹¹ Here I draw on Mezzadra and Neilson, "Borderscapes of Differential Inclusion."

community for its own regeneration as a struggle for dignity; they represent and advance systems of information through “temporary autonomous zones of knowledge production” that reflect, gather, and archive a diversity of knowledges including situated (Haraway); poetic (Kelly); collective (both as memory and as ethnography); and strategic.⁷⁹² Each of these spaces contributes to the circulation of struggle.

The People’s Community Medics

The People’s Community Medics is a grassroots first-responder initiative that emerged in response to people being left to bleed out across the Bay Area. They regularly host trainings in basic emergency first aid with a specific focus on seizures, gunshot wounds and heavy bleeding trauma and through the trainings convene community speak outs addressing violence and care. These occur across Oakland, Berkeley, San Francisco, San Jose, and beyond. The trainings also provide free basic emergency first aid kits to participants. The Medics also deploy via cell phone in their own well-worn vehicles in response to emergency calls across Oakland. In many cases, they arrive well before the ambulances and are frequently restricted from providing further care when the police arrive. It has become increasingly common across the Bay Area for police to establish a perimeter around a body and identify the space as a crime scene and force community care workers out of the space.

⁷⁹² Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Systems Of Information.”

The women who formed the project and continue into the present as its main medics originally belonged to the Oscar Grant Committee, one of many autonomous projects to rise out of the mobilization of the killing of Oscar Grant. They have spent a good portion of their years in close proximity to the many textures and struggles of Oakland and the Bay Area.⁷⁹³ The Medics' presence and practice at the intersection of violent, racialized policing practices and their prominence in the Occupy Movement in Oakland drew attention to an important political intersection between police violence and brutality struggles and mobilizations that were more closely aligned with anarchist commitments and drew on a legacy of alter globalization movement.⁷⁹⁴ Thus, the Medics emerged from Bay Area mobilizations that continued following the shooting of Oscar Grant as they engaged with Occupy spaces. This was evident in the occupation and renaming of the central plaza in downtown Oakland in front of City Hall as Oscar Grant Plaza. The Oscar Grant Movement that began on New Year's Day of 2009, and the Occupy Movement that marked its beginning in the Bay Area with the first encampments and assemblies in the plaza in 2011 were targets of an extremely violent, repressive, and militarized policing force. By the Spring of 2012, Oakland's Occupy Movement had fanned out into neighborhood parks across Oakland offering free community barbecues and skill shares where the Medics presented their trainings together with families speaking about the violent

⁷⁹³ The project was founded by Sharena Diamond Thomas and Lesley Phillips.

⁷⁹⁴ This intersection has been previously elaborated more fully in the chapter on the Battle for 14th and Broadway earlier in this work.

deaths of their loved ones and Know Your Rights trainings from local copwatching groups.

As part of their own political genealogy, the Medics specifically locate their emergence as a response to the BART police execution of Oscar Grant and the everyday policing practices and absence of emergency medical response units directed at Black and Brown communities across Oakland. Their genealogy also notes the trainings made possible by friends trained as healthcare workers as well as the presence of well-organized street medics that formed a critical component of the Occupy Movement. These care workers and medics were active in the every day functioning of the Oakland Commune's camp and in the street battles between police and protestors filled with tear gas, rubber bullets, sound cannons, flash bang grenades, and physical interactions with brutal law enforcement agencies. The medics also travel with supplies to mitigate the impact of chemicals used by police, including tear gas and pepper spray. They work under the motto, "Each one, teach one."

The Love Balm Project

The Love Balm Project is a series of performances and spaces unfolding through the *testimonios* of mothers and grandmothers who have lost loved ones to state and state-manufactured violence. As a project of remembering and mourning, as well as a celebration of life, the Love Balm was originally catalyzed by the BART police murder of Oscar Grant. Not long afterwards, it expanded to

encompass community losses to police and street violence across the Bay Area.⁷⁹⁵

Initially, it focused on the stories of loss of six Bay Area women and their children: Bonnie Johnson, the mother of twenty-two-year-old Oscar Grant, killed by BART police officer Johannes Mehserle in East Oakland on January 1, 2009; Anita Wills, mother of Kerry Baxter, Sr. incarcerated since April 2001, at thirty years old and serving a sixty-six year sentence as a result of questionable policing practices and juridical failures, and grandmother of Kerry Baxter, Jr., fatally shot at nineteen years old in a still unresolved homicide in Oakland on January 16, 2011; Ayanna Davis, mother of twenty-five-year-old Khatari Gant, killed on the street in Oakland on August 4, 2007; Brenda Grisham, mother of seventeen-year-old Christopher La Vell Jones, shot and killed on the family's front porch in Oakland on December 31, 2010; Denika Chatman, mother of nineteen-year-old Kenneth Harding Jr., fatally shot by San Francisco Police on July 16, 2011; and Yasmin Flores, mother of twenty-seven-year-old Daniel Booker, shot and killed outside a nightclub in San Jose on December 19, 2009. The lives that were remembered by the mothers and grandmothers belonged to Black and Latino men, from seventeen to twenty-seven years old.

The early stage of the project was based on the director, Arielle Brown, listening and documenting the stories of mothers and grandmothers about their lost children. From here, continuous monologues were produced based on the narration that were then read out loud by each of the women during a performance

⁷⁹⁵ The Love Balm Project was conceived by Arielle Brown of Oakland who shares an entwined family history with Oscar Grant.

at the Eastside Arts Alliance, a community center in East Oakland. Thus in this early incarnation, each mother read her own words constructed into a continuous narrative back into a community space.

Following this initial reading, the monologues from the different stories of the mothers were then carefully woven together in one theatre piece, *Love Balm for My SpiritChild*, that was presented in community theaters across the East Bay over Fall and Winter of 2012–2013. As the play began, a basket was passed solemnly through the crowd filled with photocopied images of the young men who had been killed. Those present to watch the play were invited to consider the many images and could also take them home. In the theater performances, local actors, many of them active in community safety struggles, revolved on the stage speaking words from the mothers’ original monologues that had been reweven to put the stories into a kind of conversation or dialogue. At the end of the play, the actors and director facilitated a community conversation that included many of the family members who were present in the audience whose loss, reflections, and struggles formed the play.

The *Love Balm* play was then disaggregated into a series of site-specific performances known collectively as *Our Hallowed Ground*. Over the summer of 2013, each woman’s *testimonio* was performed by a local actor speaking at the site where the violence occurred in the words of the mother whose child had been lost on that site. The performances, like the lives and losses they represented, spanned the Bay Area from Oakland to San Francisco to San Jose. There was no monetary exchange for those who came as “audience.” Several of the

performances took place several times over the course of the day, so the act of witnessing was not necessarily restricted to a particular time. In some cases, as in the well-known and easily accessible case of the performance of Wanda Johnson on the Fruitvale BART platform, there was a significant presence to witness the monologue. In several cases, the killing had occurred deeper into neighborhoods difficult for those outside of that space to access resulting in fewer people. Sometimes only a handful of people circled the woman performing the monologue. In one instance, on a busy street corner, several people walked carelessly through those gathered around the performance, not realizing the solemn space that had been carved out from the city for the duration of the monologue. At every site, the family was present, often with many children and layers of extended family. They were invited to speak or stay silent, each having worked with the director and the actors and community members as the project had unfolded over time.

For the following summer, the play was then recomposed again as *Love Balm for My SpiritChild* for a ten-day run from July 11 through 20, 2014, at the Brava Theater in San Francisco's Mission District. Evenings were organized to include a facilitated discussion following each performance with those in attendance. This exchange was facilitated by families represented in the play. The dialogue also wove in more recent justice struggles engaging other families and community members present in the theater who saw reflected in the performance similar experiences of violence. Thus, they were presented with a space where these stories could be shared.

The Love Balm Project also extended beyond the performances to include the Love Balm Institute which holds *testimonio* workshops across the Bay Area and Los Angeles. Relying on popular education strategies and making use of open spaces of *testimonio*, the Love Balm Institute facilitates dialogues on violence across communities and creates space to explore focused conversations, including the role of art and the artist in social movements and struggles, and strategies for engaging justice and peace building.

The Community Feed at Kenny's Corner

The Community Feed at Kenny's Corner was started on February 19, 2012, by Kenneth Harding's mother Denika Chatman and community supporters in Bayview-Hunter's Point. It is situated in the cordoned off area where Kenneth Harding Jr. was purposefully left to bleed out after being shot multiple times in the back of the neck by San Francisco Police on July 16, 2011, for supposed evasion of a \$2 bus fare. On this space of the plaza, his execution and slow death were witnessed by over fifty people, including children. Originally Bayview-Hunters Point was the site of ship manufacturing in service of World War II, and communities developed around this site of labor. Currently, Bayview-Hunters Point is heavily polluted by toxic chemicals associated with shipbuilding and is notably one of the last remaining largely Black neighborhoods in San Francisco. It is the only neighborhood in the city where fare inspections are carried out by

armed police; in other areas of the city, unarmed MUNI officers are responsible for this task.⁷⁹⁶

Every third Sunday, community members and supporters gather at the corner of 3rd and Oakdale to set up tables, make healthy sandwiches for bag lunches, and assemble grocery bags of food to hand out from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. to people in the Bayview Hunter's Point community. The Community Feed distributes as many as 150 bags of food each month. They also host a coat drive, providing free coats, shoes, and other clothing to people who come by the Community Feed. The project is deliberate in its two aims: "to give back to the community and reclaim the space from murdering SFPD."⁷⁹⁷ Similar to Oscar Grant Plaza, part of this project has involved a community renaming of what was formerly Wendell Plaza to Kenny's Plaza. The Community Feed acknowledges its roots in a community feed initiated by local collective Black Star Line Incorporated that took place in August 2011 in commemoration of Black August and less than a month after Kenneth Harding's assassination.⁷⁹⁸

The space of the Plaza is also the space where Denika Chatman's *testimonio* was performed as part of the site-specific performances of Love Balm's *Our Hallowed Ground* series in the summer of 2013.

⁷⁹⁶ See Horne, "Kenneth Harding, Raheim Brown, Oscar Grant."

⁷⁹⁷ See Kenneth Harding Jr. Foundation, "Celebrating our First Year," para. 1.

⁷⁹⁸ Ibid, para. 5.

The Social Factory Ateneo

A project of Uni Tierra Califas, the Social Factory Ateneo was launched in May 2014 as part of a series of networked learning spaces. A node in a larger Uni Tierra system of campuses extending from Chiapas to Oaxaca and across Southern California, Uni Tierra Califas is centered in the South Bay. As an autonomous learning project, Uni Tierra explicitly exists outside of capital, prioritizing collective learning and shared research over institutionalized education. Uni Tierra Califas has continued to advance several interconnected spaces that include *ateneos*, *tertulias*, *mitotes*, community *tianguis*, thesis clinics and *talleres* or skill shares. Each of these spaces is imagined as a “space of encounter” where information is shared collectively across communities. Theorized as “temporary autonomous zones of knowledge production,” or TAZKPs, the insights, reflections, and strategic information shared and collectively generated in these spaces contribute to building a shared analysis and the circulation of struggle.⁷⁹⁹

Beginning in 2011, Uni Tierra has advanced three *ateneos* across the Bay Area—the Democracy Ateneo in San Jose, the Insurgent Learning Ateneo in San Francisco, and the Social Factory Ateneo in Oakland.⁸⁰⁰ The *ateneos* serve as spaces of horizontal learning and community autonomy that in recognizing the

⁷⁹⁹ Here I draw on the relation of TAZKP to the circulation of struggle elaborated in Callahan’s, “In Defense of Conviviality.”

⁸⁰⁰ The Democracy Ateneo has been in place in the South Bay continuously since 2011, the Insurgent Learning Ateneo was activated in the Spring of 2012 and deactivated in the Spring of 2013, and the Social Factory Ateneo was activated in May of 2014. Both the Democracy Ateneo and the Social Factory Ateneo are active as of this writing.

critical role of knowledge production, exist alongside movement spaces where different knowledges can be exchanged across struggles and new knowledges formed. The *ateneos* have contributed to building a shared analysis, facilitating collective research and theorizing and advancing direct actions across the Bay Area, including through People's Investigations and other community safety and regeneration projects. Uni Tierra's *ateneo* spaces have also produced convivial tools that respond to militarization including an elaborate, decentralized community safety database designed with the struggles of families confronting state violence at the center. The spaces and projects combined contribute to a "circulation of struggle" weaving together direct actions and grassroots initiatives from across the Bay.⁸⁰¹

The Social Factory Ateneo was conceived as a convivial research space that "recognizes the community as a principal site of struggle with women as key agents undermining capital's efforts to impose capitalist social relations, as well as generating new forms of reproducing the community that is dignified and autonomous."⁸⁰² The project arises from the understanding that in the current conjuncture, this requires reflection on the forces of capital and the state aimed at families and community bonds through militarization and specifically forms of militarized policing, mass incarceration, deportations, and surveillance of every day life. Uni Tierra's initial announcement that launched the Social Factory

⁸⁰¹ On circulation of struggle, see Cleaver, "The Zapatistas and the International Circulation of Struggle."

⁸⁰² Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, "Social Factory Ateneo 5-24-14," para. 2.

Ateneo circulated as an invitation to share struggles from the site where the community reproduces itself.⁸⁰³ Through a focus “on specific projects rather than issues” and with the invitation to “convene around the ways we are already organizing ourselves and the ways we already see ourselves as autonomous,” the Social Factory Ateneo started from a recognition that communities across the Bay are already engaged in resistances and prefigurative spaces of community regeneration.

The emphasis and collective commitments of the Social Factory Ateneo developed in relation to a series of gatherings convened across the Bay and several community safety projects with women at the center, including a number of spaces of relational *testimonio* organized by Uni Tierra Califas over the Fall and Spring of 2013–2014, as well as collaborative skill shares, community theses clinics, and grassroots investigations.⁸⁰⁴ From its inception, the Social Factory

⁸⁰³ Ibid., para. 3.

⁸⁰⁴ Among these were the Democracy Ateneo that regularly brought together these struggles, as well as several prominent events in San Jose in the year leading up to the launching of the Social Factory Ateneo. These included a collaborative community skill share that brought together the People’s Community Medics, People’s Investigations, youth groups organized against criminalization in schools, Filipina groups organized around police violence, and CCRA. These also included a UT Thesis Clinic that converged various projects, including The Hutta Visitation Center in Texas working with women, migration and deportations; the Love Balm Project, the ICMC, CCRA, CCWP, and other projects across Oakland and Bayview-Hunter’s Point. Other spaces that brought community members and shared projects together to give shape to the Social Factory Ateneo included a gathering of families and in particular mothers whose children had been killed that took place in San Jose in October of 2012, following the “Our Hallowed Ground” performance featuring the story of Yasmin Flores; and an event on the San Jose State University campus on February 27, 2014, “Libation to Liberation,” that brought together families whose loved ones had been targeted by state and state-manufactured violence as well as vigilante violence and deadly campus violence meted out by fraternities. Families present include the family of Emmett Till, Oscar Grant, Kerry Baxter Jr. and Sr., Gregory Johnson, and Hernan Jaramillo. Members of the Love Balm Project, CCRA, and the People’s Community Medics were also present.

Ateneo explicitly drew on the work of Precarias a La Deriva to imagine a “politics of care” in response to the privatization of care and the externalization of the home, theorized through the *ateneos* as the militarization of care. This contributes to a larger strategy to “reweave the social fabric,” bringing together care work, justice struggles, community defense projects, and community investigations with families targeted by state violence at the center.⁸⁰⁵ As a “space of encounter,” the *ateneo* is imagined within a larger effort aimed at proliferating and building neighborhood assemblies where the community can determine its own needs and imagine its own future collectively and autonomously.⁸⁰⁶ The *ateneo* is also a space of collective ethnography. It is a space that deliberately and through collective process archives and advances struggle as a collective process.

Occupation and Reclaiming Space

As long as my son's blood is on those streets, that's where I'll be.
*—Denika Chatman*⁸⁰⁷

The projects that rose out of direct police shootings emerged within a territory defined by the logic, codes and practices of the security state.⁸⁰⁸ Each

⁸⁰⁵ See Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Social Factory Ateneo.”

⁸⁰⁶ See Esteva, “The Oaxaca Commune” for a discussion on neighborhood assemblies and the Popular Assembly of the People’s of Oaxaca (APPO).

⁸⁰⁷ Author’s notes from Celebration of Life commemorating the birthday of O’Shaine Evans and others, San Francisco, July 18, 2015.

⁸⁰⁸ The relationship between differential policing and racial quarantine in their relation to security and war has been outlined earlier in this chapter. I draw on M. Davis, *City of Quartz*; Rimke, “Security: Resistance;” Paul Amar, *The Security Archipelago*.

marks an active engagement, assessment and confrontation against a militarized landscape organized through low intensity war directed at particular bodies and populations.⁸⁰⁹ They navigate a complex geography, which in the current conjuncture is increasingly policed according to areas designated as battle zones through every day practices of urban warfare against a civilian population.⁸¹⁰ As political projects, these resistances are enacted in a specific relationship to the spatial grids of the metropolis, with its racialized demarcations and multiple internal boundaries and borders of differential inclusion.⁸¹¹ Similar to the work of *Precarias a la Deriva*, these resistances confront capital's imposition on the architectural forms and flows of the city, calling attention to its circuits, transfer points, spaces and hierarchies of violence.⁸¹²

Connecting the occupation of space with the “sexual uprising of Stonewall,” Maria Serrano and Silvia López of La Eskalera Karakola, Madrid, lay claim to urban space through an assertion of collective presence.⁸¹³ “Because we are part of these territories we daily struggle to construct them and reorganize them...legitimate re-appropriation of our own living space, of our bodies, our

⁸⁰⁹ See Stephen Graham, *Cities Under Siege*; Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*.

⁸¹⁰ See Graham, *Cities Under Siege*.

⁸¹¹ On metropolitan space, see Soja, *Postmetropolis*. On borders and internal borders, including “differential inclusion” and “multiplication of labor,” see Mezzadra and Neilson, “Borderscapes of Differential Inclusion,” and Mezzadra and Neilson, *Border as Method*. On borders, internal borders and “differential laboring subjects” Callahan, “Crisis and Permanent War.”

⁸¹² See *Precarias a la Deriva*, “Adrift Through the Circuits.”

⁸¹³ Serrano and López, “Positions, Situations, Short-Circuits,” 2.

boroughs, our world.”⁸¹⁴ Serrano and López begin from the understanding that space is never neutral but “an accumulation of history and an incarnation of power.”⁸¹⁵ “It forms us and transforms us; we are molded by the spaces through which we move, which structure our daily life, which determine whom we encounter and in what terms.”⁸¹⁶ In theorizing occupations, they engage feminist debates at the intersection of public/private, the political, visibility, and urban space. They write about an effort

to make explicit this unity, this non-differentiation, between ‘the public’ and ‘the personal’ and to insist that it is in this complex environment that politics is done, is like, so many feminist struggles, a matter of making the visible the invisible, of denaturalizing what passes for natural, just as is revealing the hidden economy of domestic work or the concealed anguish of sexual violence.⁸¹⁷

For Serrano and Lopez this making visible through occupations—claiming and creating space—is a collective act linked to citizenship. “Creating our own spaces is a matter of insisting that citizenship is a daily practice collectively built through the active and conscientious habitation of space.”⁸¹⁸ This citizenship has more to do with new territories of collective organization than the nation-state.

Each of the projects organized by women that form the basis of this chapter are deliberate in their efforts to reclaim space. In this sense, they can each be understood as advancing several components of collective belonging and

⁸¹⁴ Ibid., 7.

⁸¹⁵ Ibid., 3.

⁸¹⁶ Ibid.

⁸¹⁷ Ibid.

⁸¹⁸ Ibid.

community regeneration concurrently. Taken collectively, they recoup spaces of intense violence that include state executions, state-manufactured violence appearing as random criminality and unsafety, and barbaric moments of the refusal life—in most cases witnessed by the community whose lives exist in that space. Several of the projects have continued over stretches of concrete still stained with blood or shattered by bullets. The actions occupy a similar space as vigils; they reclaim space as a public act of remembering, mourning, and celebration of life—a collective refusal against forgetting through living memorialization that has the power to overwrite the space with care and unity. They have the power to produce, even if momentarily, a collective subject centered around both shared loss and refusal. Thus, they function as collective sites for remembering and continuing to mingle the dead with the living and can allow families to maintain connections to those that have passed, even extending this network across the geography of a city. Yet, these sites are not constructed primarily as urban cemeteries nor do they represent a “cult of the dead.”⁸¹⁹

The claims they advance are complex efforts of a resistant occupation, to “embrace [occupation] as a process and strategy.”⁸²⁰ On November 24, 2012, the

⁸¹⁹ Foucault discusses the position and movement of cemeteries in Western culture over time in relation to center and periphery, churches and suburbs. Of the role of the cemetery in modern bourgeois life, Foucault notes, “in correlation with the individualization of death and the bourgeois appropriation of the cemetery, there arises an obsession with death as an ‘illness’.” Michel Foucault, “Of Other Spaces,” 6. In this way, he argues, cemeteries have been displaced from their proximity to churches. This theorization of the movement of cemeteries to urban peripheries overlaps with, rather than contradicts, other theorizations that draw on real estate prices in an expanding metropolis.

⁸²⁰ Callahan, “In Defense of Conviviality,” 5.

People's Community Medics received a call requiring them to dispatch from the afternoon's preparations for their own community fundraiser to the scene of an incident on San Pablo Avenue where a teenage boy had been shot while getting on his bike after leaving a local convenience store. The Community Medics team arrived before the ambulance, but the police and the Oakland Fire Department paramedics had already arrived on the scene, putting up yellow tape and pushing those gathered, including the Community Medics, further down the street. The Medics responded by returning to the scene of the incident the next morning to share a community training and hand out flyers. They learned that the boy had died. They spoke with people about the incident and set up candles in a space of vigil on the sidewalk at the intersection where the boy had lost his life.⁸²¹

This functions as both a refusal to let the violence go unmarked and without response in a securitized urban environment where those who voluntarily provide life-saving medical attention are restricted from doing so by police. Their work to return to the spot makes visible new forms of securitized or militarized abandonment critical to the biopolitical regime, one governed according to an organizational hierarchy of "make live and let die." These moments of "occupation" as care and also resistance place similar moments side by side to

⁸²¹ Several community safety efforts across the Bay make use of similar "occupations" of spaces where violence has occurred. In another powerful instance, after learning of a brutal police beating of a young Mexican man over Cinco de Mayo weekend in San Jose, a weekend notorious for its acts of police violence and aggression against the Mexican community, members of San Jose Copwatch, AZ, and CCRA gathered on the sidewalk on the spot of the violence with hand lettered signs and stayed for several hours into the late evening speaking to people about their experiences with the police during the Cinco de Mayo weekend. For the People's Community Medics description of incident and their return to the space the following day, see "2012-11-25 message from "People's Community Medics."

expose critical observations and questions, as this work seeks to do. For example, if militarized or securitized abandonment involves the police surrounding a dying person and refusing to let others enter the space and provide care, what is it when a SWAT team surrounds a vigil where a person was killed that day, or a month or a year before, where the whole family is on the inside of the perimeter, in a space of mourning? Or, when militarized police surround a family barbecue and refuse to let people leave the park except in configurations larger than two or three people? Those groups gathered to support the medics at the November fundraiser and in the aftermath of this violence included members of the Black Riders, a militant community self-defense group based in Oakland, members of Berkeley Copwatch, organizers from a People's Tribunal on Racism and State Violence that had taken place Oakland in February of 2011, members of the Oakland Anti-Repression Committee, and other groups engaged in a number of community safety projects.

With their return to the securitized scene where community care efforts were restricted the project of the Medics carves out another kind of space, one where information vital to the defense, survival, and reproduction of the community can circulate. This moment, like the Bayview Community Feed and the site specific performances of *Our Hallowed Ground*, is a prefigurative space. It is also a convivial space of care and collective investigation, where the spontaneous training becomes both an occupation and an invitation. As a space of convivial research, it is one where the Medics were able to share what they learned about the functioning and priorities of the state when they were restricted

by police from providing life-saving care. It is space for witnesses to come forward and for the story of the violence to live in opposition to the state's statements validating the presence of police and the criminalized subject categorized as a "threat." As occupations, these moments challenge a foundational myth of the police role to "serve and protect." The space becomes an invitation for a different story to be told, a narrative that contests state hegemony and contributes to the elaboration of a community's counter narrative.

In his recent analysis of the Occupy Movement in San Jose, California, Manuel Callahan identifies among the successes of the Occupy Movement its ability to "facilitate politically potent moments of conviviality," and poses the question, "How to disrupt dominant forces and still maintain convivial reconstruction?"⁸²² At stake, he argues, "is the challenge of moving beyond the initial 'spontaneity' to constructing a space for co-generation of intercultural knowledges and strategies capable of embracing or inventing alternatives to capital and the state."⁸²³

Taken together, these projects are profoundly subversive in their reclaiming of space and in their ability to reveal the complexity of struggles in the social factory. Through this category, we can read them through Tronti's designation of the "social factory" as a kind of occupation of the spatial and temporal realm outside the factory wall and outside the realm of the wage. Such a reading offers a way of thinking about resistance as reclaiming space that resists

⁸²² Callahan, "In Defense of Conviviality," 5.

⁸²³ Ibid.

the dichotomy of public/private, one that too easily lends itself to a notion of “exposing” violence for an “audience” that may be outraged for a brief moment. It also resists a “civic” solution. When de Sousa Santos argues that the realm of the public has been carved out by a Western Epistemology, this opens space for a new imagination of what it means to gather together in the street, one that is no longer circumscribed by the terms of liberal governance or spaces carved in service of capital.⁸²⁴ They become, in Fred Moten and Stefano Harney’s words, moments of “Black study” where we engage new ways of being together in the “undercommons.”⁸²⁵

In opening his analysis of *heterotopias*, Foucault’s reminds us that “space itself has a history in Western experience” and further, that spaces exist as relational, where each site “is defined by relations of proximity between points or elements” which can be described as series, trees, or grids.”⁸²⁶ As he advances his analysis of space and spatial relations, Foucault writes that,

the heterotopia is capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible. Thus it is that the theater brings onto the rectangle of the stage, one after the other, a whole series of places that are foreign to one another.⁸²⁷

His theorization of heterotopias (“linked to the accumulation of time”) and heterochronies allows for an understanding of a complex layering of space,

⁸²⁴ de Sousa Santos, “Public Sphere and Epistemologies of the South.”

⁸²⁵ See Harney and Moten, *The Undercommons*. See also Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Democracy Ateneo Announcement 5-09-15.”

⁸²⁶ Foucault, “Of Other Spaces,” 1, 2.

⁸²⁷ Ibid, 6.

events, and time as a political moment of encounter.⁸²⁸ In the theater production of the *Love Balm*, as actors representing different stories circle each other and respond to each other on stage, the “space of encounter” is not limited to the mothers encountering each other. Stories of police killings co-exist with stories of community violence across an expansive geography of violence extending from San Jose to Oakland. State violence and state-manufactured violence are placed in proximity to provoke new connections for thinking through the militarization of community space, and aimed at the community’s own reproduction. Killings otherwise separated by many years exist adjacent in “an accumulation of time” through the stories recounted contemporaneously in the voices of the mothers.⁸²⁹ As the *Love Balm* play is disaggregated back out into the site-specific performances on the streets, including sharing space with the Community Feed as overlapping projects of marking a site of violence, each specific site remains interconnected with the other sites, providing a living map where entwined

⁸²⁸ Ibid, 7. Here, the “encounter” does not necessarily privilege a subject or isolate a subject from a context. One is reminded of similar displacements effected by Deleuze with his theorization that the “the event” is the one speaking. Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*.

⁸²⁹ Among the significant achievement of the *Love Balm Project* has been this co-habitation in a shared space of stories of young people lost to police violence next to stories of young people lost to community violence or “subaltern violence” (Callahan). Julia Sudbury (now Julia C. Oparah) explores a similar tension between the abolitionist movement and the criminal justice system, in particular in relation to “state protections” including mandatory sentencing laws, offered as solution to domestic violence. Sudbury discusses how differing opinions and experiences between prisons abolitionists on the one hand and activists in the domestic violence and sexual abuse (DVSA) movement on the other “created barriers between the two movements that potentially threatened the effectiveness of both.” Sudbury, “Toward a Holistic Anti-Violence Agenda,” 135. Resolved here through the overlap between Critical Resistance and DVSA collectives that formed the basis on the powerful collective INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence, Sudbury’s analysis points to the need for shared “spaces of encounter” where a collective analysis can be advanced.

violences advance possibilities for a shared analysis of the complexity of militarization, providing a circuit for resistances and knowledges to travel across communities.

Systems of Information

Militarization reveals an array of social antagonisms. For CCRA, “any situation of social antagonism necessarily produces competing systems of information, or formal and informal interventions, that archive knowledge.”⁸³⁰ The performances of *Love Balm for My SpiritChild* in theaters and its corollary *Our Hallowed Ground* on the streets reiterated a series of statements retrieved from conversations between Arielle Brown as a playwright and mothers who had lost children to violence. In each reenactment, statements are also circulated as forms of subjugated, situated, and strategic knowledges within the context of the performance.⁸³¹ On stage, actors voice statements that speak to what has been lost, and where the injustices lie, statements that advance details and give shape to a collective, counter hegemonic knowledge. Several women circle each other on a sparsely designed set, sharing profound reflections and insights. Each woman recalls the past of her child, his growing and his living over time. These stories deny state tactics that are contingent on criminalizing those it targets to maintain its own legitimacy. The details situate each young man with a web of relations—a

⁸³⁰ Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Systems Of Information,” para. 1.

⁸³¹ These knowledges, and their relation to war and the domestication of war, have been elaborated earlier in this work.

family, a community, a work place—and within a trajectory of life that includes a past where he was loved and cared for and with a future that was his and was stolen. They reveal these as elements that the state seeks to overwrite. In the functioning of the state, the past is only called forth to surround those targeted when its details can be deployed to establish those targeted as criminal, violent, a threat or a menace, and not wanting or deserving of their own future. Taken together, these are not individualized acts of remembering as obituaries. They reveal patterns through which those speaking “in dialogue” with those gathered can detect and expose strategies of an unfolding counterinsurgency.

One woman says of her murdered child, “He was my life’s work.”⁸³² Her statement that both speaks to her incredible loss and her work of care and reproduction from within the social factory that the state has attempted to erase. Increasingly, reproductive justice issues are focusing on the extreme violence targeting the children of Black and Brown women, as feminist collectives organized around care, well-being, and survival establish a continuity of attack, situating the violence targeting Black and Brown youth as attacks on the communities whose young people are no longer safe.⁸³³ Similar to struggles

⁸³² Brown, *Love Balm for my SpiritChild*.

⁸³³ This was the primary focus of the Social Factory Ateneo in East Oakland from 2014–2015, and is emerging at the intersection of grassroots women of color led justice struggles and autonomous feminist collectives, as was recently highlighted in the work of Global Women’s Strike’s statement of solidarity for the “Million Mother’s March” against police brutality and racial injustice held in Washington, DC on May 10, 2015. The Million Mother’s March was called by Mothers for Justice United and in particular Marie Hamilton, mother of Dontre Hamilton, who was killed by Milwaukee police officer Christopher Manney on April 30, 2014. Selma James and Andaiye are prominent members of the Global Women’s Strike and have advanced the project of “caring not killing,” drawing connections between care work, gendered labor, and violence.

against the invisibilization of labor in the social factory as advanced through the work of *Lotta Femminista* (Feminist Struggle) in wages against housework campaigns, this statement from the mother whose child has been taken from her advances an understanding of violence that is linked to capital—not only to the police as a instrument of brute and deadly force. Women’s struggles against racial violence and against the violent targeting of family and community reveal capital’s violent imposition into the spaces and rhythms of reproductive life. They expose capitals attempts to impose relations outside of the factory and outside of the wage through a strategy of terror and complete disruption.

Another woman advances a statement that exposes a counterinsurgency strategy deployed by the state against many families targeted by violence, noting, “We still haven’t received the coroner’s report.”⁸³⁴ In other words, and as explored earlier in this ethnography, the state has disseminated its narrative of the violence, but has refused to reveal the report that might give the family a more concrete understanding of what violence their child endured at the hands of the state.

In another statement, a woman grapples with an analysis of militarization where state violence and state manufactured violence are advanced as intertwined projects against communities, saying, “Someone is bringing guns into this community.”⁸³⁵ The knowledges given space to circulate—situated, poetic, strategic, oppositional, subaltern—contribute to larger, more complex systems of

⁸³⁴ Brown, *Love Balm for my SpiritChild*.

⁸³⁵ Ibid.

information vital to community efforts to fight back, to assess its strategies, to compare previously isolated experiences of violent loss and to move forward with new tools at its disposal. In the community speak out following one of the July 2014 performances of the *Love Balm*, Refugio Nieto, father of Alex Nieto, joined those on stage to share for the first time in his own words the story of his son murdered by SFPD on March 21, 2014, in Bernal Hill Park in San Francisco.⁸³⁶

For Arielle Brown, the process of creating the Love Balm Project was intimately linked to forms of community-based justice emerging from situations of violence. Arielle drew on her experiences in Rwanda working with a collective of women who adopted children orphaned as a result of the Rwandan genocide, a moment of extreme state-manufactured violence. In “traditions of counter-memorial” as practices of justice, communities came forward over many years to bear witness together in assemblies convened as spaces of relational *testimonio*, as community members shared what they saw, what they participated in, what role they played and what they endured in relation to collective violence. Here, justice

⁸³⁶ See Love Balm Project, “*Love Balm for My SpiritChild* at Brava Theater Center.”

processes are about healing, but also about sharing information that exposes the role of the state in producing violences among communities.⁸³⁷

Like the assemblies in Rwanda, the Love Balm Project becomes both a process of healing and justice, but also serves as a convivial tool. CCRA analyzes systems of information in relation to a convivial approach: “The task of a convivial research effort is to expose the dominant knowledge and its limitations while amplifying local and oppositional knowledges.” This marks an effort “to promote open, reflexive systems of information as part of interconnected temporary autonomous zones of knowledge production, or the variety of short-lived grassroots spaces that generate situated, poetic, and oppositional knowledges.”⁸³⁸ As counter-memory and systems of information, these shared knowledges are critical to justice processes and situate care at the center of

⁸³⁷ Author’s oral history interview with Arielle Brown, April 7, 2014. See also Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Social Factory Ateneo 7-26-14.” The focus for the July Social Factory ateneo was the Love Balm and was co-convened with one of the mothers whose story was represented in the play, Anita Wills. I am grateful here for a series of spaces in May–July of 2014 where this conversation emerged and that included Arielle Brown and Anita Wills of the Love Balm Project, H.L.T. Quan and Crystal Griffith of Quad Films, and participants in UT Califas’ Democracy and Social Factory Ateneos, and Theses Clinic, as well as collaborators in Queer Qumbia and a *tertulia* held on May 29th at *La Estrellita* in Oakland with groups from Transgender, Gender Variant, and Intersex Justice Project (TGIJP), CUAV, CCWP, AZ South Bay, and others organized as a space of reflection and sharing across parts that formed part of an ongoing collective ethnography around gender, justice, and community safety. Uni Tierra Califas and AZ mobilize *tertulias* as critical spaces of community regeneration and knowledge production. For Uni Tierra Califas, “a tertulia refers to neighbors who gather at an accessible public space...to share news and information that affect the community.” See Uni Tierra Califas *folleto* (pamphlet), “Tertulia,” para. 1. The tertulia “politicizes regular local gatherings often common to barrios as sites to generate and archive local histories of struggle.” Ibid. Uni Tierra Califas advances that “a consistent and accessible tertulia can be a site where community members can develop projects, coordinate activities, facilitate networks, share resources, and promote research.” Ibid.

⁸³⁸ Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Systems of Information,” para. 3.

ongoing self-organized moments that reflect struggles within, against, and beyond the state.

Each of the community safety projects that emerged in response to these Bay Area killings can be read as a space of convivial research and a convivial tool deliberately designed to allow subaltern knowledges to surface and be heard, for multiple “systems of information” to circulate. Each effectively produces a site for knowledge to not only be shared, but co-generated and in so doing opens up new possibilities for political life that directly draw from both the impositions and restrictions of the social factory, and the structures and relations in place that allow for a new kind of politics to breathe.⁸³⁹

Temporary Autonomous Zones of Knowledge Production

The space carved out by each project for the exchange and archiving of complex systems of information functions as a TAZKP where information critical to the survival of the community is shared, generated, and transmitted across members, traveling across various networks.⁸⁴⁰

In early October of 2013, the *testimonio* of Yasmin Flores speaking of her son, Daniel Booker, was performed on a street corner in downtown San Jose by Ana Maria Luera as part of a series of *testimonios* as site specific performances enacted over the summer of 2013 by women on sidewalks, public transportation

⁸³⁹ This draws on connections and theorizing advanced through CCRA.

⁸⁴⁰ See Callahan, “In Defense of Conviviality;” Convivial Research and Insurgent Learning, “Systems of Information.”

platforms, and other urban spaces across Oakland, San Francisco, and San Jose. In December of 2009, at twenty-seven-years-old, Danny Booker was fatally shot in front of five police officers on the corner of 2nd and Santa Clara in downtown San Jose after walking out of a popular nightclub. He bled to death on the sidewalk before an ambulance arrived. The story of his life told through the reflections of his mother was woven into her own life story and those of a larger community targeted by violence. The space delineated by the *testimonio* was also a vigil, a heterotopic, heterochronic space as community members converged in San Jose from across the Bay and wrote names of others lost to state and street violence on small stones and arranged them as a border to carve a stage out of the sidewalk— Kayla Moore, killed by Berkeley Police Department in 2013; Mario Romero, killed by Vallejo Police in 2012; Alan Blueford killed by Oakland Police Department in 2012; Raheim Brown, killed by Oakland Police Department in 2011; James Rivera Jr., killed by Stockton Police and San Joaquin County Sheriff Department in 2010; Idriss Stelley, killed by San Francisco Police in 2001.

To follow the late afternoon *testimonio*, Uni Tierra Califas, AZ South Bay and 50.50 Crew had organized a gathering a few blocks away with food to honor Yasmin and the family, the life of Daniel Booker, the many other mothers and families present who had lost loved ones, the actors and those who had imagined and created the site specific performances, and those who kept up the fight, connecting families and struggles through rallies and protests and vigils across the

Bay.⁸⁴¹ The gathering was a strategic space, imagined as a space of convergence and assembly for a community of struggle to come together and recognize itself in its collective loss and struggle after a shared experience. There was no agenda, but a desire to come together organized around agreements.⁸⁴² People sat in folding chairs in an open circle of thirty to forty people, mostly women and almost all Black and Brown, in the mahogany back room of the San Jose Peace and Justice Center. Many balanced paper plates of tamales and rice and beans on their laps and others held children. Several rocked strollers back and forth across the wooden floor and several fanned themselves. The group agreed to go around the room and introduce themselves in relation to the struggles and communities each claimed. Several families spoke of their own children, brothers, sons, grandchildren, and partners who had been killed or incarcerated. “They’re hunting us down,” one woman said. There was a quiet shared affirmation of this statement reflected among those present with nods and low sounds of acknowledgement. “That’s why we need to keep coming together like this,” another woman responded, “so we can figure out what to do next.”

Much of the conversation focused on retelling, with care and honesty, stories of those whose presence was not possible in the space as a result of various

⁸⁴¹ AZ has been engaged in community safety struggles as part of an effort to advance an urban Zapatismo across Califas since 2003. 50.50 Crew is a youth collective based in San Jose also committed to community safety efforts through working with youth to confront the militarization of schools.

⁸⁴² Uni Tierra Califas and AZ South Bay rely on agreements as a facilitation tool to insure a safe space of horizontal learning, care, and practice of listening. This is drawn from habits of assembly and facilitation strategies across Mexico and Latin America and is considered central convening space as part of a larger urban Zapatismo advanced by Uni Tierra Califas and AZ.

forms of militarization and criminalization—police bullets and home raids, engagement in economies considered illegal by the state, gun violence across communities, punitive school policies that led to juvenile hall and incarceration, harassment policing that exposed outstanding warrants that funneled people back into carceral institutions, search warrants that revealed more illegal economies, juridical processes that fueled prisons and forms of ongoing surveillance. Two central themes focused on the need to document the violences and connect struggles and families across the state, and the need for consistent spaces where a shared analysis could be generated.

The performance and gathering was a formative moment for the circulation of struggle across the Bay. It connected a number of spaces and families and extended a collective imagination around the scope and relation of militarization. The killing of Daniel Booker in an act of subaltern violence rather than at the hands of police forced a different kind of conversation and analysis. Of all the families joined together in the Love Balm Project, Daniel Booker was the sole Latino while those targeted in other violences were primarily identified as Black. In San Jose, militarization and forms of state violence, including police shootings and deportations, continues to target and have a devastating impact on the large Latin@ and Mexicano community base there. His presence in narratives of Bay Area violence and his story as told through his mother and performed by a Latina actor made observable the complexity of racial hierarchies organized through capital across the Bay and violently articulated across bodies and communities.

For Uni Tierra Califas, this was also a critical moment in creating the relations and further advancing the shape of the Social Factory Ateneo. The Democracy Ateneo drew on the site specific performance for its monthly announcement and analyzed it in collaboration with others as a moment in larger Bay Area struggles around autonomy and community safety through collectively generated questions at the *ateneo* itself. As a performance, as interconnected TAZKP, and as a space of assembly, the October gathering was situated as a moment of inquiry and reflection in relation to other grassroots investigations, larger shared documentation and convergence projects, and direct actions currently underway across struggles.

By the Fall of 2014, the Social Factory Ateneo was well underway as a consistent, if temporary, space of convivial knowledge production in Oakland. The *ateneo* convenes on the third Saturday of the month at a small taqueria just a few minutes from the Fruitvale BART platform where Oscar Grant's life was taken by BART officer Johannes Mehserle in 2009, where protests and rallies had unfolded for months and years afterwards, where the site specific performance occupied the space with Oscar's mother, Wanda Johnson at the center and enacted by Cat Brooks of ONYX in August of 2013, and where, on the white cement wall of the building behind the station, a high vertical mural had been painted with

Oscar Grant's smiling face partitioned into the three shades of the readily recognizable BART ticket—blue, white, black.⁸⁴³

The Social Factory Ateneo emerged directly from community struggles to respond to these tremendous violences and to build with families and women. The emphasis on the “social factory” as a strategic concept also marks a recognition for a need to analyze these violences in relation to capital—the analysis is incomplete if it remains focused on structural racism and state violence. This has also meant that the collective that gathers as a consistent enactment of Uni Tierra grapples to produce a consistent space of analysis that can explain the violence in relation to the current conjuncture and to theorize strategically the power of autonomous projects. Some of this power is reflected in the ways the state and its array of institutions, including the dense nonprofit geography of Oakland, continually attempts to deactivate, isolate, and institutionalize insurgencies, including strategies to insure that families of those targeted remain isolated from each other.⁸⁴⁴ These range from counterinsurgency strategies easily recognizable from their application across the Global South and advanced as “savage developmentalism,” by public intellectual H.L.T. Quan. This notion of savage developmentalism as a strategy of counterinsurgency can be seen in the allocation

⁸⁴³ Acts of subversive remembering made use of this BART ticket imagery. Local artists made earrings out of the credit card size BART tickets. Then there were deviations as well, with some comrades wearing a BART ticket in one ear and a tiny replica of a gun dangling from the other ear. Protest signs made use of the replicated BART ticket as well.

⁸⁴⁴ The role of nonprofits as an arm of the state in a larger counterinsurgency approach with specific application to Oakland is engaged in greater depth earlier in this work. See also K. Williams, “The Other Side of the COIN,” and Ciccariello-Maher, “Introduction” (*Raider Nation I*) in their cartography of nonprofit intervention in service of “peaceful demonstrations” following the murder of Oscar Grant.

of disproportionate aid across social services provided by non-profits in their role to take up the decimated social wage, for those who are “deserving.” Across Oakland and beyond, this savage developmentalism and the isolation, competition, and various technologies of power with which it is aligned can be observed in the settlements paid out by the city for families whose loved ones are the victims of police shootings.⁸⁴⁵ In another familiar scenario, groups vying for power, recognition, or credibility or even simply eager to express moral outrage, will “claim” one family following a police killing, often with the impact, however unintentional, of isolating that family from other families and the larger movement.

Situating these violences in the context of an autonomous approach to reading capital (as a relation) and emphasizing projects (as work) in open spaces of horizontal learning has allowed the *ateneo* to navigate and address some of these challenges and obstacles, while proposing a site where multiple community struggles and competing systems of information can encounter each other. The *ateneo* has woven together numerous families and projects, including from recent police murder trials and protracted justice struggles, from organized collectives of mothers working across the larger Bay area, families suffering from recent deadly attacks by police, anti-prison struggles, and grassroots investigations. The space

⁸⁴⁵ This conversation took place over multiple *ateneo* spaces in the Spring of 2014 regarding the diverse range of settlements following police killings as a state strategy of counterinsurgency that parallels counterinsurgency strategies aimed the Global South. These strategies are designed to create tension and competition through disproportionate aid allocated across villages, encouraging complicity with the interests of capital and often fraying long-standing bonds among villages.

provided continues to be a space where knowledge and tactics are collectively produced, and moments of autonomy and care are sifted to the surface.

Space and the Commons

Militarization targets the relations and bonds that communities construct over time and rely on to survive. In the advance of militarized life, community and the bonds that cohere it become the target of a low intensity war waged by the state against particular populations. In the case of the site specific performances of *Our Hallowed Ground* and the impromptu and organized moments of the Medics' community trainings, women are actively advancing a strategic political project, speaking from the very spaces and moments where families are targeted in order to make visible the terms and practices of low intensity war. This battle exposes the attack on the social factory, and demonstrates the struggles emerging from within it.⁸⁴⁶

These projects not only make visible practices of differential policing and racial quarantine as strategies of control enacted by the state and the policing apparatus, they can be read as struggles for the commons that mark the “demise of the dialectic between public and private” and in which “the transformations of the social relations of labor and capital,” and capital accumulation, can be

⁸⁴⁶ See M. Dalla Costa, “Emigration and Reproduction.”

rearticulated as autonomous practice.⁸⁴⁷ They are also spaces of “a new kind of politics.”⁸⁴⁸

Bonaventura de Sousa Santos argues that the notion of the “public” is a Western sphere, articulated through a Western epistemology.⁸⁴⁹ Read together across multiple feminisms, where the notion of “public” is defined through a concomitant understanding of private, such critical interventions make visible capital’s attempts to bifurcate space according to opposing and mutually exclusive realms of home/work, civic/domestic, labor/leisure, production/reproduction, political/personal, waged/unwaged.⁸⁵⁰ Feminist scholars have for decades directed significant attention to these bifurcations around public and private. Feminist autonomous struggles as well as queer struggles that reclaim or occupy realms designated as “public” are not invested in seizing this space of state power or fighting for inclusion. Rather, these struggles advance possibilities for a new way of doing politics. This includes amplifying “cracks” that resituate struggles for the commons and make possible the formation of a collective subject.⁸⁵¹

⁸⁴⁷ Roggero, *The Production of Living Knowledge*, 3.

⁸⁴⁸ Zapatismo is often described as a “new kind of politics,” see for example, Žiga Vodovnik, “Introduction: The Struggle Continues...,” 45.

⁸⁴⁹ de Sousa Santos, “Public Sphere and Epistemologies of the South.”

⁸⁵⁰ See for example, Fortunati *The Arcane of Reproduction*; M. Dalla Costa and James, *The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community*; A. Davis, *Women, Race, and Class*; Federici, *Revolution at Point Zero*.

⁸⁵¹ On “cracks” see Nasioka, “Communities of Crisis;” and John Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*. On the collective subject, see Callahan, “In Defense of Conviviality.”

For Gustavo Esteva, the commons can never be reduced to a plot of shared land that resists privatization and enclosure.⁸⁵² Drawing on the work of Esteva and autonomous and Zapatista struggles underway in Oaxaca and Chiapas, Manuel Callahan argues that the commons are more about a way we organize ourselves as a community around work. This involves *cargos* and *tequios*, as well as convivial tools.⁸⁵³

Struggles for Dignity and Convivial Tools

When communities gather and construct their own convivial tools we can witness a struggle for dignity. Drawing on the work of Ivan Illich and Manuel Callahan, each of these projects can be read as a convivial tool because they are constructed from within the community for the purposes of its own regeneration. The *testimonios* of mothers and the multiple intersecting projects that brought together families, artists, and community members reflect the struggles from within these communities against forms of militarization increasingly invading the spaces and relations of every day life. These are struggles for dignity, as theorized in the work of John Holloway and Manuel Callahan, as the struggle against capital.

⁸⁵² Esteva, “Regenerating People’s Space,” 138; and Esteva, “Commoning in the New Society.”

⁸⁵³ *Cargos* are loosely defined as community obligations and *tequios* as community work projects. For more on the commons as a relation linked to *cargos* and *tequios*, including a space of relational *testimonio* as a collectively produced radio segment that includes Callahan and others speaking to this point, see Radio Autonomía, September 2013 Show: *La Escuelita Zapatista*, September 1, 2013.

Convivial tools can also be used to build a shared analysis in service of a collective ethnography and can produce a collective subject.⁸⁵⁴ These interconnected autonomous spaces are moments of collective ethnography.

Community Safety: Care, Defense, Justice, and Assembly

After a bullet was fired into his back by Johannes Mehserle, Oscar Grant bled to death while detained on the Fruitvale BART platform in Oakland. In tying their emergence to the absence of life-saving care, what the Medics continue to make visible goes beyond a lack of services or training resulting from the roll back of the welfare state and the privatization that continues to accompany capitalist restructuring.⁸⁵⁵ Oakland Fire Department (OFD) paramedic and whistleblower Sean Gillis filed a suit against the OFD for alleged mistreatment of Grant, pointing out that Grant was allowed to bleed out because OFD responders covered the entry wound but not the exit wound after Grant was shot through the back with the bullet exiting through his chest, while he was lying on the platform. Gills also alleges that the OFD destroyed evidence related to the incident and that the incident of Grant's death evidences "system-wide discrimination against people of color" at the hands of the OFD.⁸⁵⁶ The other young men detained on the platform with Grant, his comrades, contribute to the formation of a counter-

⁸⁵⁴ Callahan, "In Defense of Conviviality."

⁸⁵⁵ Nasioka, "Communities of Crisis."

⁸⁵⁶ Horne, "Paramedic Whistleblower Alleges," para. 10, and Horne, "Kenneth Harding, Raheim Brown, Oscar Grant." An extensive interview produced by the Labor Video Project, "Oscar Grant Murder Cover-up," offers a thorough analysis of the situation.

knowledge vital to the community. They attest to Mehserle's statement directed at Grant after shooting him in the back and as his friends begged BART police to call an ambulance, "Fuck that. I'm not calling any ambulance."⁸⁵⁷

The Medics' emphasis on the "golden hour" can be seen as one response that both advances care and promotes community defense as it calls attention to a specific counterinsurgency strategy, that of abandonment, deployed across multiple shootings. Their work makes vivid the state's committed refusal to save a wounded and immobilized person under the guise of "threat" or "suspect." Yet, the work of the Medics is not aimed at reforming the sanctioned medical institutions in Oakland or dismantling the institutions of the state. Rather, their work functions as an observable at the same time it exists as a prefigurative practice. As a tool, it serves as both a skill share and community speak out. Information is exchanged in a shared space of community in a context of rage and care, creating a critical potential component in the proliferation of neighborhood assemblies.

The Community Feed can also be understood in terms of what it exposes about a crisis of care and its imbrication with militarization. It marks the spot where a young man's life was denied him because the life saving care he required was restricted by a police cordon, leaving him in twenty-eight minutes of visible agony in the blaring July sunlight of the plaza at 3rd and Palou.

⁸⁵⁷ Occupy Patriarchy Barbecue, Rainbow Park, April 14, 2012; recording by filmmaker Caitlin Manning. See Manning (director), "Oakland Occupy Patriarchy Barbecue and Speakout 2012."

As a site of food distribution, the space of the Community Feed also poses an interrogation of privatization and in particular the crises made manifest through the externalization of the home.⁸⁵⁸ Every third Sunday, the community continues to come together here, to share food and information critical to their own survival and resilience. As other families across the Bay are confronted with forms of state violence and the murder of their loved ones, the small collective organized at Kenny's Corner continues to provide connections and support from their entrenched position in the Bayview.

In his analysis of the Oaxaca Commune, Gustavo Esteva writes, "the reorganization or creation of assemblies at the grassroots continues at its own pace, looking for more solid ground."⁸⁵⁹ Considering these projects in the Bay Area as spaces of convivial research and as convivial tools that advance a larger community safety project underway provides a way of assessing the pace locally and seeing these struggles through toward a shared solid ground.

⁸⁵⁸ See Precarias a la Deriva, "A Very Careful Strike."

⁸⁵⁹ Esteva, "The Oaxaca Commune," 991.

POSTSCRIPT: JUSTICE FOR AMILCAR

*America is a continent not just a country because an Indian planted it.
-song sung at the memorial of Amilcar Lopez-Perez⁸⁶⁰*

The memorial ceremony for twenty-one-year-old Amilcar Lopez-Perez on April 4, 2015 took place in St. John the Evangelist off a small street near the intersection of 16th and Mission in the Mission District of San Francisco on Black Saturday, the day of the Blood Moon, a moon that can be seen from across the length of the Americas, South to North. The ceremony was hastily convened. Amilcar had been shot and killed by San Francisco police on February 26th, 2015.⁸⁶¹ Amilcar's body had just been released and the community was preparing to send it home.

The songs at the funeral, together with the statements, underscored that the killing of Amilcar occurred at the intersection of numerous explanations of violence. He was vulnerable as a migrant. He was targeted for death by police as a Brown body. He was residing in an area fighting an escalating gentrification in the shadow of Silicon Valley. His life and the moment of death exist within an

⁸⁶⁰ The services were held on April 4, 2015, at St. John the Evangelist, 1661 15th Street in the Mission District of San Francisco.

⁸⁶¹ Amilcar was killed by plainclothes San Francisco police officers Craig Tiffe and Eric Reboli, shortly after they encountered Amilcar on the sidewalk around 9:45 p.m. In one of the police versions of the narrative, Amilcar had stolen a bicycle from a passing cyclist and when they arrived at the scene he tried to run and they shot him. Yet the witness statements contradict this version and testify that Amilcar had just had his cell phone stolen by a passing cyclist and was attempting to get the phone back when he was jumped by two plainclothes police from whom he attempted to escape by running between two parked cars. Other witnesses claim they saw both Amilcar and the cyclist in police custody, alive, a full ten minutes before the shooting. See Valencia, "Eyewitnesses Speak Up at Vigil." See also San Francisco Bay Area Independent Media Center, "Justice for Amilcar Perez-Lopez Sought."

ongoing context of cognitive capital and capital accumulation, globalization and migration, gentrification and evictions, and violence against Black and Brown communities. As the songs and statements at the funeral also made explicit, Amilcar, and the SFPD shooting of Amilcar, also existed in an ongoing context of primitive accumulation and settler colonialism against indigenous people of the Americas from the Global South to the Global North. The death of Amilcar points to the violence of the border and its function in producing “differential laboring subjects” while at the same time pushing—and indeed, pulling—people off of their ancestral lands.⁸⁶²

Immediately following the SFPD shooting on February 26th, a collective of neighbors and community members had begun organizing through vigils on the sidewalk in front of the home Amilcar shared with others, all of whom were facing eviction.⁸⁶³ As with other spaces following killings, many of these vigils served as sites where witnesses came forward with the support of a gathered community and offered valuable *testimonio* to the incident that they had witnessed. While many chose to remain anonymous under fear of police reprisal, it is critical to note that increasingly the vigils and other spaces provide an architecture of community support where these statements can emerge. In at least two other incidents that I am aware of specifically through my involvement in People’s Investigations and other direct action initiatives, witnesses are not

⁸⁶² For the border as a *dispositif*, see Callahan, “Crisis and Permanent War.” See also Mazzedra and Neilson, *Border as Method*.

⁸⁶³ Andrea Valencia’s excellent coverage of the vigil for Amilcar attests to the space as a space of *testimonio*. See Valencia, “Eyewitnesses Speak Up at Vigil.”

willing to speak to what they saw when contacted following an incident. In some cases, witnesses only dare come forward years later, often when the case has already been dropped by lawyers or a settlement has been reached, often in the absence of compelling evidence to contradict the police narrative. Thus, the community gathering of a vigil, or, as in this case, in a church, provided a kind of safety and support network that I argue facilitates the space as a *testimonio* space, and more critically, as a space of relational *testimonio*, as others build off each others stories and gain courage through a collective act of sharing.

Various mobilizations and forms of protest sprang up as counter narratives circulated across independent media linking the murders of Amilcar and Alex Nieto. A sketch was made of Amilcar in a recognizable style of the faces of others killed by police—including Alex Nieto, Oscar Grant, Eric Garner, Michael Brown, and others. Neighbors together with families targeted by violence including La Mesha and Refugio and Elvia Nieto, gathered for potluck dinners at various homes in the neighborhood with Amilcar's roommates and other neighbors, many of whom, like Amilcar, did not speak English. Efforts to contact the family following the killing of Amilcar had included a search to determine someone familiar with the Indigenous language that Amilcar spoke among his family as well as a search for community members locally who also spoke that language to insure the legal team could communicate directly with the family.

There were multiple and changing police versions of the story. Even as the state narrative shifted repeatedly, there was not one narrative that emerged from the state that was not contradicted by eye witness accounts. Those who came

forward as witnesses despite great risks had helped advance the call for an independent autopsy. For the legal team to secure the independent autopsy and for the independent team to perform the autopsy it had taken time. This meant that Amilcar's body was released suddenly and because his family was unable to get visas to travel to the United States to return home with their child's body, there was a rush to assemble a ceremony to send off Amilcar. When news traveled that the body was to be released, networked systems already in place were activated, and despite it being Black Saturday and a day before Easter services across the city, a chaplain was finally located to perform the service. Political comrades connected to locate another comrade to convene a *mexica* ceremony. Many of these relations travelled the familiar paths of families networked across shared experiences of violence. They also drew on student bonds as political relations catalyzed in the academy extended and endured beyond the classrooms. Those who knew and lived close to Amilcar had circled in and acted quickly.

After several weeks of warm weather, the Saturday afternoon was cold when the services started at 4pm. At the same time, a few blocks away a march to welcome and honor Caravan 43 from Ayotzinapa that had started with *danzantes* in the early afternoon had assembled into a community forum. Caravan43 was comprised of families of the disappeared students and had embarked on a tour across California and the United States to connect with the struggles of families against state violence across the United States. As the forum commenced, so did the services for Amilcar. The air of the church was thick with both incense and copal surrounding the coffin that held Amilcar's body. It is likely that Amilcar

would not have recognized all of the pallbearers that accompanied the coffin to its place in front of the altar. It was circulated in whispers that the body had not been kept on ice and after two autopsies, was dismembered and unrecognizable. One of the mothers leaned in to whisper, *“I think of the parents when he arrives. I wish I had never seen the body of my son after they what they did to him.”*

There were lilies and an honoring of the seven directions—East, West, South, North, Sky, Earth, and the inner direction. Yet the requiem for Amilcar was also inextricable from the justice struggle. The Chaplain spoke of Black Saturday, before the resurrection, and also of the ongoing protests in the streets. When the lawyer for the family stood at the pulpit he confirmed that an independent autopsy, the results of which would be publicly available after Amilcar had already completed his journey home, will expose the SFPD lies. The lawyer was in communication with the family.

Amilcar was Chortí Maya heritage and was from Aldea Santa Rosa la Cuesta, San Jose La Arada, Chiquimula, a region in the mountains of Guatemala. At the funeral, Amilcar was named by the name his family used to describe his migration—he was a *trabajador*, which connotes hardworking and honest. The lawyer shared from a conversation with Amilcar’s father: Amilcar had only been in the states a few months, but had already been sending remittances back home to bring electricity to the village. His roommates confirmed this—he was hardworking. Those who spoke had not known him long but could not speak through their tears. Others who spoke had never met him.

La Mesha approached the pulpit, “When I heard the news of Amilcar, it shattered my heart in a million pieces. I recalled my own son, Idriss Stelley, shot forty eight times by the San Francisco Police in 2001.”⁸⁶⁴ Drawing on a collective effort to remember from those seated next to her in the rows surrounding the coffin containing Amilcar, la Mesha read a list of names of Chican@s, Mexican@s, Latin@s, and migrants from across Central and South America who had been killed by law enforcement across the Bay Area and beyond: Frank Alvarado (Salinas); Julio Ayala (South San Francisco); Mark Garcia (San Francisco); Sheila Amay (Union City); Rudy Cardenas (San Jose); Carlos Mieja (Salinas); Yanira Serrano-Garcia (Half-Moon Bay); Alex Nieto (San Francisco); Sheila Detoy (San Francisco); Lupe Ochoa (Oakland); Luis Buennuestro (Oakland); Andrea Romero (South Bay); Andy Lopez (Santa Rosa); Alvarado Fals Torres; Ernesto Duenez; Osman Hernandez (Salinas); Angel Ruiz (Salinas); Antolin Morenco (San Francisco); Antonio Guzman Lopez (San Jose); Adrian Parrera; Hernan Jaramillo (Oakland); Michael Oneita; Victor Villapanolo; and Amilcar Perez-Lopez. After each name, those gathered called out *Presente!* Other names were remembered later and added to the list.

As others gathered approached the pulpit, it began to function as a space of witness *testimonio*—one witness who had not known Amilcar but had seen him killed told how the police had refused to let him approach Amilcar and perform CPR, though he had communicated to them that he was licensed to perform CPR and at the time Amilcar was still alive. He watched him bleed to death on the

⁸⁶⁴ Mesha Monge-Irizarry, public statements at a funeral, April 2015.

street.⁸⁶⁵ A neighbor who had been instrumental in organizing the ceremony but had not ever met Amilcar said, “I just want his parents to know that there is a community here and we are fighting for justice and we won’t allow him to be forgotten.” The ceremony itself was recorded, with a live voice over so that it could be shared with his family in Guatemala.⁸⁶⁶

After the official ceremony was over, folks lingered and more stories circulated—first the police had tried to say someone else had shot Amilcar, and they needed to close the block to catch the unknown shooter. The whole block was cordoned off and witnesses were told to back away from the windows. Other officers interrogated those present as to whether they had taken photos or video footage, if they had used cameras on their phones, if there were surveillance cameras anywhere in the building, as they attempted to ascertain all the moments where the incident was recorded. Many of those at the funeral had heard, and counted the shots as they echoed through the neighborhood.

The ceremony for Amilcar was one of many temporary autonomous zones of knowledge production where research is shared and new knowledges and connections are made. Against the backdrop of Caravan43’s visit to Califas, it made visible the entrenched justice struggle unfolding across multiple spaces, a struggle where systems of information bound together with relations of care are increasingly critical to the community’s ability to confront and respond to

⁸⁶⁵ The Justice for Amilcar struggle makes the point that Amilcar bled to death with SF General’s Trauma Unit just blocks away. San Francisco Bay Area Independent Media Center, “Justice for Amilcar Perez-Lopez Sought in Vigil, Rallies, and Marches.”

⁸⁶⁶ Author’s notes, April 2015.

militarization. These relations among people function as the conduits that insure circulation of the narratives, details, counter-facts, stories—the many resonances through which a community understands what it faces, what its strengths are, what it must do.

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APPENDIX A: ANALYTICS OF VIOLENCE (SCHEMATIC)

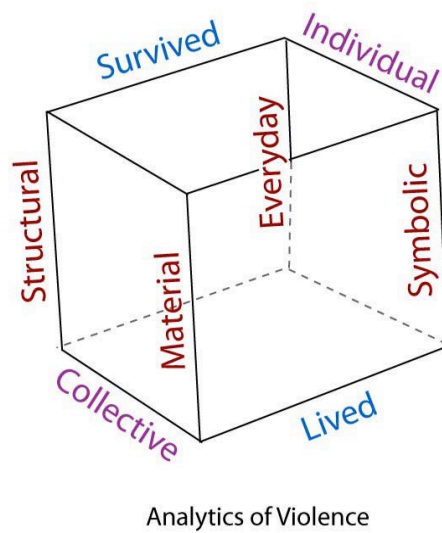


Figure A1: This schematic represents numerous violences and their intersections—structural, material, everyday, symbolic, survived, lived, individual, and collective.

Image courtesy of Manuel Callahan and CCRA.

APPENDIX B: BORDER WAR CONVERGENCE (SCHEMATIC)

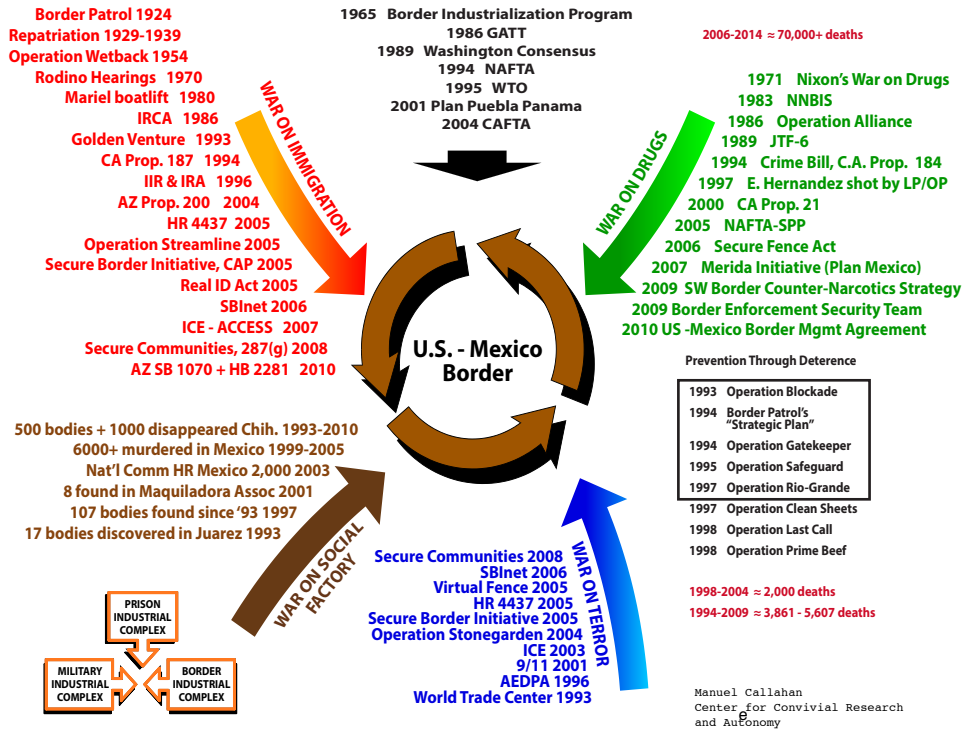


Figure B1: This schematic maps several wars as they converge with the U.S.–Mexico border at the center—the War on Immigration, the War on Drugs, the War on Terror, and the War on the Social Factory—with key “events” in the history of each war.

Image courtesy of Manuel Callahan and CCRA