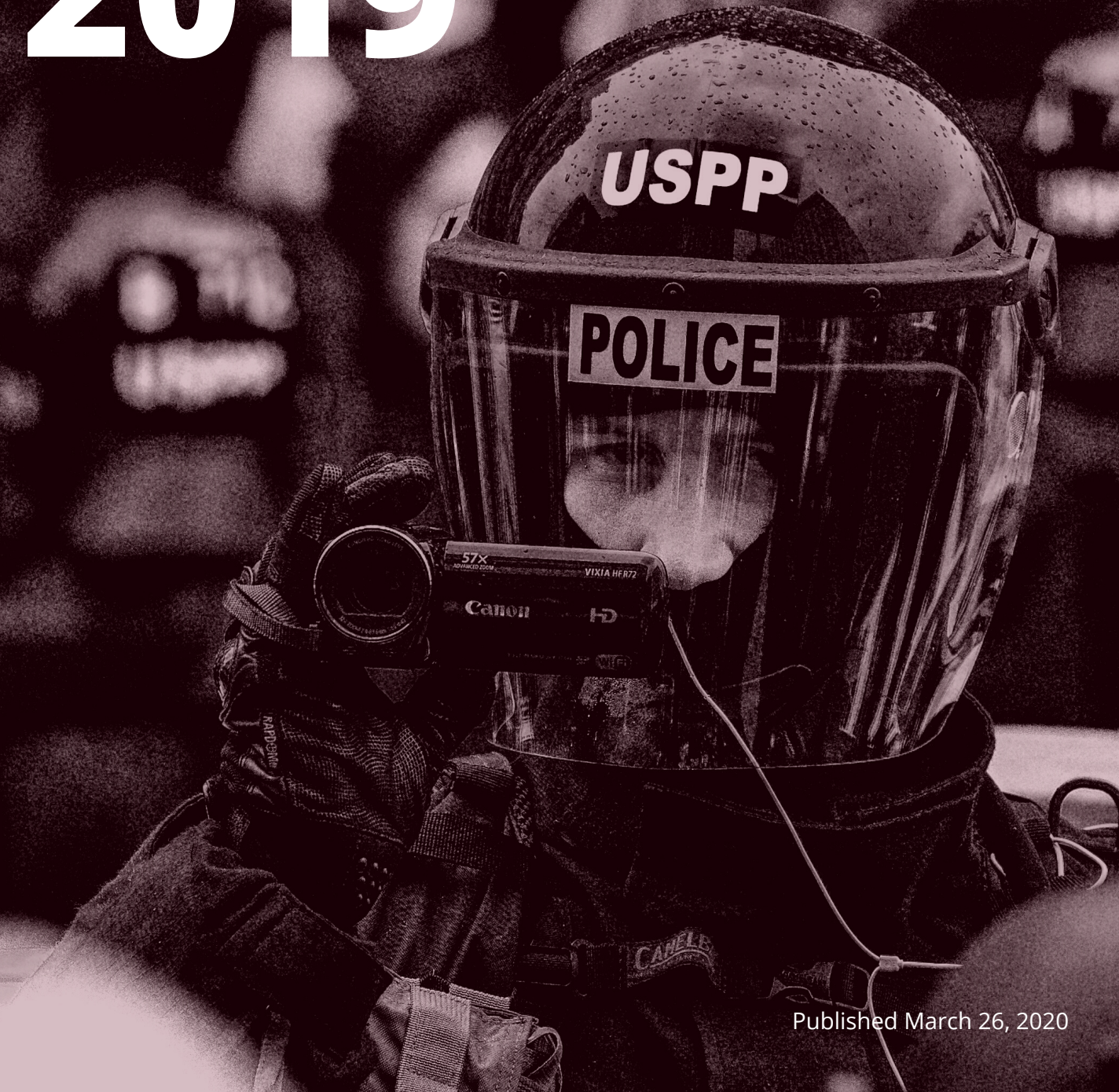


STOP

SURVEILLANCE TECHNOLOGY
OVERSIGHT PROJECT

ANNUAL REPORT

2019



Published March 26, 2020

Letter from the Executive Director

Friends,

Looking at what S.T.O.P. accomplished in 2019 is overwhelming. I'm grateful beyond words to the partners, supporters, staff, board members, and volunteers who made our first year an astounding success. When S.T.O.P. began in January 2019, we were just an idea. We had no funding or support, we had no office or paid staff, but then something incredible began to happen: Our community came together.

At first it was our Board of Directors and Community Advisory Board, civic leaders from across New York City who believed in the need to fight government surveillance. Then our pro bono partners began to join. Then came our incredible staff, starting with my amazing co-founder Liz O'Sullivan, and our Organizer Will Luckman. We built a team far bigger than I ever imagined possible, drawing on the talents of superstar interns and fellows from some of New York's top universities and law schools. Together we turned S.T.O.P. from a URL and a logo into a movement for surveillance reform.

As we grew, we also got to work drafting new laws, researching cutting edge technologies, holding legal trainings, representing victims of police misconduct in court, building new software, and changing the public narrative around surveillance. In just a matter of months S.T.O.P. became an internationally recognized force for privacy and civil rights, featured in nearly every major, national news publication and outlet.

But we're far from finished. If 2019 was our launch year, then 2020 is our growth year. That's because the more work we do, the more need we find for legal services, public education, legislation, organizing, and advocacy. But I know that the amazing S.T.O.P. community is up to any challenge. I can't wait to write you this time next year, telling you about our breathtaking accomplishments from 2020.



**With gratitude,
Albert Fox Cahn, Esq.
Executive Director**



It's no secret that 2019 was a crazy year for me. I quit my job (quite spectacularly), and for the first time in my life stepped into the public discourse on technology issues that affect us all. I was shocked and elated to find that, after nearly a decade working in the technology industry, there is a whole world of passionate advocates who spend their lives striving to make the world a fairer, nicer place. It's such an honor to call myself one of these activists, working alongside some of the most incredible people I've ever met along the way. When I first met my incredible co-founder Albert, we knew immediately that there were tons of things we wanted to do together. And 2019 was exactly that: a year of doing things to help turn the tide in the battle for privacy.

Our job now is to hold the powers that be accountable for all they wish to do when it touches technology that governs our rights and daily lives. We've been in front of NYC and state government bodies, advocating for civil liberties and privacy. We've written letters and briefs for judges on many different benches. We've been on task forces, panels, podcasts, and news segments more times than I can count. And we're just getting started! It's no exaggeration to say that fighting for privacy protections and civil liberties is nothing less than a calling that I've just discovered with the help of the incredible team at S.T.O.P., and I can't wait to continue the work in 2020 and beyond.

Liz O'Sullivan
Technology Director

I joined S.T.O.P. at the end of 2019, and the timing couldn't be better. Recent innovations in digital interconnectivity and machine learning are being harnessed to chill free speech, target marginalized communities, and to throw our neighbors in jail. And in response S.T.O.P. formed to call law-enforcement out, to illuminate the role technology plays in policing, and to work hand-in-hand with fellow New Yorkers to stop them in their tracks. As this is happening we are witnessing a major shift in consciousness around these issues. Technical experts, civil rights groups, and impacted communities are calling for reform, the general public is beginning to wake up to the harms present, and elected officials are taking an interest. Now is the time to act! As S.T.O.P. continues researching surveillance and developing our response, we must build the people power necessary to ensure that reforms are made. In the year ahead I'm excited to lead S.T.O.P.'s important outreach work via trainings and teach-ins to help people learn more about the technology affecting them. And beyond that, crucially, to in turn learn from the communities subject to the worst ravages of surveillance abuse, and work with them in coalition to demand oversight and protections. Individually, the fight for privacy is an uphill battle, an escalating and insurmountable technical arms race. But when we work together to demand the change we need, we can and will win!



Will Luckman
Organizer

Legislation

S.T.O.P. fights for laws that protect privacy, oversight, and civil rights.

Public Oversight of Surveillance Technology (“POST”) Act

S.T.O.P.’s flagship bill is the POST Act. For years, the NYPD built up an arsenal of cutting-edge, military-grade spy tools without any public notice, debate, or oversight. The POST Act brings much-needed civilian review to NYPD policies, letting lawmakers know the types of surveillance conducted on New Yorkers and how that information is kept safe from federal agencies, including ICE.

Existing NYPD spy tools include fake cell towers that can track New Yorkers’ location and data traffic, X-ray vans, automatic license plate readers, and facial recognition technology. Additionally, the Domain Awareness System takes data from those tools and countless other systems to create a real-time log of millions of New Yorkers. Unlike the FBI and a growing list of police departments across the country, the NYPD has no public policy to explain how these tools can be used, where they can be targeted, and what happens with the data they collect.

S.T.O.P. leads a broad coalition of advocacy groups fighting for the POST Act, organizing teach-ins and panels, and promoting the bill in the press. In October 2019, we spearheaded a sign-on letter from 70 leading national and local civil society groups, urging City Council Speaker Corey Johnson to support the bill. In December 2019, S.T.O.P. organized a rally for the POST Act and testified on the bill at a City Council Public Safety Committee hearing.

At the end of 2019, the POST Act was endorsed by nearly two-thirds of City Council members and the Public Advocate. It has been endorsed by the *New York Times* editorial board, and the City Council's Black, Latino/a, and Asian Caucus, and Progressive Caucus.

Other Legislation:

New York City Campaigns

- **Gang Database Reforms**
 - Bill Number: T2018-2223
 - Status: Introduced, pending Committee vote
- **Perp Walk Ban**
 - Bill Number: Int 0635-2018
 - Status: Introduced
- **Commercial Biometric Surveillance Ban**
 - Bill Number: Int 1170-2018
 - Status: In Committee
- **Keep Entry to your Home Surveillance-Free (KEYS) Act**
 - Bill Number: Intro 1758-2019
 - Status: Laid over in Committee
- **IDNYC “Credit Chip” Ban**
 - Bill Number: Intro 1706-2019
 - Status: Laid over in Committee

New York State Campaigns

- **Automated Decision Systems Task Force**
 - Bill Number: S6428
 - Status: In Senate Committee
- **Ban on Police Drones**
 - Bill Number: S6435
 - Status: In Senate Committee
- **Banning Unofficial DNA Databases**
 - Bill Number: S6009
 - Status: In Senate Committee
- **Ban on Biometric School Surveillance**
 - Bill Number: S5140A
 - Status: In Senate Committee
- **New York Privacy Act**
 - Bill Number: S5642
 - Status: In Senate Committee
- **Residential Facial Recognition Ban**
 - Bill Number: S5687
 - Status: In Senate Committee
- **Law Enforcement Facial Recognition Ban**
 - Bill Number: S7572
 - Status: In Senate Committee
- **Bodycam Facial Recognition Ban**
 - Bill Number: S6776
 - Status: In Senate Committee

Litigation

S.T.O.P. partners with leading law firms to bring impact litigation and direct legal services cases at no cost to the client. Our 2019 cases included:

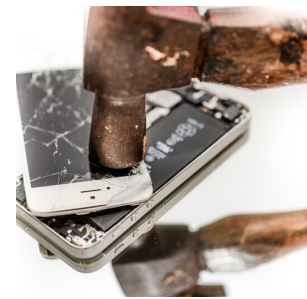


NYPD “Hijab Ban”

S.T.O.P. and our co-counsel are litigating a putative class action lawsuit to end the NYPD policy of forcing arrestees to remove religious head coverings, including turbans, wigs, hats, and the hijab. Our plaintiffs include a survivor of domestic violence who was traumatized by the NYPD when she was forced to undress in front of male arrestees and officers. In March, we organized local and national partners to call on New York City to end this unlawful practice and to allow arrestees to retain their head coverings. S.T.O.P. also seeks for the NYPD to purge photos taken of arrestees whose head coverings were removed against their will.

NYPD Cell Phone Searches

S.T.O.P. and our co-counsel sued the NYPD to obtain documents requested by our client (Upturn, Inc.) under New York's Freedom of Information Law (“FOIL”). Upturn requested the records as part of a nationwide evaluation of how police departments use and misuse mobile device forensic tools (MDFTs), which can break mobile device encryption. Unlike other police departments around the country, which complied with Upturn's request, the NYPD refused to provide any records, claiming that they couldn't locate any responsive documents or that those documents were exempt from production. S.T.O.P. and our co-counsel filed our petition in New York State Supreme Court on December 23rd, 2019.



MTA Facial Recognition

S.T.O.P. and our co-counsel sued the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) to obtain documents requested by S.T.O.P. under New York's Freedom of Information Law. S.T.O.P. requested documents regarding the apparent installation of facial recognition surveillance in the Times Square/Port Authority Subway Station. S.T.O.P. originally requested the documents on April 19th, 2019, after social media posts showed an apparent facial recognition monitor. The MTA publicly denied that the monitors had facial recognition capability, but they then denied S.T.O.P.'s FOIL request. S.T.O.P. and our co-counsel filed our petition in New York State Supreme Court on January 6th, 2020.

Public Education & Advocacy

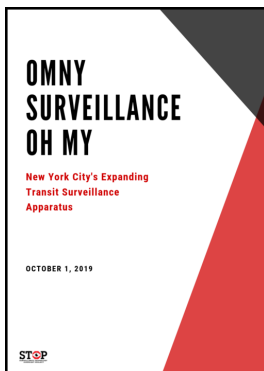
This year, team S.T.O.P. held dozens of know your rights trainings, panel discussions, and other educational events, **reaching more than 1,400 participants!** We partnered with groups across the country to change the public discourse on privacy and civil rights. We also launched our S.T.O.P. x RadTech speaker series, a monthly teach-in event on technology, social justice, and community.



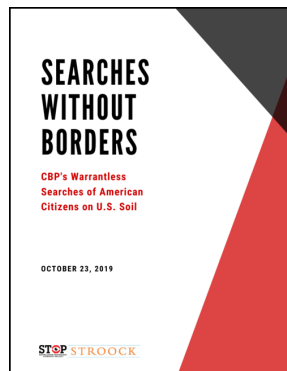
Research

In the past year, our team has conducted extensive research on new surveillance technologies, policies, and practices in New York City and State. Using information gathered from FOIL and FOIA requests, our research supports our litigation efforts on behalf of New Yorkers and their rights to privacy.

Along with a slew of shorter reports, we released two detailed white papers in 2019:



OMNY Surveillance Oh My: New York City's Expanding Transit Surveillance Apparatus
(October 1, 2019)



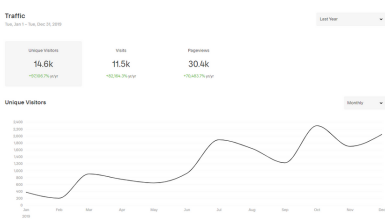
Searches Without Borders: CBP's Warrantless Searches of American Citizens on U.S. Soil
(October 23, 2019)

Communications

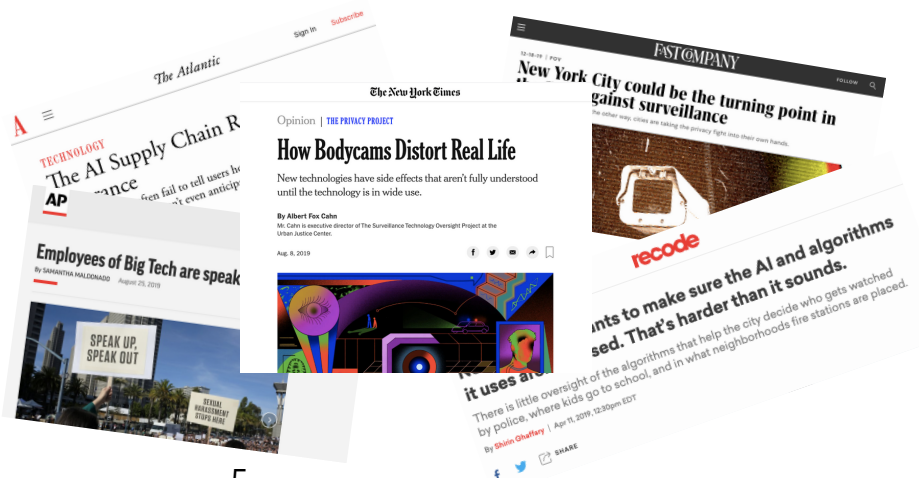
Last year, S.T.O.P. was featured in hundreds of articles, including the front page of the *New York Times*.

Our reach includes:

- 31 op-eds published
- 14,579 unique visitors
- 3,076 Twitter followers
- 1,219 email subscribers



S.T.O.P website traffic



Development

We are deeply grateful to the partners who helped us fight for privacy in 2019.

Our work against local and state-level surveillance would be impossible without pro bono support from some of **New York's leading law firms**. We would like to thank our legal partners who have appeared in court with us, co-authored white papers, and helped our clients in countless other ways, all at no cost.

- Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld LLP
- Emery, Celli, Brinkerhoff, & Abady LLP
- Kirkland & Ellis LLP
- Norton Rose Fulbright
- Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP
- Pearl Cohen Zedek Latzer Baratz IL
- Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan LLP
- Schillings International LLP
- Shearman & Sterling LLP
- Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP
- Stroock & Stroock & Lavan LLP
- Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP



Our movement takes a coalition of **local advocates and leaders**. Their grassroots support ensures that S.T.O.P. is always directed by, and accountable to, those impacted by surveillance.

- Decrim NY
 - Electronic Frontier Alliance
 - The Micah Institute
 - MoveOn.org Progressive Partner
 - Muslim Community Network
 - New York Immigration Coalition
 - NY Immigrant Freedom Fund
 - Yemeni American Merchants Association
-

We would also like to extend gratitude to the **Urban Justice Center** for accepting S.T.O.P. as one of just five organizations hosted in their Social Justice Accelerator, an incubator for nonprofit start-ups. Our office space at the Urban Justice Center has provided us with the room to continue to grow our team and collaborate with other social change organizations.

2019 Finances

Statement of Activity

January - December 2019

	Total
REVENUE	
Cash donation	100.00
Check	1,750.00
Grant	83,250.00
In-Kind Income - Non-Reportable	
Free Office Space	20,000.00
Pro Bono Legal Services	1,198,866.05
Total In-Kind Income - Non-Reportable	1,218,866.05
In-Kind Income - Reportable	
Equipment Donation	184.00
Membership Fees	205.00
Services Paid for as Donation	3,113.10
Software Donations	1,846.76
Total In-Kind Income - Reportable	5,348.86
Interest received	4.50
Non-Profit Income	1.09
Online Donation	11,054.60
Publications	2,800.00
Total Revenue	1,323,175.10
GROSS PROFIT	1,323,175.10
EXPENDITURES	
In-Kind Expenses - Non-Reportable	
Free Office Space	20,000.00
Pro Bono Legal Services - Expense	1,198,866.05
Total In-Kind Expenses - Non-Reportable	1,218,866.05
In-Kind Expenses - Reportable	
Equipment Donation	184.00
Membership Fees	205.00
Services Paid for as Donation	3,113.10
Software Donations	1,846.76
Total In-Kind Expenses - Reportable	5,348.86
Insurance	6,845.05
Legal & Professional Services	2.00
Online Donation Processing	263.27
Payroll Expenses	4,467.83
Total Expenditures	1,235,793.06
NET REVENUE	\$87,382.04

STOP

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