



Dear Friends,

Summer is a time for reflection. At the Center for Security, Race and Rights (CSRR), we look back on our accomplishments with pride and gratitude.

Proud to be the only civil and human rights law school center focused on Muslim, Arab, and South Asian communities' civil and human rights—notwithstanding multiple attempts to censor our work. Grateful for the support you provide each time you attend our public lecture series, share our work on social media, and donate funds that allow us to expand our impact.

CSRR's most significant achievement this year is the publication of our groundbreaking report Shining a Light on New Jersey's Secret Intelligence System. The culmination of a year-long investigation by a team of lawyers and Rutgers law students, the report exposes the grave risks to civil liberties posed by an opaque and unregulated New Jersey fusion center. As such, CSRR calls on Governor Murphy and state legislators to fulfill their obligations to conduct meaningful and regular oversight of state intelligence agencies, including the Regional Operations Intelligence Center. These concerns were put into broader trends of surveillance and racialized policing in a panel discussion with former FBI agent Mike German and ACLU of NJ attorney Dillon Reisman.

In the Race, Security and Empire Lecture Series, CSRR continued to host scholars and advocates whose work challenges Orientalist, Islamophobic, and imperialistic narratives, laws, and policies.

In The Two Faces of American Freedom, Professor Aziz Rana reinterprets the American political tradition from the colonial period to modern times, placing issues especially of race, immigration, and national security in the context of shifting notions of empire and citizenship. Professor Heba Gowayed discussed her new book Refuge: How the State Shapes Human Potential, which shows that human capital, typically examined as the skills immigrants bring with them that shape their potential, is created, transformed, or destroyed by receiving states' incorporation policies.

Our final lectures deftly tied the domestic with the international in upending systemic racism. Professor George Bisharat shared his extensive expertise on Mobilizing International Law and Social Movements in the Palestinian Struggle for Justice. He cautioned that legal discourse is not a substitute for other forms of struggle and is likely capable of no more than a subordinate role in a broader movement for Palestinian rights. Professor Tanya Hernandez delivered a thought provoking lecture on her groundbreaking new book Racial Innocence: Unmasking Latino Anti-Black Bias and the Struggle for Equality wherein she examined the ways in which understanding Latino anti-Black bias is critical for fostering a multiracial democracy.

During this summer of reflection, CSRR is proud to continue our trailblazing work and thankful for your continued support!

Sahar Aziz

Distinguished Professor of Law Executive Director Center for Security, Race and Rights Rutgers Law School

CSRR Launches New Report: Shining a Light on New Jersey's Secret Intelligence System



Civil liberties in the United States have been eroding for over two decades. Under the auspices of national security, federal agencies working with their state counterparts have built an expansive homeland security apparatus, facilitated by laws granting national security officials broader surveillance and investigative authorities. Prior to the attempted insurrection of January 6, 2021, national security powers nearly exclusively targeted Muslim and Arab communities – with many South Asian communities targeted in the immediate wake of 9/11 as well. At the same time, these powers have also furthered the mass incarceration of African American communities.

The most invasive, and simultaneously secret, post-9/11 tool has been state fusion centers. Fusion centers coordinate federal, state, and local law enforcement through complex intelligence-gathering systems that retain, analyze, synthesize, and distribute data – with minimal oversight. They have become institutionalized within the American law enforcement framework post-9/11 despite little, if any, tangible results to show for their intended original purpose: preventing terrorism. New Jersey's Regional Operations Intelligence Center is a prime example of expansive over-policing that targets marginalized communities fueled by the red herring of national security concerns – while much of its work remains opaque and inscrutable.

Shining a Light on New Jersey's Secret State Intelligence System examines New Jersey law enforcement's unique use of CIA-style intelligence-gathering, some of its known harms in certain, well-documented instances like the City of Camden, and the Kafkaesque legal regime that works to keep vast amounts of public information out of the public eye.

Three recommendations for New Jersey policymakers would help reign in these unaccountable drivers of mass incarceration and allay concerns that civil liberties are not still on the chopping block for Muslim, Arab, South Asian, and African American communities in the Garden State:

- 1. Governor Murphy should appoint an ombudsman to oversee New Jersey's intelligence system. The mechanism for this appointment already exists by way of a long-ago issued executive order – but has never been used. This ombudsman should have the authority to oversee the ROIC's activities in collaboration with minority communities most impacted by surveillance.
2. The New Jersey legislature should mandate regular reporting by the Chief Intelligence Director to ensure that the state's domestic intelligence-gathering apparatus is focusing on actual terrorist threats while preserving civil liberties for all.
3. Civil society should conduct a People's Audit of the fusion center to determine the privacy impact on New Jersey's diverse populations.

To read the full report, click here.

Race, Security, and Empire Lecture Series 2023

The Two Faces of American Freedom with Professor Aziz Rana (1/24/2023)

Professor Rana situates the American experience within the global history of colonialism, examining the intertwined relationship in U.S. constitutional practice between internal accounts of freedom and external projects of power and expansion. In the process, he reinterprets the American political tradition from the colonial period to modern times, placing issues especially of race, immigration, and national security in the context of shifting notions of empire and citizenship. Watch here.



Refuge: How the State Shapes Human Potential with Professor Heba Gowayed (3/6/2023)

Drawing on a global and comparative ethnography, this presentation explores how Syrian men and women seeking refuge in a moment of unprecedented global displacement are received by countries of resettlement and asylum—the U.S., Canada, and Germany. It shows that human capital, typically examined as the skills immigrants bring with them that shape their potential, is actually created, transformed, or destroyed by receiving states' incorporation policies. Since these policies derive from historically informed and unequal approaches to social welfare, refugees' experiences raise a mirror to how states (re)produce inequality. Watch here.



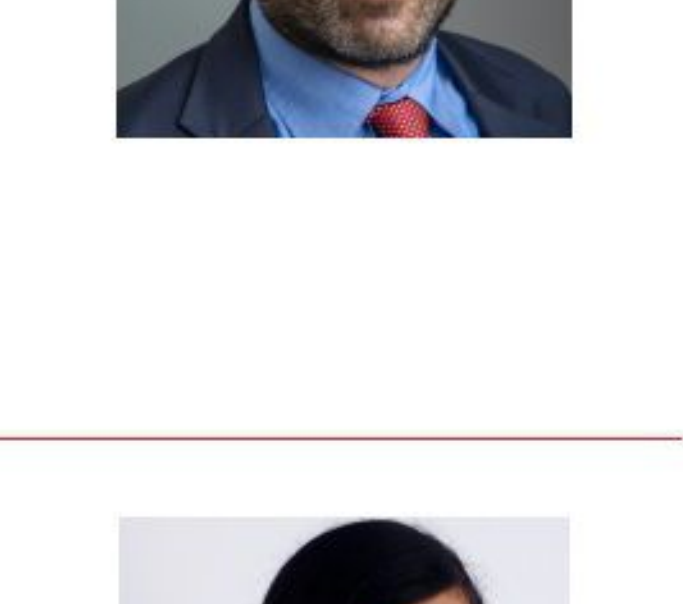
Mobilizing International Law and Social Movements in the Palestinian Struggle for Justice with Professor George Bisharat (3/29/2023)

Law is where power announces its victories. In other words, law generally, and international law in particular, have little independent potency to shape social and political realities. That principle is well-demonstrated in the case of Israel/Palestine, where law has exercised little impact on the ground, other than to legitimate Israel's domination and dispossession of the Palestinians among certain audiences. Watch here.



Coming to Understand Latino Anti-Black Bias with Professor Tanya Kateri Hernández (4/24/2023)

The author of Racial Innocence: Unmasking Latino Anti-Black Bias and the Struggle for Equality, discussed the ways in which understanding Latino anti-Black bias is critical for fostering a multiracial democracy. Based on interviews, discrimination case files, and civil rights law, Professor Hernández reveals Latino anti-Black bias in the workplace, the housing market, schools, places of recreation, the criminal justice system, and Latino families. Watch here.



The Racial Muslim with Professor Sahar Aziz, in conversation with Deborah Amos (4/24/2023)

The Institute for the Study of Global Racial Justice at Rutgers University-Newark proudly continued its Race and Religion series with the spring 2023 signature book talk featuring Sahar Aziz, Rutgers Professor of Law, Chancellor's Social Justice Scholar, founding Director of the Center for Security, Race, and Rights and acclaimed author of The Racial Muslim: When Racism Quashes Religious Freedom. Professor Aziz was in conversation with Deborah Amos, Ferris Professor of Journalism in Residence at Princeton University and Award-Winning International Correspondent for National Public Radio. Watch here.



Shining a Light on New Jersey's Secret State Intelligence System (6/8/2023)

Civil liberties are vulnerable to infringement in large part due to the post-9/11 expansion of a government surveillance apparatus. We examined the threats to civil liberties and rights posed by Fusion Centers, as highlighted in CSRR's groundbreaking report Shining a Light on New Jersey's Secret Intelligence System. Watch here.



CSRR in the News

What Business Do Former CIA Agents Have in Domestic Law Enforcement? Colin Kalmbacher, Iman Boukadoum, and Daanish Faruqi. Common Dreams. (2023).

This exercise of fitting a square into a circular peg is precisely what now guides New Jersey's contemporary policing regime. The Regional Operations Intelligence Center (ROIC), the only Department of Homeland Security-affiliated fusion center within the Garden State is led by a former CIA agent trained in international espionage, not state and municipal law enforcement tactics that must adhere to constitutional rights. As New Jersey's experience makes clear, the way fusion centers operate render them ripe for abuse, and offer outdated models of policing. Read more here.



Homeland Security's fusion centers show the dangers of mission creep. Jonathan Hafetz. The Hill. (2023).

The terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, prompted an unprecedented escalation in the domestic surveillance apparatus. More than 20 years later, the tools of surveillance developed post-9/11 not only continue to expand but also drift further from their ostensible mandate of preventing future terrorist attacks. These tools, moreover, operate without meaningful transparency or checks, increasing the threat to individual freedoms without any corresponding security gains. Read more here.



The War on Terror Has Not Waned. It's Used Against Black and Brown Communities. Saher Selod. Truth Out. (2023).

Even though the September 11 attacks transpired more than 20 years ago, their impact on the United States and its security practices endures. As a scholar who investigates both domestic and global surveillance, I have come across skeptics who think that the global "war on terror" may be waning. Read more here.



Secrets & Spicionless Policing: A Fundamentally Anti-Democratic Mix. Catherine Grosso. American Constitution Society. (2023).

Years of human rights work taught me that democracy thrives only where formal legal guidelines both enable and restrain government power. The constitutional regulation of police investigation makes clear our shared commitment to restraint in this sphere. The Fourth Amendment simultaneously upholds the value of transparent police access to evidence in facilitating investigations and the important check on that access that warrants—based on actual evidence—play. These dual principles help maintain a reasonable balance of power. Read more here.



Unmaking Asian Exceptionalism. Gaiutra Bahadur. Boston Review. (2023).

As I watched Pat Buchanan address the Republican National Convention three decades ago, I cried. I can still see his doughy face and fixed expression fill the TV screen as he urged his almost all-white audience: "We must take back our cities and take back our culture and take back our country." Buchanan's headline anti-immigrant bid for the Republican nomination had been unsuccessful, but he was still wagging his campaign to reclaim America's Judeo-Christian identity. At the time, I believed that he aimed his "we" and his "our" against me and my family. Read more here.



Distinguished Professor Joseph Massad joins CSRR as Distinguished Senior Fellow

Joseph Massad teaches and writes about modern Arab politics and intellectual history. He has a particular interest in theories of identity and culture – including theories of nationalism, sexuality, race and religion. He received his Ph.D. from Columbia University in 1998. He is the author of Desiring Arabs (2007), which was awarded the Lionel Trilling Book Award; The Persistence of the Palestinian Question: Essays on Zionism and the Palestinian Question (2006); and Colonial Effects: The Making of National Identity in Jordan (2001). His book Daymumat al-Mas'alah al-Filastiniyah was published by Dar Al-Adab in 2009, and La persistence de la question palestinienne was published by La Fabrique in 2009. The Arabic translation of Desiring Arabs was published in 2013 by Dar Al-Shuruq Press in Cairo under the title Ishtihā' Al-'Arab.



A Message from Distinguished Professor Joseph Massad:

"I am honored to join the Rutgers' Law School Center for Security, Race, and Rights as a Distinguished Senior Fellow. I had the privilege of speaking at the Center in 2018 and I continue to be most impressed with its principled commitments to racial justice and its active and critical work in pursuit of it."

Join us in welcoming Distinguished Professor Joseph Massad to CSRR!

The Center for Security, Race and Rights (CSRR) engages in research, education, and advocacy on law and policy that adversely impact the civil and human rights of America's diverse Muslim, Arab, and South Asian communities. We do so through an interfaith, cross-racial, and interdisciplinary approach.

To learn more about CSRR's work, visit our website at https://csrr.rutgers.edu

