

# Copwatch: Community Based Police Accountability

Fall 2016

## Class Facilitators:

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## Class meetings:

**Tuesdays 5:00-6:30pm location TBA**

## Class Overview:

Through a combination of class presentations by leading activists in the alternative justice movement and direct field monitoring of police on duty, students will experience first hand the complex issues faced by residents caught between high crime in their neighborhoods and the dangers that racial profiling, civil and human rights abuses bring to the community. Students will be trained in basic criminal procedure, power analysis, and techniques for observing police activity. In addition, students will examine the history and origins of police, resistance movements, and community based alternatives to the justice system as we know it.

## Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this semester, students will:

- Know and be able to assert their rights when stopped by police\
- Be able to identify constitutional police practices and procedures
- Be able to document police misconduct and know how to evaluate a potential case for civil rights violations
- Be able to interact with civil authorities in pursuit of individual complaints and learn how to file Public Records Act requests
- Analyze the causes of police misconduct and recommend possible solutions

## Student requirements

Attendance: Students may not have more than two unexcused absences in order to pass.

Homework/Readings Students should come to class having read the assigned reading and prepared to ask questions and discuss related topics.

Copwatch Shifts Each student is required to participate in five (5) Copwatch shifts. Shifts can be spent Copwatching or participating in office, outreach or other work to contribute to and

better understand community organizing. At least (3) street observations; copwatching at protests and rallies count as shifts.

### Assignments:

- Each student will be required to write two 1-2 page reflections about their experience of observing police, research, case-work, an assigned reading, etc. Due dates are 9/27 & 11/1
- Students will be required to write a public records request for information from a public institution (university, police, nonprofits, etc).
- Final assignment based on students' individual interests. Project/presentation proposals need to be approved in advance.

### Grading

- Shifts, class attendance, participation, and written work are required to receive a passing grade.

## **Fall 2016 Semester Schedule**

### **August 30**

Introduction to Community Based Police Accountability

### **September 6**

Know Your Rights Legal Training/Techniques

- Reading: Copwatch Handbook

### **September 13**

Monitoring Techniques and Documentation

- Writing PRAs in Class
- Reading: People's Investigation Handbook

### **September 20**

Police and Mental Health: Case Study of the Death of Kayla Moore

- Reading: The People's Investigation of the Death of Kayla Moore
- [http://www.berkeleycopwatch.org/resources/Peoples\\_Investigation\\_Kayla\\_Moore\\_2013.pdf](http://www.berkeleycopwatch.org/resources/Peoples_Investigation_Kayla_Moore_2013.pdf)
- Guest Speaker: Maria Moore

### **September 27**

Militarization of Mental Health and Alternatives

- Reading: Boston Globe article: "Families failed by a broken mental health care system often have no one to call but police."

<https://apps.bostonglobe.com/spotlight/the-desperate-and-the-dead/series/polic-e-confrontations/>

- Guest Speaker: Critical Resistance- Oakland power project
- Assignment Due: **Reflection due in class**

#### **October 4**

History and Role of the Police

- Reading: Review timeline of policing and come to class with 3 dates and events from
- Link to reading:  
[http://criticalresistance.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/policing\\_timelinenew.pdf](http://criticalresistance.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/policing_timelinenew.pdf)

#### **October 11**

Database and Information on the Struggle for Accountability

- Reading: Washington Post findings on Police Shootings, also review the database
- Link to reading:  
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/investigative/wp/2015/12/26/2015/12/26/a-year-of-reckoning-police-fatally-shoot-nearly-1000/>
- Guest Speaker: Nikki Jones

#### **October 18**

People's Investigation of Police Response to December Protests

- Reading: Review timeline of Dec 6 & 7 protests and complete People's Investigation timeline scavenger hunt before class
- Timeline available here: <http://berkeleycopwatch.org/timeline/>

#### **October 25**

Militarization and Urban Shield

- Reading: Al Jazeera article:  
<http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/9/4/urban-shield-policemilitarizationoakland.html> & article by John Lindsay Poland  
<http://www.thestreetspirit.org/the-movement-to-stop-the-militarization-of-police/>
- Guest Speaker: John Lindsay Poland

#### **November 1**

The Role of Police in Racial Profiling/ Gentrification & Structural Racism

- Reading: Summary of findings of Urban Displacement Project Study:  
[http://www.urbandisplacement.org/sites/default/files/images/urban\\_displaceme](http://www.urbandisplacement.org/sites/default/files/images/urban_displaceme)

[nt\\_project\\_-\\_executive\\_summary.pdf](#) & explore Anti-Eviction Mapping Project website <http://www.antievictionmap.com>

- Guest Speaker: Marcel Jones
- Assignment Due: **Reflection #2 in class**

### **November 8**

Alternatives to Police

- Reading: Excerpt from The New Jim Crow, will be handed out in class.
- Guest Speaker: Charlotte Halloran-Couch
- **\*\*Discuss Final Project requirements**

### **November 15**

Changing Police Culture: The Case of San Francisco & Oakland Police Departments

- Readings on recent Oakland chief scandal:
- [http://www.eastbaytimes.com/breaking-news/ci\\_30132479/federal-monitor-see-s-crisis-oakland-police-department](http://www.eastbaytimes.com/breaking-news/ci_30132479/federal-monitor-see-s-crisis-oakland-police-department)
- <http://anonhq.com/three-chiefs-eight-days-decline-oakland-police-department/>
- Guest Speaker: Yulanda Williams: Officers for Justice
- **\*\*Assignment due: Final Project Proposal**

### **November 22**

UC Police and the Struggle for Reform

- Reading: Mass Incarceration on Trial by Jonathan Simon (our faculty sponsor!) excerpt will be passed out in class.

### **November 29**

Last Class: Evaluation and Presentations

- **\*\*Assignment Due: Final Project**

## **Recommended Additional Readings:**

[Lockdown America: Police and Prisons in the Age of Crisis](#) by Christian Parenti (1999)

[The Iron Fist and The Velvet Glove](#) by Institute for the Study of Labor and Economic Crisis (1973)

[Police Brutality: An Anthology](#) by Jill Nelson (2001)

[Governing Through Crime](#) by Jonathan Simon (2007)

Abolition Now! Ten Years of Strategy and Struggle Against the Prison Industrial Complex:

Contributors Include: Incite! Women of Color Against Violence, David Gilbert, Martha Escobar, Liz Samuels and David Stein, Dylan Rodríguez, and Eddy Zheng (2008)

The New Jim Crow: Michelle Alexander

\*Various articles and primary documents via email and other online sources