

Mapping the FBI: Uncovering Abusive Surveillance and Racial Profiling

Adaptation of article from the ACLU

The FBI is collecting reports on innocent Americans' so-called "suspicious activity" and sharing it with various federal, state and local government agencies based on stereotypes about which groups commit different types of crimes.

In response, the ACLU's "Mapping the FBI" program attempts to expose the FBI's abuse of power, **racial profiling** and other violations of Americans' rights across the country.

The FBI should be tracking true threats, not wasting resources and unfairly mapping American communities on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, or religion. Law enforcement programs based on evidence and facts are more effective than a system based on racial stereotypes or mass suspicion.

Yet, since 9/11, the rules for the FBI's intelligence collection activities have been erased, allowing them to engage in racial and ethnic profiling and to begin investigations with little or no suspicion of wrongdoing.

The ACLU is working in the courts, in Congress, and in communities to expose how the FBI's increased control is a threat to civil rights. Our work includes:

- In September 2013, the ACLU published "Unleashed and Unaccountable: The FBI's Unchecked Abuse of Authority." This report documents the expansion of FBI power since 2001, including abuses against racial and religious minorities, immigrants, and protest groups.
- Eye on the FBI: The ACLU's "Eye on the FBI" alerts provide regular and detailed analysis of FBI activities that pose a threat to civil liberties.
- eGuardian: The ACLU has sued the FBI about an FBI monitoring and information-sharing program known as "eGuardian," which is a program the FBI uses to collect so-called "Suspicious Activities Reports" (SARs) from local, state and federal law enforcement agencies nationwide.
- FBI Interviews: The ACLU is working to educate individuals and community organizations about their rights when encountering law enforcement. Over the past two years, the FBI has increased "voluntary" interviews – especially within specific racial, ethnic, and religious communities – often encouraging interviewees to serve as informants in their communities.

Racial Profiling: the use of race or ethnicity as reason for suspecting someone of wrongdoing