

THE ALGORITHM IS NOT NEUTRAL

HOW RACIALIZED CARE,
CONTROL, AND CRIMINALIZATION
ARE CODED INTO EVERYDAY LIFE



PRESENTED BY DR.
GIFTY ASARE

WOMENATTHECENTRE

THE LEARNING NETWORK

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ALGORITHM

01

1. A process or set of rules to be followed in calculations or other problem-solving operations, especially by a computer.
1. A data-tracking system in which an individual's internet search, history, and browsing habits are used to present them with similar or related material on social media or other platforms.

ALGORITHMIC BIAS

02

Algorithmic bias occurs when AI systems produce systematically prejudiced results due to erroneous assumptions in machine learning processes often stemming from unrepresentative training data or flawed, biased data inputs.

Common examples include facial recognition struggling with darker skin tones, hiring tools favoring men, loan algorithms penalizing minority neighborhoods, and healthcare algorithms prioritizing white patients.

ALGORITHMIC BIAS

03

2016

CRIMINAL JUSTICE — COMPAS RECIDIVISM RISK

Investigation by ProPublica (2016): Found that the COMPAS risk-assessment tool used in U.S. courts was more likely to label Black defendants as high risk compared with white defendants with similar outcomes.

2018

FACIAL RECOGNITION BIAS — “GENDER SHADES”

Gender Shades study (2018): Joy Buolamwini and Timnit Gebru showed facial-recognition systems had much higher error rates for darker-skinned women vs. lighter-skinned men.

2019

HEALTHCARE ALGORITHMS — BIASED RISK SCORES

Science study (2019): A widely used clinical risk-prediction algorithm systematically ranked Black patients as less in need of care than equally ill white patients because it used healthcare costs as a proxy for needs.

ALGORITHMIC BIAS

CANADA

04

2020

PREDICTIVE / ALGORITHMIC POLICING IN CANADIAN CITIES

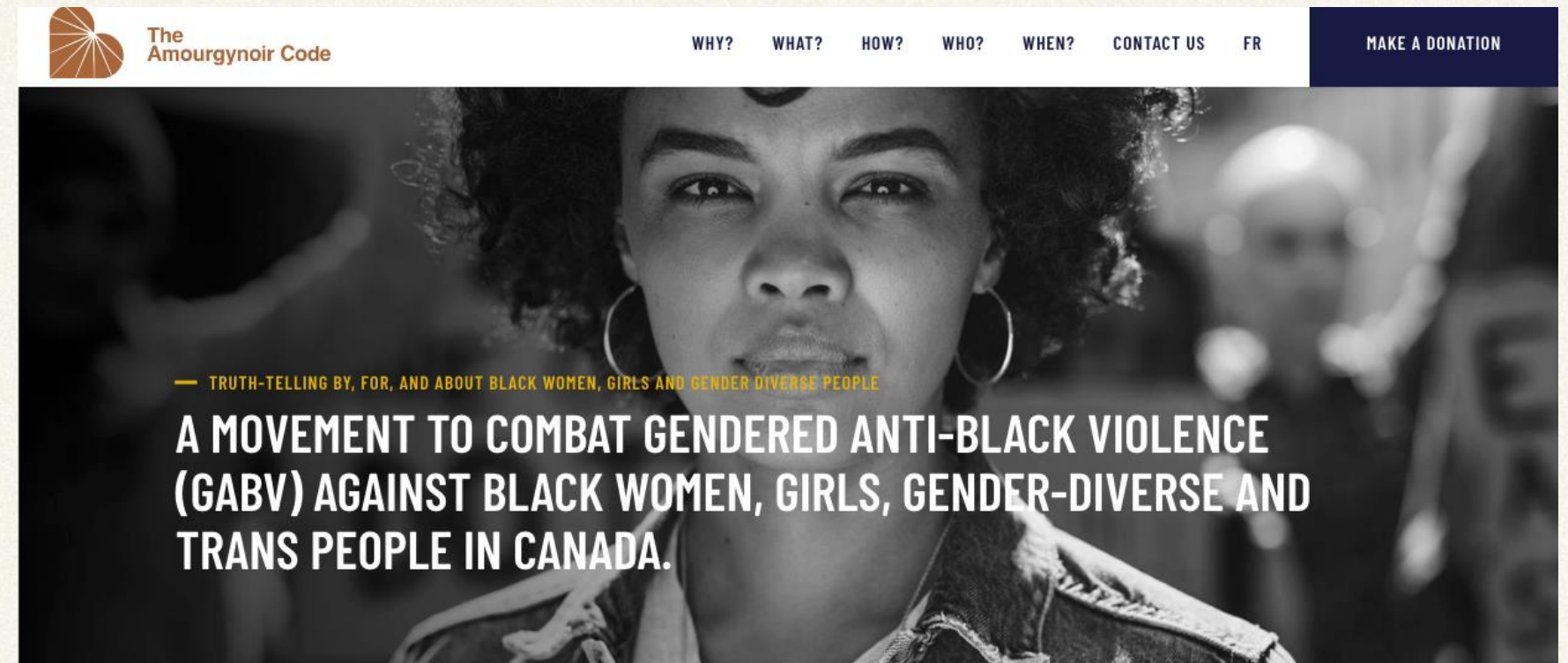
Citizen Lab (University of Toronto) research shows Canadian police services have adopted predictive and analytical policing technologies that rely on historical police data that “risk entrenching and amplifying existing patterns of discrimination and over-policing.”

2020-21

FACIAL RECOGNITION BIAS — RCMP USE OF CLEARVIEW

The RCMP used Clearview AI, a facial recognition system known to misidentify Black and racialized people, without legal authority or consent. The OPC concluded the RCMP’s use violated Canadian privacy law and posed serious risks to civil liberties

TRUTH & TRANSFORMATION



05

5-year research project advancing gender equity for Black women, girls, gender-diverse and trans (B-WGGDT) communities in Canada. A call to action that uses love to disrupt misogynoir and counter the systemic hatred against B-WGGDT.

452 SURVEYS

26 INTERVIEWS

32 FOCUS GROUPS

1 YOUTH CAUCUS

5 ELDER FORUMS

TRUTH & TRANSFORMATION

FINDINGS

- 75% of survivors experienced anti-Blackness in GBV services
- Survivors reported 3–4+ overlapping harms while seeking support
 - 39% changed how they engage with services;
 - 89% altered speech or disclosure to stay safe
- 1 in 4 experienced child welfare and/or foster care involvement
 - Survivors consistently described fear of monitoring, reporting, punitive system involvement, family separation following help-seeking

1. MISOGYNOIR

2. SEXISM

3. THREATS OF VIOLENCE

4. MICROAGGRESSIONS

5. HOMOPHOBIC LANGUAGE



TRUTH & TRANSFORMATION

FINDINGS

- 65% had some postsecondary education, yet 89% earned under \$80K
- Nearly 1 in 3 lived on less than \$40K annually
- In a list of 29 services, Lowest satisfaction was police (22%), and school (23%)
 - Most common Negative Service Experiences
 - Feeling dismissed & unheard by providers
 - Racial stereotypes & microaggressions
 - Lack of cultural safety
 - Harmful institutional outcomes
 - Barriers that disrupted access

***‘The systems just aren’t
designed to help us’***

***‘The odds seem to always
be stacked against me’***

‘The system is out to get me’

TRUTH & TRANSFORMATION

Algorithmic bias misses that
care is relational not predictive

What survivors valued most:

- Being seen, believed, and validated
- Culturally specific, Black-led supports
- Material & practical help (childcare, transport, food)
- Peer connection & community care



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- Citizen Lab. (2020). To surveil and predict: A human rights analysis of algorithmic policing in Canada. Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy, University of Toronto. <https://citizenlab.ca/algorithmic-policing-in-canada-explained/>
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RESOURCES

- **ABC** - University of Toronto-based interdisciplinary research initiative focused on understanding and addressing algorithmic bias in Canada: <https://algorithmicbias.ca/>
- **Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC)**: <https://www3.ohrc.on.ca/en/informing-canadas-renewed-ai-strategy>
- **Use and human rights implications of algorithmic policing practices in Canada**: <https://citizenlab.ca/research/to-surveil-and-predict-a-human-rights-analysis-of-algorithmic-policing-in-canada/algorithmic-policing-in-canada-explained/>
- **WomenatthecentrE**: www.womenatthecentre.com
- **Amourgynoir**: <https://www.theamourgynoircode.org/>

THANK YOU

GIFTY@WOMENATTHECENTRE.COM

