Materialization of racialized surveillance: Lived experiences of home imprisonment

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Abstract
Racialization, surveillance, and securitization may be distinct theoretical concepts, but they are nevertheless significantly intertwined. Race, as a mode of thinking and governance, largely informs the practices of securitization, whereby surveilling racialized bodies is an immanent task of the securitization process. To demonstrate this relationship, I interviewed three of the men from the infamous Canadian "Secret Trial 5" Security Certificate cases and their family members. I investigate their lived experiences of home imprisonment, examining how their home became a key site for the operation and deployment of racialized surveillance. Their experiences illustrate how surveillance emerges as a practice of securitization, where racialized “Others” are reaffirmed as threats to and subjects of unfettered surveillance practices. As the only research endeavor to interview Canada’s security certificate detainees and their families, this article demonstrates how securitization materializes through the transformation of the home into a prison; this is achieved through the imposition of carceral practices and a penal architecture within the home and through eroding belonging and safety for the people living under this type of regime. Moreover, given that most studies focusing on the experiences of securitization are restricted to the experiences of the incarcerated individuals, these studies often exclude, and by extension, silence the voices of the families also touched by these processes. Thus, this article illuminates that, albeit, in different magnitudes, families also undergo the pains of imprisonment.

Keywords
Home imprisonment, home detention, security certificates, pains of imprisonment, racialization
Introduction

A “home” is distinct from a “house.” It is a space wreathed with memories, a harbinger of intimate moments and an embodiment of hopes for the future. The home is not merely a house—that is, a three-dimensional structure that provides shelter—but rather, it is an expression of emotions and imaginaries (Blunt and Dowling, 2006). Within and beyond being a house, the home gains its force through the personalization, privacy, ownership, and identity it offers its inhabitants (Brun and Fabos, 2015). The constellation of these imageries is what creates a home and distinctively marks it from a house.¹

As Brun and Fabos (2015) describe, a home is a particular articulation of space, “which, and within which, we experience social, psychological and emotive attachments” (p. 6). Likewise, Blunt and Dowling (2006) ascribe the home as being an idea imbued with feelings, such as acceptance, family, and community. For them, the home “is hearth, an anchoring point through which human beings are centered” (p. ii).

Indeed, the home is a spatial imaginary: a set of intersecting and variable ideas and feelings, which are related to context, and which construct and connect places and extend across spaces and scales. Given this understanding of the home as a “space” of sanctity, it is important to situate the home in wider traditions of thought and consider what happens when romanticized notions of the home are disrupted or when the home becomes a site through which exclusionary assemblages of power and control operate.

Taking these insights into account, this article focuses on the lived experiences of security certificate detainees and their families; particularly, five Muslim men, infamously known as the “Secret Trial 5,” who have been subject to Canada’s security certificate provision. Held without formal charges, Hassan Almrei, Mohamed Harkat, Mahmoud Jaballah, Mohamed Zeki Mahjoub, and Adil Charkoui have lived under an invasive security regime for a total of 50 years combined, in which they were subjected to ubiquitous home surveillance by state security agents and surveillance technologies (Wala and Bingham, 2014). This research is the first to interview these men and their families to explore their lived experiences of securitization. Their experiences illustrate what happens when the home is denuded of its feelings of safety and comfort and materializes as a site replete with surveillance, powerlessness, and emotional chaos.

Through an engagement with race, security, and surveillance literature, this article highlights how the “home” becomes a key site for the operation and deployment of what Browne (2015) refers to as racialized surveillance—“the technology of social control where surveillance practices, policies and performances concern the production of norms pertaining to race and exercise a power to define what is in or out of place” (p. 15). More particularly, my analysis reveals how the home becomes restructured into a prison through the imposition of carceral practices and penal architecture, ultimately eroding feelings of belonging and safety affiliated with their home. Although existing literature on home detention has investigated experiences of surveillance within the home, the role of race in experiences of home imprisonment has been vaguely acknowledged, if at all (Nellis, 2009; Payne and Gainey, 1998; Sykes, 1958). In this way, this article contributes to the existing scholarship on home detention by investigating how home imprisonment occurs under the ambit of racialized surveillance.

This article begins with an overview of the ways literature has positioned racialization, surveillance, and securitization as symptoms of one another. Relying on these concepts, scholars have demonstrated how these concepts are etched deep into the fibers of one another, where racialized surveillance and securitization are constitutive of each other. Next, it investigates the security
certificate provision, demonstrating how the unfettered power of the state is exercised to materialize a force of law bereft of any procedural safeguards to “deal” with the (racialized) security threats. Finally, the article presents an analysis of the men and their families’ lived experiences of home surveillance. It does so by discussing the processes by which the home is undressed of its positive sentiments and instead, through the deployment of quasi-penal structures and practices, becomes a site of alienation, oppression, and racialized violence. These experiences of home imprisonment illustrate the ways securitization offers conditions for the deployment and enactment of racialized surveillance.

**Race, securitization, and surveillance**

Racialization, surveillance, and securitization flirt together in the literature, where each concept may be cited as a symptom of the other. Recently, however, scholars are beginning to recognize their interconnectedness, accounting for how these concepts are systematically linked—without one, the other seizes to exist (Browne, 2015; Kundani and Kumar, 2015; Moffette and Vadasaria, 2016). While the particulars of arguments may ostensibly differ, each is simply a different iteration of the same logic: namely, that securitization is the process of making a raced body into a security object, which then becomes a site through which surveillance is practiced and enacted. In fact, the very formation of the nation-state and the practices akin to racial oppression are born together, through the casting of racialized “Others” as threats to the (white) national social fabric. The realization of the (white) national identity, tracing its imbrication with race, empire, and exclusion, was entrenched in the settler’s goal to territorially dispossess Indigenous groups and pacify their resistance. To do so, the colonizers depended on “an effective ideological erasure of those who peopled the land” through their securitization (Kundnani and Kumar, 2015: n.p.). This profoundly racialized storyline has been echoed at different historical junctures, where persons of color have been demarcated as threats under different tropes of insecurity, whereby it is ultimately empire and capital which renders who will be securitized, in what ways, and for how long (Kundnani and Kumar, 2015).

The violence constituted by this relationship has gained increasing attention, whereby scholars have begun to theorize securitization, racialization, and surveillance as an assemblage operating through one another. Continuing this work, my article brings to the fore how this trifecta is intimately linked, specifically, that surveilling racialized bodies is an immanent task of securitization.

The critical security studies’ literature conceptualizes securitization as a product of processes that construct “who and what needs protecting,” and by extension, who and what needs to be securitized against. Scholars Moffette and Vadasaria (2016) stipulate that the securitization literature however has obscured the question of race, whereby securitization appears “as an ahistorical abstraction that conceals the historical specificity of the racially embedded process of securitization” (p. 2). Likewise, in tracing the intellectual origins of securitization, Brodie (2009) argues that this process discursively constructs something as having potentially fatal consequences for the national state, national communities, and a national way of life. Indeed then, this security logic sets in motion and facilitates a particular type of racialized thinking: national borders must be protected against those radically threatening “Others” who exist outside of or precariously inside the nation-state (Razack, 2012).

Monahan (2006) argues that discussions about “security” are deep-rooted in the assumption that increased surveillance leads to greater security—a thinking that has materialized through the disproportionate surveillance of non-white persons. While the links between securitization and
surveillance are being bridged, Browne (2015) argues that within surveillance studies, race remains largely undertheorized, and “serious consideration has yet to be given to the racial subject and to the role of surveillance” (p. 8). To address this lacuna, she introduces the concept, racialized surveillance, which “signals those moments when enactments of surveillance reify boundaries, borders, and bodies along racial lines and where the outcome is often discriminatory treatment of those who are negatively racialized by such surveillance” (p. 16).

Indeed, prior to Browne’s introduction of racialized surveillance, scholars have demonstrated that surveillance practices have been coded by race thinking (Finn, 2011; Fiske, 1998; Razack, 2012; Thobani, 2004). However, Browne makes explicit the need for considering race at the forefront when analyzing surveillance. Of a similar view, Kundnani and Kumar (2015) argue that the debate on national security surveillance is “woefully inadequate,” “due to its failure to place questions of race and empire at the center of its analysis” (n.p.).

We see this racially embedded process of securitization in the post-911 context, where the Muslim figure has emerged as the principle figure of anxiety. The conflation of brown bodies with terrorism post 9–11 has occasioned a particular type of othering for Muslims, who have been subject to and subjects of everyday state-sanctioned surveillance (Finn, 2011). Thobani (2004) contends that racial profiling vis-à-vis surveillance does not differentiate between those Muslims born in the West and those who are not. Rather, it colors everyone who looks like a Muslim with the same hue, whereby they are all viewed through the prism of fear and suspicion (Nagra, 2018). Kundnani and Kumar (2015) argue that the racial underpinnings of the “War on Terror” imply a need for the mass surveillance of Muslim populations and further cultivates the security logic that to keep “us” safe, surveillance must be waged against “them.” The discussion of national security, peppered with images of the “dangerous Muslim other,” reveals how the racialized process of othering and the process of securitization are mutually constitutive.

Bringing the concepts of securitization, surveillance, and racialization into dialogue, this article illustrates how each is deeply soaked into the other and therefore must be analyzed as such. Surveillance emerges as a practice of securitization by reaffirming the normativity of whiteness through relegating raced bodies into objects of security, and subsequently, “maintaining the ‘normal’ by disciplining what has been abnormalized” (Fiske, 1998: 72). To demonstrate the rhetorical process of securitizing a raced body, such that the body becomes an object of surveillance, this article relies on the lived experiences of security certificate detainees and their families. It considers the effects of this trifecta by unpacking their experiences of home imprisonment, where racialized surveillance is a materialization of the securitization process.

**Security certificates**

Under the “War on Terror,” there has been the engendering, suspension, and the contortion of laws to abandon procedural fairness and fundamental justice for brown bodies. Canada’s security certificate provision is an example of a legal tool that has been mobilized under this war, by its application against five Muslim men, colloquially known as the cases of the “Secret Trial 5.”

Implemented in 1978 and employed 28 times since its inception, Canada’s security certificate provision is situated under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA)*. This judicial tool is used to indefinitely detain and render inadmissible to Canada foreign nationals or permanent residents who are alleged to threaten national security, violate human or international rights, or against those involved in organized or serious crimes (Bell, 2006). The process is initiated when Canadian Security Intelligence Services (CSIS) alleges that based on allegations of past
affiliations, that the individual may potentially, at some point in the future, pose a threat to the
security of Canada (Shapiro, 2008). Following CSIS’ advice, section 77 of the IRPA gives the
Minister of IRCC and of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness the authority to issue a
certificate calling for the detention and removal of noncitizens from Canada (Aitken, 2008).

Hudson (2010) highlights that the judge must review the evidence issued against the subject in
the absence of the public, the person named in a certificate, and their counsel. If found reasonable,
the certificate effectively becomes a removal order from Canada and the person named is
immediately subject to detention. Once the certificate is upheld, the subject can be arbitrarily
detained and neither they, nor their counsel, are provided access to review the evidence being used
against them (section 81, IRPA, S.C. 2001 c. 27). Although the reasons for the continued detention
must be reviewed at least once every 6 months by the judge, “the certificate program authorizes
limitless and untested forms of detention” (Aitken, 2008: 384).

Their indefinite detention is centered on their potential to engage in acts of terrorism based on
their alleged past affiliations, life history, memberships, and relationships (Shapiro, 2008). Section
86 of the IRPA allows the Ministers to apply for the nondisclosure of evidence on the grounds that it
would be injurious to national security or the safety of any person (Aitken, 2008). Scholars have
argued that the practice of using of secret evidence makes it so that the accused or their counsel will
not only neither fully know the evidence against them nor be privy to court hearings on which their
lives depend. Although the Canadian government vehemently defends certificates as being
defensible on the grounds of national security, scholars and legal professionals alike have argued
that the very fact that these certificates are grounded in the use of secret evidence, not only renders
the task of mounting a defense against them extremely difficult but forecloses opportunities to
disprove the state’s claims (Aitken, 2008; Bell, 2006). Undeniably, the men can only successfully
prevail against the certificate if they can disprove undisclosed inaccessible evidence, to which
scholars have purported “is difficult to imagine how even someone innocent of all wrongdoing
could meet such a burden” (Bell, 2006: 72). Nonetheless, the very fact that three of the men have
had the multiple security certificates issued against them quashed is material indication that the
insidious surveillance and security practices deployed against them were superfluous.

While security certificates do not specify racial, ethnic, or religious groups in their text, the
targeting of Muslim men post 9/11 has marked this legislation to be a highly racialized tool
(Aitken, 2008; Jamil and Rousseau, 2012; Lopez, 2006; Razack, 2008). This point has been well-
established in the literature, where scholars have argued that the certificate program is rooted in the
relationship between citizenship status and (in)security; a relationship that often materializes in the
targeting of the racialized ‘Other.’ Razack (2008) argues that for these men, their Arab back-
grounds have operated to mark them as people whose inclination toward violence is implied by
their racial identity. Echoing Razack, Larson (2008) describes how the peremptory principle
underpinning security certificates allows for unlawful imprisonment pending deportation not
because of allegations that an individual has committed an act of terror, but rather because they are
deemed to fit a particular (racialized) profile of a “terrorist.” Consequently, then, the culpability in
security certificate cases is not assessed on any actual crimes, but the crime in these cases is
something “born in the blood, a hidden indicator of the latent capacity to violence” (Razack, 2008:
35). In this way, these cases of these five Muslim men demonstrate how race provides ballast to
what otherwise is considered a weak argument (Razack, 2008).

The threshold required in certificate cases is much lower than the standard of proof beyond a
reasonable doubt required in criminal proceedings. Shapiro (2008) stipulates, the Canadian gov-
ernment is not required to demonstrate any identifiable criminal act that the accused is likely to
commit; instead, “mere association with or membership in terrorist organizations has been sufficient to motivate the issuance of the security certificate” (p. 43). Whereas in criminal law, evidence must be judged beyond a reasonable doubt, under immigration law, the threshold for assessing evidence is merely based on the possibility to commit an act of terrorism. Problematically then, in a post 9/11 society where Muslim is often conflated with terrorist, it “opens a channel for race to do the work of convincing [judges] that a terror suspect is indeed a terrorist,” making it so that the “decision regarding the outcome of one’s life, is not based on evidence, rather, it is based on a ‘belief’—to which race undeniably gives content” (Razack, 2008: 14).

This section has mapped out various scholars’ conceptualization of the security certificate provision as a tool of racial violence. Contributing to this inventory of literature, this article further demonstrates how the certificates issued against these five Muslim men were rooted in and reproduces racial logic.

Methodology

The data for this article is borne out of five qualitative semi-structured interviews I conducted with three of the five Muslim men of the “Secret Trial 5” cases and their families. To gather empirical material on their lived experiences, I conducted semi-structured interviews as they provide a window to the participants’ stories by eliciting detailed narratives and the meanings attached to their experiences of securitization (Whiting, 2008).

To gain access to the men and their families, I built relationships with various activists and lawyers in the community advocating against security certificates. Through building these relationships, these individuals trusted me enough to put me into contact with the men and their families. The interviews were carried out in the summer and fall of 2017 in the interviewees’ homes or in public spaces.

Moreover, studies concerning the lived experiences of incarceration often exclude, and by extension, silence the voices of the families touched by these processes. As such, I wanted to illuminate that, albeit, in different magnitudes, families also undergo the pains of imprisonment (Comfort, 2003). The sample included three of the five men who have been issued a security certificate, a wife and a son of a security certificate detainee. I was unable to interview one of the detainees or anyone from his family, therefore, this research does not account for the perspectives of one family entirely.

It was important to not allow preexisting assumptions to bias my interpretation of their experiences. I put aside my conceptual presumptions, status, and positionality to allow for the men and their families to guide the narratives based on their personal experiences and meanings (Nagra, 2018). Since the interviewees spoke anecdotally, it made theoretical sense to allow the themes to flow from the interviewees’ lived experiences.

Because my research is interested in exploring the lived experiences of securitization, I felt that it was imperative to begin from the actualities of the interviewees’ lives. Scholars Henry and Tator (2006) assert that it is a pervasive practice in academia to dismiss the narratives of racial minorities through claims that they represent subjective experiences. For this reason, I trust the interviewees’ experiences as evidence of “real forces in society, and not merely subjective experiences or isolated individual experiences” (Nagra, 2018: 38).

Given that my research project concerns the cases of the “Secret Trial 5,” the issue of anonymity was a concern. To protect anonymity in such well-known cases, all personal names and details from the data set that would be revelatory of one’s identity have been anonymized.
Research findings

The narratives in this section illustrate how the status conferred unto the men as being “suspected terrorists” or their families, as being “supporters of terrorists,” subjects them to quasi-penal structures and practices within their home. By way of a brief note, I argue that the mens’ experiences of home imprisonment must be contextualized and understood in the broader “War on Terror” context, whereby racialized surveillance not only emerges from the conflation of Islam with terrorism but has offered the justification for the unbound surveillance against Muslims. This is apparent in my research, as the interviewees describe how imprisonment extends outward from the concrete walls of a prison cell and materializes within their most sanctified space—their home. My analysis reveals how the experiences and the pains of imprisonment are reproduced within the home, namely, through the restructuring of the architecture of the home to imitate a prison, the deployment of prison practices within the home, and the erosion of positive sentiments associated with their home.

Embodiment of the carceral architecture

Albeit the occupants of the home being the same, the memories associated with the home—enduring, and all else related to their space, remaining ostensibly unchanged prior to their detention, the men describe a completely different experience of their home upon their release. Through my interviews, I learned that following their labelling as a “terrorist,” the pains of incarceration were reproduced within the home through its physical restructuring to embody a prison-like environment. In the following accounts, respondents describe how the “conditions [they] were living under were so terrible” as their homes were subject to 24/7 monitoring vis-à-vis cameras and surveillance agents outside their house. I begin with an excerpt from the son of a former detainee:

“We're the only people that on all exits of the house have cameras (. . .). Anybody steps out of the house and [CSIS] sees. (. . .) When my dad was home, there was 24-hour surveillance. He had a GPS bracelet that tracked him for 24-hours and cameras and officers outside the house (. . .). It’s so redundant.

Similarly, a former detainee describes:

During the house arrest [I rented] a townhouse. They installed cameras all over and security guards all around [the house]. There was [cameras]—one in each of the rooms in the house.

The interviewees expressed their frustration with the perpetual surveillance technologies by positing how they were paired with another means of surveillance. Former detainees describe how “[CSIS] put cameras (. . .) in front of [their] homes. And [they wore] bracelet[s] around [their] leg all the time.” The physical installation of cameras in the home coupled with state agents parked outside their home 24 h a day is a literal and tenacious replication of the prison structure, logic, and experience where prison guards are situated outside cells and surveillance technologies are dispersed throughout the prison institution. In fact, a former detainee likens his continued detention in a prison to the lack of having a “jailor at home”. He describes “because I have no family to be my jailor, I was still in jail when everyone else went home. They hired 24 guards to watch me.”
The interviewees also described how their home embodied a carceral structure through the classification of spaces as “off-limits” within their home. For instance, a son of a former detainee details:

It was ridiculous—we were allowed to use the internet but the room had to be locked, so we had an office in our house with a locked door and my dad wasn’t allowed to enter that room. Whenever somebody is in that room, the door had to be shut. So, you couldn’t even be on the computer with the door open.

Nellis (2009) describes how surveillance can take many socio-technical forms of “varying degrees of precision [and] depth and duration” (p. 43). For the interviewees, surveillance materialized through technology, cameras, and surveillance personnel to guarantee acquiescence with specified routines of temporal and spatial regulations. This is described by a wife of a former detainee below:

We had to lock the garage, [my husband] wasn’t allowed on the property by himself. (…) He couldn’t go into the backyard by himself. (…) We had surveillance cameras everywhere. We couldn’t park in the garage. It was ridiculous. Once, I was barbecuing and I forgot something, so I had to come back in [the house], and, [CSIS] said “it took [your husband] a minute and a half to come in the house” (…) and that was grounds for consequences.

Surveillance is enacted through imposing a quasi-carceral blueprint within the home, where certain areas of the home are mapped as off-limits. Problematically, the specifying of areas as restricted to authorized persons imitates the prison ecosystem, where, similarly, it is only select individuals who have authorized access to enter and prisoners are prohibited. Consequently, the home emerges as a site of potentially new offences which can only be committed because the home has personified a prison. Put differently, the transformation of a home to a prison effectively widens the net to comprise behaviors that otherwise would be considered normative conduct within the home—as acts of criminality (re: using the internet with the door open, visiting the garage, entering the house after your partner, etc.).

In this vein, the home emerges as a site of insecurity, whereby neutral activities are reimagined as lawbreaking activities. Through construing these otherwise meaningless activities as prohibited acts, surveillance actors are afforded opportunities to label the men in breach of their conditions, thereby flagging both the complexity and forcefulness in restructuring the home to be a prison.

The replication of a prison environment within the home crystalizes and reproduces the home as a site of pain, oppression, and exclusion. A son of a former detainee describes home imprisonment as “punishment. (…) It was meant to make life difficult and isolate you, and it did.” Although Nellis (2009) argues that there is an assumed inviolability of the home from unwanted intrusion, in the case of security certificates, the state effectively destabilizes this assumed protective barrier. This is achieved by nebulously labelling areas within the home as prohibited in order to physically exclude the men from participating in activities within their home. As an insidious force of violence, the state’s tactics effectively facilitate feelings of low connectivity for the men to their families; despite being on the inside of their homes, the men are nonetheless on the outside.

The interviewees’ experiences of home surveillance must be situated in the wider post 9/11 context of the “War on Terror.” Raco (2003) posits that “policing space is increasingly about
controlling [people] through design, surveillance technologies and enforcement” (1869). The redundancy of having incessant surveillance through cameras, security agents, and electronic bracelets suggests that the surveillance is tied not to what the men have done, but rather in who they are, ultimately placing suspicion on their racialized identity. In a post 9–11 climate, terrorism has been persistently qualified with Islam, whereby the terrorist figure is portrayed as a religiously and ideologically motivated actor opposed to Western values of liberalism and treated as though they have a higher propensity for terrorist violence (Razack, 2008). Resultantly, literature has argued that these narratives allow for extraordinary surveillance practices to be deployed against the men, not because of allegations that they have committed an act of terror, rather, because they are deemed to fit a particular (racialized) profile of a “terrorist” Razack, 2008.

This is further evidenced in the interviewees’ descriptions of how state agents would collect and monitor as much data as possible and on every diminutive detail of their lives. As critical race scholars have argued, “insecurity” is attached to one’s racialized identity and therefore serves as a justification for disparate levels of surveillance deployed against them and their bodies (Razack, 2008). The transformation of the home to embody a carceral architecture is therefore evocative of surveillance practices reifying racial boundaries, as spaces occupied by men become sites through which surveillance must be practiced and enacted.

This relentless surveillance, both informed and guided by racial beliefs, eventually fosters an environment of mistrust within the men’s neighborhoods. Below, a former detainee’s son details the impacts of the racialized surveillance on their social capital.

We live in a nice quiet neighbourhood, it’s not like a road with mansions on it where everybody has security cameras. We’re the only people that has security cameras. There was 24-hour surveillance. They had CBSA officers parked outside our house 24-hours a day. I’m sure if you see a car in your neighbourhood that is always parked there with people sitting in it, you’re going to have questions. My neighbours see that.

This is echoed by a former detainee who recalls how he was approached by members in his community:

Our neighbors see when CBSA comes. (…) They ask me “why are these people watching you” (…) why do you have security here?”

The surveillance cameras and personnel outside the men’s home appear exactly at the same date and time they are released. The harmony and synchronicity between these two events are mechanisms by which the detainees are effectively (re)introduced into their communities as threats. The events of 9/11 have rendered Muslims supra-visible and libeled as suspicious, radicalists, fundamentalists, and terrorists (Perry, 2015). The inconspicuous surveillance operation, materialized through cameras and surveillance actors outside their homes, exposes the men to the persistent stigma of the dangerous “Muslim man”—something that must be feared and watched. Put differently, the explicit tagging of the men’s homes broadcasts to their community, “they are not like us’ and calls attention to the “Muslim presence and the inherent threat posed by their presumed traits” (Perry, 2015: 8). In doing so, it not only alienates them, but cheats them of opportunities to meaningfully integrate into their communities following their release, rendering their experiences of imprisonment, exclusion, and racialized surveillance perpetual.
Carceral practices within the home

In this next section, this article describes how the home’s boundaries become porous through the introduction of carceral practices therein. Deploying practices entrenched in the prison institution’s rhetoric of security effectively denotes the home as a potential (in)security that must be securitized. This transpires, although the home is a lifeless object, by way of those who occupy the space. Tellingly, for the men and their families, punishment extends beyond the walls of a prison and is reproduced within the home vis-a-vis raids and the regulation of everyday activities within their space. Extending surveillance practices native to a carceral space in the home leads to the curtailing of personal freedoms and autonomy linked to that space, ultimately disrupting feelings of security and belonging associated with the home.

One of the ways carceral practices are deployed within the home is through unannounced raids. A son of a former detainee describes:

The conditions permitted [CSIS & RCMP] to search the house unannounced anytime and they didn’t have to give us notice (…). Police and CBSA officers would come anytime and they’d go through everything … we’re not just talking about my dad’s room, all the closets, clothes, everything and take anything they wanted to.

This experience of an unannounced raid was similarly recounted by a former detainee:

My friend called and said “my house has just been raided and I think they are coming to yours.” I was sitting in Tim Hortons and I’m watching all [CSIS & RCMP] agents come to my apartment and take everything. They know where I am and they left a note—“We searched [your home]”.

In an excerpt included below, the son of a former detainee offers an unsettling account of how an unannounced raid led to serious implications for the children encapsulated within the surveillance envelope

We got [my brother] a (game console). The condition was he can have the (console) only if he used it in the computer room and the door had to be closed. One time [CSIS & RCMP] came and searched the whole house and my brother was playing with [the console] in his room and fell asleep. They found the console outside of the locked room and took it to court. We all had to go to court and convince the judge that an innocent child forgot and we didn’t intentionally break the conditions. The ten-year-old would have to testify that “yes I—snuck it in my room forgot it.”

These raids can be understood as attempts to transform the men into “obedient corps of unindividuated, nonthreatening entities who can be organized according to the prison’s rules” (Comfort, 2003: 100). Through the unprovoked and unannounced searching of the men’s homes, it strips feelings of privacy, safety, and sovereignty over their space. A former detainee’s wife explains that when she complained, a surveillance agent told her “[she] has no personal space.” Whereas the home is imagined as a literal and figurative enclave away from the outside world, investing the powers within state agents to conduct unannounced raids reveals that depending on its inhabitants, the home’s boundaries are permeable.

As Razack (2012) argues, these men’s status as objects of security is imbricated upon and a product of their racial identity. Tellingly, the space they inhabit and the objects therein become perceived equally as perilous and subject to analogous surveillance operations. This is apparent
through the unforgiving nature of the surveillance agents toward the 10-year-old’s mistake of leaving his console system in his room. This unveils the thinking that under the trope of national security, items touched, occupied, or merely associated with the “alleged (in)security” become subject to the surveilling gaze—which is also a racialized gaze under the “War on Terror.”

Cacho (2012) discusses how for racialized groups, their humanity is made intelligible, it is something that they can strive to earn but not something that they can just be. Nowhere is this more realized than in the experiences for the men and their families, whereby in the eyes of the security state, the inhabitants of the home are imagined and relegated to security threats. The deployment of racialized surveillance is also evident in this next excerpt where a wife of a former detainee describes a time surveillance agents showed up to their home with “sniffing dogs:”

... and said “is [your husband] here?” He was in the shower. They picked him up naked. (…) They took him downstairs and handcuffed him (…). They touched everything, books, DVD boxes, opened cracker boxes, pulled wires, took lights, looked under the kitchen cabinet. They removed vents (…), plugs, extension wires, everything. (…) They took a picture frame that has an Arabic saying on it. They took my photo album with family in it cause it has Arabic writing on it. Everything that was in Arabic they took.

Comfort (2003) stipulates that there are profound psychological impacts of being denuded of one’s property, since persons invest self-feelings in their possession. Material possessions are such a large a part of an individual’s conception of themselves that “to be stripped of them is to be attacked at the deepest layers of personality” (p. 69). Ergo, stripping the men and their families of personal objects leads to the deprivation of autonomy where the men are stripped of their personal control, the deprivation of goods and services where the men loose access to personal possessions and “ultimately, the deprivation of security, whereby the men are living at the mercy of predatory surveillance guards” (Nellis, 2009: 46).

Like Cacho (2012), Wehelieye (2014) argues that at the crux of the racialization process is the dehumanization of racialized persons who are considered inept for basic fundamental rights. Taking Wehelieye’s insights into account, invading the former detainee’s privacy—realized through dragging him naked outside of the shower, unprotected against the violent and racially charged gaze of the surveillance actors—is an articulation of the men’s perceived dehumanization. What’s more is that the clear targeting of objects that include “Arabic” writing is emblematic of racial undertones guiding these “security” measures. Post September-11, racist ideas formed the basis for the ways in which national security (racialized) surveillance was enacted. Particularly, CSIS’s targeting of otherwise meaningless items tied to the men’s Muslim identity is evidence of how racial beliefs underpin surveillance strategies.

In addition to the deployment of unannounced raids, the regulation of everyday activities within the home is riddled with prison undertones. A former detainee discusses how everybody who was visiting the home “had to be approved by CSIS, everybody [had] to [sign the] logbook and write what time [they came] in and what time out” and “everyone’s mail and phone is tapped so you’re all being surveilled.” This echoes practices native to a prison, whereby visitors are required to sign in to visit an inmate and where each visit is subject to monitoring. While the men are no longer in prisons, these practices are replicated within their homes. In the excerpt below, a former detainee details the conditions of his home detention:

I wasn’t allowed to speak Arabic [at home]. [My home] was tougher than jail. (…) I can’t just go buy groceries, somebody has to come and take me (…). I am only allowed out [of my home] three times a week for 3 hours and before I go, I have to call [CSIS] and I have to tell them. (…) I have to call CBSA
every time I open or close my door. I cannot open my windows or even go to the gym. I want to go back to jail. Sometimes I stay 3-4 days in my house and I have no [groceries].

The former detainee’s quote illustrates how the activities and routines within the home are redefined according to the cadences of prison routines. Similarly, the son of a former detainee explains it was

a prison at home. When we visited [my dad] in prison, we would have to submit an application with our driver’s license. They would do a background check on you and then you can visit him. It was the same process at home.

The most troubling thing about the narratives above is these men and their families continue to serve a prison sentence within their home and are subject to the routines, surveillance, and control of prison, although never having been charged for a crime.

In the excerpt below, the son details how family members are like jailors by way of being required to share in the control, surveillance, and punishment deployed against the detainee:

My dad couldn’t stay in the house alone, somebody had to supervise him 24-hours. When I would go to university [my mom] would have to leave work to stay home with him till I came back (\ldots). Every outing, he would have to submit forms to CBSA (\ldots). We had to write where we are going, what time we would leave, and the route we would take (\ldots). We went to court once when we stopped for gas or picked up milk because it wasn’t part of our itinerary. My siblings weren’t allowed playing with the Xbox because it connected to the internet (\ldots). We all had to sign waivers, so they would get our call records. They could see everybody that I communicated with and this has nothing to do with my dad, why are you subjecting me to that (\ldots). Before anybody was allowed to come to the house, I would ask for their driver’s license and fax it to CBSA for background checks. They would say “this person is approved or this person is not.” We had a log sheet and everyone had to sign their name and couldn’t bring their cellphones in the house.

Along the same lines, a wife of a former detainee explains:

[My husband] was never allowed by himself. CBSA was allowed in anytime. There were two only outings a week for maximum 4 hours. Outings had to be preapproved in advance and some of our outings were denied. I couldn’t go to my doctor appointments. Everybody coming to [our house] had to be pre-approved. When we went out we were followed by [up to] 6 vehicles depending on the outing.

Albeit being released from prison, these men and their families experience a subsequent prison sentence within their home through the warrantless surveilling and regulating of their everyday lives.

A son of a former detainee likens his experience to prison, by stating “when [my dad] was in jail, they hired people to be his guards and when he was home, our homes turned into a prison and we became the guards.” In this way, we witness how practices akin to a prison, such as regulating who is allowed in and out of spaces, the seizure of personal belongings, the monitoring of mail and phone calls, and the preapprovals for outings, are reproduced within the home, marking it as a site of (in)security and (re)prisonizing those who inhabit it.

Despite the men feeling like they are returning to their home, and their attempts “lead to a normal life. The reality is that [they] don’t have a normal life” and are serving a secondary sentence, only
this time the prison walls are the walls of their home. In this way, detention within the house acts as a driver for the transformation of persons into security objects via the space that they occupy.

Moreover, the narratives demonstrate how structuring a case against the men exclusively on the basis of a “potential to commit a terrorist offence”—makes it so that the men and their families can be legitimately subjected to control. Put differently, the notion of “potentiality” makes it so the mens’ activities, behaviors, and relationships are encompassed under policies aimed at protecting national security.

Deploying such conditions around the home and anyone who bears access to this space is a technology to further isolate and stigmatize the men and their families. Controlling who, when, where, and under what conditions individuals could access this space became a means by which the men and their families’ relationships could be destabilized, a central component of exclusion strategies. While the men are still permitted, albeit liminal, to maintain communication with pre-approved persons, this form of control, as described by the detainee’s family, becomes a way to alienate them from their community.

The securitization of their everyday life is a replication of the logic native to prisons, yet presents an array of challenges and pains that imprisonment does not. Below I explore how these disciplinary processes exercised within one’s house undeniably impacted one’s sense of belonging toward their home.

The “home” as a carceral space—Collateral consequences

The narratives included in this section illustrate how sentiments toward one’s home are malleable, varying depending on the context and the experiences hemmed therein. More profoundly, their experiences of home incarceration are relics of the already existing precariousness of belonging experienced by people of color. Critical race scholars have argued that for racialized groups, the regulation of everyday space becomes a means to preclude belonging. This is achieved through transforming these groups into passive objects to be governed by those who self-appoint themselves as gatekeepers of that space. This deeply racialized logic has now seeped through the private walls and materialized in their most sanctified space—their home. The articulation of a prison within the interviewees’ homes mares their feelings toward their home as a space of inviolability and instead, their reduction into passive objects of government surveillance transforms their space into a site of powerlessness and violence. Interviewees described feeling powerless in their homes as they were infantilized by the security state. The son of a former detainee details how experiences of home imprisonment severely impacted families:

When my dad came out, the conditions that we were living under were so terrible, but my heart aches for [the other detainee’s] family cause the impact it had on them was so much worse. [That former detainee] told his lawyer to take him back to prison because his family just couldn’t take it anymore. His family shattered. His kid’s life shattered. It was just too much. He went and stayed a whole year in prison all alone. It’s not real.

Securitization of their home bears greatly upon their experiences within that space; particularly, one of the collateral consequences of home detention was the emergence of an array of challenges and pains that were otherwise absent when the men were in prison. One of the fundamental pains unique to home detention was the prisonization of the family members.

The interviewees expressed that they felt the government “was punishing the family. And some things that they did, there is no way you can justify.” For this reason, all former detainees that I
interviewed indicated that on multiple occasions, they sought returning to prison. This decision was rooted in protecting their families from the denigrating penal practices deployed within their home. Despite their status as legally innocent persons, the families of detainees were obliged to comply with the stripping of their privacy in order to be reunited with their fathers/husbands.

One of the former detainee’s son argues that “the choice was that you either have your dad at home and you agree to these things or you don’t agree to them and you don’t have your dad. (…) There’s no choice there.” His statement underscores that while reunification may have been framed under the veneer of ‘a choice,’ it was not something that families should have been expected to choose between. Reducing reunification among families to a “choice” is emblematic of the moral indifference with which the lives of the families are conceived. Moreover, these experiences must be understood in consideration of the racialized lines of force that underscore the “us vs them” dichotomy. Families who back their fathers or husbands likewise become subject to analogous violence. This can be understood as a way to “legally” securitize those supportive of the men, and therefore, by extension, unsupportive of the state.

A wife of a former detainee equates her experiences of home detention to being both a prisoner and de facto prison guard within her own home, she explains that she was on “house arrest or 3 ½ years. I served time. I was a prisoner and a prison guard for my husband.” One of the most disheartening things she shared during our interview was that after seeking therapy for her traumatic experiences of home imprisonment, she realized several things associated with her home became triggers for her, such as:

The sound of a car door, the door bell, a phone call in the middle of the night, because I’m thinking in the middle of the night [my husband’s] going to get picked up. On several occasions, [CSIS] tried to pick him up. (…) They came to search the house with 16 officers (…). They violated my personal space (…). I would scream. I got so angry. I would try to blame [my husband] and I know it wasn’t his fault and many times he said “I’ll go back.”

Racialized surveillance defines “what is in and out of place” (Browne, 2015). Tellingly, the families’ experiences reveal how the penal reach extends beyond the confines of a prison wall and materializes within the home, making it so all those who choose to remain within the home are treated as being “out of place” and similarly relegated to objects of security. This hampers the positive sentiments toward the home not just for the men, but for the families who occupy that space as well, whereby the home becomes positioned as a site of pain, emotional turmoil, and oppression. The narratives establish how families undergo a secondary prisonization, whereby home detention “mitigate[s], catalyze[s], and or/or enhance[s] tensions, (…) leading to family disruption” and solidifying the imprisonment of family members (Granja, 2016: 275). Below, the wife details how penal scrutiny infiltrated and dominated her personal, professional, and family life:

My whole world got turned upside down. My financial situation, my job, my health, everything got affected, my family life. I had a miscarriage. (…) One reason why we don’t have kids is because of this situation. We had to put it on hold because we were on house arrest for so long and then when we finally decided to, it was too late. I had a miscarriage, then my uterus got damaged. We blame the government for all of this, it took that away from us.

The wife statements are revelatory of the ways penal reach extends within the home and tenaciously pervades all aspects her life, where she is required to submit to and chafe against the control
exerted upon and against her. She ascribes the loss of her child and subsequent inability to bear children as a collateral consequence of her home imprisonment. In this vein, it is clear that the added layers of surveillance, confinement, and control penalize family members, not because they have committed a crime, but because they support the “racialized Other.”

What’s more, is the execution of prison rules, culture, and practices within the home has the unintended effect of infantilizing the men, further rupturing their feelings of belonging with their space. A former detainee explains:

[In my home] my supervisor was my own son. It’s hard. He’s going to be the son and he’s going to guide the father and be my supervisor.

His son added to this by explaining: “we come from a culture [where] we hold our parents to such a high degree, so imagine you have to be the one to tell dad you can’t do this.”

Here again, this excerpt symbolizes yet another instance of the collateral damage caused by home imprisonment, whereby the men experience complete loss of freedom and power and total dependency upon their family members as enforcers of their surveillance. This quote illustrates how the pains of home imprisonment are also highly gendered in nature. In the quote above, the son alludes to the (un)doing of masculinity experienced by the father, by way of having his son be his “caretaker” or feeling like his responsibility. This is but one example of the disruption of normative conceptualizations of gender roles in the family. In other instances, the wife of a former detainee detailed how she felt as though she was her husband’s keeper, needing to “always ensure that he did not break his conditions.” Importantly, we witness how family members are not just subject to but in fact, are required to share in the surveillance, control, and punishment deployed within the home and against the men. For the families, the ongoing clash between being a forcibly assigned prison guard, yet subject to wrath of the prison gaze, highlights how the home becomes a zone of friction for them. The home becomes targeted as the people occupying it are ultimately viewed through a racialized gaze. This cyclic process reverberates the pains of imprisonment through the lives of all of those who occupy the home, whereby they experience the restricted rights, diminished resources, social marginalization, and other consequences of penal confinement, even though they reside well beyond the prison’s boundaries. Ultimately, home imprisonment stains the lives of the men and their families—a temporary intervention, with painfully permanent consequences.

**Conclusion**

Security and race have historically been entangled in the politics of nation-building, whereby national security discourses have constructed the “public” whom it should protect as white, while demonizing and surveilling persons of color as a danger to that “public.” In recognizing this link, Browne (2015) coins the term “racialized surveillance” to draw attention to instances where boundaries, borders, and bodies are reified along racial lines and where the outcome is discriminatory treatment of those who are negatively racialized by such surveillance. Consequently, racialized surveillance is not only produced from the securitization of racialized groups but is also a crystallization of the normativity of whiteness, where racialized Others are reaffirmed as threats to the national space, security, and identity. This article contributes to this emerging scholarship by recognizing the entanglement between these concepts and points to how racialized surveillance is an immanent task of securitization.
It does so by focusing on the lived experiences of Canada’s security certificate provision and how it has been deployed post 9–11 against five Muslim men from the “Secret Trail 5” cases. Situating this article in the existing body of literature that has cogently mapped out the racial underpinnings of the certificate provision (Bell, 2006; Razack, 2008; Code and Roach 2007), this article points to how racialized surveillance deployed against the security certificate detainees and their families materializes through transforming their home into a prison. Particularly, in mapping out the interconnectedness between race, surveillance, and security, I highlight how the men’s status as “racialized threatening Others” exposes them to unrestrained surveillance practices deployed against and within their home.

Racialized surveillance within the home materializes through the transformation of the architecture of the home to mimic a prison. This is further accomplished by the imposition of carceral practices within the home, such as erratic raids and the regulation of everyday activities, and through the erosion of positive sentiments associated with the home. Their lived experiences of racialized surveillance nuance traditional understandings of the home as a site of belonging, privacy, and security and reveal it to be a matrix between relations of power and control.

Blunt and Dowling (2015) analyze the home as a complex and multilayered concept. As much as the home was once imagined as a place of sanctity by the men and their families, their experiences of racialized surveillance dismantle and unsettle this imaginary. The men and their families lose sovereignty over their home, their potential for inclusion within their own home is eschewed, and their feelings of safety attached to their space, eroded. Through the deployment and operation of racialized surveillance, the home was reorganized along carceral and racial lines and became a site which embodied, enforced, and expanded state violence.

The release from prison presents opportunities for the men to reclaim their humanity by virtue of being reunified with their personal space, belongings, memories, families, and so on—things that are symbolic of their personhood. However, the deployment and operation of racialized surveillance within the home undeniably prevents this (re)humanization process. It is this process then, where carceral control moves beyond prison walls, and is enacted in the privacy of one’s home that effectively maintains the subjugation of the men and their families as racialized security objects. Given that this unfolds within their home, it inevitably transforms their space into a battleground—a site of contested personhood and belonging—whereby the men and their families defend against their dehumanizing prisonization and attempt to reclaim their space, status, and belonging.

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Notes
1. I am aware that for some, “home” may register differently than the way I interact with it. However, in this article, I draw on Peter Saunder’s conceptualization of the home as a place where individuals “can be
themselves, establish their own rules of conduct and feel relatively secure. The home is where people are
off-stage, free from surveillance, in control of their immediate environment. It is their castle. It is where
they feel they belong” (Saunders, 1989: 184, emphasis added).

2. The cases of the “Secret Trial 5” refer to the cases of Hassan Almrei, Mohamed Harkat, Mohamed Zeki
Mahjoub, Mahmoud Jaballah, and Adil Charkaoui. Hassan Almrei was arrested in 2001 and continued to
live under a certificate for more than 8 years until 2009 (Bell, 2006). Mohamed Harkat was arrested in
2002 and was released on strict conditions in 2006 (Aitken, 2008). While Harkat has been released from
prison, he continues to fight the certificate issued against him, thereby subjecting Harkat to 19 years of
living under the certificate regime. Mohamed Mahjoub was detained in 2000 (Aitken, 2008); he also con-
tinues to fight his deportation order. Mahmoud Jaballah was arrested in 1999, which was later quashed by
the Federal Court. However, a second certificate was issued in 2001. After 15 years of living under the
certificate program, Jaballah’s certificate was quashed in 2016. Finally, Adil Charkaoui was arrested in
2003. After spending almost 2 years incarcerated, he was released to house arrest and lived under various
intrusive conditions, until his certificate was defeated in 2009.

3. The security certificate legislation was reintroduced in 1991 in replacement of an earlier procedure that has
been in place since 1978 (Aitken, 2008).

4. Secondary prisonization refers to the restricted rights, diminished resources, social marginalization, and
other consequences of penal confinement that family members of inmates experience, albeit legally inno-
cent and residing outside the prison’s boundaries (Comfort, 2003).

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