

## **Consolidating a Regime of State Terror: A Historical Analysis of Necropolitics and the Evolution of Policing Practices in California as a Former Colony, Frontier, and Late-Modern Settler Society**

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**Abstract :** This paper draws primarily upon the framework of necropolitics and presents California as itself a former frontier, colony, and late-modern settler society. The convergence of these successive and overlapping regimes of state terror is actualized and traceable through an analysis of historical and contemporary police practices. At the behest of the Spanish Crown and with the assistance of the Spanish military, the Catholic Church led the original expedition to colonize California. The indigenous populations of California were subjected to brutal practices of confinement and enslavement at the missions. After the annex of California by the United States, the western-most territory became an infamous frontier where new settlers established vigilante militias to enact violence against indigenous populations to protect their newly stolen land. Early mining settlements sought to legitimize and fund vigilante violence by wielding the authority of rudimentary democratic structures. White settlers circulated petitions for funding to establish a volunteer company under California's Militia Law for 'protection' against the local indigenous populations. The expansive carceral practices of Los Angelinos at the turn of the 19th century exemplify the way in which California solidified its regime of exclusion as a white settler society. Drawing on recent scholarship that queers the notion of biopower and names police as street-level sovereigns, the police murder of Kayla Moore is understood as the latest manifestation of a carceral regime of exclusion and genocide. Kayla Moore was an African American transgender woman living with a mental health disability that was murdered by Berkeley police responding to a mental health crisis call in 2013. The intersectionality of Kayla's identity made her hyper-vulnerable to state-sanctioned violence. Kayla was a victim not only of the explicitly racial biopower of police, nor the regulatory state power of necropolitics but of the 'asphyxia' that was intended to invisibilize both her life and her murder.

**Keywords :** asphyxia, biopower, california, carceral state, genocide, necropolitics, police, police violence

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