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# Alexis Pauline Gumbs Duke University Press

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Press*

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## MELENDEZ CABRERA

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A Critical Anthology Duke University Press

In *Spill*, self-described queer Black troublemaker and Black feminist love evangelist Alexis Pauline Gumbs presents a commanding collection of scenes depicting fugitive Black women and girls seeking freedom from gendered violence and racism. In this poetic work inspired by Hortense Spillers, Gumbs offers an alternative approach to Black feminist literary criticism, historiography, and the interactive practice of relating to the words of Black feminist thinkers. Gumbs not only speaks to the spiritual, bodily, and otherworldly experience of Black women but also allows readers to imagine new possibilities for poetry as a portal for understanding and deepening feminist theory.

*The Black Shoals* U of Minnesota Press

The concluding volume in a poetic trilogy, Alexis Pauline Gumbs's

*Dub: Finding Ceremony* takes inspiration from theorist Sylvia Wynter, dub poetry, and ocean life to offer a catalog of possible methods for remembering, healing, listening, and living otherwise. In these prose poems, Gumbs channels the voices of her ancestors, including whales, coral, and oceanic bacteria to tell stories of diaspora, indigeneity, migration, blackness, genius, mothering, grief, and harm. Tracing the origins of colonialism, genocide, and slavery as they converge in Black feminist practice, Gumbs explores the potential for the poetic and narrative undoing of the knowledge that underpins the concept of Western humanity. Throughout, she reminds us that dominant modes of being human and the oppression those modes create can be challenged, and that it is possible to make ourselves and our planet anew.

Wild Things Duke University Press

In *Maroon Choreography* fahima ife speculates on the long (im)material, ecological, and aesthetic afterlives of black fugitivity. In three long-form poems and a lyrical essay, they

examine black fugitivity as an ongoing phenomenon we know little about beyond what history tells us. As both poet and scholar, ife unsettles the history and idea of black fugitivity, troubling senses of historic knowing while moving inside the continuing afterlives of those people who disappeared themselves into rural spaces beyond the reach of slavery. At the same time, they interrogate how writing itself can be a fugitive practice and a means to find a way out of ongoing containment, indebtedness, surveillance, and ecological ruin. Offering a philosophical performance in black study, ife prompts us to consider how we—in our study, in our mutual refusal, in our belatedness, in our habitual assemblage—linger beside the unknown. Duke University Press Scholars of Color First Book Award recipient

*Remastering Space and Subjectivity in Post-Apartheid South Africa* University of Chicago Press

An anthology that gives access to the voices of mothers of color and marginalized mothers "Revolutionary Mothering: Love on the Frontlines" is an anthology that centers mothers of color and marginalized mothers voices women who are in a world of necessary transformation. The challenges faced by movements working for antiviolence, anti-imperialist, and queer liberation, as well as racial, economic, reproductive, gender, and food justice are the same challenges that marginalized mothers face every day. Motivated to create spaces for this discourse because of the authors passionate belief in the power of a radical conversation about mothering, they have become the go-to people for cutting-edge inspired work on this topic for an overlapping committed audience of activists, scholars, and writers. "Revolutionary

Mothering" is a movement-shifting anthology committed to birthing new worlds, full of faith and hope for what we can raise up together. Contributors include alba onofrio, Alexis Pauline Gumbs, Ariel Gore, Arielle Julia Brown, Autumn Brown, Cheryl Boyce-Taylor, China Martens, Christy NaMee Eriksen, Claire Barrera, Cynthia Dewi Oka, Esteli Juarez Boyd, Fabielle Georges, Fabiola Sandoval, Gabriela Sandoval, H. Bindy K. Kang, Irene Lara, June Jordan, Karen Su, Katie Kaput, Layne Russell, Lindsey Campbell, Lisa Factora-Borchers, Loretta J. Ross, Mai a Williams, Malkia A. Cyril, Mamas of Color Rising, Micaela Cadena, Noemi Martinez, Norma A. Marrun, Panquetzani, Rachel Broadwater, Sumayyah Talibah, Tara CC Villaba, Terri Nilliasca, tk karakashian tunchez, Victoria Law, and Vivian Chin."

**Honeypot** Duke University Press

Black, White, and in Color offers a long-awaited collection of major essays by Hortense Spillers, one of the most influential and inspiring black critics of the past twenty years. Spanning her work from the early 1980s, in which she pioneered a broadly poststructuralist approach to African American literature, and extending through her turn to cultural studies in the 1990s, these essays display her passionate commitment to reading as a fundamentally political act—one pivotal to rewriting the humanist project. Spillers is best known for her race-centered revision of psychoanalytic theory and for her subtle account of the relationships between race and gender. She has also given literary criticism some of its most powerful readings of individual authors, represented here in seminal essays on Ralph Ellison, Gwendolyn Brooks, and William Faulkner. Ultimately, the essays collected in Black, White, and in Color all share Spillers's

signature style: heady, eclectic, and astonishingly productive of new ideas. Anyone interested in African American culture and literature will want to read them.

*Spill* transcript Verlag

Undrowned is a book-length meditation for social movements and our whole species based on the subversive and transformative guidance of marine mammals. Our aquatic cousins are queer, fierce, protective of each other, complex, shaped by conflict, and struggling to survive the extractive and militarized conditions our species has imposed on the ocean. Gumbs employs a brilliant mix of poetic sensibility and naturalist observation to show what they might teach us, producing not a specific agenda but an unfolding space for wondering and questioning. From the relationship between the endangered North Atlantic Right Whale and Gumbs's Shinnecock and enslaved ancestors to the ways echolocation changes our understandings of "vision" and visionary action, this is a masterful use of metaphor and natural models in the service of social justice.

**Half in Shadow** Duke University Press

In *The Pursuit of Happiness* Bianca C. Williams traces the experiences of African American women as they travel to Jamaica, where they address the perils and disappointments of American racism by looking for intimacy, happiness, and a connection to their racial identities. Through their encounters with Jamaican online communities and their participation in trips organized by Girlfriend Tours International, the women construct notions of racial, sexual, and emotional belonging by forming relationships with Jamaican men and other "girlfriends." These relationships allow the women to exercise agency and find

happiness in ways that resist the damaging intersections of racism and patriarchy in the United States. However, while the women require a spiritual and virtual connection to Jamaica in order to live happily in the United States, their notion of happiness relies on travel, which requires leveraging their national privilege as American citizens. Williams's theorization of "emotional transnationalism" and the construction of affect across diasporic distance attends to the connections between race, gender, and affect while highlighting how affective relationships mark nationalized and gendered power differentials within the African diaspora.

**Scenes of Black Feminist Fugitivity** University of Westminster Press

A new take on Afrofuturism, this book gathers together a range of contemporary voices who, carrying legacies of 500 years of contact between Africa, Europe, and the Americas, reach towards the stars and unknown planets, galaxies, and ways of being. Writing from queer and feminist perspectives and circumnavigating continents, they recalibrate definitions of Afrofuturism. The editors and contributors of this exciting volume thus reflect upon the re-emergence of Black visions of political and cultural futures, proposing practices, identities, and collectivities. With contributions from AfroFuturist Affair, John Akomfrah, Jamika Ajalon, Stefanie Alisch, Jim Chuchu, Grisha Coleman, Thomas F. DeFrantz, Abigail DeVille, M. Asli Dukan with Wildseeds, Kodwo Eshun, Anna Everett, Raimi Gbadamosi, Alexis Pauline Gumbs, Milumbe Haimbe, Ayesha Hameed, Kiluanji Kia Henda, Kara Keeling, Carla J. Maier, Tobias Nagl, Tavia Nyong'o, Rasheedah Phillips, Daniel Kojo Schrade, Nadine Siegert, Robyn

Smith, Greg Tate and Frohawk Two Feathers.

*Black Utopias* Duke University Press

At colleges and universities throughout the United States, political protest and intellectual dissent are increasingly being met with repressive tactics by administrators, politicians, and the police—from the use of SWAT teams to disperse student protestors and the profiling of Muslim and Arab American students to the denial of tenure and dismissal of politically engaged faculty. The Imperial University brings together scholars, including some who have been targeted for their open criticism of American foreign policy and settler colonialism, to explore the policing of knowledge by explicitly linking the academy to the broader politics of militarism, racism, nationalism, and neoliberalism that define the contemporary imperial state. The contributors to this book argue that “academic freedom” is not a sufficient response to the crisis of intellectual repression. Instead, they contend that battles fought over academic containment must be understood in light of the academy’s relationship to U.S. expansionism and global capital. Based on multidisciplinary research, autobiographical accounts, and even performance scripts, this urgent analysis offers sobering insights into such varied manifestations of “the imperial university” as CIA recruitment at black and Latino colleges, the connections between universities and civilian and military prisons, and the gender and sexual politics of academic repression. Contributors: Thomas Abowd, Tufts U; Victor Bascara, UCLA; Dana Collins, California State U, Fullerton; Nicholas De Genova; Ricardo Dominguez, UC San Diego; Sylvanna Falcón, UC Santa Cruz; Farah Godrej, UC Riverside; Roberto J. Gonzalez, San Jose State U;

Alexis Pauline Gumbs; Sharmila Lodhia, Santa Clara U; Julia C. Oparah, Mills College; Vijay Prashad, Trinity College; Jasbir Puar, Rutgers U; Laura Pulido, U of Southern California; Ana Clarissa Rojas Durazo, California State U, Long Beach; Steven Salaita, Virginia Tech; Molly Talcott, California State U, Los Angeles.

*Black, White, and in Color* Duke University Press

In this original and trenchant work, Christina Sharpe interrogates literary, visual, cinematic, and quotidian representations of Black life that comprise what she calls the “orthography of the wake.” Activating multiple registers of “wake”—the path behind a ship, keeping watch with the dead, coming to consciousness—Sharpe illustrates how Black lives are swept up and animated by the afterlives of slavery, and she delineates what survives despite such insistent violence and negation. Initiating and describing a theory and method of reading the metaphors and materiality of “the wake,” “the ship,” “the hold,” and “the weather,” Sharpe shows how the sign of the slave ship marks and haunts contemporary Black life in the diaspora and how the specter of the hold produces conditions of containment, regulation, and punishment, but also something in excess of them. In the weather, Sharpe situates anti-Blackness and white supremacy as the total climate that produces premature Black death as normative. Formulating the wake and “wake work” as sites of artistic production, resistance, consciousness, and possibility for living in diaspora, *In the Wake* offers a way forward.

*Revolutionary Mothering* Duke University Press

Nellie Y. McKay (1930–2006) was a pivotal figure in contemporary American letters. The author of several books, McKay is best known for coediting the canon-making Norton Anthology of

African American Literature with Henry Louis Gates Jr., which helped secure a place for the scholarly study of Black writing that had been ignored by white academia. However, there is more to McKay's life and legacy than her literary scholarship. After her passing, new details about McKay's life emerged, surprising everyone who knew her. Why did McKay choose to hide so many details of her past? Shanna Greene Benjamin examines McKay's path through the professoriate to learn about the strategies, sacrifices, and successes of contemporary Black women in the American academy. Benjamin shows that McKay's secrecy was a necessary tactic that a Black, working-class woman had to employ to succeed in the white-dominated space of the American English department. Using extensive archives and personal correspondence, Benjamin brings together McKay's private life and public work to expand how we think about Black literary history and the place of Black women in American culture.

**Fugitive Science** The New Press

A groundbreaking collection tracing the history of intellectual thought by Black Lesbian writers, in the tradition of The New Press's perennial seller *Words of Fire* African American lesbian writers and theorists have made extraordinary contributions to feminist theory, activism, and writing. *Mouths of Rain*, the companion anthology to Beverly Guy-Sheftall's classic *Words of Fire*, traces the long history of intellectual thought produced by Black Lesbian writers, spanning the nineteenth century through the twenty-first century. Using "Black Lesbian" as a capacious signifier, *Mouths of Rain* includes writing by Black women who have shared intimate and loving relationships with other women, as well as Black women who see bonding as mutual, Black

women who have self-identified as lesbian, Black women who have written about Black Lesbians, and Black women who theorize about and see the word lesbian as a political descriptor that disrupts and critiques capitalism, heterosexism, and heteropatriarchy. Taking its title from a poem by Audre Lorde, *Mouths of Rain* addresses pervasive issues such as misogynoir and anti-blackness while also attending to love, romance, "coming out," and the erotic. Contributors include: Barbara Smith Beverly Smith Bettina Love Dionne Brand Cheryl Clarke Cathy J. Cohen Angelina Weld Grimke Alexis Pauline Gumbs Audre Lorde Dawn Lundy Martin Pauli Murray Michelle Parkerson Mecca Jamilah Sullivan Alice Walker Jewelle Gomez  
*Speculative Life and the Music of Other Worlds* University of Illinois Press

In her first book-length collection of nonfiction, Cliff interweaves reflections on her life in Jamaica, England, and the United States with a powerful and sustained critique of racism, homophobia, and social injustice. *If I Could Write This in Fire* begins by tracing her transatlantic journey from Jamaica to England, coalescing around a graceful, elliptical account of her childhood friendship with Zoe, who is dark-skinned and from an impoverished, rural background; the divergent life courses that each is forced to take; and the class and color tensions that shape their lives as adults. In other essays and poems, Cliff writes about the discovery of her distinctive, diasporic literary voice, recalls her wild colonial girlhood and sexual awakening, and recounts traveling through an American landscape of racism, colonialism, and genocide - a history of violence embodied in seemingly innocuous souvenirs and tourist sites.

*Pedagogies of Crossing* Duke University Press

While over the past decade a number of scholars have done significant work on questions of black lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered identities, this volume is the first to collect this groundbreaking work and make black queer studies visible as a developing field of study in the United States. Bringing together essays by established and emergent scholars, this collection assesses the strengths and weaknesses of prior work on race and sexuality and highlights the theoretical and political issues at stake in the nascent field of black queer studies. Including work by scholars based in English, film studies, black studies, sociology, history, political science, legal studies, cultural studies, and performance studies, the volume showcases the broadly interdisciplinary nature of the black queer studies project. The contributors consider representations of the black queer body, black queer literature, the pedagogical implications of black queer studies, and the ways that gender and sexuality have been glossed over in black studies and race and class marginalized in queer studies. Whether exploring the closet as a racially loaded metaphor, arguing for the inclusion of diaspora studies in black queer studies, considering how the black lesbian voice that was so expressive in the 1970s and 1980s is all but inaudible today, or investigating how the social sciences have solidified racial and sexual exclusionary practices, these insightful essays signal an important and necessary expansion of queer studies.

Contributors. Bryant K. Alexander, Devon Carbado, Faedra Chatard Carpenter, Keith Clark, Cathy Cohen, Roderick A. Ferguson, Jewelle Gomez, Phillip Brian Harper, Mae G. Henderson, Sharon P. Holland, E. Patrick Johnson, Kara Keeling, Dwight A.

McBride, Charles I. Nero, Marlon B. Ross, Rinaldo Walcott, Maurice O. Wallace

*The Lonely Letters* W. W. Norton & Company

A brief biography of one of the first black organizers of voter registration in Mississippi.

**New Writings in Black Queer Studies** UNC Press Books

In *Black Trans Feminism* Marquis Bey offers a meditation on blackness and gender nonnormativity in ways that recalibrate traditional understandings of each. Theorizing black trans feminism from the vantages of abolition and gender radicality, Bey articulates blackness as a mutiny against racializing categorizations; transness as a nonpredetermined, wayward, and deregulated movement that works toward gender's destruction; and black feminism as an epistemological method to fracture hegemonic modes of racialized gender. In readings of the essays, interviews, and poems of Alexis Pauline Gumbs, jayy dodd, Venus Di'Khadija Selenite, and Dane Figueroa Edidi, Bey turns black trans feminism away from a politics of gendered embodiment and toward a conception of it as a politics grounded in fugitivity and the subversion of power. Together, blackness and transness actualize themselves as on the run from gender. In this way, Bey presents black trans feminism as a mode of enacting the wholesale dismantling of the world we have been given.

*Black Trans Feminism* NYU Press

A 2008 cover of *The New Yorker* featured a much-discussed Black Power parody of Michelle and Barack Obama. The image put a spotlight on how easy it is to flatten the Black Power movement as we imagine new types of blackness. Margo Natalie Crawford argues that we have misread the Black Arts Movement's call for

blackness. We have failed to see the movement's anticipation of the "new black" and "post-black." *Black Post-Blackness* compares the black avant-garde of the 1960s and 1970s Black Arts Movement with the most innovative spins of twenty-first century black aesthetics. Crawford zooms in on the 1970s second wave of the Black Arts Movement and shows the connections between this final wave of the Black Arts movement and the early years of twenty-first century black aesthetics. She uncovers the circle of black post-blackness that pivots on the power of anticipation, abstraction, mixed media, the global South, satire, public interiority, and the fantastic.

*The Blue Clerk* Duke University Press

E. Patrick Johnson's *Honeypot* opens with the fictional trickster character Miss B. barging into the home of Dr. EPJ, informing him that he has been chosen to collect and share the stories of her people. With little explanation, she whisks the reluctant Dr. EPJ away to the women-only world of Hymen, where she serves as his tour guide as he bears witness to the real-life stories of queer Black women throughout the American South. The women he meets come from all walks of life and recount their experiences on topics ranging from coming out and falling in love to mother/daughter relationships, religion, and political activism. As Dr. EPJ hears these stories, he must grapple with his privilege as a man and as an academic, and in the process he gains insights into patriarchy, class, sex, gender, and the challenges these women face. Combining oral history with magical realism and poetry, *Honeypot* is an engaging and moving book that reveals the complexity of identity while offering a creative method for

scholarship to represent the lives of other people in a rich and dynamic way.

*Black Southern Women Who Love Women* U of Minnesota Press

In *Ontological Terror* Calvin L. Warren intervenes in Afro-pessimism, Heideggerian metaphysics, and black humanist philosophy by positing that the "Negro question" is intimately imbricated with questions of Being. Warren uses the figure of the antebellum free black as a philosophical paradigm for thinking through the tensions between blackness and Being. He illustrates how blacks embody a metaphysical nothing. This nothingness serves as a destabilizing presence and force as well as that which whiteness defines itself against. Thus, the function of blackness as giving form to nothing presents a terrifying problem for whites: they need blacks to affirm their existence, even as they despise the nothingness they represent. By pointing out how all humanism is based on investing blackness with nonbeing—a logic which reproduces antiblack violence and precludes any realization of equality, justice, and recognition for blacks—Warren urges the removal of the human from its metaphysical pedestal and the exploration of ways of existing that are not predicated on a grounding in being.

**Meditations on Feminism, Sexual Politics, Memory, and the Sacred** Duke University Press

In "Spill" poet, independent scholar, and activist Alexis Pauline Gumbs presents a commanding collection of poetry inspired by Black feminist literary critic Hortense Spillers depicting scenes of fugitive Black women and girls seeking freedom from gendered violence and racism.