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Artist/Executioner: Antidotes to Counter-Revolutions

Eunsong Kim

Abstract: This essay examines Pat Parker's unpublished and undated novel draft, "Assassination," which follows two fictional characters, the journalist Jennifer Moore, as she investigates Tracy Scott, a former member of the Black Panther Party who assassinates the president after being appointed as the first director of "Race Relations." "Assassination" delineates the intra-tensions between liberal and radical politics, honing in on journalist Moore's fixation of how coverage of Scott's actions will elevate her career, while refusing to tend to Scott's revolutionary politics. Parker's configuration of the liberal writer, who awaits the sacrifice of revolutionaries, speaks to the dynamics of violence in a counter-revolutionary society. I take up Parker's examination of the liberal politics of the artist subject, and the ways writers collude with the counter-revolution by situating radical action and sacrifice as artistic fodder. Furthermore, I contend with how Parker composes a fictional landscape without innocence: the artist is compromised, and revolutionary action involves violence. This approach is in direct contrast to colonial narrations of victims and innocence. Taking up psychoanalyst Christopher Bollas' notion of "violent innocence," Christina Sharpe's analysis of the enmeshment of whiteness and innocence in the media, Dionne Brand's repudiation of the virtue of the poet subject, and Saidiya Hartman's critiques of the corporatization of antiracist discourse in "Crow Jane," the essay examines the aesthetic and political innovations offered in the rejection of colonial innocence.

Keywords: *Pat Parker; Black Women's Revolutionary Council; Unpublished Drafts; Novel Drafts; Violent Innocence; Christopher Bollas; Critiques of Counter-Revolutionary Art; Revolutionary Art*

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Don't let the fascists speak.
—Pat Parker

Pat Parker's unpublished and undated novel draft, titled "Assassination," follows two fictional characters, the journalist Jennifer Moore, as she investigates Tracy Scott, a former member of the Black Panther Party who assassinates the president after being appointed as the first director of "Race Relations."[1] In the plot, Moore is the first Black journalist to be hired to write for a prominent magazine but receives no bylines until this assignment. Parker's narrative follows how Scott's assassination becomes the catalyst for Moore's career.

Upon the news of Scott's successful assassination, Moore thinks to herself, "if you only knew what your dying means to me. I'll show them what kind of writer I am."[2] She then continues to narrate the life she will lead once the story is published: a new office, a company credit card, fame, more. Delineating the intra-tensions between liberal and radical politics, the constructed distance between artist and revolution, Parker depicts a reactionary artist subject, and its collusion with the counter revolution.

This is most representative in how the journalist Moore outlines the national narrative circulating around Tracy Scott: the former Panther publicly recants her radical politics and comrades to take a tempered approach to politics. This capitulation—from radical to liberal—is noticed by the president through private correspondence, and for her political surrender he rewards Scott with the position of director of "Race Relations" in his cabinet. Through this political subterfuge, Scott succeeds in assassinating a US president.

There is no archival explanation as to why Parker's twenty-five-page novel draft remained unfinished. In my examination of her journals and letters, Parker does not speak of the novel to her friends, lovers, and other correspondents. It could

be surmised that her illness and passing at forty-five in 1989 may be part of the story, or something else that the archive could not capture. Though unfinished and in draft form, from plot to execution, "Assassination" is an original critique of how the counter-revolution becomes mistaken for the revolution through the figure of the writer. Locating how the artist seeks out the revolutionary sacrifices of others as material, "Assassination" intervenes in a canonical debate about the function of the artist amidst revolution.

While going over the facts of the case, the journalist Moore gloats about her pending new life. Uninterested in how Scott's actions may cross over with what anarchists throughout history have described as propaganda of the deed—spectacularized violence against a figurehead as a catalyst toward revolution—or what Huey Newton describes as revolutionary suicide—risking one's death in the pursuit of revolution—Moore only seems to be fixated on her personal and professional transcendence. She thinks to herself,

> I've got the opportunity of a life time. I've been waiting for a chance like this ever since I've been working for this magazine and it's here.
>
> Rhetoric is one thing. Killing the president is a whole different story.
>
> In one instance everything is turned completely around. And all because of this one demented woman.[3]

To Moore, Scott's bridging of rhetoric to practice is a sign she is "demented," and once Scott is deemed irrational, Moore does not have to contend with Scott's praxis. Though Scott's politics remain unexamined, her life and death become Moore's *opportunity*.

Moore's taking of Scott's risk and death as a catalyst for her writing career transposes modernist narratives of the suffering artist. Modernist ventures are often preoccupied with an artist's sacrifice for their art: J. M. W. Turner strapping himself to the mast of a ship sailing in the ocean to experience the contours of water, in order to better paint them; the various authors who locked themselves up to complete a novel, or suffered for a poem. Modernist artists and writers allegedly practiced truer freedom unencumbered by the orders of institutions and their forms. This was the heart of modernism's initial claim of progressiveness: that it took up a philosophical stance toward broadening the category of artist, that it developed notions of individual expression, and that the two efforts coincided in the democratization of aesthetics.[4] The artist who stops eating and the philosopher who isolates forever. The suffering for art. While not always explicit (but sometimes explicitly) this scheme considers pain and

suffering to be a site of artistic possibility. Thus, as Moore contemplates, "If you only knew what your dying means to me. I'll show them what kind of writer I am."

As Parker's "Assassination" elucidates, some artists have figured out that they do not need to be vessels of suffering. Some have figured out that the deaths of others can be the site from which they transcend: "If you only knew what your dying means to me. I'll show them what kind of writer I am."

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Psychoanalyst Christopher Bollas coins a phenomenon called "violent innocence," wherein the speaking subject describes a situation where the subject is implicated in violence, but refutes this description. As in, one tells a story about one's terrible mother throwing a cup at one's terrible father, one tells a story about how one's terrible mother could not see how one slapped one's brother under the table and believed one could do no wrong—and I repeat your story back at you but describe the action and its underlying feeling (the force of the throw, the pain of your witness): you repudiate my understanding. You insist the story you told is 2D, flat. And now, all the action and feeling can be attributed to me, the person who heard you and can recount the story.

Bollas describes "violent innocence"—a phenomena he witnessed as an analyst—as the speaking subject's use of force to protect their understanding of their own innocence. They—the subject—not only believe they are innocent, they use violence against others to protect this narrative site. Those who can hear them, those who accurately repeat and remember their stories are inculcated into the role of jester and judge, where the speaker's action and feelings can be ventriloquized. Yet the speaker believes they have no witnesses, no analysts, no observers; they insist simultaneously that they are surrounded and surrounding.[5]

Journalist Jeff Sharlet remarks on a rhetorical consistency between project 2025, right-wing rallies, and QAnon. He says their violence is codified in innocence, noting how there is "a reverence for violence, a redemption through violence." In this, he states that the neofascist project 2025 begins by invoking children, it "begins with four pillars […] number one is protect-the-children." The rhetorically useful and abstracted children situate the innocence of their project (it is for them, the innocents). Sharlet states explicitly that there is "an invocation of innocence and again and again at Trump rallies, and in Trump's rhetoric, you hear the idea of their innocence which therefore justifies any violence in response."[6]

The indexing of whiteness to innocence spans neofascist rallies to its media coverage. In newspapers and representation, whiteness is often woven with innocence. Examining *New York Times*' coverage of white supremacists, Christina Sharpe writes, "Daily and with deliberation, newspapers constitute whiteness as innocence, in ways that hide and forgive their own interests in the preservation and distribution of white supremacy."[7] As Bollas observed in the course of narration, Sharpe contends that innocence is fortified and composed through violence: "The machinery of whiteness constantly deploys violence—and in a mirror-register, constantly manufactures wonder, surprise, and innocence in relation to that violence. That innocence-making machine rubs out violence at the very moment of its manufacture."[8]

The violent innocent attend rallies. They wave flags and scream for deportations. And in interviews they say: *they don't understand us, they're always after us.* It isn't just that when their leaders are criminally charged and convicted they are equipped with a defense, it is that they are always innocent and persecuted. Is this because their religion instructs that only the innocent can be persecuted and saved? On this, James Baldwin wrote that "it is the innocence which constitutes the crime." Their innocence requires the burning of books and the killing of non-rhetorical children. Their innocence incites the bombing of medical centers and schools and erodes hundreds of species of birds.

And yet, if you repeat to them what they have told you, about stories of their action, if you tell them with accuracy about what they've done and to whom: your life is in danger. This is without hyperbole. If your repetition persecutes them, if your repetition bends the shield of their narrative innocence: danger.

They need innocence the way some need air, water, each other, to survive. Innocence grounds all they have built, and violent innocence is how they prevail.

Perhaps you can immediately point to parallel examples. Of particular nation states who cannot be anything but a victim. And their unrelenting, unresolvable violence.

*

Innocence, or the victim position, is how the left, the law, and most religions imagine the addressing of grievance; also, has the right not appropriated this better than anyone? And as Bollas theorizes in the space of private analysis, as Sharpe magnifies in the circulation of racial violence, and as Sharlet suggests in the forum of the rallies, if we listen closely, the fantasy of being either the sacrificed or the rescued victim constitutes much of what is said. As innocence is a metonym for victim, there is a contemporary and collective fantasizing of oneself as aggrieved. The violent innocents imagine themselves as removed from the violence of their world. Their open fantasy of political innocence speaks to one's infection and aggression.

Perhaps in direct contrast to the composition of Parker's Jennifer Moore, yet in corresponding critical planes, Dionne Brand's *Nomenclature for the Time Being* crafts a knowing and compromised speaker. The narrator proclaims, "I know everything, I'm not innocent,"[9] and a few pages later, the poem reads,

> The beautiful innocence of those
>
> who live at the centre of empire, their
> wonderful smiles, their sweet delight…[10]

If Bollas traces the analysand who violently denounces description of reality (violence) through an allegiance to identifiers of innocence, and we can see updated examples of this through the framing at white supremacist and reactionary rallies, Brand's speaker invokes a longer debate concerning innocence. Rather than the Schillerian division between knowledge and ignorance demarcating the romantic separation between those innocent and not, Brand contrasts the speaker who *knows* with those "who live at the centre of empire." Moreover, Brand's speaker stands against the presumed innocence of narration, and the virtue invoked of poetry. In the collection *Ossuaries*, the speaker pronounces,

> what brutal hours, what brutal days,
> do not say, oh find the good in it, do not say,
> there was virtue; there was no virtue, not even in me[11]

There is the prevalent advertisement of the revolutionary artist and the promise of revolutionary art, and then the secondary publicity of art/poetry as the investigation of good. In *Ossuaries* and *Nomenclature*, the poem and its speaker seem unsatisfied with either articulation. In popularized prescriptions of "art

is revolutionary" (a slogan that does not account for counter-revolutionary art and culture…) there is imagined virtue and innocence. Parker's novel lays out a critique of the counter-revolutionary imperative where the art and the artists are said to rest in one place, and the revolution takes place elsewhere. In such a landscape, Brand's poems begin with a rejection of all innocence.

*

"Assassination" might be critically situated through what Erica Edwards describes as "imperial grammars." Edwards defines "imperial grammars" as narratives that place Black women as agents of US empire, identifying "the codes of cultural production and public discourse linking the rationalization of US imperial violence in the late- and post-Cold War years to the US public sphere's manipulation and incorporation of Blackness as the sign of multicultural beneficence."[12] Edwards's scholarship examines how agents such as Condoleezza Rice, along with popular representations have instrumentalized the signification of Black women into the fabric of US Empire, from police and state agents to its speculative counterparts.

Parker's novel draft of imperial incorporation intimately portends Edwards's analysis, as Parker's critique of US empire fixates on refusing liberal politics and personal gains as anything but counter revolutionary. In an April 28, 1980 press release for the Black Women's Revolutionary Council—of which Parker was a founder—Parker and council members elucidate the collusion between liberals and fascists, from the role the KKK makes possible for functionary bureaucrats and technocrats, to the media's disparagement of radical activism, to antiblack racism disguised as solidarity efforts within the women's movement.[13] She also notes the romanticism of revolution vs. its ongoing realities, and parses out its difficulties:

> One of the difficult questions for us to understand is just "what is revolution?" Perhaps we have had too many years of media madness with "revolutionary eye make-up and revolutionary tampons." Perhaps we have had too many years of Hollywood fantasy where the revolutionary man kills his enemies and walks off into the sunset with his revolutionary woman who has been waiting for his return […]. The reality is that revolution is not a one step process […]. We have many examples of societies in our lifetime that has had successful armed revolution. And we have no examples of any country that has completed the revolutionary process. Is Russia now the society that Marx and Lenin dreamed? Is China the society that Mao dreamed? Before and after armed revolution there must be education, and analysis, and struggle. If not, and even if so, one will be faced with coups, counter-revolution and revision.[14]

Suspicious of representational wins ("revolutionary eye make-up") and their counter-revolutionary and reactionary formations ("Hollywood fantasy"), Parker's revolution was long, protracted, failing, possible, and near. Additionally, and as a member of the International Committee Against Violence Against Women, Parker's conception of violence centered on how to make women's lives better; violence does not make an appearance in her writing as an aesthetic experiment, a cleansing ritual, a metaphor, or a ruse. Her keen awareness of the sacrificed revolutionary for reactionary pursuits situates a politics unencumbered by the morality of the present. She writes,

> The message they bring is coming clear. Be a good American—Support registration for the draft. The equation is being laid out in front of us. Good American = Support imperialism and war. To this, I must declare—I am not a good American. I do not wish to have the world colonized, bombarded and plundered in order to eat steak. […] And it is critically important to me that you who are here, that your commitment to revolution is based on the fact that you want revolution for yourself.[15]

Refusing the protections offered by nationalism and the romance of failed state socialism, Parker insists on a commitment to revolution on more ambitious terms than narrowed self and national interests, and she steadfastly warns against co-option. This refusal expands to the protections often offered to artists, situated as free but ideologically enmeshed. And such concerns are warranted, as Parker historicizes the ways in which revolutionary momentum becomes violently interpolated into reactionary forces.

One constant ingredient of this reactionary force is the function of repetition and surprise. Sharpe defines "Cultures of Surprise" as,

> a culture of refusal and disavowal, and the national as well as personal ability to maintain innocence in the face of knowledge and/or evidence to the contrary to be found in all aspects of juridical, social, economic, political, and everyday life; one in which, through the processes and politics of remembering and forgetting (history, narrative, lived experience, etc.), one (a person, group, nation, faction) is continually positioned to be surprised by events, traumatic or otherwise, instead of, for example, prepared, knowing, aware of, or producing.[16]

The position of innocence is the position of constant bewilderment that comes through disavowal and a structural re-enforcement of domination and power. Antagonistically to cultures of surprise and colonial aesthetics, "Assassination" offers a world without innocence: Scott's revolutionary action requires violence, and Moore's appetite for literary opportunity is depicted without virtue. Moore is a composite of the counter-revolutionary artist / imperial agent who sees herself as a rational subject, and the revolutionary as irrational ("demented

woman"), yet whose sacrifice she demands for hierarchical ascendence. This arena of no-innocence is found in Parker's speeches. In the same speech, Parker locates the audience and herself as directly implicated in US empire. She states,

> The rest of the world is being exploited in order to maintain our standard of living. We who are 5% of the world's population use 40% of the world's oil.
>
> As anti-imperialist we must be prepared to destroy all imperialist governments; and we must realize that by doing this, we will drastically alter the standard of living that we now enjoy. We cannot talk on one hand about making revolution in this country, yet be unwilling to give up our video tape recorders and recreational vehicles. An anti-imperialist understands the exploitation of the working class, understands that in order for capitalism to function, there must be a certain percentage of the population working for shit wages and another percentage that is unemployed. We must also define our friends and enemies based on their stand on imperialism.[17]

Invoking *we*, Parker does not absolve herself or the audience from innocence. She and all those in the room are responsible for the conditions of the world—and she asks, how much of your life would you give up for this?

Moreover, while neoliberal aesthetics encourages depoliticized forms of "personal expression" to be the site of true artistic freedom, this contemporary definition comes at the detriment and legacy of revolutionary art. An anonymous proposal from the 1960s titled "Proposals for Art and Culture as a Revolutionary Force" makes the standard for revolutionary art clear. Point 1 states:

> The duty of revolutionary art is to make revolution. Revolutionary artists must be responsible to their society […]. At this time that means that art must
>
> a). Make clear what are the enemies and who are the people […]
> f). Take the offensive
>
> We are not the reflection of a revolutionary process.
> We are a part of that process.[18]

The proposal demands an entwining between art and revolution and prescribes action ("take the offensive"). The writer in "Assassination" cannot partake in the revolution because the artist is the manager of its representation. Additionally, the artist in "Assassination" prevents revolution by fixating on personal gains and losses, thereby adhering to the liberal impulse against social transformation. Parker examines the writer removed from the revolutionary process to analyze the violence of this breakage. In concert with Brand's narrator who rejects the presumed innocence of poetry, Parker's narrator is imbricated into empire.

In parallel conversation with many of the ideas foregrounded in Parker's novel draft and speeches, Mustapha Khayhti, once a member of the Situationist International, writes about how the language forged for the revolution becomes co-opted by counter-revolutionaries, and how this co-option is a betrayal of revolutionary prisoners of war. He writes:

> Words forged by revolutionary criticism are like partisans' weapons: abandoned on the battlefield, they fall into the hands of the counterrevolution. And like prisoners of war, they are subjected to forced labor. Our most direct enemies are the proponents and established functionaries of false critique. The divorce between theory and practice provides the central basis for cooption, for the petrification of revolutionary theory into ideology, which transforms real practical demands (for whose realization the premonitory signs are already appearing in the present society) into systems of ideas, into demands of reason. The ideologues of every variety, the watchdogs of the reigning spectacle, carry out this task, emptying the content from most corrosive concepts and putting them back into circulation in the service of maintaining alienation […]. Concepts of radical critique suffer the same fate as the proletariat: they are deprived of their history, cut off from their roots. They become grist for power's thinking machines.[19]

Akin to Moore, the journalist in Parker's novel, who is uninvolved in radical politics and revolutionary action but fixated on what its rhetoric and representation might offer her career, Khayhti insists that revolutionary language must be protected and defended from the violence of its enemies and their prisons, and asserts that the way to fight appropriation is securely bonding theory to practice ("The divorce between theory and practice provides the central basis for cooption").

The most exquisite thing about Parker's twenty-five-page draft is that Scott's action stands without explanation. Scott leaves no language to appropriate, instrumentalize, imprison. In this absence, the fictionalized Panthers in the novel call for Scott to receive an award, her mother offers an apology on her behalf, and the parasitic journalist Moore scavenges in search of language Scott may have abandoned; everyone wants to use Scott's language but she leaves them none. They instead live in a world changed by her actions.

By examining who the artist thinks they can become through the radical action of others ("If you only knew what your dying means to me. I'll show them what kind of writer I am"), Parker politicizes the sacrifices looted in the pursuit of counter revolutionary art.

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Saidiya Hartman's *Crow Jane Makes a Modest Proposal*, traces the character—Crow Jane—who gives talks to millionaires about racial justice and has a home because her father purchased property in the Oakland Hills after "the demise of the Black Panther Party."[20] Crow Jane, whose name evokes the legal reign of antiblack violence (Jim Crow) is the unapologetic continuation of Moore's "If you only knew what your dying means to me" and Khatyi's description of language which becomes a prisoner of war in the counterrevolution. Hartman writes,

> In crude terms, she nips and tucks the racial order. 2020 was a watershed year. Her client list grew exponentially, as did her investment portfolio. She penned solidarity statements for the Fortune 500, drafted thousands of diversity-and-inclusion pledges, waxed poetic about the compassion of J.P. Morgan, Barclays, HSBC, and Lloyds, about the long history of their investments in the Black community.

Refuting popularized apologies around implicated paychecks and non-purity, Hartman crafts an intra-species predator. And as demonstrated by Parker and Khatyi, this predator's primary weapon is language. Crow Jane is not cynical, she's not careerist, she's a replicator for those like her: "It feels good to be a role model, she reflects. Young people need examples they can emulate, otherwise they risk nihilism."[21] To call Crow Jane or the character Jennifer Moore "careerist" and to describe either portrait as satire is a dereliction of critique, and an affirmation of our current simulacra.

Here are unfinished figurative sacrifices, or executions, or assassinations. The designation seems vital and open. Parker's novel depicts a fictionally successful assassination and the story remains unfinished because of her early death. Her examination of the assassination/executioner begins with an interrogation of the kind of artist cultivated in this neoliberal economy, in which the artist takes the suffering (sacrifice) of others as fodder, material, expansion. This artist is not revolutionary or ritualistic—this artist, like Hartman's Crow Jane, is a new kind of vulture, an agent of state longing. The artist in "Assassination" is a predator because they maintain a sphere where only those like them can thrive. And in this depiction, there are no innocents to be found.

What should we make of the absence of figurative innocence in Brand's, Parker's, and Hartman's work? They do not preserve the innocence of the artist or art; rather, they tend to their mutations.

Just as the fantasy of sacred victimhood has intensified within the political discourse of reactionary conservatives, neocolonialists, and neofascists, antagonism to the fantasy of political innocence remains fundamental to radical

projects. In Parker's speeches, she invokes *we* to suggest that we should see ourselves as aggressors taking part in aggression, and it is aggression, movement, and shattering that may be required to explode tales of colonial innocence. Thus, a culture against the capitulation of white and colonial innocence—to build a world and plot without.

*

I've written about my many encounters with Pat Parker's poetry and archive.[22] Expansively, her archive contains not only her drafts, but the history of movements. She kept the newsletters that cataloged the fight against Merle Woo's termination. In the 1980s, Woo was fired from UC Berkeley for being a socialist, feminist, lesbian, and for organizing with students toward a Third World College. In wanting to learn more about Parker's poetry through her archives, I learned about her political ambitions and the communities she organized with. Finding Parker's correspondence with the writer Willyce Kim, I connected with Willyce in 2023 to learn more about their time in community.[23] I say this because I think it's important to note that my connection to Parker has been political, relationally and continuously informed by her aesthetics/politics; her literary archive has introduced me to a trove of activist history and presence.

I wanted to examine Parker because her writing produced no innocents, and I am most interested in what this landscape might innovate. She founded the Black Women's Revolutionary Council and the Women's Press Collective, was involved in the Black Panther Party, wrote openly against fascism, directed the Feminist Women's Health Center, gave countless speeches at lesbian and socialist forums, and constructed antidotes to counter-revolutionary formations. Heart toward the pending revolution, all other forms inspected, rejected, and reconstituted for politicization. I end with her words:

We are charged with the task of rebuilding and revitalizing the dreams of the 60s and turning it into the reality of the 80s. And it will not be easy. At the same time that we must weed reformist elements out of our moment we will have to fight tooth and nail with our brothers and sisters of the left. For in reality, we are 'all products of a decadent capitalist society' […]. In order to survive in this world we must make commitment to change it; not reform it – revolutionize it.[24]

NOTES

1 Pat Parker Archives, Box 8, Novel, re: assassination, n.d., Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

2 Pat Parker Archives, Box 8, Novel, re: assassination.

3 Pat Parker Archives, Box 8, Novel, re: assassination.

4 Modernism and the Avant-Garde have been endlessly studied: from literary criticism to art history, to music studies and performance, and more. There are modernist societies and organizations from a range of fields, and the term "modernism," the invented form that it is, remains debated. In constructing my flash description of modernism (which is not claiming Turner as a modernist, but noting his influence), postmodernism, and the avant-garde, I am compressing well-known arguments made by art historian Rosalind Krauss and poetry critic Marjorie Perloff, and Helen Vendler. Perloff and too many formative modernist scholars have composed the race-less vacuum that so much cultural production has been made to sit inside of, and thus, my description of these timelines work against their previous notations. For these arguments, see *Modernism: An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence Rainey (Blackwell Publishing, 2005); Rosalind E. Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-garde and Other Modernist Myths* (MIT Press, 1986). For critical discussions concerning modernism, see Raymond Williams, "When Was Modernism," *New Left Review* 1, no. 175 (May–June 1989): 48–52.

5 Christopher Bollas, *Being a Character: Psychoanalysis and Self Experience* (Routledge, 2013).

6 "Trump Assassination Attempt, Authoritarian Violence & Project 2025," *Democracy Now*, July 2025.

7 Christina Sharpe, "Note 60: May 10, 2011," in *Ordinary Notes* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2023), 127

8 Sharpe, "Cultures of Surprise," 351.

9 Dionne Brand, *Nomenclature for the Time Being* (Duke University Press, 2022), 6.

10 Brand, *Nomenclature*, 10.

11 Brand, *Nomenclature*, from the collection *Ossuaries*, 501.

12 Erica Edwards, *The Other Side of Terror: Black Women and the Culture of U.S. Empire* (New York University Press, 2021), 21.

13 I am noting ambiguity in authorship, how this press release could've been a collective statement or Parker's own speech because the same speech appears in the folder "Speeches" (Speeches, n.d.,) undated, and in the folder "Black Women's Revolutionary Council, 1980" dated, meaning that there were two copies (at least) found in her archives. However, there are several moments throughout the press release and the speech where the first person "I" is invoked—suggesting that the press release could have been Parker's speech at some point.

14 Pat Parker Archives, Box 13, Speeches, n.d., Schlesinger Library.

15 Pat Parker Archives, Box 13, Speeches, n.d., Schlesinger Library.

16 From Sharpe, "Cultures of Surprise," 351

17 Pat Parker Archives, Box 13, Speeches, n.d., Schlesinger Library.

18 1960–1970s social movements ephemera collection, Labor organizing, 1964–1980, Art Worker Organizing, MS218 Box 23 Folder 11, Deering Library, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL.

19 Mustapha Khayati, "Captive Words: Preface to a Situationist Dictionary," trans. Ken Knabb, in *Situationist International Anthology, 1966*, Anarchist Library Online.

20 Saidiya Hartman, "Crow Jane Makes a Modest Proposal: A Solution to the Problem of Race Relations," *n+1* 48 (2024): 2.

21 Hartman, "Crow Jane," 2.

22 See, Eunsong Kim, "With Lunar Calendars: On Pat Parker & Merle Woo," *Dilettante Army* (2024) and "Unbinding Poetic Lives," Poets.org, July 8, 2024.

23 I wrote about their relationship and correspondence in "Unbinding Poetic Lives: On Pat Parker + Willyce Kim," *American Poets Vol. 66 (Academy of American Poets, 2023)*: 38–40, and "Poetry for the People: Janice Mirikitani + June Jordan," *American Poets Vol. 64, (Academy of American Poets, 2024):* 34–36. The letter was found in the Pat Parker Archives, Box 5, Schlesinger Library.

24 Pat Parker Archives, Box 13, Speeches, n.d., p. 6, Schlesinger Library. I thank Carrie Nakamura, Yelena Bailey, and Jackqueline Frost for reading early drafts of this article and for offering their thoughts and criticisms. The peer reviewers provided essential feedback, and the editors of this issue, Dominique Routhier, Louis Hartnoll, and Tobias Dias, guided this article into its final form. I am grateful to be part of this *Marxist Aesthetics* volume.