Critical Black Futures

Speculative Theories and Explorations

Edited by Philip Butler

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Notes on Contributors

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Joshua Bartholomew teaches religious and theological studies at Iliff School of Theology, is an affiliate professor at Regis University, and is a licensed minister from the historic Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem. He is a postdoctoral research fellow at The Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. His research deals with the relationship between economic justice and racial equality within the United States, and its transnational range of influence, focusing on the recovery of intellectual resources and economic praxis from the Black Panther Party.

Philip Butler is Assistant Professor of Theology and Black Posthuman Artificial Intelligence Systems at Iliff School of Theology. He is also the founder of the Seekr Project, a distinctly Black conversational artificial intelligence with mental health capacities. His work primarily focuses on the intersection of neuroscience, technology, spirituality, and race. He is the author of *Black Transhuman Liberation Theology: Spirituality and Technology*.

Tommy J. Curry is Professor of Philosophy and an American scholar and author. He holds a personal chair in Africana Philosophy and Black Male Studies at the University of Edinburgh. In 2018, he won an American Book Award for *The Man-Not: Race, Class, Genre, and the Dilemmas of Black Manhood*.

Patrick Earl Hammie is an American visual artist who examines personal and shared Black experiences and offers stories that expand how we express notions of gender and race today. Hammie works primarily with themes related to cultural identity, social justice, storytelling, and the body in visual culture. His recent awards include the Puffin Foundation Award (2017) and Arnold O. Beckman Research Award from the University of Illinois (2016).

Lauren-Ashley Howard is an artist from Buffalo, New York. In addition to installation, digital collage, cosplay, and performance work, she is a writer and Afrofuturist storyteller. Howard holds a Juris Doctor from the State University of New York at Buffalo, an MFA in Studio Art from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and is pursuing an MA in African Studies with a concentration in the Swahili language.

Delita Martin is an artist based in Huffman, Texas. She holds a BFA in Drawing from Texas Southern University and an MFA in printmaking from Purdue University. Formally a member of the fine arts faculty at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Martin is working as a full-time artist in her studio, Black Box Press. Martin's work has been exhibited both nationally and internationally. Most recently Martin's work was included in the *State of the Arts: Discovering American Art Now*.

Caitlin O'Neill (she/they) is Assistant Director of Brown University's LGBTQ Center. She holds a PhD in African American Studies from the University of Texas, Austin. O'Neill was also a Sarah Pettit Doctoral Fellow in Lesbian Studies at Yale University in 2016. They were also Assistant Director of the Multicultural Resource Center at Oberlin College, where she earned a certificate in Social Justice Mediation.

Stacey Robinson is an Arthur Schomburg fellow and has completed his Masters of Fine Art at the University at Buffalo, SUNY. He is originally

from Albany, New York, and graduated from Fayetteville State University with a Bachelor of Arts degree. His art speculates about futures where Black people are free from colonial influences.

Tokie Rome-Taylors work explores representation through themes of adornment, memory, spirituality, and time. She draws inspiration and influence from an eclectic range of time periods, artists, and cultures. She photographed portraits of Coretta Scott King for the book *The Many Faces of Sweet Auburn*. Her work has been published in *Behind the Shutter Magazine* as well as *Art-Diction Magazine*.

Damion Kareem Scott is a lecturer in the Department of Philosophy at the City College of New York, CUNY, and a doctoral candidate in philosophy at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. Scott studied philosophy at New York University and at Birkbeck College, University of London. In addition, he earned a master's degree in African American Studies from Columbia University.

Scott's research interests converge on Africana Philosophy and African-American Political and Artistic History. In Africana Philosophy, Scott is engaged in research in the fields of metaphysics, aesthetics, and the history and geography of ideas. His work in metaphysics engages the ontology of personhood via critical examination of the conceptual logic and phenomenology of subjectivity, race, ethnicity, nationality, post-colonialism, humanism and transhumanism. In aesthetics, he explores the value of art arising out of social and political oppression with particular attention to the pragmatics and aesthetics of Black Futurism, especially in science fictional film and electronic music.

Raissa Simpson is an African American/Pilipinx choreographer and artistic director of the San Francisco-based PUSH Dance Company. A graduate of SUNY Purchase with an MFA from UC Davis, Simpson has held creative residencies at Dance Initiative Carbondale, Santa Clara University, Bayview Opera House, Sacramento State University, Margaret Jenkins CHIME, African American Theater Alliance (AATAIN!) and CounterPulse. She received a Phyllis C Wattis Foundation grant with Bayview Opera House for her most recent work, The Motley Experiment.

Phillip Luke Sinitiere is Professor of History at the College of Biblical Studies and the Scholar in Residence at UMass's W. E. B. Du Bois Center. A scholar of American religious history and African American studies, his recent books are *Salvation with a Smile: Joel Osteen, Lakewood Church, and American Christianity* and *Citizen of the World: The Late Career and Legacy of W. E. B. Du Bois*.

Ni'Ja Whitson is an award-winning gender-nonconforming/transmogrifying artist, performer, and writer who brings together experimental and African Diasporic practices to highlight themes of gender, sexuality, race, and spirit. Mentioned by the *New York Times*, Whitson's recent accolades include the Creative Capital Award, Bessie Award, Urban Bush Women Choreographic Center Fellow Candidate, LMCC Process Space Residency, Bogliasco Fellowship, Brooklyn Arts Exchange Artist Residency, and being a featured choreographer of the 2018 Cornell Council for the Arts Biennial.

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Introduction

Philip Butler

Welcome.

Moving from one place to another without critical reflection can be thought of as haphazard—lacking in earnest. While one can never prepare for all potentialities, the lack of a critical approach does not allow for movement that can be traceable, measurable, or comparable. Journeying without a sense of imagination relegates one to the rudimentary aspects of what has already gone before. While some might say, "if it ain't broke don't fix it," that is not the case, nor has it been, when thinking about what Black bodies might be doing in the future. So, movement toward future modes of existence without critical reflection might be comparable to flailing about in an endless void without grounding. Some might call that a wish. And without imagination nothing new is made. Imagination invites one into the speculative. Some might say the prophetic. It takes seriously what is currently found and reconfigures it in ways that are perhaps more amenable than their current order. Speculation requires the

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ability to hold ideas, and concrete things in tension to see what might be "next." This extends to Black futures, because any attempt to envision Black futures situates one in spaces that work toward a new reality. *Going* to a new reality requires grounding. For instance, can you walk here? Do you fly there? Is there a portal with an encrypted biosensor lock? And, what happens when you get there? How are you to be with primary interface of this new reality? Regardless of how one arrives in these new spaces the combination of critical thought and imagination is inescapable. This introductory chapter will connect you to the inspiration of this collection, some of the major discourses that allow this volume to exist, and it will end with a breakdown of each chapter.

So, echoing Lonny Avi Brooks (2016), "I [too] share a dream: to ensure that long oppressed racial minority and diverse voices can articulate themselves in the futures imagined in the practices of long-term thinking and in the professional areas of foresight." As a result, I asked a group of scholars and artists to come together for the express purpose of writing some critical Black futuristic shit. One of the underlying notions of this volume is that Black critical discourse is steeped in the speculative. It might even be argued that Black critical discourse bubbles up from the respective subjectivities that house Black imagination(s) and give rise to the multiple potentialities of Black imagination (Maturana 1988; Wynter 2007; Voss Roberts 2017). Whether via Zora Neale Hurston's literary awakening, Octavia Butler's speculative futurist fiction, Aime Cesaire's anti-/decolonial deconstructionism, or Achille Mbembe's exploration of the political elements that govern death and dying: Black critical discourse relies heavily on Black speculative imagination(s). In each of the above examples, there exists a beckoning conceptualizing/molding of new worlds through epistemic shifts or upendings that are traced back to the imaginations of these contributors or critical Black futuristic thought—the speculative aspects of this discourse that function as signifiers of the radical imagination. In "Ecologies of the Radical Imagination" (2019), Alex Khasnabish defines the radical imagination as "our capacity to conceive of the world as it might be otherwise." And in order to do so one is required to conceptualize novel epistemologies, social norms, genders, sexualities, embodiments, etc. The point is that new worlds, where Black futures are intact, accounted for, self-determined, and powerful

require approaches that are not rooted in the present reality (whatever it may be). So, it is important to be in conversation with Black critical imagination for the express purpose of thinking critically about what the future may hold for Black people. This project relies on the idea that Black futures (that are desirable to Black people) will result from a larger discourse reachable through the engagement of Black imaginations. In effect, it is an attempt to explore the perceived possibilities of what may *be* in futures where Black people are alive, thrive and in power.

This volume seeks to provide an exploration of various futuristic landscapes through the speculative imagination that derives from a range of Black critical perspectives. Mainstream futuristic depictions are fraught with extravagant designer technologies, ecological possibilities, and scientific explorations that often exclude, relegate, or invisibilize Blackness into irrelevance/obscurity or extinction. Contributors to this volume have offered critiques of these futures (both directly and indirectly) by centering Blackness through a combination of Black speculative approaches to the future. One of the driving factors that influenced the formation of this volume was curiosity around what an inclusively Black future might look like—one that welcomes all Black perspectives (i.e. Black male, womanist, queer, afrofuturistic, Afro- Caribbean, etc.) on various subjects regarding the future; metahumanism, transhumanism, posthumanism, Astro-Blackness, or technology—broadly constructed. Our desire was to add to discourses from multiple disciplines: science, economics, law, religion, philosophy, psychology, data science, education, etc., in an effort to project ahead of anything that currently exists (Butler 2018).

The goal of this project is to teleport the proverbial needle into futures unexplored and/or under-explored, returning to view the results of its teleportation from the vantage point of the present. Building off of Lonny Avi Brooks's (2016) aim to restore Afrocentric points of view in the context of futures research, the contributors to this volume are embarking on the adventure/task of engaging in normalizing Black thriving in near and distant time periods. Because, moving the needle forward can no longer be viewed as an acceptable practice. Although, any moving of the needle leaves Black futuristic thinking vulnerable to the whims of present/current theoretical and actual moves toward any different realit(ies). The

multiple variables that comprise this vulnerability are too wide to project onto any future. Any supposed movement of said theoretical needle could easily be moved backward. Within the employment of this strategy (projecting beyond what is currently available), there is a recognition that moving too far ahead may render our project illegible/incomprehensible to some, maybe even the very audience we have intended. However, this is a welcome problem. Incomprehensibility opens up the possibility for imagination. People need their imaginations when attempting to understand things that are not immediately apparent (as a result of the limitations of language), thus, placing people in the realm of the speculative when embarking on the critical. While on the Afrofuturist Podcast, Ayize Jama-Everett (author of The Liminal Series) discussed the distinctly Black elements of speculative fiction. He mentions that the gross realities depicting rough and granular elements of experience are what make Black science fiction speculative. "It's a much more accurate form, of what is going on" (Jama-Everett 2017). Enrique Dussel (1985) would argue that those who are on the margins have a much clearer picture of what is going on, hence their accuracy in critiquing it. It is that granular accuracy, that painstaking attention to the gross complexity of reality within Black science fiction that is the very element of its speculative nature. Jama-Everett argues that attention to the disturbing and beautiful aspects of life's complexity is what differentiates Black speculative fiction from mainstream forms of science fiction. For that reason Black science fiction is never merely science fiction.

The questions that led to this volume are: What types of critique are necessary in order to develop worlds of Black political, social and economic power? What is a necessary event, or context, that precipitates Black innovation in the future? How would the world be different, if at all, if Blackness were the dominant force of economic, political and social construction? How might a Black approach to ecology differ or provide new and deeper insight into the search for a sustainable future? What role, if any, does Africa play in this reconstructive global politic? How might Black women lead the way into a more equitable and just future? What does masculinity have to offer to decolonization? What does it mean for Blackness to arm itself, similarly to North Korea in order to achieve a status of political "diplomacy"? What modes of thinking exist,

or are in need of construction, that will allow for a more thorough and practical means to usurp and therefore subvert current forms of power in the world? Can Blackness attain and assert power separate from colonial means from the past? Before looking at the overview of the chapters in this volume it is important to cover a few topics: the first being the relationship between Afrofuturism and Critical Black Futures.

Afrofuturism?

Over the past 30 years scholars have worked to carve out space for the burgeoning field of Afrofuturism. These discussions have ranged from the myriad ways that Afrofuturism has already been in motion throughout history to revolving around the very necessary aspect of how one might define this phenomenon. As such, Afrofuturism has a plethora of definitions. Coined by Mark Dery (1994), Afrofuturism is "speculative fiction that treats African-American themes and addresses African-American concerns in the context of twentieth century technoculture—and more generally, African-American signification that appropriates images of technology and a prosthetically enhanced future." Dery was attempting to name the way that Black art, literature, style, and existence speak to the realities and counter-societal normativities. Ytasha Womack (2013) extends this definition as "an intersection of imagination, technology, the future, and liberation." Amalgamatively, Jennings and Anderson (2018) see it as a technocultural perspective and a form of cultural production that originates in the practices of Black urban dwellers in North America after World War II—with "popular examples emerging in the works of Jazz musician Sun Ra and artists of the Black Arts Movement like Ishmael Reed or Amiri Baraka." More recently, in a panel at Los Angeles's esteemed Leimert Park, Anderson (2018) defined it as any way you can see yourself in history. Here, he alludes to a vast array of Afrofuturistic representation that does not allow for a solid definition.

Realistically, a symbiotic relationship between Critical Black Futures and Afrofuturism boils down to scope. Critical Black Futures becomes a departure from Reynaldo Anderson's descriptive outline of Afrofuturism's evolution, in that it goes onto mark a specific space within Black

futuristic discourse. When talking about the trajectory of Afrofuturism and Afrofuturistic discourse, Anderson chooses an overarching approach, highlighting three distinct phases of Afrofuturism: 1.0, 2.0, and 3.0. Afrofuturism, otherwise known as 1.0, focused on "twentieth century techno-culture, the digital divide, technology, music and literature in the West" (p. vii). In conversation with works from Sofia Samatar, Anderson describes 2.0 as "the early twenty-first century technogenesis of Black identity reflecting counter histories, hacking and or appropriating the influence of network software, database logic, cultural analytics, deep remixabililty, neurosciences, enhancement and augmentation, gender fluidity, posthuman possibility, the speculative sphere, with transdisciplinary applications [that have] grown into an important Diasporic techno-cultural 'Pan-African' movement"(p. x). He goes onto outline the five areas that 2.0 extends to: "metaphysics; aesthetics; theoretical and applied science; social sciences; and programmatic spaces." For him, 3.0 is the actual speculating AND doing of Afrofuturistic work by Africans on, and native to, the continent. While pan-African in scope, critical Black futures recognizes the inability to speak squarely to a universal phenomenon. While similar phenomena occur simultaneously and from a multitude of vantage points, nothing that is experienced as a result of similar occurrences is the same. This alludes to the ways that various contexts, subjectivities, bodies, and geopolitical regions function as dynamic interdependent systems/universes acting toward their own understanding of the concept—in their own right. Similarly, as Critical Black Futures attempts to speak to Black futures from a US context it cannot do so for all of the US context. Therefore, it would not be problematic to see a Critical Black Oakland Futures, Critical Black DC Futures, or Critical Black Detroit Futures scholarship. In this way, Critical Black Futures overlaps with Afrofuturism and exist simultaneously with it in different spaces.

So, much like the regional qualities Anderson describes, Critical Black Futures is fostered by a particular mode of Blackness that is apparent within the United States. Even when frameworks are presented with universal implications there is a recognition that these ideas are predominantly presented from the vantage point of folks exploring Black futures with life experiences in the United States—even if they are not Black

themselves. So, this becomes an expression of the regional differences present within the 2.0 movement. And thus, its own extension into the specializing AND doing around Blackness in US contexts. Because this hasn't been fully materialized yet. So, the specifics of this volume might be considered an example of the transnational aspects of Black futuristic discourse. While transnationalism, just as afrofuturism, has multiple definitions of its own it has widely been accepted to encompass the manner in which ideas, peoples, cultures, gender, capital, etc., cross borders (Kasun 2017). So, while Afrofuturism has presented itself as a Pan-African movement—reaching across borders of shared Blackness via phenotype, physiognomy, and cultural production—both function as entryways into critical Black imagination(s).

What Are Critical Black Futures?

Amber Johnson (2020) suggests that one of the definitive aspects of Critical Cultural Studies is the deconstruction of oppression and power. Johnson, a scholar of communications studies specifically highlights the role of rhetoric in this work as not only taking on the liberating work of the body, but of "continu[ing to] critiqu[e] systemically oppressive structures … us[ing] your work to go far beyond the critique … in an effort to (re)build, strategically, our just future" (p. 81). Alex Khasnabish (2019) adds that critical work around radical imagination seeks fundamental change rather than reform. In reference to the critical nature of art, Ciarán Finlayson (2019) highlights how Fumi Okiji merges Adorno's critical interpretation of art and unfreedom with the Black radical tradition. In "Black Adorno" Finalyson reviews Okiji's work with this to say in regard to Adorno's own similarity to Black critical discourse:

> On a deeper level, those with serious commitments to [B]lack art find something of worth in the utter seriousness of his philosophical revolutionizing of the field of art. For Adorno, as for much [B]lack radical art, there is nothing less at stake in (modern) art than the last available realm of authentic experience and the possibility for freedom in a manifestly unfree world. (Finlayson 2019, 289)

This is crucial to Critical Black Futures as the speculative rubs up against, gives birth to, is birthed by, and emerges out of the wake of Blackness (Sharpe 2016) as Critical nothingness/everything-ness (*possibility*) that comes from the Black abyss of being: and the imagination that comes to the surface and overflows into every nook and cranny.

Recent moves in critical Black studies have focused on the nuanced approach to Critical Black Futures research and discourse. In *Future Movements* (2018), editors Tobias van Veen and Reynaldo Anderson argue that political critiques of neoliberal imaginations coupled with Afrofuturistic imagination come together to make what would be considered "countering the neoliberal imaginary and its autodestructive impulses." This by any means necessary approach is meant to produce counter-narratives through the critical exploration of the shortcomings of neoliberal capitalistic socio-racial hierarchies. Similarly, Roymeico Carter and Leila Villarde (2017) speak of Black critical future discourse as Black futurology in the Critical Black Studies Reader. For them, Black futurology acts as a "bricolage of Blackness, aesthetics and all things future" (58). This combination allows for the tendrils of Black imagination(s) to reach into boundless categories/disciplines of thought. In considering the relation between art and radial imagination, T Eliott "Mansa" Thomas (2018) writes that "The connection between the two is the power of the creator [think artist] to assign value and power to the things that [s]he creates … My interest in power is my response to apathy in the face of oppression. I imagine the studio as a cauldron where meaning is assigned" (p. 13). For Mansa, imagination has its own epistemic consequences wherein reconfiguration of power dynamics results in redistribution of value. So, as a consequence of the speculative aspects of radical imagination new worlds where Black lives matter might grow, but only through a recognition that solutions which are approved by present power structures will only serve to maintain those power structures. In this manner, shifts in epistemic foundations and nodes imbued with systematic meaning result in new technologies whose genealogy leads to (and stems from) critically analyzed/oriented Black future realities.

With this in mind, Critical Black Futures might be described as the combination of epistemic reimagining/reframing along with complex

critical analyses of the realities that Black folks find themselves immersed in. You might liken Critical Black Futures to world building. Peter von Stackelberg and Alex McDowell (2015) define world building as "the creation of imaginary worlds with coherent geographic, social, cultural, and other features" (p. 32). Kerri Ann Kramer (2018) highlights how the details that stem from the meticulous approach to constructing believable and immersive worlds are integral to science fiction. This echoes Jama-Everett's naming of what makes Black science fiction speculative—the critical aspects that take seriously the granular intricacies of existence. In "If I Built the World, Imagine That" (2018), Matthew Jordan Miller reflects on how world building practices are being used in Black Los Angeles's Leimert Park Village. He recollects on the ways that both scholars, students and community members worked on teams to imagine four specific modes of Black placemaking for Leimert Park in 2050: Garden Leimert (dense cooperatively owned gardens and STEAM oriented lean ring environments); Free Leimert (a combination of community policing and shared autonomous vehicles); Play Leimert (public instruments playing music from Black music legends throughout history); and Virtual Leimert (augmented and virtual renderings of Leimert Park legends). Here, placemaking was conducted via world building through an Afrofuturistic lens. This becomes important when engaging in space taking and spatial analysis for uplifting and empowering Black bodies (Bates et al. 2018). Similarly, Holbert et al. (2020) argues that Afrofuturism can function as a critical constructionist design framework/methodology. One of their assumptions regarding critical design is that "many of the challenges we face today are unfixable and that the only way to overcome them is by changing our values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors" (Dunne and Raby 2005, 2). While one may assert that Holbert, Dandob, and Correa were less critical about their own use of terms like Afrofuturism or their desire to create culturally relevant materials for Black youth, the centering of Black perspectives at the nexus of critical revaluations and speculative injections become examples that peer into the potential of doing Critical Black Framing by Critical Black Future Theorists. Since critical design delves into alternative modes of existence/being by imaging or thinking of counter/alternative futures focused on questioning "the cultural, social and ethical implications of emerging technologies"

(Dunne and Raby 2005), it is important to remember that Critical Black Futures is always already working to design new realities by shifting the very elements of our current existential iterations. So, this volume is a combination of conceptual future realities, critical dispositions toward normality, futuristic projections, spatial realities, temporal injections into potentially infinite futures, and notes on gender, sexuality, and masculinity.

Chapter Breakdown

In The Black Futures of W. E. B. Du Bois , Phillip Luke Sinitiere begins to think alongside W. E. B. Du Bois about the topic of Black futures through a centering of his call for "looking forward into the past" as both an admonition and a methodology. He frames the chapter as an interrogative exercise, inquiring: "How did Du Bois imagine Black futures while remaining rooted in a methodology that privileged documentary research and historical argument?" He argues that Du Bois's black futures come into clearer focus when the liberal arts/humanities that shaped his historical thought, political commitments, and intellectual reflection are accounted for. This chapter contends that because Du Bois was equipped with a methodology that constantly looked forward into the past, he consistently drew from history to both mobilize new thought and to work for the altering of material conditions that Black people and other nonwhite populations encountered. Du Bois engages in the act of Critical Black futures in the production of knowledge for the purpose of rearranging, recalibrating, and redistributing power and material resources. Du Bois considered Black futures in his journalist writing and wrote science fiction along other creative expressions such as novels and poetry. In this chapter, Sinitiere expands current historiographic work concerning Du Bois' relationship to Black futures that primarily looks at his science fiction and novels. Further, this chapter uses Du Bois's published and unpublished writings in each of the aforementioned genres as sites of analysis to understand the unique but interconnected dimensions of his historical method of black futures.

In A Black Tetratic Future: Blackness and the Age of Hyper-Exponentiation (Hyper-4), Philip Butler provides an initial exploration of the era of tetration through an imagination of its relationship to Black people. Simply put, the chapter posits the era of tetration as the era expected to follow the age of exponentiation. Butler describes this era, which admittedly may not arrive until the near-distant future, as the convergence of tetratic thinking and tetratic technology. To arrive at this speculative futuristic time period, Butler begins by exploring and defining tetration via its mathematical framing. The chapter then outlines the parameters for tetratic thinking along with tetratic technology. From there it imagines the convergence of the two within the bounds of materiality as being composed of collisions/events that occur at the speeds of the imaginable/imagination. Further, this chapter seeks to situate itself within Black futurist frameworks, speculating beyond current notions of mainstream futuristic realities.

Towards an Afrofuturistic Feminist Manifesto by Caitlin O'Neill explores the ways in which engaging black future texts is not only significant work but entirely necessary to the survival of African descended people and the ability of black women and girls to thrive in the twenty-first century and beyond. In this chapter, O'Neill explores creative, affirmative answers to Mark Dery's question: "Can a community whose past has been deliberately rubbed out, and whose energies have subsequently been consumed by the search for legible traces of its history, imagine possible futures?" This chapter attempts to highlight the long history of work that black women have always contributed to the tradition of Black speculative fiction. It also works to establish the beginnings of an Afrofuturistic Feminist genealogy by investigating works from Octavia Butler to Janelle Monáe and privileging the speculative fiction, fantasy, and other creative production of Black women over historically recognized futuristic texts by male figures like F. T. Marinetti's "The Foundations and Manifesto of Futurism" or W. E. B. DuBois's short story "The Comet." Imagining possible futures is central to the work that Black women do every day when manifesting spaces where Black women's bodies are respected and safe from emotional, physical, and sexual violence and cooptation. The work is by no means easy—and for many Black women—imagining alternative presents and futures does not always mean imagining utopias free

from racism, sexism, and queerphobia but rather imagining and making more tangible, creative, and resistive strategies for survival.

Writings on Dance: Artistic Reframing for Celestial Black Bodies by Raissa Simpson posits that Black bodies are in crisis in modern-day San Francisco. Highlighting the dwindling population of African-Americans, who make up 3–6% of among 800,000 residents, Simpson focuses on how what has traditionally been understood as redlining is affecting Black dancers. Due to the San Francisco tech boom, she shifts from redlining to codelining as the phenomena responsible for limiting the ability of Black dancers to live and afford housing in the City. Here in this uncharted terrain of gentrification a new type of modern-day colonization is explored for the coding tech industry and age old phenomenon of redlining. *Codelining*, coding plus redlining, is a multiyear work exploring access, hope, and the digital divide. The uses of new media technology such as motion capturing, sensory motion, and projection mapping to show housing disparities between tech industry and African-American communities are key examples of this reality that Simpson engages in this chapter.

A Disruptive Visual Respite provides an escape from the limitations of theory and speculation into the amazing speculative pieces of Stacey Robinson and John Jennings as Black Kirby, Delita Martin, Lauren-Ashley Howard, Tokie Rome-Taylor, and Patrick Earl Hammiehe. Black Kirby offers Bauhop, a multi-modal practice that overlaps hip-hop the five senses and sacred geometry. Delita Martin presents Veilscape, a space between the physical and spiritual realms. Lauren-Ashley Howard provides a piece entitled Speculative Afrotheism that is a distillation of Afrofuturism's spiritual component into an exploration of Afrotheistic belief. Tokie Rome-Taylor's Creolization presents a look into the hybridization of African cultural traditions and those of the new world as a means of survival, subversion and rebellion, and Patrick Earl Hammie's Oedipus considers the prenatal prophecies carried by Black people into a tethering of life and love lost with manifestations that overcome the odds.

Black Radical Nationalist Theory and Afrofuturism 2.0, authored by Reynaldo Anderson and Tommy Curry, explores Black power, Black masculinity, revolutionary identity and eschatology as apocalyptic existentialism. In doing so, both Anderson and Curry explore Black masculinity in

conjunction with its revolutionary potential. Their discourse on masculinity peers into Black maleness in relation to the existential modes of perception that beset Black male revolutionaries on potential paths to violent revolution. This chapter investigates the potential dialectical materialism present in Black militant science fiction and analyzes the eschatological conundrum of Black male revolutionaries.

In Afrofuturism and Black Futurism: Some Ontological and Semantic Considerations, Damion Kareem Scott presents what he argues is a differentiation, if not a complete disjunction, between Afrofuturism and Black Futurism within the larger category of thought on speculative futuricity. This delineation of Afrofuturism and Black Futurism is useful when thinking through the potential political efficacy and aesthetic potency of an Afrofuturism that meaningfully refers to actual historical and socioeconomic situations of African and New World Africana Diasporic peoples as a way to raise questions not simply of power imbalances and epistemic injustice themselves but of the efficacy of modes of resistance to such power imbalances and the potential for change those modes of resistance might have, do have, and will perhaps have. It is an attempt to clarify ontological and semantic concepts within Afrofuturism that present a vague, confused and often uncritical conflation with Black Futurism, revealing contingencies as well as shortcomings of versions of Futurisms that reify simplistic color-based racial categories that covertly normalize *racial* conceptualizations in lieu of historically determined *cultural* and *ethnic* conceptualizations.

In Super Fluid/Super Black: Translations and Teachings in Transembodied Metaphysics, Ni'Ja Whitson turns a piece that was originally commissioned as a keynote lecture for the 2020 Collegium for the African Diaspora Dance (CAAD) conference, Fluid Black: Dance Back. This chapter is a hybrid text that centralizes Black Transgender and Nonbinary experiences in a conversation of futurity in African Diasporic spirituality, dance traditions, and performativities. Furthermore, *Super Fluid/Super Black* interrogates beingness through an exploration of astrophysics and global attempts at Black erasure to uncover new strategies of collectivizing under physical, metaphysical, and cosmic bodies that dismantle cisheteronormativity at their core.

In the penultimate chapter, Race, Economics, and the Future of Blackness, Joshua Bartholomew begins the work of developing a constructive, liberationist ethic of counter-capitalist resistance. As a necessary and basic strategy in the process of imagining a just, global society acknowledges the work of liberationist scholars who historically have critiqued normative Eurocentric models of economics. And while providing a critique of capitalism's ability to improve the lives and conditions of all people, Bartholomew also recognizes that these scholars have not developed a socioeconomic model of praxis that would be an alternative to capitalism. Keeping in mind that black liberationist ethics remains a radical response from many Black Christians to mainstream versions of white religious history, Bartholomew then critiques the racial politics of liberation. He contends that a fully established economic model of social justice that prioritizes a future of political self-determination for black people and for all people around the world does not exist. Since Black Theology understands itself as being rooted in the Blackness of the US Black Power movement of the late 1960s and 1970s, this chapter explores the Black Panther Party—being the most revolutionary example of racial politics for black liberation during and after the Black Power movement—as a necessary model of economic and political praxis. In doing so, this addition to the volume sees the Black Panther Party's economic as intuitively informative for the construction of liberationist models of economic ethics.

The final chapter, Newhampton: A Future Forward(ified) Black City in the US juxtaposes the grave lessons of the Greenwood community in North Tulsa with the fictional techno-futuristic landscape of Wakanda. As a bustling Black community, Greenwood drew the ire surrounding white communities. This chapter analyzes the limitations of the Greenwood community to defend itself against the convergence of whiteness beset upon it. This analysis of "Black Wall Street" is compared to the futurist isolationist technologies of Wakanda that infuse Bantu philosophy/spirituality into their technological constructionist practices. From these ruminations emerge Newhampton. Newhampton is a Black future city in the US that learns from the Tulsa massacre, and draws from the wisdom of Wakanda. It is a city that exists between the two, as a vibrant, protected, isolated, and futuristic city that leads the future it belongs to.