



ABSTRACTS AND NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

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“What activism can learn from poetry”: Lyric Opacity and Drone Warfare in Solmaz Sharif’s LOOK

The essay explores whether concealing humanness or emphasizing humanness is a more effective strategy for anti-drone activism that seeks to disrupt the conventional epistemologies of militarized surveillance. Building on Édouard Glissant’s decolonizing philosophy of relation and more recent theories of gender and surveillance such as Rachel Hall’s notion of “animal opacity,” the essay argues that poetry is one place we might find an answer to what seems like a binary problem of seeing versus unseeing humanity in technologically mediated aerial warfare. I illustrate that the 2016 poetry collection *LOOK* by Solmaz Sharif intervenes to suggest activism that steers readers away from the logics of recognition and toward the ethical potential of concealment. *LOOK* garners formal elements from lyric and experimental poetry traditions to employ a strategy of resistance-looking based in multiple valences of opacity.

Keywords: Solmaz Sharif, drones, poetry, opacity, lyric, surveillance, recognition

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The Surveillance of Blackness in the Kardashians' Wellness Empire

Keeping up with the Kardashians depicts the lives of the Kardashian clan through reality television. The unparalleled success of five sisters managed by their mother has only continued to increase over time along with their participatory self-surveillance through their formidable use of social media. In recent years, a focus on health and wellbeing has led the sisters to endorse products for weight loss and health, using their bodies as spaces of commodification and advertisement online. The family's interaction with the camera, and the aesthetics of their social media cross-promotions combine to present an open "honest" front promoting the replication of their success and beauty for their audiences. The sisters engage with blackness in a way that bolsters their claims of capacitating and beautifying white feminine subjects, engagements now commonly termed "blackfishing." This article analyzes how the Kardashians have created an intense regime of self-surveillance, even dabbling self-consciously in the carceral state's techniques for surveilling blackness, to construct themselves as both uncommonly, exotically sexual ('baring all') and respectable enough (white or white passing) to sell various remedies with dubious health value.

Keywords: reality television, surveillance, social media, The Kardashians, health and wellness

Heena Hussain is a doctoral student at the University of Manchester. Her thesis is currently titled, "Liberal Imperialism in Post-9/11 Hollywood Fantasy Films." She completed her Bachelor (Hons) at Manchester Metropolitan University in English Literature and Creative Writing, and her Master's in English Literature and American Studies at the University of Manchester.

RABIATU B. MOHAMMED

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Anti(Hijab)Bodies: An Auto-Ethnography

Using the metaphor of the biological organism fighting foreign invasion with its antibodies, I analyze some of the problems associated with the "scapegoating" of foreigners in sites of surveillance. In this essay, I assess the portability of this metaphor, not only in the sites associated with US security and surveillance like the airport and other ports of immigration, but also in sites of everyday interactions/transactions like the streets, stores, and classroom. My analysis and assessments are based on an auto-ethnographic study of my experiences with the sites of everyday surveillance. From my experiences as a foreigner in the US, I have realized that

the fact that I am a Black woman with hijab in the US/Mexico borderlands region has compounded my hypervisibility which in turn results in the hyper-surveillance of my body. In order to cope with the problem of surveillance, I catalog how I perform self-surveillance in order to evade surveillance antibodies.

Keywords: US security, surveillance, US-Mexico border, hypervisibility

Rabiatu B. Mohammed is a graduate student at New Mexico State University in the PhD Rhetoric and Professional Communication program in the English department. Her research interests include Surveillance of Foreign Aliens in the US, Social Justice and Activism in Technical Communication, and Movements of Rhetorical Bodies across Spaces (geographical, ideological, digital, and intellectual). She is also interested in the neo-colonial study of her home community in Ghana.

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The Monster Minority: John Yoo's Multicultural Instruction and the "Torture Memos"

In the aftermath of 9/11, the United States declared a war on terrorism that would come to rely on legal memoranda to justify the surveillance, detention, and torture of "terrorists" held at the Guantánamo Bay Military Prison. Analyzing the language of these 2002 "Torture Memos," this article contends that the memos discursively produced not only the racial formation of the terrorist but also the emergent figure of the "monster minority," embodied by then-Deputy Assistant Attorney General, John Yoo. Defined in this essay as a patriotic, individualistic, and exceptional racialized subject who works on behalf of counterterrorism, the monster minority plays a central role in the legal construction of the terrorist precisely because of his exemplary status within US society. While Asian American studies explains the formation of the model minority that accounts for Yoo as a beneficiary of elite multicultural education, and post-9/11 studies of US imperialism elucidate the formation of the terrorist-as-monster, this essay puts these fields in conversation to establish how Yoo's particular brand of Asian American masculinity consolidates both the racialized enemy and the racialized agent of the US security state.

Keywords: Model minority, Asian American Studies, torture memos, John Yoo, war on terrorism

Emily Raymundo is a writer, editor, and teacher. Her writing has appeared in the *Journal of Asian American Studies*, *Public Books*, and the anthologies *Fashion and Beauty in the Time of Asia* (NYU

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Press, 2019) and *Q&A: Voices from Queer Asian North America* (Temple UP, 2021).

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Seeing Shadows: The FBI Surveillance of Louise Thompson Patterson

This article explores the ways gender and race influenced the FBI's surveillance of Black women activists. Previous scholarship has covered the role of surveillance in repressing revolutionary movements and neutralizing radical organizations. Historically, within many social movements, Black women have been marginalized, silenced, or reduced to only their gender because of patriarchal leadership. As a result, the persistence of sexism within these Black movements has affected Black women's visibility within movement organizations. This piece asks, how does gendered marginalization impact their surveillance by and visibility to the FBI? It seeks to understand the influence of race and gender on the FBI's surveillance of Louise Thompson Patterson. By examining the language and narrative components of her FBI file, the article provides an analysis across gender and across time to theorize the dynamics of surveillance, race, and gender. Based on a close analysis of Patterson's FBI file, I argue that the tension between hypervisibility and invisibility deriving from gendered stereotypes resulted in the Bureau's vague understanding of her personal life and political ideology.

Keywords: Black women's history, FBI surveillance, Black communism, Black women's activism

Kiara Sample is a Master's student in the African American Studies and African Diaspora Studies department at University of California at Berkeley. She received her BA from Washington University in St. Louis in African and African-American Studies and Psychology. As a Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellow, she conducted research on gender's influence on the FBI's surveillance of Black women activists in the 20th century. Her research interests include Black Feminism(s); Black women's history; Surveillance; and 20th-century Black social movements.

PATRICIA STUELKE

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**Feminist Conspiracies, Security Aunties,
and Other Surveillance State Fictions**

This article investigates two recent fictional representations of the feminized US surveillance state and its "security feminists" (Grewal), with an eye towards limning what visions of social transformation and political life such representations make possible.

It first examines Gish Jen's 2020 novel *The Resisters*, considering how the novel's characterization of the US surveillance state as a snopy suspicious Aunt maintains American liberal fantasies about the value of productive work and institutionally-sanctioned responses to state violence, even as the novel attempts to find grounds for reinvigorating a democratic commons. Jeff Vandermeer's 2021 novel *Hummingbird Salamander*, in contrast, is suspicious of democratic visions of the social. Instead, the novel unravels the privatized figure of the "security mom" (Grewal) in order to experiment with how a queer antisocial orientation might confront environmental and institutional collapse and reimagine the idea of "security" itself.

Keywords: US surveillance state, feminism, Auntly work, antisocial theory, the commons

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J.D. Schnepf is an assistant professor of American Studies at University of Groningen. She is working on a book about domestic cultures of US imperialism, gender, and digital media. Her writing has appeared in *Contemporary Literature*, *Feminist Media Studies*, *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, *Media + Environment*, *Modern Fiction Studies*, *Public Books*, *Surveillance & Society*, and other venues.

