

EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

Beyond Racialized Carceral Safety: Toward a Conceptualization of Black Safety

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IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE GEORGE FLOYD AND BREONNA TAYLOR uprisings in the summer of 2020, public safety has achieved a new kind of popular attention in the United States and across the planet; however, much of this discourse still resists a deep interrogation of the violence of coloniality, imperialism, racism, surveillance, and the policing and caging of Black people. The call for safety in the United States routinely insists upon the singular expansion of carceral and police power in the criminal legal system and across all major institutions, from family (Roberts 2022), education (Shange 2019), and health (Ben-Moshe 2020, Destine 2019) to social

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services (Richie & Martensen 2020) and beyond. Even as the spectacle of racist state violence in the middle of a global pandemic ignited one of the largest Black-led and multiracial protest movements in recent history and across the world, most police and jail budgets expanded in the aftermath as revanchist politics took hold (Akinnibi et al. 2021). In this special issue, we emphasize another mode of safety, sociality, and being that has arisen against the long history of state violence and white racialized carceral safety: Black safety.

The Problem with Safety

Literature in the fields of radical feminism and critical race, abolitionist, anti-colonial, and queer studies points to how our collective understanding of safety is distorted by this global carceral landscape as well as the logic of white supremacy upon which it and capitalism were built (Ignatiev 2022, Olson 2004). Across Jim Crow, South African apartheid, urban ghettoization, suburban white flight, and mass incarceration, safety operates as a white-dominated, one-dimensional construction defined mainly through white logics of crime, whereby harm is only understood to be criminal acts and safety requires the ongoing absence/absencing of those acts and people—largely racialized—who commit them. Tenorio (2022, 517) offers further insight into this kind of safety as a place-making production of “white carceral geographies,” those “(re)iterative spatial practices of racial division that produce and maintain the delineation of the criminal and the innocent under conditions of liberal democracy where whiteness serves as the basis for protection from harm, promotion of life, and the exercise of freedom and where blackness measures criminality.” As we see across this issue, these racialized spatializing practices extend into the current moment through the inevitable forms of criminalization that follow gentrification, gender violence, protest and organizing, and, quite simply, being Black.

In the same way that this construction of safety has become common sense, so too has the idea that policing and incarceration are solutions to fear and unsafety (Jackson & Meiners 2011, Seigel 2018). This aligns with McDowell’s (2019, 45–46) concept of carceral safety, which is defined by “the use of state-organized banishment, mass criminalization, and law enforcement as the only legitimate forms of protection from and solution to harm and violence in the United States.” In this world-building practice, violence work provides a useful way of rethinking the function of law enforcement and criminal justice, not as work in service of safety but as fundamentally

any “work that relies upon violence or the threat thereof” (Seigel 2018, 26). This theorization of the carceral state insists, whether potential, suspended, or actual, that racialized violence is the labor that the criminal legal system rests upon, the preeminent institution that makes fearfully real the core power of the state (see, for example, Camp & Heatherton 2016, Correia & Wall 2018, LeBrón 2019, McQuade 2019, Schrader 2019, Vitale 2017). With deep historical connections to property, slavery, and the attendant conflation of race and dangerousness, police, in particular, have occupied a mystifying intersection of social infrastructure as an assumed public good framed as protection, safety, and service that, in reality, is a key site for the production of racial violence, differential vulnerability, and premature death (Gilmore 2007).

Such configurations increasingly produce popular demands for a radical reconfiguration of law, justice, and safety (Akbar 2018, Akbar et al. 2021). Invoking abolitionist principles, we offer that any challenge to the legitimacy of state violence requires a refusal of the commonsense and superficial understandings of police and prisons, for instance, as having a legitimate monopoly on safety and protection. Furthermore, we emphasize not simply a need for analyses of the ways in which the carceral state structures and amplifies violence but also attention to experiences, ways of being, and epistemologies that point to a world beyond safety. As Mariame Kaba (2022) stated in a recent online webinar, abolitionists increasingly know how to shut down prisons and provide security but are deeply challenged when it comes to thinking about violence in our own communities, accountability from abusers, or ways of providing safety that do not make us cops. We, as editors, find safety to be so deeply embedded in the foundations of state violence and white supremacy that we ourselves are operating without a clear lexicon but with a vision for something more akin to the freedom and emancipatory infrastructure of Black life, joy, safety, and agency. We look to the longstanding feats of survival and the potentialities of Black sociality against the terrors of violence and criminalization.

Black Safety

El-Amin’s research in this issue, building from her 2019 dissertation and community work, offers Black safety as a reimagining that centers Black peoples, places, and experiences:

Black safety is a framing that recognizes the perpetual weight of racial injustice that stifles the fullest expression of Black life and wellbeing in

America. It affirms Black peoples' need for freedom not just from the more blatant of these injustices like chattel slavery and disenfranchisement but also freedom from the most minute and fundamental threats to our humanity. Black Safety predicates on Black people's freedom: freedom to self-determination, freedom from perpetual fear, freedom to love and be with and in a community that values and promotes their humanity rather than the criminalization of their bodies.

Black safety is the creation of temporal spaces and places where Black people experience or approximate the experience of this type of freedom in the face of violent systemic inequalities. In pursuit of this type of freedom, Black safety denounces mass incarceration and the policing of Black bodies. Furthermore, it radically necessitates the destruction and disappearance of whiteness, white supremacy, and the institutions upon which they stand. Black safety recognizes that it is nearly impossible in the current iteration of American society for Black people to experience true freedom, but the endemic insurgency or fugitivity of Black safety is still ever present.

Emergent work, like El-Amin's, points us to the long history of Black safety, bringing into relief the ways that Black people have survived under the tyranny of colonialism, imperialism, and its many manifestations for centuries, from subtle survival acts to radical opposition, across space and time, as perennial forms of resistance (Taylor 2016, 2017). Similar to current movements, Black Power era organizations like the Black Panther Party (BPP) argued that doing away with racist police violence and prisons was central to Black liberation. Starting as a community defense project against police violence and brutality, the BPP argued that Black poverty was an outcome of state neglect and abandonment, with police as the only state investment in Black neighborhoods there to surveil and criminalize Black communities. With the launch of the breakfast programs in 1969, the BPP made mutual aid in the face of such abandonment and neglect a central plank of its program. Similarly, Black and Latina women's anti-violence work across the 1970s and into the 1990s argued against criminal justice-centered approaches to gender violence that moved energy out of movements and into social services and law and order forms. As Emily Thuma (2019) notes, scholars have overlooked how intensely questions about the role of police and prisons in responding to gender violence were debated at that moment in regional and national levels and within organizations. The self-defense campaigns for Joan Little and Inez García, who had killed their sexual assailants and intimate partners, as well as for Angela Davis, developed out of

sustained participation in defense organizing and new alliances with women in prison. These women crafted an anti-violence and anti-prison agenda committed to advocacy for intersectional community-based responses to rape and sexual violence (Davis et al. 2022, Richie 2012) that has extended into recent campaigns to free Marissa Alexander, Cyntoia Brown Long, Ce Ce McDonald, and Nan-Hui Jo, all framed as mass defense projects for survivors who have been criminalized.

This legacy is apparent in the organizing efforts of Black feminist and queer organizers and scholars of color in anti-violence work (Davis et al. 2022, Thuma 2019). Collectives and chapters of Black Mama's Bailouts, community defense projects, court watch, makeshift pods and peer groups of anti-violence work, and mothers fighting for justice for murdered children are routine parts of the life of cities across the United States. The daily work of Black Mamas in all of these forms captures the emergency-oriented commitment to anti-prison work, building coalitionally with women and children on the inside, showing up, and meeting the basic needs of survivors of organized abandonment. We see this everywhere but especially in the formative work of INCITE! in generating a women of color anti-violence movement (INCITE! 2016); in Ejeris Dixon's efforts as founding program coordinator for the Safe OUTside the System Collective at the Audre Lorde Project, which centers abolitionist principles on behalf of lesbian, gay, bisexual, two-spirit, trans and gender nonconforming peoples; in SpiritHouse, the Black women-led artist and abolition collective that has structured the Durham Harm Free Zone; in Alexis Pauline Gumb's work with UBUNTU, a survivor-led coalition of women of color to end gendered violence; in Mimi Kim's efforts with Creative Interventions and their creation of one of the most used grassroots toolkits for community-based interventions to interpersonal violence; in Mariame Kaba's efforts with Chicago's Project NIA to end youth incarceration and the Just Practice Collaborative to respond to intimate partner violence and sexual assault without relying primarily on police or carceral systems; in Mia Mingus's efforts to generate models of accountability and pod safety in the Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective, which emphasizes survivor and disability justice; in Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha's work on care work and disability justice; in Dean Spade's focus on mutual aid and radical care and his efforts with the Sylvia Rivera Law Project; in the Oakland Power Projects; in Philly Stands Up; in Staci Haines's work with GenerationFIVE, which seeks to end the sexual abuse of children within five generations via survivor-led community efforts at transformative justice; in efforts by Indigenous scholars to decolonize

methodologies and the history, writing, and theory of imperialism via Red Nation and NDN Collective; and in *Interrupting Criminalization* and in *Survived & Punished*, which is grounded in historical trajectories of self-defense and protection “to de-criminalize efforts to survive domestic and sexual violence, support and free criminalized survivors, and abolish gender violence, policing, prisons, and deportations.”

We take this work as a serious space of study and struggle and have included organizer voices across the articles and as a focused presence in this issue as a space of reflection for this ongoing formative work on Black safety. In the current era, the work of the Movement for Black Lives (2016) in the direct fight against carceral safety has ignited and held space for so much of this effort led by this generation’s Black abolitionists, reproductive justice activists, labor organizers, and housing and food justice workers toward a more democratic world. Even as these groups have sought to grapple with interpersonal and state violence, they have insisted upon a structural analysis that views capitalism as foundational to all forms of oppression. As key sites for multiracial coalition building and training spaces for grassroots efforts in communities, Black, queer, and trans organizations have worked to save the people they love and thereby to organize against all forms of violence, including the state and capital. Borrowing from Fannie Lou Hamer’s powerful statement, “Nobody’s free until everybody’s free,” Black safety necessitates a more meaningful kind of safety for all. Defending Black space and its communal forms of safety as places of vital dependencies and engagements protected from the carceral state, while key to the history of the Black Power Movement, makes it a perpetual counterinsurgent target, such as the Black Panther breakfast program being labeled by then-FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover as “the greatest threat to internal security of the country.” The carceral state, as the articles in this issue make clear, seeks to eradicate Black safety by any means possible. In this way, Black safety necessitates the transformation of infrastructures, institutions, and societies, requiring, as Ruth Gilmore forecasts, one thing: change everything (Gilmore & Murakawa 2020).

Building on Black safety and the work of organizers and scholars we interrogate and challenge safety by centering Black agency to deconstruct the necropolitics of racialized public safety, carceral safety, and white supremacist conceptions of safety. Black safety is ground up, an on-the-ground approach for these communities that produces culture, space, and joy and outlines agency in what are often rendered non-agentive realities due to systems of law, power, and politics. As El-Amin writes in this issue of gentrification,

the negation of Black safety looks like “the rupture, erosion, and erasure of community cultural practices that provide safety, relationality, and joy through the presence of long-term residents who are being pushed out.” One of the key features of Black safety is its temporality, opening up temporary respite of community through freedom from carceral safety as well as the white gaze. Black safety offers a reprieve in the absence of carceral safety and whiteness in the midst of community: from the everyday techniques of creating informal neighborhood daycares, extended families, homecomings, barbecues, and unsaid community standards of conduct. It is rooted in the collective trauma and resistance of early Black churches with secret reading groups that provided refuge from heinous treatment by slave owners and overseers. Much like the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense patrolling police who terrorize communities, informal adoptions in Black families, or Black queer houses and ballroom cultures, Black safety is the agency of Black people among one another, in subtle and overt ways, in a community void of white violence.

Questions, Contributions, and Hopes

In this special issue, we take up a key set of questions and conversations with scholars and activists whose work is attuned to the practice of Black safety. Similar to McDowell’s work prompting community members to ask what community safety could look like, this special issue asks readers to work to conceptualize Black safety with us. Our contributors were given the prompts below:

What is Black safety and its role conceptually, experientially, culturally, politically in countering the white supremacy of the carceral state?

What do sites of Black safety look like—what do sites of threats to Black safety look like?

What is its historical genealogy and foundational relationship to Black place-making, movement, and temporality—where do Black people feel safe and unsafe across time and place?

How does Black safety relate to fugitive forms of Black social life that have attempted to carve out not simply survival, but Black life, agency, and joy in the uninhabitable spaces of white supremacy and carcerality?

How too have concerns for Black safety under systems of white supremacy and carcerality occupied and exhausted the lives of Black people?

How do Black safety and joy act as insurgent ways of knowing and being that challenge the dominance and justification of white supremacist and liberal constructions of public and carceral safety?

What forms do these ways of Black social life take? And how does approximation to and reproductions of whiteness in Black spaces pose threats to Black safety?

Is the term “safety” foundationally co-opted through structures of white supremacy and racial capital?

What visions, lexicons, and alternatives exist beyond safety?

How do we move (already) toward freedom and emancipatory infrastructures?

How do we name the everyday ways in which Black protection, joy, and radical care and culture take shape in spite of the racialized necropolitics of so-called public safety?

What is it that truly allows all of us to live full, flourishing lives?

In their responses against criminalization and the terror of police and prisons, the authors imagine a world of safety through interdependence and intersectionality, collective care, memory, holding space for the layering and levels of trauma and oppression that the white carceral state has produced, and insisting on seeing harm-doers as part of the community rather than banished from it. In this special issue, Black safety is home, family, place, time, horses and riding, food, housing, dancing, listening, bandaging, grieving, and engaging in principled struggle and relational care against the spectacular violence and grinding ordinariness of white carceral safety.

El-Amin and Perry appropriately launch the special edition with El-Amin’s theorization of Black safety in relation to one of its starkest enemies: gentrification. As they note in their introduction, in the summer of the George Floyd uprisings, after the high-profile killings by police and white vigilantes of three Black Americans, Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, and Breonna Taylor, Black people bought land. With efforts to retain and collectivize land, to secure a place, as a key component of Black safety now and historically, we see the importance of place as sites of refuge and resistance from the white gaze, making Black homes, shops, schools, and churches not just the center of Black social, cultural, and business life, but spaces of safety. The authors shift our focus from the important dominant critiques of gentrification as a removal of working-class people of color and poor communities by well-to-do whites who are drawn back to the inner city to

one in which we see the deeper functions of gentrification as the erasure of community cultural practices that provide safety, relationality, and joy. El-Amin and Perry push us to see how carceral and white preoccupations with safety in the processes of gentrification invert it foundationally, disinterpreting and criminalizing the historical presence of Black life and people, changing “the feel, the memory, the identity of the community.” Through two fascinating case studies, we see how insurgent Black safety is reduced to nuisance and noise by white encroachment and capital in historically Black spaces. In Philadelphia, we follow the Fletcher Street Urban Riding Club, a key Black institution of intergenerational Black riders and horses, pulling from the important but overlooked historical legacy of the Black cowboy (see Jordan Peele’s portrayal of this genre in his 2022 film *Nope*). Now facing a threatened existence in the expanding gentrification of North Philly, the Fletcher Street stables, long a space of safety and refuge for Black youth and rescued horses, relationships foundationally marked by care, risk disappearance. In the second case study, we link safety and culture across the long history of Black music as a central component of Black life, migration, and community to the specific place and time of Go-Go music, a genre that crosses funk with hip-hop and is “a signature characteristic of Washington DC’s Black population.” Focusing on “the expressive freedom the genre allows, in its function as a place-making and place-claiming tool in the development of Black spaces outside the white gaze, and in the community building and care it fosters,” El-Amin and Perry note how its criminalization in conjunction with gentrification is an old racial displacement pattern in the United States at the level of culture. Go-Go spaces, like the Fletcher Street stables, have been key spaces of temporary respite, where Black people could just be, finding joy in movement, dance, each other, taking a momentary break from harsh realities of racialization and criminalization under the white gaze. As we see with each of this issue’s contributions, Black safety emerges as an (infra)structure that is ordinary, everyday, and built relationally through the work and love of community, always against and in the shadow of monolithic reactionary institutions like law, police, and the criminal legal system.

McDowell, whose early 2019 piece on insurgent safety informs and inspires our work in this issue, reminds us of the challenges of moving beyond carceral safety toward insurgent forms of safety and the importance of the Black radical tradition in doing so. Carceral safety is a powerful force rendered largely invisible in that “it successfully naturalizes the idea that safety is inextricably linked to policing, banishment (via jail, prison, or deporta-

tion), and mass criminalization, the trinity of state protection.” Insurgent safety counters carceral dominance through locally determined ethics and practices that refuse the logics of the carceral state, and instead reconceptualize safety as a mode of sociality built through things like interdependence, mutual aid, play, joy, and communion. Attentive to how crisis poses distinct opportunities to challenge carceral safety, McDowell asks: “If carceral safety is a vehicle of premature death, what does a different practice of safety look like? How do people practice noncarceral forms of safety in their everyday lives? What is the role of the imagination in this process?” McDowell’s work as a scholar and activist in Durham, North Carolina, highlights the city’s longstanding efforts to contest policing in the South. With a specific focus upon the abolitionist imagination in Durham’s (Re)imagining Public Safety Project, McDowell insists upon the importance of cultural creativity as an ordinary, collective form of sociality essential to the birthing of new worlds. The project, where participants were given digital cameras and asked to take photos of what community safety looks like, sought to specifically generate, analyze, and circulate abolitionist alternatives to the carceral state. Along the way, participants grappled with the challenges of scale, strategy, reformism, grief, and survival in the aftermath of the death of seventeen-year-old Jesus “Chuy” Huerta while in police custody. Across beautiful, grainy, and deceptively mundane photos as well as colorful drawings and artwork provided by community members, we see Black safety manifest as what McDowell describes as a kinetic, improvised exchange of energies and movements, prefiguring long-term trust and relationship-building practices against racial capitalism, liberalism, and the carceral state. Drawing upon the work of Fred Moten, Robin D.G. Kelley, and Cedric Robinson, McDowell insists that this form of radical politics and mutual aid is foundational in challenging white carceral and criminological modes of safety through a radical sense of openness and curiosity that puts joy first:

Their collective work reminds us that we must unmake, indeed implode, the project of white civil society, a project that has only ever imagined a “public safety” that produces white hyper-life through the production and exploitation of group differentiated premature death (Gilmore 2007; see also Rodriguez 2008). When safety is reimagined as something we make and remake collectively, not as something we have, or something we are (safe/unsafe), the ideological glue that holds the carceral state together is “productively destabilized.”

Both El-Amin and McDowell provide foundational spaces to rethink safety in its chronic cooptation by white supremacy and the carceral state and its insistent and fugitive reconfiguring of the places, relationships, and cultures of Black insurgent joy.

While discussions of safety are often configured as specific to the project of mass criminalization in the United States, we know that carceral configurations of safety and the movements against them are planet wide. As Black radical abolitionists such as Angela Davis and Ruth Gilmore argue, our efforts must be international, moving across borders in efforts to build strategy, practice, and movement solidarities. Both Shaneda Destine and S.M. Rodriguez shift our analysis to a more intersectional and internationalist focus. In Destine's work, we follow the movement that has launched so much of the contemporary conversation around Black safety in the United States and across the globe: the Movement for Black Lives and Black Lives Matter. Destine's fieldwork in Baltimore, Appalachia, and the South focuses on "the current Movement for Black Lives (M4BL) as a contested space of Black safety—a space to imagine liberation, to be liberated, and to provide a temporal safety net for *all* Black people." Destine does not shy away from a close examination of the tensions within movement building at the local level and the necessity of an intersectional and international form of consciousness that centers all Black lives across nations, genders, ethnicities, and sexualities in relation to the challenges of trauma and the necessities of Black safety. In providing a genealogy of the Movement For Black Lives, she also points us toward the potential futures of Black safety as BLM has become a capacious space for larger demands for reparations, equitable housing, education, health, and all the things necessary for Black safety for all Black people. As Destine makes clear, that cannot happen without an intersectional and material analysis of how to produce safe havens for the complexities of organizing work itself, against the trauma and mental exhaustion of criminalization, targeted policing, and incarceration. Destine points to how these varied experiences and proximities to trauma necessitate that Black safety be intersectional with close attention to the overwhelming number of ways in which Black bodies are subject to oppression and state violence. Illuminating how class conflicts operate around the issue of gentrification, Destine describes one organizer's efforts to strategize how Black communities can benefit from the seeming inevitability of gentrification, while another, gay, at times unhoused, and with mental health issues, insists that they would see none of those benefits. Destine's work highlights how "the creation of these autonomous Black spaces to dream

for liberation—and the conditions of what that liberation may look like in local organizations—actually unfolds” through “narratives of activist-centered approaches to reimagine how this space can meet the challenge of providing a haven for all Black people through an intersectional perspective, since freeing the most marginalized of us will necessitate the freedom from all the systems that disenfranchise people.”

S.M. Rodriguez continues this discussion with attention to the growing neoliberalization of political economies of prisons and postcolonial contexts by forcing a powerful return and global reckoning with “the prison as the preeminent sphere of social, economic, political and physical death throughout the African Diaspora: a carceral death world that exists to stifle Black dissent.” Following the prison writing of former political prisoner Stella Nyanzi, they remind us of Black safety as foundationally diasporic in response to colonial systems of violence, where a global carceralism (militarization, securitization, and confinement) takes shape with the prison, itself a diaspora of cages, the place where “anti-Black coloniality enjoys continuous reanimation.” Returning us to the physical infrastructure of the prison, the colonial carceral diaspora, in this case Uganda and the larger context of Africa, foregrounds the challenges of generating Black safety in impossible death worlds. For Rodriguez, the prison is the crucial site in which anti-Black coloniality enjoys continuous reanimation. Given that the expansion and overutilization of prisons is a uniquely growing threat to Black female, intersex, and trans safety internationally, Rodriguez turns to “oversimplified notions of sex and gender” as key challenges to Black safety. Focusing upon the extractive and forced labor of Black women of African descent, Rodriguez insists upon prisons as a western bureaucratizing and correcting violence that continues racialized brutality and extraction through colonial discourses of civility and modernization. Here the breaking force of the prison is depicted as a “perverse criminalization” and dehumanization through immoral and unreasonable harm that also severs the capacities for shared humanity—the building blocks of Black safety. Against this formation, both connection and interdependence materialize as key political spaces for surviving and resisting this punishment, even and unto death. As Rodriguez describes, it is when Nyanzi suffers a miscarriage in prison, one that guards assume is impossible because of her age and declare her postmenopausal, that she writes of her survival through the mutual aid of fellow prisoners: “prisoners give her water, pads, toilet paper to collect her blood and her unborn baby, resources rationed to them. They protect her privacy, they ‘hold up blankets as shields,’ they lift and blanket her limp body”—“Sisterhood is forged on

that prison floor.” Here in the forced and oppressive definition of Black sexed bodies and womanhood, women and their bodies are thrown into mortal harm by the carcerality of prison and its presumptions of sex, and a queer intimacy and shared politics of struggle and survival is born. Opposing individual and reformist remedies, Rodriguez insists that Black safety is an abolitionist enterprise: “we must rid the colonial carceral from our culture, including the institution of gender. We need to situate the prison as the preeminent space of Black death (personal, political, and social)—so that we can abolish it.” Rodriguez leaves us with a methodology in which to do this work: one of connection-making where “we witness life-building practices and historical-futuristic collectivity.” As Rodriguez concludes, Black safety is created through collectives, both intimate and political, through survival and struggle: “whether inside or out, the collective is all that we have.”

Last, we turn to the work of three formidable organizers of Black safety and engage them in a series of what were hard, productive, visionary conversations about the tensions of safety and joy, reform, and abolition. Ejeris Dixon, founding program coordinator of the Safe OUTside the System Collective at the Audre Lorde Project and director of Vision Change Win Consulting, Krystal Leaphart, operations and policy associate at the National Organization of Black Elected Legislative Women, and Ash-lee Woodard Henderson, the first Black woman codirector of the Highlander Research and Education Center, speak to us about their experiences, practices, and dreams of Black safety. Their work marries the pragmatic work of everyday organizing against the most challenging realities of harm and violence through commitments to the struggle of envisioning and building a world otherwise. Their edited interviews are presented in print version and in full on the award-winning Black in Appalachia Podcast created by El-Amin. The podcast episode is a key component of this issue, offering a different kind of sensory space to listen and hear how Black people dream safety and freedom, to hold space for a more experimental kind of engagement and reflection. These movement actors took time to share how they came to organizing and how communities and generational legacies have informed their work, their conceptualizations of safety, the role of intersectionality and trauma in movements, the challenges and tensions of abolition, the role of place and gentrification, and finally, their vision of Black joy and safety. A rich and complex vision of Black safety unfolds in the telling of these stories. We hope this special issue documents, indicts, celebrates, analyzes, inspires, and provokes. Mostly, we hope it permits you to envision with us the modes of analysis that acknowledge, generate, and protect the historical

and emergent practices of Black safety and joy necessary to the transformation of everything.

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