

Contents

Introduction or Looking for the Fugitive Life in Social Death — 1

Part 1 Fugitivity against the Border: Afro-Pessimism, Black Feminist Fugitive Thought, and the Border to Social Death — 12

- 1.1 A First Note on Method: Concept-Driven Cultural Analysis — 13
- 1.2 Travelling Border Concepts — 14
- 1.3 Afro-Pessimism and the Border(s) of “the Human” — 19
- 1.4 “Black Feminist Fugitivity” against the Border — 32
- 1.5 A Second Note on Method: The Texts, the Tools, and Positionalities — 54

Part 2 Practices of Flight: Captivity and Fugitivity in Black American Literature — 64

- 2.1 Fugitive Forbears — 64
 - Reiterations of life and “comparative freedom” against social death in Frederick Douglass’s *Narrative* and *My Bondage* — 72
 - “Loophole[s] of retreat” from the garret to the North: Harriet Jacobs’s *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* — 79
- 2.2 Fugitive Black Power — 91
 - “A slave in a captive society”: George Jackson’s prison letters — 109
 - Conjuring captive and fugitive communities in Angela Davis’s autobiography — 120
 - “You’ll be in jail wherever you go”: Confinement and flight in *Assata: An Autobiography* — 135
 - From Black Power to Black Lives Matter — 151
- 2.3 Fugitive Fictions of Slavery and Flight — 154
 - “Do you think it’ll be any different in Canada?”: Fugitive narration from Josiah Henson’s slave narrative to Ishmael Reed’s *Flight to Canada* — 167
 - “Rememories” of captivity and flight in Toni Morrison’s *Beloved* — 187
 - Futile homemaking, impossible homecoming, and “perpetual migration” in Lawrence Hill’s *Someone Knows My Name* — 204
 - The “fugitive notes” of Teju Cole’s *Open City* — 221
 - Fugitive insights of narratives of slavery and flight — 244

**Fugitive Conclusions or the Inescapability of Captivity, Flight, and Fugitive
Narration — 248**

Works Cited — 258

Acknowledgements — 286

Index — 288