

GHOSTS OF SEGREGATION

AMERICAN RACISM, HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT

PHOTOGRAPHY BY **RICHARD FRISHMAN** • ESSAYS BY **B. BRIAN FOSTER**

FOREWORD BY **IMANI PERRY**



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Grandma was the one who taught me. A photograph is a serious thing—how it looks, who is in it, and what you decide to do with it after it is taken. Keeping ain't always about what *you* want to have. It is sometimes about *what* you want to keep. No matter how high-happy, low-sad, or “so sorry” your history makes you, it is yours and Ours. Be responsible to it.

To the house that my brother Blake and I grew up calling Grandma-and-Grandpa-house, like it was one word, the first archive I ever knew. For holding Grandma and what she kept. For teaching me the importance of keeping. For keeping.

To Black folks, wherever they may be in time, space, and condition. Every word I ever write is out of a deep, tender, and defiant love for you. For Us.

To Rich, my friend, who handled this project with the seriousness and responsibility that my grandmother would say it required. Thank you for the astonishing amount of time, attention, and effort that you poured into this collection. Thank you for trusting me with what I have heard you say is “the most important thing” you’ve ever done. For practicing the things that, when it comes to American racism, so many white folks have made a lot of money writing and talking about, but not living—empathy, revision, humility, careful listening, curiosity, reading, asking. For doing.

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but writing? That happens in community. For community.

To the scholars, writers, and other creatives whose work I reference or signify on: *The Trayvon Generation* by Elizabeth Alexander; *Imagined Communities* by Benedict Anderson; *Camera Lucida* by Roland Barthes; “The Ghosts of Place” by Michael Bell; *A Map to the Door of No Return* by Dionne Brand; *Listening to Images* by Tina Campt; *No Common Ground* by Karen Cox; “The Symbolic Lynching of James Meredith: A Visual Analysis and Collective Counter Narrative to Racial Domination” by Barbara Harris Combs, Kirsten Dellinger, Jeffery T. Jackson, Kirk A. Johnson, Willa M. Johnson, Jodi Skipper, John Sonnett, and James M. Thomas; “A Space for Place in Sociology” by Thomas Gieryn; *Ghostly Matters* by Avery Gordon; *Freedom Dreams* by Robin D. G. Kelley; *The Generation of Post-Memory* by Marianne Hirsch; “Dear Mississippi” by Sierra Mannie; *Black Aliveness* and *The Sovereignty of Quiet* by Kevin Quashie; *Chocolate Cities* by Marcus Anthony Hunter and Zandria F. Robinson; “Black Placemaking: Celebration, Play, and Poetry” by Marcus Anthony Hunter, Mary Pattillo, Zandria F. Robinson, and Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor; “Haunted Houses, Sinking Ships” by Samira Kawash; “Where Chicago’s 1919 Race Riot Began” by Robert Loerzel; “Searching for the Doorway: Dionne Brand’s Thirsty” by Jody Moody; *Beloved* by Toni Morrison; *Mississippi Cold Case* by David Ridgen and Thomas Moore; *Orientalism* by Edward Said; “Lynching” by Tyler Shields; *Black Towns*, *Black*

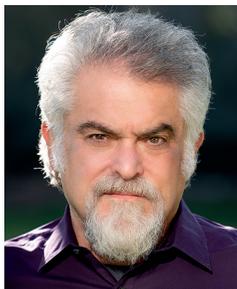
Futures by Karla Slocum; *How the Word Is Passed* by Clint Smith; *Imperial Debris*, edited by Anna Laura Stoler; *Political Life in the Wake of the Plantation* by Deborah Thomas; *The Warmth of Other Suns* by Isabel Wilkerson; *Hope Draped in Black* by Joseph Winters; *Development Arrested* by Clyde Woods; “An Open Letter from Black U.Va.” by a group of Black students at the University of Virginia; the poetry of Lucille Clifton, Lorne Simpson, and Richard Wright; the thinking of Barbara Christian, Saidiya Hartman, Christina Sharpe, and Katherine McKittrick; the writing of Regina Bradley, Gwendolyn Brooks, Zora Neale Hurston, Randall Keenan, Kiese Laymon, Audre Lorde, Jesmyn Ward; and the mapping and archival work of the Texas Freedom Colonies Project. For the language. For language.

Grandma was the one who taught me. I grew up living beside her and running behind her—to Sunday school and worship service, to the grocery store and McDuffie Drugs, to love on friends, family, and church folks—all the time. She is the first person I looked for after school, in the summertime, and in those kinds of family pictures when your people are so young that it’s hard to recognize them, but you look at their eyes and cheekbones, you look at their nose and their necks, you look at their hands, and I could always know which one was her.

To Grandma—Lyvelle Trice Foster—a keeper. Our keeper. For teaching me. For loving me. By how you lived. In deep, tender, and fierce love. Thank you. For ever.

—B. BRIAN FOSTER

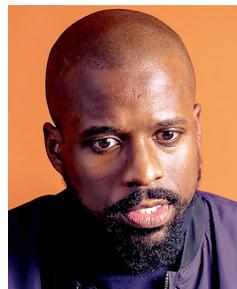
ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Richard Frishman's photographs explore how the built environment reveals our cultural histories. In 2021, Frishman was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship for photography. His current documentary project, *Ghosts of Segregation*, explores the vestiges of racial oppression in the landscape of the United States.

Frishman's photography is included in a wide range of collections, including the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, the New Orleans Museum of Art, the Museum of Contemporary Photography, and the OAS Art Museum of the Americas. His work has garnered numerous awards, including the 2019 Review Santa Fe Curator's Choice Award (juror: Makeda Best), the 2019 PhotoNOLA Portfolio Award, two Sony World Photography Awards (2018), a Communication Arts Photography Award (2018), and a Photo District News Photo Annual Award (2018). In 1983, he was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize in feature photography.

He lectures around the United States about the intersection of the designed environment, history, and social issues.



Zaire Love

B. Brian Foster is a writer, storyteller, and sociologist from Shannon, Mississippi. He earned his PhD in sociology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and currently works as an associate professor of sociology at the University of Virginia. His award-winning book *I Don't Like the Blues: Race, Place, and the Backbeat of Black* chronicles Black community life and blues tourism in Clarksdale, Mississippi. Brian has also directed two award-winning short films and written for *Bitter Southerner*, CNN, Delish.com, *Esquire*, the Ford Foundation, *Veranda* magazine, and *The Washington Post*, among others.

Also by B. Brian Foster

I Don't Like the Blues: Race, Place, and the Backbeat of Black Life



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