

LETTERS
FROM
THE
UTOPIAN
MARGINS

THE HAWTHORN
ARCHIVE

AVERY F.
GORDON

"The Hawthorn Archive opens a path for thinking in its extended engagement with the documents and ephemera of utopian thought. Avery Gordon creates an innovative and dazzling account of global efforts to live in the here and now that refuse the brutal dispositions of racial capitalism and create the 'what might be.' It is an exercise in runaway thought; it is a blues, a manifesto, a love letter, and a freedom dream."—**Saidiya Hartman**, author of *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route*

"The Hawthorn Archive is the 'Where's Waldo?' of theoretical treasure hunts. This not-so-imaginary archive is a multimedia jigsaw puzzle, a plurivocal mystery story, an epistemic chameleon of present tenses, shimmering hints, fragmentary indices, and stumbling stones that keep moving. This is a curatorial masterpiece whose 'utopian margins' are as imperfectly futuristic, fleeting, and incommensurable as history itself."—**Patricia J. Williams**, James L. Dohr Professor of Law, Columbia University School of Law



THE HAWTHORN ARCHIVE IS NOT AN ARCHIVE IN THE CONVENTIONAL SENSE but rather a disorganized and fugitive space for assembling traces of the political consciousness of runaway slaves, war deserters, prison abolitionists, commoners, and other radicals who live in-difference to the deadly forms of power that characterize modern society. In this genre-bending publication, Avery F. Gordon presents a selection of its documents—letters, reports, notes, essays, images, conversations—exploring the utopian elements found in this past and present resistive and defiant activity.

Reminiscent of the later fictions of Italo Calvino or Walter Benjamin's Arcades Project, *The Hawthorn Archive* is a groundbreaking work that defies strict disciplinary, methodological, and aesthetic boundaries. And like *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*, which established Gordon as one of the most influential interdisciplinary scholars of the humanities and social sciences in recent years, it provides a kaleidoscopic analysis of power and effect.

Avery F. Gordon is Professor of Sociology at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and Visiting Professor in the Birkbeck School of Law, University of London. Her most recent books are *The Workhouse* (with Ines Schaber), *Ghostly Matters*, and *Keeping Good Time*.

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