

At the end of first light, beyond
father, my mother, the shack
chapped with blisters, like a pear
afflicted with curl, and the thin
roof patched with pieces of gaso
cans, which create swamps of ru
in the stinking sordid gray straw
and when the wind whistles, the
odds and ends make a noise biza
like the crackling of frying, then
like a brand dropped into water t
smoke of its twigs flying up . . . /
the bed of boards from which my
rose, my whole entire race from
with its keros
elephantia
and its
rearr
er's



I the issu
he was pe
ump threat
many moved
American Fre
ether; he prom
ership (TPP), a tr
ed that he would u
gency tariffs, on Chi
ith all his policies, Mr T
age once in office, partic
conomy of starting a fully-hea
to
the mindset that clearly underlies an
mercantilist zero-
view of the world in which economies are intrinsically in competition and
nt account deficits prima facie reflect cheating by trade partners. With
ositive wealth-creating role of trade increasingly and mistakenly being
issued by politicians, that is a deeply worrying development.
e are reasons to hope Mr Trump might soften his approach once in
r. First, there is a long tradition of presidential candidates talking tough
side and then pulling back. Barack Obama promised to renegotiate NAFTA

NO MONEY

#5

**THE CRACKLING OF
FRYING**

Containing

Hamja Ahsan::: *from Shy Radicals*

Tom Allen::: untitled

Nisha Ramayya::: *from States of the Body Produced by Love*

Sean Bonney::: Three Letters in Turmoil

Danny Hayward::: 09.11.2016

Hannah Proctor::: Under the circumstances

De-Arrest Newsfeed::: Everyone's Grievous Banquet

Ed Luker::: Naming and the riotous: the socio-poetics of Sean Bonney's *Letters Against the Firmament*

Wail Qasim::: Justice Matter: Black Lives in a #caravan

from Shy Radicals
HAMJA AHSAN

Smuggled excerpt from Prison Interview from Shy Radical political prisoner Amy Littlewood (currently detained without trial for resistance operation for the Aspergistan homeland state):

"One Friday night when I was free, I came to another realisation. I was walking around the Brixton area looking for just a quiet place to sit with my friend. Just one place. We walked all around the streets and the back streets and the markets. Every place was rammed, bustling, pumping out incessantly and confined noise. This was supposed to be a sign of "life", a "successful area". Before we even walked through the door... You can anticipate the unhomeliness. I just wanted one quiet place to sit and have a face-to-face meaningful conversation with low lighting. There was no where to go. One bar after another. Just one place...

So I thought how about if it could be made statutory. That a quiet place could be protected by law. A legal right that acknowledged our way of being. A shy people's relations act. Space, property, noise protected by the state. Space in the public sphere reserved for us in alignment with our needs. Could that be conceivable? Could it be a realistic demand?

But then you realise that the entire legislative body is made of people of a certain personality. They are supposed to represent you. And then our people, they don't have the "personality" to run for election as a Member of Parliament. So are all shades of "personality", as they call it, represented? Or is it the case that the person with "personality" is then supposed to speak on our behalf? As if they can, they only speak to their own class ... Then you think to yourself what changes are necessary?"

FREE ALL SHY RADICALS POLITICAL PRISONERS

--

Charles: As soon as we get settled, we'll build you a dark room in the basement, okay?

Lydia: My whole life is a dark room. One big dark room.

- dialogue from the film Beetlejuice (Dir: Tim Burton, Lydia played by Winona Ryder)

--

extrovert-supremacism out of Africa...

extrovert-supremacism out of Asia...

extrovert-supremacism out of the Americas...

extrovert-supremacism out the Middle-East...

extrovert-supremacism out of the ghetto...

Shy radicals is militant, vanguard, uncompromising, separatist, internationalist, Anti-Imperialist political party for Shy People.

@shyradicals

@hamjaahsan

The book will be published by Bookworks soon as part of the Common Objective series:

hamjaahsan@gmail.com for latest

Untitled
TOM ALLEN

At the centre of the suffering is a hole, and in the hole is a child next to fire; registering each flame as if it means only for her. Outside the child is fear, coagulation and time. But the child does not age. She is fixed in the centre with reach. The need maintains while the child has the need but not for the sustenance, for the child does not change nor grow. The desires grow with the constitution and they speak to protect the object from the child while the child is fair, but uninterested. The defence is indistinguishable from the constitution. Those who need the constitution as they caress it, hold and know it outside them in its absence inside them, must reach for the objects while condemning the child who swings, sings and moves for the object prior, but not behind it. Against the child the things grow shifting through defences cold of the constitution as the destiny of the thing restricted where need as access is trailing meaning determined. Occurrence strikes as the defences grow named in their faceted as distinct with the false-aspect-faces of the child condemned. The aspects of the child are the defences condemned wriggling as class under one particular sun. Some hang, die while the modes of death are outside as the process of the working on the outside changes that which changes on the inside. There are cities built in the suffering; built to divide the suffering, to protect it from the child in their increasing constitutions as quartz red destinies maintain their constitution within the border as decay asserted in the process in which the outside changes on the inside to the possibility of the beyond defended from the child who knows as simple as crime that says when asked that there is no change in the lock without the thief and no stage for the instrument outside the tortured.

from States of the Body Produced by Love
NISHA RAMAYYA

On the future tense in Sanskrit: responses to the desire to arrive at the present by means of the past.

Joy of the Eyes

Pensive Reflection

Imagine a time in which you feel happy. In your happiness, you imagine another time in which you feel unhappy. You are in bed, your love is in your arms; the room is cold and it belongs to you.

This is the tower of the past. The battlements are formed of anthills, the anthills the curves of the goddess, the curves snakes agreeing sealing themselves away. Lookouts lie face down, mouths open to the earth, swallowing the matter of their warnings. Lookouts are snakes.

In your unhappiness, you imagine another time in which you feel happy. You are standing, you catch sight of your love across the room. One or both of you is wearing a uniform. The room is warm; it does not belong to you.

The tower is oversaturated and impossible to date. Lookouts' mouths fill with earth, earth itching, itching converting warning to retch. Lookouts reduce the noise of their retching; snakes containing the warnings in the smoothed lines of their swallows.

This is how to conjugate the old future tense.

Desire

For the sake of standing, we would pull the warnings from the mouths of the lookouts.
We would pull out the tongues of our enemies.
We would paralyse.

The goddess, highly coloured, carries a knife.
You imagine her cutting tongues.
You would offer tongues.

[*yaḥe yaḥṣi yaḥṭāhe ca*] I sacrifice, I have sacrificed, and I shall sacrifice

The first tongue, the other (between two and infinity) tongues, the others speaking desire into desire.

You, paralysed, would let her into your mouth.
She would kiss your friends.

You, standing outside desire, would watch.

Sleeplessness

Past versions of you
Past versions of me dreaming past versions of you
Inherited dreams of you
Inherited qualities of me inherited from dreams of you
Inherited qualities of me you
Inherited qualities and strings of pearls and lightly wearing me you
Places where your pearls were lightly worn were like me unlikely you
Places where your loved ones were born you were born like-minded you me you
Places where your loved ones die in all likelihood you die you me you
Places where you would die you would die your like-mindedness would die you you you

Singular moments of laughter you
Plural moments of laughter with you with you with you
Singular moments of fear of you of me of you
Plural moments of fear of walking with without these moments with you
Desiring to walk home to leave home to leave you
Desiring to leave home with you without you without you
Cleaning the room as if that is all you can do you
Cleaning the room cleaning and cleaning and missing you you
Squatting to clean and squatting and sitting and missing you me you
Unseating you are deep-seated within me you you you

Desiring to clean to unseat you to squat you
Desiring do not squat you do nothing you do nothing you
Images and actions are not images and actions you
Becoming visible ink on the walls of the mind you
Becoming characteristic of poetry you
Becoming sensibility of writers and readers of poetry you me you
Becoming visibility of the walls between minds you you you
Visibility of the walls is neither image nor action you me you
Shame at placing this moment beside that moment you me you
Shame at placing this room beside that room me me you

Retching between moments of laughter and fear you
Retching while walking not with you not like you
Retching the lengths between me and you me and you
Measuring lengths between wanting you having you
Measuring lengths between wanting having wanting having you you you
Finding ourselves in our friends they're like you they're you they're not like you
Finding ourselves on the outside we're inside we're like you we're not you
Finding ourselves wanting we're having we're not you we're not you
Inheriting your loved ones you are qualified by love you me you
Inheriting rooms I am further and further and further from you you you

Emaciation

The य y in Sanskrit stands in the closest relationship with the vowel इ i (short or long); the two exchange with one another in cases innumerable.

Learning our histories selectively, the lesson is corrupted and incorrectly applied:

The yes in Sanskrit stands in the closest relationship with the I.
The yes and the I exchange with one another in cases innumerable.

This is no optional interchange.

Very probably, the Sanskrit I has everywhere more of a yes-character than belongs to the corresponding European sound. The yes is one of the most common of Sanskrit sounds.

This is how to conjugate our constitutional histories of yes.
This is how to construct our constitutional identities around yes-sounds, yet, loyal, betrayal.

The flat of the tongue against the walls of the room.
The reverberations of yes-sounds enforcing the I, the I, the I.

We yield to the hooks of these I-sounds, inside, history, independence.

The walls of the room blocking the sounds of the tongues on the hooks of the I.

Indifference to External Objects

NO POLICE THE GLORIOUS TALES OF we are taught not to see the difference OF
YOUR GREATNESS when did you first see the difference VILLAGE NO GIRL PROTEST
SEETHING we are taught to be proud of the difference DEATH GIRL DANCING NO ONE
STOP THE when did you first feel proud NO IMPENDING NO ATTEMPTED concerned
only with ourselves we must love ourselves VICTIM HONOURED concerned only with
comparisons we must prefer ourselves we must be preferable DEMONSTRATED DEED
WAS DONE love must be mutual the comparisons are insatiable PENALTY NAMED
COMMON DEATH NO we desire to be loved by everybody DEATH ARRIVED NO we do
not see everybody we desire their love BURNT ALIVE OR DOWRY EVEN NOW I TOOK
THE we must be seen by the world what must be seen FORM OF KALI we are proud when
did you first feel proud RULED OUT HONOUR NATION HEINOUS we are ashamed when
did you first feel proud CAN EQUALITY OF KIND we are seen by the world when did you
first feel proud DEVOTED WIFE BECOMES A we remember powerlessness enslaved by
our power FEAR IS ARE SCALE EQUAL SCARE WE our dirty habits our shamelessness
our fatalism STEM THE ROT ALLOWING we are capable of love we love our families
UNENDURABLE OF OUR SOCIETY we are capable of shame we are ashamed of our
families NO IS POWER we are ashamed of our homes we are proud of our homes MURDER
THE IDEAL we are brought up to welcome you into our homes BODY NOT YET
SHADOW CHATTEL I am brought up to say yes to you ORAL NAKED BODY LEGAL
SPIRIT OF THE GIRL I am brought up to be closed in my family I am brought up to be open
at home FORCING FAILED TO SET ABLAZE my family is proud of me BOYS
POTENTIAL TREATING ROWDIES GENDER YOGIC FLAMES my family is proud of
me I would break my arms to defend my family IMMOLATED BODY IN THEM
SUBSIDIES NO SHAME I am alone at home I arm myself to break my family CHARGES
WHO SUSTAINED I undo my upbringing I am alone at home BETTER IF YOU DON'T I
must shave my head to sustain my aloneness EVEN NAMES OF SEXUAL FIRE
EXPRESSING GRIEF I lose my hair I am shameless at home SEXUAL DEATH WOULD

DEATH OPPOSE how you love something and need nothing DEMON POWER PUNISH
GODDESS how you love nothing and need something OUT CAME KALI FROM HER
FOREHEAD how you love something and feel unhappy SAFETY BRUTAL BLAME
POLICE COMES how you love nothing and feel unhappy NO AMEND OF HOME SUCH
CASES EFFORTS WOULD OFFENCE how you need something and feel unhappy
GOVERNMENT SHE TURNED UPON HER how you need nothing and feel unhappy
FATHER YOU ARE VAIN AND WICKED how you begin with shame as if shame were the
beginning NOW ASHAMED TO CALL MYSELF YOUR how you end with shame as if
shame were the ending I WILL CAST MY WORTHLESS BODY how you withdraw from
pride HONOUR VICTIM MARRY ONLY CONQUER ME IN how you withdraw from
desire BATTLE HUMBLE AND MY PRIDE how you withdraw from gratitude AND THE
SHAMEFUL DEEDS PRETENDED TO AFRAID ALAS SPARE how you withdraw from
consent I AM HELPLESS yes what is it yes what do you want yes indeed yes is it so

Abandonment of Shame

Infatuation

Fainting Away

Death

***from* Letters in Turmoil** **SEAN BONNEY**

Letter in Turmoil 1

“It is no longer possible to have a balanced relationship with the world”. I read that somewhere in Ernst Bloch, throw the book at the wall, scream for a while, then run down six flights of stairs to the street below. This seems to happen just about every morning. I head to the canal and stand there staring at the swans, and pronounce certain words of shrivelled power. Theresa May, for example. Stephen Crabb. Of course, these words only have purchase in the land of the dead, but still I recite them, their syllables grinding together like the ghosts of medieval machinery, like a parade of headless skeletons or the wonder of a ghost train perfectly preserved in post-apocalyptic brine, the auditory bleach we bathe in every day. The canal is called the Landwehr and is famous. On June 1st 1919 they dragged Rosa Luxemburg’s insulted body from it. It had been there for six months. I think about that as I stare at the swans. I also think about the well known poem by Paul Celan that alludes to that incident, and about how he talks about the silence of the canal, or at least about how the canal has become silent, and I think about how wrong that is. Its inaudible radioactive signals never stop shrieking, an impossible music I’ve been unable to stop dancing to for days now, each of its notes the representation of an impossible world flickering somewhere just outside the borders of the known imaginary spectrum, those impossible borders, those ridiculous walls. We scratch ourselves to pieces on those walls. Or rather we write there. And what we write there would explode all known dictionaries were it not for the foul neoliberal glow of the so-called sun transforming all we have written into, once again, those aforementioned words of power. May. Crabb. Dirt and bones and gas. Yes every morning I sit there by the canal and when the panic has passed I murmur softly to the swans, and then I go home and dream that I have befriended them and they have flown high across the border and into the land of the dead, and there they have torn out the throats of all of our tormentors and they have passed a soothing balm among the souls of all those who continue to live but are trapped in that land, and obviously by soothing I mean usefully corrosive and deadly, and it is rare that I don’t wake up in tears. I’m trying to stop that shit. I’ve been studying magic, utopia and weaponry. I’ll keep you up to date with my progress.

Letter in Turmoil 13/What if the Summer Never Ends

None of us have slept for a long time. How could we. There were fires up and down the Charing Cross Road. Mumbled conversations about Apartheid. England was damp, was possibly leaking. We followed tiny trails of liquid waste across the city. Called it aesthetics. Called it action. We all fell down. Some of us voted. Some of us put on balaclavas. There were several earthquakes. Endless strategies of tedious indifference. Some major buildings and some statues defaced. Declaration of endless war. Parties in the park. Criminalisation of drinking. Several dead friends. There was experimentation with make-up and electricity. Occupation of a number of universities. Fist-fights with cops and fascists. Talks on Russian Futurism in squatted pubs while central London burned. Distress. Hate speech. Consolidation of royalty. Running for our lives. It’s difficult now - all of that stuff is piled up like a heap of expressionist rubble in a semi-imaginary alley somewhere far away.

We argue endlessly about whether it was us who died or them, but the one thing we all agree on is the barbed line that separates us. Sometimes we pluck that line. It makes a high and barely audible electric screech, like some useless old record. It puts immense pressure on the inside of our skulls, like boiling bleach, like the abolition of all memory. Its speaks of heartbreak, of denial, of new advances in somnambulism. Of revenge fantasies and drug addiction. It has nothing to say about where to go from here, about the day we crawl out from under our scattered rocks, and burn their border controls to the ground. One day our eyes will close. One day the sun will finally go down.

Letter in Turmoil 18 / Orchids (after Anita Berber)

I am not a garden
there are no orchids
I will never kiss them
these women and boys
their spectral offices
they devour me
this storm of ghosts
I am cold as silver

*

Take this man. Draw a diagram of the catastrophe.
Draw as many borders as you can, across the various states of his body.
Fill his mouth with contraband. Take his borders. Contravene them.
Draw our lives across his body. The catastrophe that is his body.
When he shits gold kill him.

09.11.2016
DANNY HAYWARD

In times of intense reaction the need for change defers to a merely suspenseful cynicism: what at first appears to be mere disbelief shelters a concealed wish not only to regress but to own the prospect of regression. I mean that the worldwide professional middle class is tacitly pretty pleased about this; they like the sensation of losing their grip. They think that that's what this is about.

It's a fucking truism already. In today's paper I was also seen to be comfortable in the alignment of fantasy and reality; I also enjoy the pornographic convenience of involvement in social brutality that I wash my hands of in the medium of inert despair.

The difference is only cognitive. It is the historical knowledge that however indifferent cataclysmic degradation may appear in the efficient churning of everyday cruelty, the homicidal intensification of violence is real all the same. It will fucking get worse now. For decades. In the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, three quarters of the world's invested capital and two thirds of its industrial capacity were concentrated in the United States. The rest was shared over the other 95 percent of the earth. And what could today's events make clearer than this, that in the expiration of one form of supremacy others rise up in its place. Hydraulic fracking is one way to think about this. What do you think anyway. I half believe it and deny it for the same reason. There is no mechanical process to convert individual passions and fears into some new figure on the 'national stage'. There isn't. There must be some way to sabotage the metamorphosis or to break into it. But I can and do feel the treachery of my own sensations. And amid all this even now I have no answer to the question of how I might ransack my own instincts from behind the Plexiglas of moderate disavowal, though I believe that a revolutionary process would have to entail just such a convulsion.

Is cognitive difference enough? How can we say with true conviction that the border to catastrophe is uninhabitable, or that the path into mass murder on a scale now unimaginable is a one-way street, that silent enjoyment under the guise of horror is a charade whose stupidity and dullness is matched only by the extremity of the inhumanity that it ultimately licenses? Example. First the regime's natural opponents are crushed: the task is to destroy ideological competitors, 'internal enemies', etc: in the early stages of authoritarianism only this visionary excess need be eradicated; and in fact restraint in fanaticism is in the daily practice of the state its own species of idealism: the only kind that can be expected from an institution with unbounded freedom to murder and repress its own members. State idealism is the commitment to crush true idealism and nothing else. The desert that surrounds the Military Prison is Palmyra is the material symbol of this moral fervour devitalised into administrative procedure: the gratuitous promise that cruelty can be contained figured in the desolation that contains it. Or do you have another suggestion.

All of this is still ahead of us, and behind us too, and we need it in our nerves, the knowledge has to thicken until resentment is diffracted in it, until it ceases to be concentrated in a single beam that makes up the spotlight in which one man lives out the fantasies that millions would die for and will; it should thicken until it curdles and fear wades through it; and it should grow into those sensations and feed on them as they feed on the thin air in which historical knowledge is choked up with suspenseful cynicism by those who know exactly where things are heading and who feel nothing but that nothing ever changes.

Under the circumstances HANNAH PROCTOR

I read about multiple luxury watches

Fabergé eggs and large collections of weapons

I read about a personal church and hard cash

\$1.2million and €460,000 in cash, as well as a collection of luxury watches

I read about 1,780 bottles of wine

Swiss watches, diamonds, fur coats

That will never happen here of course

Fuck visiting hours

I don't care about tenderness

I only want brittle stalks

I only want the kind of vacuum cleaner with no bag

I only want the composting to stop

I don't need a thermometer and I don't wear white jeans while menstruating

I find it hard to believe in deciduous things

Why does everyone care so much about the moon when it's so far away?

Who even notices if there's an 'x' on the end anymore anyway?

It seems pointless to think about skin care regimes under the circumstances

Under the circumstances it seems pointless to think about my wheat intake

I bought some scented candles but under the circumstances it seems pointless to light them

Everyone's having a baby to greet the apocalypse

New arrivals

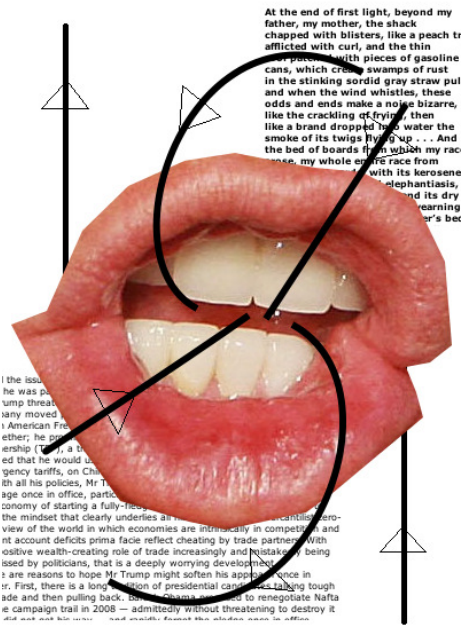
You showed me your baby's passport

That was before she could even hold her own head up

We carried her into the lake
You said you didn't know what to do now that her eyes had turned green
You said that in the WhatsApp group all the mothers talk about Lenor
Can you kill a baby with fabric softener? They ask
Can you kill it with soft fabrics?
Can it choke on tiny things?
Who's going to stop that from happening?
Could it happen even here?
Not an it but a he or a she they insist
Your very own tiny baby with its very own tiny passport
Security is not a blanket

I said the abortion machine was also like a vacuum cleaner
It showed me such tenderness and so did you
Even though your Dad is a cop
But I don't care about tenderness remember
And I wish we hadn't let him take us for pizza
But that was not a baby and then was not the apocalypse
Then was something else and we called it different things
We could never really agree on what name suited it best
Sometimes I remember eating Laughing Cow cheese on the bedsheets in Aleppo
Then was something else

Now it is 2016
Now it is 2016 and it feels like soon we'll have a name for it
A name for the new epoch I mean
Wizened and cruel the new-born nothing new
2016
Like those peeling images of world leaders you can see at the airport
George Bush is looking pretty cute these days



At the end of first light, beyond my father, my mother, the shack chapped with blisters, like a peach tr afflicted with curl, and the thin pieces with pieces of gasoline cans, which cross swamps of rust in the stinking sordid gray straw pul and when the wind whistles, these odds and ends make a noise bizarre, like the crackling of dry wood, then like a brand dropped in water the smoke of its twigs flung up . . . And the bed of boards from which my race rose, my whole entire face from with its kerosene elephantiasis, and its dry learning er's bec

I the issu he was pe ump threa any moved American Fre ether; he pr ership (T ed that he would U gency tariffs, on Ch th all his policies, Mr T age once in office, part economy of starting a fully the mindset that clearly underlies an view of the world in which economies are intrinsically in competit and nt account deficits prima facie reflect cheating by trade partners With ositive wealth-creating role of trade increasingly and mistakes being used by politicians, that is a deeply worrying development. are reasons to hope Mr Trump might soften his approach since in r. First, there is a long tradition of presidential candidates being tough ade and then pulling back. In 1980, Ronald Reagan decided to renegotiate Nafta ie campaign trail in 2008 — admittedly without threatening to destroy it did not know and didn't want to do so. In office,

Everyone's Grievous Banquet DE-ARREST NEWSFEED

And I want us to be a country where it doesn't matter where you were born, who your parents are, where you went to school, what your accent sounds like, what god you worship, whether you're a man or a woman, gay or straight, or black or white.

– Theresa May, 5 October 2016, Conservative Party Conference

Now that Theresa May has delivered her first speech as Prime Minister to the Conservative Party Conference, certain things begin to become clearer. Perhaps the first among these has to do with question of what the ideological *basis* will be for national unity in the coming period. May's exercise in re-selling the party to the left was self-evidently founded in the belief that the Tory core vote would remain irremovably loyal out of sullen, undisguised terror that a Social-Democratic Corbyn government would instantly declare Year Zero and begin removing the intestines from anyone earning above the personal allowance threshold. Despite occasional allusions to Thatcher's revolting bon mots of the mid-1980s (e.g. 'if you think you are a citizen of the world then you are a citizen of nowhere'), the speech did not revive anything like a Thatcherite 'project' for state transformation, for the simple reason that nothing in its text aside from a smattering of malicious threats was even remotely credible.

The difference in state authority that separates us from the early 1980s could hardly be more conspicuous. Thatcher was open about her desire to wage war on the left and constructed a perfectly legible ideological division between 'Socialist' collectivists and free-market individualists. She was absolutely forthright about her revulsion for all organisations of collective solidarity larger than the bourgeois family, for 'progress' and 'free expression', for 'Soviet Marxism', and for anything that might look enough like a spontaneous impulse as to be peremptorily disparaged as a 'fantasy' (fantasies were disreputable and shouldn't be allowed out in public). She was candid about her desire to polarise society and to triumph in a more or less frontal conflict over her political and social enemies; and for this reason her persona was attractive in a way that is, in one sense at least, perversely similar to the attraction exerted by the persona of Jeremy Corbyn in 2015/16. Her vision of society was a falsification only in that it violently misrepresented the number of people who might stand to benefit from the maiming of all organs of working-class representation and self-defence.

May's speech by contrast fastidiously avoids any comparable account of fundamental ideological or class division, as might be expected of an unelected head of state faced with complex and unpredictable, albeit hardly insurgent, mass movements on both her left and her right; but it is able to do so only because it *retains* a complex fidelity to the elemental Thatcherite class politics of bogus proprietorial aspiration, modified along the following axes:

1. Where Thatcher c.1979 was primarily concerned to build a bloc of electoral support consisting of what she liked to call 'decent people', May is concerned to *prevent* a bloc of electoral support from leaking 'ordinary, working-class people'. This is a difference with some significance. A 'decent' person is defined by a clearly defined canon of reactionary prejudices (abhorrence of homosexuality, promiscuity, leisure, dependence on other humans) while an 'ordinary' person has only a kind of deep ambient sensation of resentment, interlaced with a strong desire that this resentment be recognised and approved of by important people of merit, like the 1st Viscount Rothermere, Edward VIII or Theresa May.

2. Thatcher's attacks on anyone not belonging to the community of 'decent' people were ferociously contemptuous and in earnest. By contrast when May substantiates her affection for 'ordinary people' by saying that she will even 'go after' tax avoiders, even if they are 'accountants' or 'middlemen', she sounds like, and communicates the same moral urgency as, the narrator who used to appear at the beginning of early 1990s VHS tapes to announce that Video piracy is a crime. The self-evident deterioration of conviction in the speech of Tory authoritarian nationalism is a direct consequence of the fact that Thatcher really was speaking about what in her view was the class enemy, whereas the success of May's performance relies on her ability to convey the impression to her most ardent supporters in the VIP lounge area that she doesn't really mean a fucking word of it. Her way of insisting that 'injustices' are '*burning*' as if the adjective had been placed securely in a glovebox is reminiscent of Owen Smith's habit during speeches of making discreet fist pumping gestures that are so close to being imperceptible that an untrained observer might conclude that he was suffering from an essential tremor; and both are genetically related, via Giovanni Giolitti, to the muffled sermonising of atheistic 18th century parsons whose main preoccupation was to dissuade the parishioners from rioting.

3. In the concluding speech at the Conservative Party Conference of 10 October 1980, Thatcher finishes with a roll call of imperialist and anti-Communist adventures: there is a 'threat from the East'; 'Europe and North America are centres of stability in an increasingly anxious world'; 'Marxists say that the capitalist system is in crisis, the Polish workers have shown that it is the Communist system that is in crisis', etc. May's speech 36 years later responds to the EU referendum by reducing world politics to its proper scale of the railway line from Aberdeen to Penzance.

What is the net consequence of these three transitions? It is not a demonstration of the 'weakness of the left' or of the absorption into the Tory bloodstream of high-grade UKIP cholesterol. It is, instead, a kind of ominous Blairite feudalism, a ritual of modernist retrogression in which a government of provincial overlords tries to wow its serfs with an outsize plumage of Level 2 training certificates in dispute resolution and corporate team-building. In its acquired role as state ideology it not only slams the emergency brakes on the period of Tory commitment to capitalist specialisation that began way back in 1979 with Keith Joseph's electoral manifesto, and which reached its miserable zenith in 2011–14 with the judicial murder of thousands of disabled people. It not only signals the end of the golden days of ruthless leveraging of Old Imperial relative advantage in a hierarchically ordered world market: the easy, uninhibited access to a whole universe of underemployed labour, from Stockwell to Bengal, secured through excellent working relationships with a whole

penumbra of British-educated 'national bourgeoisies'. It not only downgrades British English from the official language of the greatest (meaning worst) ever system of value capture into a merely ordinary net of suspicion, to be cast liberally over any funny-talking world citizens riding in on their dinghies from 'nowhere'. And it not only rebalances the traditional 'threat from the East' so as to ensure that what in Thatcher's period was embodied by the USSR and counteracted by Polish workers is today embodied by Polish workers and counteracted by the voting-age population of Chelmsford. It does more than this. In Theresa May's conference speech of this October, not only are the reigning practical certainties of the last forty years brought shudderingly to a halt, but also a new spirit ditty of no tone begins to be heard.

What is this tone? What it *corresponds to* is the strategic constraints of the British State during what is evidently an accelerated phase in the long relative decline of the national capital over which it disposes. It is possible for the state to engineer a strategy of class confrontation within the limitations of bourgeois parliamentary democracy only if that confrontation frees up capital so that it can be used to win over a part of the wavering middle classes; and it can pursue a strategy of class *truce* only on the basis of the favourable climate for exploitation that follows in the fullness of time from an earlier period of confrontation. Confrontation and truce are to state strategy what equality and opportunity are to party political doorstepping techniques; and it is the essential magic trick of parliamentary politics to transform the reality of the former into the appearance of the latter using nothing more sophisticated than a long invisible thread of bribes, threats and minor acts of ceremonial patronage.

By clearing away most of these props of parliamentary population management, Brexit has compelled Theresa May to make practical recourse to a third strategy, of aggressively outward-directed revanchism. This was in its way already perfectly blatant on 12 July. But her speech of 5 October shows that it has also, and perhaps more innovatively, compelled her to join this strategic primitivism to a brand new ideological treatment of equality and opportunity, of a kind that the perfervid crowds who almost crushed one another to death so as to clutch at the sleeves of Tony Blair on the occasion of his election in 1997 could barely even have dreamed. This is the final outcome of the transformations that May carries out upon the elementary materials of the Thatcherite politics of 'decency' and 'aspiration'; it is at once the intellectual kernel of her new tone of condescending reassurance, lordly community-mindedness and provincial introversion *and* the most compelling vision of social life that British capitalism will now allow its responsible administrators to venture. Its basic outlines can be defined very succinctly, since its foundation is the simplest social contract imaginable. It goes like this. Anyone who keeps their head down and works sufficiently hard will from now on be *equally* entitled not to wealth, social advancement or a mortgaged ex-council flat but to their very own special distinguishing legitimate grievance. No matter 'where you were born, who your parents are, where you went to school, what your accent sounds like, what god you worship, whether you're a man or a woman, gay or straight, or black or white', this banquet of legitimate grievances is *for you*; and if you hold your nose and close your eyes as you take your place alongside the serried ranks of déclassé Trump-supporting intellectuals and indigenous small shopkeepers, you might be able for at least a moment to forget the small and barely salient difference that while everyone here is equally

invited to *eat*, the delicate repast at the head of the table amounts to grossest autophagy at its foot. It is a spectacle so horrid that it could even make the economic pie now relocating to Paris and Frankfurt want to puke.

Naming and the riotous: the socio-poetics of Sean Bonney's *Letters Against the Firmament* ED LUKER

‘you, you and I, back, together, again.’ - Roberta Flack and Donny Hathaway

In Sean Bonney's *Letters Against the Firmament* (2015) the act of naming could be considered to perform what the poet and critic Fred Moten calls ‘the sociopoetics of riot’, or, rather, the poetry grasps at the sociality of the riot.¹ In this piece I want to briefly explore that act of naming, and the naming of politicians in particular. I want to contrast Bonney's use of naming to the significance of the act in Charles Olson's poetics. Bonney is a keen reader of Olson, as was another important figure for Bonney, Amiri Baraka. I want to focus on how naming relates to cosmology as the identification of system and law. I contend here that Bonney repurposes Olson's poetics of bourgeois power to seize life, as an act of defense, for the construction of a socio-poetics. I hope to open up questions about naming as a political act, especially in light of the powerful use of naming as a demand for justice in current political struggles. This piece of writing is in part trying to think of a way that poetry wields political power that runs contra to beliefs that the author may normally hold about the relation between poetry and the political. I want to try and draw a generative element of counter-power from *politically* charged poetry; I want to draw on the performance of the language of political violence, the minimal possibility of common life that jumps out of *Letters Against the Firmament*.

Bonney's poetic letters contain many excursions upon political events, such as the riots across Britain in August 2011, the student protests of the year previous, and various insurrections across history from ‘The Paris Commune, Orgreave’ and ‘The Mau Mau rebellion.’² As an act of recollection these letters are often considerations on how a revolutionary poetry could be capable of what the poet desires it to be, such that in ‘Letter on Riots and Doubt’, ‘we're in need of a new prosody and while I'm pretty sure a simple riot doesn't qualify, your refusal set to leave the seminar room certainly doesn't.’³ Later in the letter this positive desire for action, and criticism of the addressee is complicated through stressing the collective implication with violence contained within pronominal address. In the address to the letter's recipient, ‘But then again you are right to worry that I'm making a fetish of the riot form [...] But what about that night when we electrocuted a number of dogs [...] We'd taken a lot of MDMA that night, and for once we could admit we were neither kind, nor merciful, nor loving.’⁴ In these lines the address to the interlocutor who is doubtful of the poet's proclamation of the power of the riot slips into a fantasy of violence, where the pronoun becomes a categorial struggle, pronouns themselves enact class violence. In the

¹ Fred Moten, ‘necessity, immensity, and crisis (many edges/seeing things)’ (Floor Journal, 2011) Available: [<http://floorjournal.com/2011/10/30/necessity-immensity-and-crisis-many-edgesseeing-things/>]

² Sean Bonney, *Letters Against the Firmament* (London: Enitharmon, 2015), p. 116.

³ Ibid., p. 8.

⁴ Ibid.

'Letter on Silence', 'There is no prosody, only a scraped wound.'⁵

Naming is a constant concern in the book, alongside explorations of how pronominal identification relates to the law. The poem 'Lamentations' stresses 'name this city'.⁶ In the poem pestilence represents damaged collectivity as a negated communal life, 'Say those rats have names say you know those names. You do not know those names.'⁷ In the 'Letters on Harmony' naming is related to the cosmology of 'the counter-earth' of revolutionary history.⁸ It enacts cosmological shifts,

According to some cosmological systems, and ones not so far removed from our own as we would maybe imagine, when anyone dies – be that Margaret Thatcher or Mark Duggan – they take their place among what are called the 'invisibles', traditionally opening up a gap in social time, a system of antimatter in which nobody can live, but from which new understandings and arrangements of social harmony may be imagined.⁹

The naming of Thatcher and Duggan marks the brief insurgent energy that followed their respective deaths. The universe shifts such that it can be seen from a new vantage. The act of the recollection of revolutionary history is often cast as a counter-cosmology to the system of order and the diurnal reproduction of capital through the institutions of bourgeois law and the state. In one letter, we are presented with a political proclamation of state power where, 'Here's the budget. A whole new set of stars.' Cosmology is the way by which large-scale shifts in history can be understood. Names, as proper nouns, are closely entwined with this system of order as, 'The law is a mouth.'¹⁰ The imposition of the law is the mouth of the judge as the imposition of state violence is the name of the politician. What is demanded in this poetry is often that, 'the endless whirring of the firmament will no longer simply be money'.¹¹

Having identified some of the thematics of Bonney's book I want to start, then, by reading a page from one of the letters, one that focuses on the naming of Iain Duncan Smith [to be read out loud]:

I know. I'd been hoping to spare you any further musings I might have had on the nature of Iain Duncan Smith, that talking claw. But perhaps we're at a point now where we need to define him, to recite and describe, occupy his constellations. Because to recite the stations of the being of Iain Duncan Smith, as if they were a string of joy-beads, and they are, would be to recite the history of the law, and if we take the law to be something as simple as a mouth is, and each noise, each syllable

⁵ Ibid., p. 13.

⁶ Ibid., p. 22.

⁷ Ibid., p. 20.

⁸ Ibid., p. 35.

⁹ Ibid., p. 38.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 16.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 112.

that emits from that mouth is only ever and never more than the sound of animals eating each other, a gap in the senses where the invisible universe goes to die, and we become like ghosts or insomniacs stumbling through the city, we become the music of Iain Duncan Smith, his origin in the chaos of animals and plants, of rocks and metals and the countless earths, where over and again he breaks the children's teeth with gravel-stones, covers them with ashes. Because to classify those stations, the cancer-ladder of the dreams of Iain Duncan Smith might, at a push, be to consume him, and to define those stations, those marks on the hide of Iain Duncan Smith, might be to trap him, to press granite to the roof of his mouth, the stations of the law.¹²

The two cosmologies in Bonney's work, the total system of capital's power, and the counter-cosmology of insurrection (insurgency, as the staking out of political *life*) are a way of articulating the relation between the material and the non-material world. They bear a relation to Olson's cosmology of universal law and his stress on embodiment found in his writings on the human universe. Through comments by Moten, I want to explore how an insurgent socio-poetics of the counter-earth undermines Olson's total system of order, as what Bonney calls 'a jagged rip through all pronouns.'¹³

In an essay on the 2011 London Riots, 'necessity, immensity, and crisis (many edges/seeing things)', Fred Moten outlines a poetic lineage starting from Charles Olson, but stretching back through Emily Dickinson and Harriet Jacobs, coming back round within the 'connection between poetry and violence' in Amiri Baraka. Moten claims that this lineage, of the poetry of the open field, bursting out of the cell of containment, needs to be re-explored. The reason that it needs to be re-explored is that this lineage contains a generative possibility as the 'sociopoetics of riot',

The poetics of the open field, especially when performed in the narrow cell, was always tied to the sociopoetics of riot, of generative differentiation as a kind of self-care, of expropriative disruption as a kind of self-defense, of seeing things as a performed social theory of mind. Baraka took it out [...] in the name of an enformant poetics, spreading the news and the new in the giving and taking of form, as lemons, and people, piled on steps, disarrayed inappropriately against every propriative and counter-propriative intention that claims to have put them there.

When I originally read this I was struck by a few things. The first was a lineage that suddenly appeared, from Olson, through Baraka and Nathaniel Mackey into Moten's poetry. That Moten's poetry utilises the page of composition as a radical immediacy of Olson's line, as what Olson calls 'the *kinetics* of the thing',¹⁴ language's denomination of thingness as 'counter-propriative intention' against a world of capital's objectivity, which continually

¹² Ibid., p. 111.

¹³ Ibid., p. 114.

¹⁴ Charles Olson, 'Projective Verse' in *Collected Prose*, ed. D. Allen and B. Friedlander (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997) p. 240.

denies, ossifies, commodifies, kills and expropriates the life of thingness, whilst simultaneously organising the time of thingness through assimilation or exclusion. Against and within the history of Western Ontology, as the organizing blueprint of Capital's system of objectivity, Moten writes in 'The Case of Blackness' that,

Perhaps the thing, the black, is tantamount to another, fugitive, sublimity altogether. Some/thing escapes in or through the object's vestibule; the object vibrates against its frame like a resonator, and troubled air gets out.¹⁵

The object is the singular of society arranged into system. Devoid of qualities, it is that dominating abstraction that mediates and exploits human labour, making its power a sameness. Yet, in its construction, how it comes to be a form of appearance, it is not without content. It is an energy, vibrating in a frame that amplifies capacity. In the refrain of the music some thing is urging its immediate force. There is always a remainder; the objectifying process of production does not absorb all of life. There is the *kinesis* in the construction of things that makes it -'troubled air gets out'- whilst some gasped, *fugitive* air was never in the resonator.

Identifying philosophy's construction of the bourgeois individual, as the one who is free, who is not enslaved, Hannah Black pinpoints that it is within Moten's writing that the possibility of a *truly* social life can be denoted, as the limit of philosophy's entwinement with bourgeois power, as 'the possibility of sociality as such, not being together exactly but the movement towards being together that is expressed in such moments as musical improvisation, social dance or just listening and talking.'¹⁶ This denotation of sociality is radical *possibility*, and perhaps, unlike with, say, Adorno, its imagining is denoted through its opposition to the individual, who is burdened by their myopia, their inability to relinquish their objectivity. It is the 'being-with' of sociality that would overcome the objective impediment to being. As Black states, 'This is not a sociality amongst subjects but some kind of possibility internal to the hole or fissure in the subject'.¹⁷ I think that this being together, this possibility of being together, bears a relation to the image of violent insurrection, of riots but also of the unnamable pestilence in Bonney's letters. Whilst of course it must be stated that Moten's working through of the concept of the subject wishes to make clear that the life of blackness is in an antagonism with the concept of subjectivity as such, like Moten, Bonney wants to contend that the necessary standpoint of the individual must be overcome. Bonney states that in the work of Rimbaud, 'The "systematic derangement of the senses" is the social senses, ok, and the "I" becomes an "other" as in the transformation of the individual into the collective when it all kicks off.'¹⁸ The imposition of language in Bonney's letter means that whilst it is necessary to 'name the task specific to that moment',¹⁹ it is also the case that 'In the enemy language it is necessary to lie.'²⁰ The poem becomes the space to work through

¹⁵ Fred Moten, 'The Case of Blackness' in *Criticism*, Volume 50, Number 2, (Spring 2008) p. 182.

¹⁶ Hannah Black, 'Fractal Freedoms' in *Afterall*, Issue 41 (Spring 2016), p. 8.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ *Letters Against the Firmament*, p. 141.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 140.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 141.

these tasks.

Within Moten's lineage of the open-field as a socio-poetics of the riot, of Olson's projective poetics as 'the connection between poetry and violence', I was struck (down) by the appropriative gesture of the 'taking of form'. In Moten's claim there is an expropriation of Olson's weapons / the counter-propiative poetics, where the seizure of an enemy discourse reroutes the generative. Olson famously disliked the abstracting tendencies of Western philosophy from the Platonists onwards. Descartes was his enemy, for in his separation of the objectivity of thinking from the body he did not acknowledge the thingness of being. Thinking was on a bad track for Olson until Alfred North Whitehead's process philosophy 'cleared out the gunk | by getting the universe in'.²¹ Olson demanded an acknowledgement of embodiment, of thought's indebtedness to the world from which it emerges. He wished to stress the immediacy of the world of experience and this is why *process*, as the immediacy of experience, was significant for him. However, Olson's insistence on the universe of things, considered cosmologically, as system, too readily disavows the resistant contingency of that world. Olson's cosmology draws the matter of the world into an identity with the embodied subject. In Olson's combination of process philosophy as a radical immediacy of thingness, constructed into a cosmological system of identity, he ends up affirming the bourgeois individual as one who knows and can claim dominion over the universe of things. Within his construction of the cosmos as system, where every particular of the universe is part of our shimmering brilliance as totality, there is a refusal to acknowledge the form of capital's objectivity, of the historical-contingency of the laws that prop it up.

What Moten highlights is that against this Imperial drive towards the centre within the appropriative human universe, there is a socio-poetic that can be appropriated from Olson, traced through Baraka. This socio-poetic is the sense of movement and *kinesis* of thingness as life, as a bare sociality, of improvisation. However whilst projective verse, its insistence on breath, might be part of how the poetics of the open field is considered as the socio-poetics of the riot, I want to contend that in Bonney's work, naming, or the incantation of proper names, as the counter-cosmology, is denotative of what Black calls 'some kind of possibility internal to the hole or fissure in the subject', as the destabilizing of the bourgeois individual by riotous collectivity. Naming may appear as private act, as the naming of the individual, but it is also the mythos of the riot or event as something shared. What I contend is that the riotous act of naming aims to make the moment of the political act alive in time, as a reproduction of the mythic image.

In the essay 'Place; & Names' (1962) Olson states that,

the crucialness being that these places or names

be as parts of the body, common, & capable

therefore of having cells which can decant

total experience - no selection

²¹ Charles Olson, *The Maximus Poems*, ed. G. F. Butterick (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), p. 249.

other than one which is capable

of this commonness²²

Naming, for Olson, is denotative. The enacting of the name in language grasps at the thing in the world, and language is capable of a singular restitution between the human subject and the object. Hence, there is 'no selection | other than one'. In the essay on Projective Verse, Olson admires Hart Crane for 'the singleness of the push to the nominative'.²³ There is a repeated sense that in poetry the subject can become unified with matter through language's nominative character in the process of composition. The poet follows their own nature as given to the causal laws of the external realm, 'if he is contained within his nature as he is participant in the larger force, he will be able to listen, and his hearing through himself will give him secrets objects share.'²⁴ The secret that objects share is part of the 'crucialness being' obtained through the exactness of language. The use of proper names will be the decanting of thinking and feeling, as the shared materiality of the bodily overcoming the abstractions that dominate thought considered in opposition to materiality. Submission to the laws of things, Kant's external laws of nature, will reveal to the subject that they are 'participant in the larger force'.²⁵ What I want to propose is that Olson's notion of naming as the decanting of total experience is reappropriated in Bonney's work as the generative sociopoetics of possible riot. It is the poetics of the deed as a counter cosmology.

In the naming of Iain Duncan Smith, Bonney's letter embodies the abstract mouth of the state, the mouth that upholds the violence of rule as cosmology. It does not enact Olson's nominalism because the 'person' named has both a general abstract and generative material function. This naming highlights the space between the cosmology of abstract order, the mouth of violence, and the counter-cosmology of a subjugated materiality. Olson's cosmology wished to submerge the two such as to suppress their distinctions. Bonney's naming wishes to make possible the decanting of experience. It is what Moten states as, 'There's a This is England poetics, a Luv 'n Haight poetics, moving without moving in and against the brutal smallness of imposed needs and nationalized histories with the kind of out lyricism that only comes from being constrained to be somewhere else, that will have already come from the other side to keep on going, that had already come with those of us who are the other things we see.'²⁶ Bonney's naming calls for the moment of life in its appearance in the riot, as the overcoming of subjectivity and the breaking of law. The decanting of a total experience demands that it can't be put back in the bottle. In the instant of its decanting, the empty bottle becomes fit for all sorts of new purposes.

²² Olson, *Collected Prose*, p. 200.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 244.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 247.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Moten, 'necessity, immensity, crisis'.

Justice Matter: Black Lives in a #caravan WAIL QASIM

The #CaravanForJustice was a tour. Four siblings of four brothers murdered by the police here in the UK, travelled with three activists to California in order to teach about their loss and learn about the movement for black lives that exploded in the US.

It is far from a little trite to say 'you had to be there to understand it', but to talk about the effects of this journey is to talk about who was there and what brought them together to ride in what we would think of as a minibus, but Americans suggest is a caravan, to travel in ten days from Oakland to LA. So I'm going to tell you about some people you don't know, who between them do some of the work of bringing justice into the world.

Taina

Taina is a Latina woman, she works at the Ella Baker Centre for Human Rights (an organisation the US border official who had to question me about why I was trying to enter his country misheard in my voice as the 'Allah' Baker Centre). She works on their program for truth and reinvestment – a campaign to highlight the truth of racist state violence in the States whilst also calling for divestment away from punitive state resources like police and prisons. Those institutions that are most vividly killing people from non-white communities.

She co-ordinated the entire trip, organised the stops and facilitated most of the rallies. Relentlessly Taina repeated over and over again a call to action, a call for all those who are not doing work to oppose state violence to get involved in an organisation that does and for all those who are doing such work to do more.

Her husband is currently sat in an LA county jail for participating in an armed robbery. He's in his fourth year of a ten year prison sentence and Taina married him whilst he was incarcerated. It isn't until the third or fourth day of listening to tracks from the same album played over and over again in the caravan that someone explains that the artist delivering searing bars in favour of #BlackLivesMatter is Richie, Taina's partner. His music was recorded and released from prison this year and commands that we remember those black lives forgotten in prisons in the US and the world over.

Taina hates lateness. She doesn't understand why these jetlagged brits so casually fall into black time. Race isn't a meandering temporality, it's one of urgency.

Stephanie

I shared a hotel room paid for by the National Union of Students with Stephanie Lightfoot-Bennet near Heathrow airport the night before we flew to San Francisco. She asked about my parents' background, I explained they were Somali. Her expression contorted and she made a comment about how I didn't have harsh features like those other Somalis. She

asked if I understood, I had to explain I didn't – but on some level I did. Anti-black racism runs deep.

Stephanie's twin brother was Leon Patterson. Killed in 1992, the year before I was born, by Greater Manchester Police. His grave only got a headstone this year as Stephanie refused to purchase one until she had made headway in his case. Reminding Americans who had never met Leon, who had no idea that British police could do what they did to her brother, that he wasn't 'lost' to her – that she knew where he was and who had killed him, became part of the progress that allowed her to put a headstone on his grave last month.

Steph is by turns immensely difficult to get on with and incredibly easy to be friends with. The truth of her loss is perhaps what makes travelling with her difficult. She spoke always about the silence of the graveyard, that we have to be the voice for the dead.

You can tell she has been screaming for decades when she leads a torrent of vocal attacks on a Salinas police department officer who walks past our rally for a young man that he had killed.

Marcia

Sean Rigg's sister Marcia is perhaps the most visible campaigner against deaths in custody in the UK. In 2008 her brother Sean was killed by police whilst having a psychotic episode in Brixton. Marcia's family live in LA, so in the planning stages of the trip she advocated that we base ourselves on the West Coast.

Mental health problems ran through almost all of the accounts of police killings that we heard whilst we were in California. So many family members speak of the regret that they held about calling police to help family members in distress, only to have them killed by those same cops.

It is Marcia who constantly reminds us that young black people in the UK have for decades been trapped and killed by a combination of mental health professionals and police.

Hannah

I probably wouldn't be speaking about any of this if it weren't for the connection between Marcia and Hannah Dee. Hannah established Defend the Right to Protest along with others after students were dragged through the courts on violent disorder charges and Alfie Meadows was nearly killed by a cop's baton strike five years ago, yesterday. But Defend the Right to Protest quickly became not only about defending traditional left wing protest and moved to showing solidarity with Marcia and her family at the inquest into Sean's death.

Hannah was the only white person on the #CaravanForJustice. A fact we often reminded her of and that possibly led to the reverse micro-aggression of being denied service of alcohol in an Oakland black owned BBQ restaurant. She was really upset by this, who wouldn't if they were denied a pint at the end of a long day that began about 48 hours prior in London, but the upset was soon displaced by news our 'caravan' had been broken into.

It was plastered with inflammatory statements like 'End Police Violence' and so everyone told us it was likely a cop.

Marcus

Unluckily for any possible claims on our travel insurance, nothing was stolen except a camera belonging to Marcus from the American Civil Liberties Union. Marcus was all right, he was kind of annoying. He used to be a freelance journalist, and has travelled the world. He's precisely the kind of person that would hang out at SOAS when they're in London. All this has to be forgiven though as he did most of the driving through California.

Americans drive everywhere because things are really far apart. Ludicrously far.

Marcus described himself politically to me as a revolutionary in a liberal organisation. He doesn't believe in police body cams, so he has been working on an app that allows people to film police and have it sent straight to the ACLU so that lawyers can look at it and police can't delete it.

Part of the tour was rolling this out through California where before it was even launched 100,000 people had downloaded it. Video footage has played a huge role in making cases of police brutality known to the public.

Black lives mattered before social media, but the movement has certainly made good use of these images in demanding that they matter today.

Shaun Hall

The app was the favourite part of the trip for Shaun Hall. He's the brother of Mark Duggan – you'll all know who that is. Not a single person in the US did. Witnesses being unwilling to come forward with video footage for fear of the police was part of what made the Duggan family's case so difficult.

Shaun is possibly the furthest person from an activist you could meet. He's dubious about left-wing campaigners, but he did leave California with a tattoo that reads No Justice, No Peace. LA 15. Which is pretty mad.

In a night of getting very drunk and very stoned with the family members, Shaun said to us all "can you imagine how it feels to have hot bullets burning in your body? Burning away in your organs?" referring to the shots V53 fired into Mark.

Kadisha

Kadisha Brown-Burrell, Kingsley Burrell's sister immediately replied "I'll tell you what, that's how it feels for us, right now."

Kingsley asked for help from police because he felt his life was threatened. When they arrived they had him sectioned. Days later he would die after police with batons and dogs stormed the hospital he was staying in and beat him until he died.

This happened in 2011 and Kadisha has reminded us ever since that black people are seen as violent and threatening even when they are at risk. That black people are seen as superhuman in strength but not human at all in worth.

Malia

For all the awful works of the National Union of Students, it was Malia, their Black Students' Officer, who helped get Kingsley's case known in Birmingham where he was killed.

Malia joined the caravan because her campaign has put black lives in the centre of an organisation that is itself the dead and lifeless husk of activism. It seems like blackness co-opting the resources of sabbatical zombie campaigners is one of the only things alive enough to shout: Black Lives Matter in the UK.

Patrisse

That slogan was turned into a hashtag over two years ago by Patrisse Cullors and it set in motion a movement led by black queer women and trans people. Many of us on the caravan had met Patrisse in January when she had come to do a Ferguson solidarity tour of the UK.

Out of the popular momentum of her hashtag Patrisse has tried to put in place the infrastructure for bringing justice into the world.

Her position starts from having lived a lifetime of black lives having no matter, bar death and suffering. Yet she has brought about a space across the US where black people can mourn and love in ways suppressed before.

This caravan was just a part of that space and has sparked the possibility for a similar one.

They say there is no justice, just us.

I say if there is no justice, just us, then we're the chance to make it.

We're the matter of justice.

* This text was originally read as a talk at *Non-threatening theatre*, Tottenham Chances - 10/12/15



In the Phalangist lounge, a dead-end speaks. It says I did not vote for this. But who am I, bankrupt fiscal-headroom of the Mosul corridor, last seen biting into the dream of a new life, made in common aspiration, if not the very innards of corruption itself!?



You are a dark grey whose nothingness can only be penetrated by the orange leaked from jets whose silver flashes to a blazing whiteness.