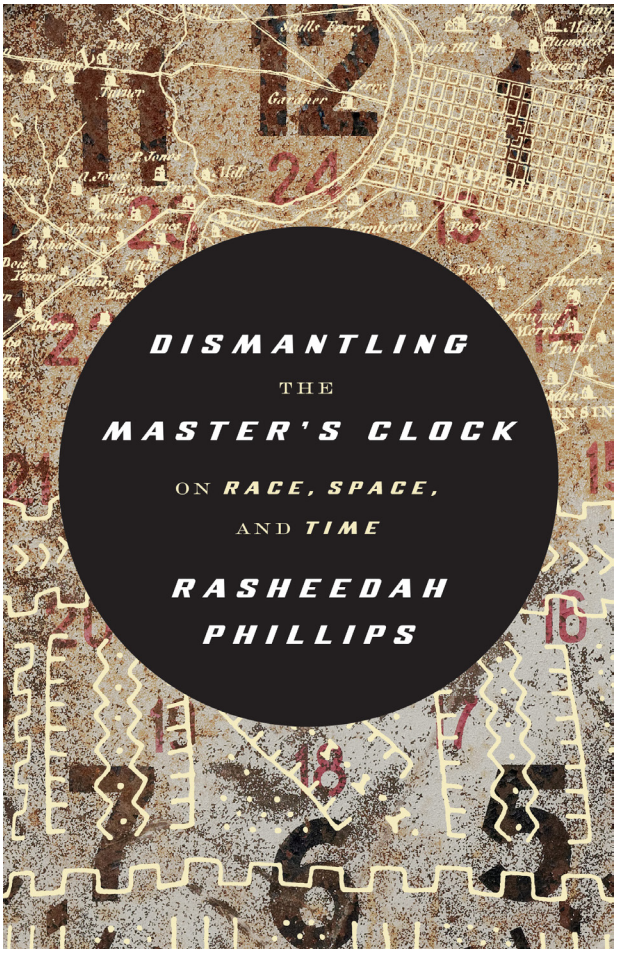
DISMANTLING THE *MASTER'S CLOCK:* ON *RACE, SPACE,* AND *TIME*

RASHEEDAH PHILLIPS



ABOUT THE BOOK

Why do some processes—like aging, birth, and car crashes—occur in only one direction in time, when by the fundamental symmetry of the universe, we should experience time both forward and backward? Our dominant perception of time owes more to Western history and social order than to a fact of nature, argues writer Rasheedah Phillips, delving into Black and Afrodiasporic conceptions of time, where the past, present, and future interact in more numerous constellations.

Phillips unfolds the history of time and its legacy of racial oppression, from colonial exploration and the plantation system to the establishment of Daylight Savings. Yet Black communities have long subverted space-time through such tools of resistance as Juneteenth, tenant organizing, ritual, and time travel. What could Black liberation look like if the past were as changeable as the future?

Drawing on philosophy, archival research, quantum physics, and Phillips's own art practice and work on housing policy, *Dismantling the Master's Clock* expands the horizons of what can be imagined and, ultimately, achieved.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rasheedah Phillips is a queer housing advocate, lawyer, parent, and interdisciplinary artist working through a Black futurist lens. Phillips is the founder of the AfroFuturist Affair, founding member of the Metropolarity Queer Speculative Fiction Collective, and co-creator of the art duo Black Quantum Futurism. Phillips' work has been featured in the *New York Times*, *The Wire*, *New York* Magazine, *Boston Review*, *Hyperallergic*, and *e-flux*.

ABOUT THE GUIDE

This guide uses various inquiry techniques, from knowledge retention and integration to guided reflections for individuals and collectives. It is designed to provoke inspiration and fortify the quantum entanglement between the spirit of *Dismantling the Master's Clock* and the reader's lived experiences and felt knowledge. The questions below amplify the book's memory-activating properties and highlight the importance of felt knowledge as an indicator of an integrated learning experience in cultures of the global diaspora. The quotes and questions in this guide are not uniform or evenly dispersed. Some inquiries include corresponding quotes, while others do not, as they were inspired by longer passages that exceed the capacity of this document. A single quote may have prompted one or several questions. Ultimately, this guide intends to mirror the non-linearity of the book and the amorphous nature of Black temporalities.

"The essays in *Dismantling the Master's Clock* amplify overlooked temporal and spatial practices within Black communities, revealing these as sites of resistance, innovation, and transformation." (p. 16)

Although all readers are encouraged to work with the guide, the questions were designed with racially marginalized communities with lived experiences of housing insecurity and displacement in mind.

Given that the book's wisdom comes specifically from a Black temporal framework, **the guide includes questions that honor Blackness as the book's central node by including questions explicitly designed for Black readers. These questions are in green** to represent the fecundity and dense wealth of Black technologies**.** These additional inquiries are optional and serve as an act of care intended to address memories and grief specific to the Black lived experiences mentioned in the book. Like the other inquiries, these emerged organically and also resist uniformity.

PREPARATION: MAPPING YOUR READING JOURNEY

"The essays in this book are conceptually interconnected yet bound by no linear logic or sequential order, despite the presence of chapter numbers. I invite readers to explore the essays in any sequence that resonates with their personal interests and intellectual journeys." (p. 17)

Before diving into the following inquiries, take a moment to review the book's table of contents. Pay close attention to how each chapter title resonates with you. Perhaps specific chapter titles feel more vibrant and boisterous, while others feel more mysterious and unknown. You may be drawn to the mystery, or the vibrant sensations may compel you. No path is the wrong path. Create your map by rearranging the chapters to align with the sensations that arise. You will read the book in this order to honor your unique path to understanding. Keep your map in or near your book so you don't get lost. If you end up with the same map as the book's table of contents, that's okay, too. Your journey gets to be your journey.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

"My deepest gratitude is extended to the ancestors whose whispers of wisdom have guided this exploration. Their stories, the ones that navigate the treacherous waters of existence under the watchful gaze of a clock not of their own design, always strengthen and uplift me." (p. ix)

1. What cultural and spiritual histories do you bring to your reading of this book? Who do you have to thank for your arrival to this moment? To whom (ancestors, beloveds, descendants) do you dedicate your reading and study of this book?

INTRODUCTION: CHAPTER 0

"Experiences of temporality can diverge significantly—even in the course of identical events, where one might perceive its passage as either dilated or accelerated in comparison to another person experiencing the same event." (p. 1)

2. Describe an instance where you've endured a similar or the same event as someone else but had completely different experiences of the event. How did you respond differently than the other person, and how do you think your respective time orientations impacted both of your responses?

"Each moment in this setting reinforced my experience of otherness, challenging the temporal norms and prompting me to reflect on how institutions of this kind recognize and interact with diverse temporalities." (p. 2)

3. When did you first realize that time was more expansive than the numbers on the clock?

4. Do you feel that institutions make room for how other cultures experience time? In what ways have you experienced institutional time as an oppressive force? What workarounds and loopholes have you created to soften the impact of institutional time?

5. "[Octavia] Butler's reorientation of such time-travel narrative frameworks celebrates these connections that were too often broken and eradicated from the formal historical record yet are vital to understanding the nuanced identities and unique temporal experiences embedded within Black communities."

6. In what ways does the "master's clock" from the past reach forward into the present to continue stealing time from Black communities who exist in the supposed "afterlife" of slavery? Name some of the mental, spiritual, and material impacts of this temporal theft on you and your community.

7. How does Octavia Butler's *Kindred* challenge conventional time-travel narratives? What narrative possibilities did Butler's queering of time travel in *Kindred* allow for? What writers and artists have influenced your relationship to the speculative aspects of life and time?

"Black temporalities refer to the rich, multifaceted, and often contentious modalities through which time is discerned, lived through, utilized, and valued within Black communities." (p. 7)

8. Based on Phillips' definition of **black temporalities**, how were you taught to discern, live through, utilize, and value time? Does it differ from how you and your community naturally orient to time, and in what ways? How would you change your current relationship with time?

"Temporal autonomy—the ability to perceive and navigate time on our own terms—is curtailed by...a uniform Western ontology on our lived experiences and perceptions, negating the variant temporal realities of other cultures and communities." (p. 10)

9. According to Karen Barad's theory of "spacetimemattering," space, time, and matter are not born separate, but distinctions between them were created to reinforce particular worldviews and structures of power. In what ways were you also separated from yourself in order to be made legible to society and oppressors? How might practicing temporal autonomy create opportunities for reassembly?

10. Phillips asserts that Black communities' responses to adversity should be recognized not simply as a reaction to oppression but as a reflection of ancestral wisdom that predates colonial disruption. How does this reframing of Black resilience allow us to assert our temporal autonomy while decentering oppressors?

11. How does Audre Lorde's essay, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House," influence the meaning behind this book's title? What did Lorde mean by "master's tools," and what does Phillips mean by "master's clock"?

12. What (and who) gets sacrificed when efficiency and productivity are prioritized above "communal, holistic, and cyclical time"? How can Phillips' concept of "temporal abundance" restore our natural temporalities? How can we practice temporal abundance to reclaim our relationship with play and creativity?

CHAPTER 1: CPT SYMMETRY AND VIOLATIONS: THE ENTANGLEMENT OF AN ACRONYM

"It encourages us to question how time, as a social construct, has been used to enforce norms and hierarchies, and how a quantum-informed perspective could inspire more equitable frameworks for organizing our lives and understanding reality." (p. 27)

13. How did Westernized/Colonial time's rigidity, predictability, and unidirectionality shape your early understanding of gender identity, sexuality, and beauty? Have your perspectives shifted since? In what ways?

"...time as a river significantly shapes our early cognitive development, seeming an almost instinctive framework for time. From a young age we are taught about, and many even seem to experience, time as propelling us forward into the next moment, day, month, or year." (p. 30)

14. Did you learn about time in school? How were you taught to relate to the shape and flow of time? Do you experience time as a river, or do you relate to it differently? What are the limitations of this metaphor?

15. How do oppressive time constructs influence Black parenting? Did the pressures and demands of the Westernized/Colonial timeframe influence how you were parented? If you are a parent or guardian, how do the pressures and demands of oppressive time constructs influence your parenting style?

16. What becomes possible when we view our individual and collective choices as movements that shape time? How might this perspective on time as something that is shaped, alter your choices in the present moment?

"An axiom stands as a self-evident truth, accepted as valid without requiring proof...We either accept an axiom as an indisputable fact or undertake the difficult, perhaps impossible, task of substantiating it." (p. 33)

17. In addition to time, name some other axioms we are taught to accept as "indisputable facts." Reflect on which axioms you feel compelled to challenge in your creative and political work.

18. If scientific law is "shaped by political, economic, and societal factors," how might the second law of thermodynamics, "which dictates the irreversible increase in entropy," be informing the rapidly increasing global disorder we are witnessing today?

"CPT [charge-parity-time] symmetry sheds light on the imbalance of the existence of matter and antimatter in the universe...meaning that when matter and antimatter collided, they didn't completely cancel each other out...What might seem like imbalances or contradictions are evidence of a nontraditional model of the universe at play." (p. 39)

19. How does the concept of CPT Symmetry challenge and undermine Causal Asymmetry Theory?

20. How might the notion of an asymmetrical universe challenge our perspectives of justice, fairness, and equality? How does the concept of equity account for the asymmetrical properties of governing systems?

21. How does the concept of "retrocausality" trouble Causal Asymmetry, or the idea that cause always precedes effect? What are some of the implications of retrocausality identified by Phillips? Why is it important to continue challenging colonial scientific narratives?

22. Identify 1-3 examples when time as a rigid, unidirectional force has been used as a punitive, regulatory tool in Black and other racially marginalized communities.

CHAPTER 2: BENDING THE ARROW OF TIME

23. In your own words, explain how the African American folktale *Br'er Rabbit's Race with Br'er Turtle* disrupts linear notions of time. What distinguishes this folktale from Aesop's fable, *The Tortoise and the Hare?*

> "...it is essential to clarify the overlaps and distinctions between the terms 'African,' 'Black,' and 'Afrodiasporic.'" (p. 56)

24. Phillips makes intentional distinctions between African, Black, and Afrodiasporic. Why is it important to establish these nuances? How do we honor the overlaps while maintaining the distinctions? How do you personally make distinctions between cultures? Do you identify with one or more of these groups? Why?

> "In the context of Zamani and Sasa, this means that future events could inform or reshape the past, a notion that aligns with the quantum theory where past, present, and future are not strictly linear but are interdependent dimensions of time." (p. 60)

25. How would you describe the Zamani and Sasa time constructs to a classroom of young, curious minds? How do Zamani and Sasa overlap? How do Zamani and Sasa reflect the Quantum Principle of Entanglement?

26. How did your ancestors relate to death? How does the colonial temporality inform our personal and societal perspectives on death? How can Phillips' exploration of the Quantum Principle of Entanglement help us queer our understanding of the living/dead and even ancestor/descendant binaries?

> "...the observer changes everything." (p. 60)

27. Reflect on the Haitian concept of "premonitory kick" and how similar "quantum-like causality violations" such as superstitions, omens, and synchronicities allow us to interact with the future and shape our realities. Have you ever received a premonitory kick about a future event? What was that like? Did heeding the information contained in the event change the outcome of a situation? How so?

28. What is the Opele chain in the Ifa divination system designed to reflect about the human mind, according to *Ifa Divination system* by Ojo Oyebisi?

29. How does African American Language (AAL) manipulate English to express Black temporalities? In addition to "be," what other terms highlight distinctive expressions of Black temporalities in AAL? How does this maneuver mimic our felt knowledge of African temporalities and languages? How does this show up across the African Diaspora?

30. What role do genealogy, astrology, and nature play in African cultures and temporalities?

31. What feelings or thoughts come up as you read about how different African communities orient to time? What qualities resonated from which communities, and what felt entirely new?

"In their role as custodians of cultural heritage, griots act as temporal bridges across generations. Their storytelling transcends narration..." (p. 69)

32. In what ways does the griot's storytelling function similar to entangled particles? What are the griot's credibility sources, as opposed to the academician's focus on specific dates? In what shape does a griot perceive time?

33. Phillips describes ancestor and author Zora Neale Hurston as a "time binder with involuntary divinatory powers." In your childhood, did you, like Zora, receive visions of the future that eventually came to pass? What was that like, and how did you navigate receiving "knowledge before its time"? Do you work with your dreams, intuition, and visions in your liberation work?

"I was, and still am, what we call tender-headed..." (p. 72)

34. In their book *Recurrence Plot: And Other Time Travel Tales,* Phillips tells a story about a fictional hood hair-dryer that functions as a time machine. Identify other mundane objects that could double as a time machine and explain how they warp, expand, or collapse time.

35. How did the simple act of getting their hair done temporally dislocate Phillips? Have you ever experienced temporal dislocation? What were you doing, and what did it feel like?

36. What is your hair story? Do the temporal politics of professional and institutional settings influence how you style or don't style your hair? How so?

"...our project calls for a reexamination of the concept, urging us to move beyond conventional associations with physical traits and color and, by extension, racial categorizations." (p. 76–77)

37. What would it look like to collectively move beyond conventional associations of Blackness-as-physical-trait into Blackness-as-cosmic-existence, "not confined to terrestrial or corporeal boundaries?" How do the colonial concepts of ownership and lookism seduce us into a superficial relationship with Blackness? How do we go deeper with ourselves?

38. Why doesn't blackness, as the "absence of light or a non-signal," violate the principles of special relativity?

CHAPTER 3:
CPT SYMMETRY AND VIOLATIONS OF BLACK SPACETIME

"CP Time—a lack of punctuality as measured by a so-called objective clock—undermines the rich and diverse cultural understandings of time within Black communities, where perceptions of time may differ from Western standards of punctuality." (p. 90–91)

39. How did you relate to CP Time growing up? How was the term used? Does it impact your current relationship with being on time? Do you flaunt CP Time like a superpower or compensate the trope with high punctual standards?

40. Since the creation of the CP Time, lateness has also been used by oppressors to describe the temporal orientations of other cultural groups, which also intersect with Black identity. Reflect on temporal oppression and how different marginalized groups have used "CP Time" framework to exemplify their own unique temporalities.

41. What are some underlying reasons that contribute to lateness? How do socioeconomic factors, systemic barriers, and personal circumstances play a role in how closely someone can adhere to Western standards of punctuality?

42. In what ways were the intervention of science, Western notions of time, and the clock shaped by the Judeo-Christian worldview and spiritual ideologies?

43. How did colonizers' perspectives about Indigenous temporalities influence how African, Black, and Afro-diasporans perceive Indigenous African Spiritual Traditions? What beliefs and attitudes must be confronted in order to reclaim our Indigenous temporalities?

"The white gaze, when surveilling Black people, compresses space and time, anchoring Black existence firmly within the reductive confines of a white supremacist chronology. This act of observation serves as a mechanism of disenfranchisement..." (p. 103)

44. What does the white gaze have in common with the Quantum Zero Effect, and how has the white gaze hindered the movement of marginalized communities?

45. What was striking about the Great Clock in Thomas Jefferson's Monticello Plantation house? What does the design of this clock implicate? What emotions arise when you think of the intentionality behind the design?

46. How was sound used on plantations to enforce temporal order, and what strategies did enslaved people use to turn time "back upon its master"? In what ways do you see plantation time operating under capitalism?

47. Define "time poverty" and describe how it manifested in the Pruitt-Igoe community. How has time poverty impacted you and your community?

"To be deemed 'Hip' was to encapsulate being 'in the now,' fully immersed in the present moment's vibrancy, challenges, and opportunities." (p. 126)

48. How did Reverend Leon H. Sullivan and Philadelphia's Zion Baptist Church members respond to the "space race"?

49. How did *Dig This Now* and *Hip City* come to exist? What is the significance of these publications?

50. In addition to reviving print media, how do you suggest we address "distortions and misrepresentations perpetuated by mainstream media" and "enhance the communal fabric of Black temporalities" in the age of artificial intelligence? What does narrative reclamation look like in a digital age of misinformation?

51. How is the concept of "presentism time orientations," which describes a tendency to prioritize instant gratification over future planning, used to perpetuate stereotypes about Black communities? How does presentism reflect the anti-Blackness in Thomas Jefferson's "analysis" in the excerpt from *Notes on the State of Virginia* on pages 101-102? Why is this harmful?

"When won't we understand
This is our last and only chance
Everybody, it's a future shock"
—Curtis Mayfield, "Future Shock" (p. 130)

52. Reflect on the relationship between Alvin Toffler's Future Shock Theory and the global unrest of the present moment. How does the pace of societal change ground or destabilize communities?

53. What is "time colonialism," and what does gentrification have to do with it?

CHAPTER 4: TIME ZONE PROTOCOLS

"I really just can't get down with this whole concept of a 'New Year'...It's not the beginning of a season. It doesn't reset anything. There is no natural growth nor change. It's just another... first of the month." (p. 139)

54. What purpose does the global standardized time zone system serve? Is it designed to collaborate or compete with local temporalities?

55. How does the Prime Meridian, "the central axis from which all other global longitudes and time zones are calculated," being set in Europe, flatten other ways of living? What does it mean that it's still the "temporal center of the world?" How do colonizers' use of time to conduct "commercial and scientific intercourse between nations" impact our intimate lives? How does this inform our relationship with children, education, housing, work, and community?

56. Chapter 4 elaborates on Phillips's artistic and creative research project, *Time Zone Protocols* (TZP). What was TZP about? What aspects of their study did you find significant in this chapter, and why?

> **"The imposition of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT), as the global standard can be seen as a form of temporal imperialism, where time itself was colonized and regulated to Western industrial priorities."** (p. 156)

57. Reflect on the Greenwich Observatory's imperialist roots. How were the tools and calculations provided by the observatory involved in standardizing the African slave trade and colonial conquests during the Age of Exploration?

58. From what country did John Harrison steal the sacred wood needed to create the first marine clock? In what ways did Harrison's marine clock/chronometer aid in colonial expansion? How did the British Parliament's Board of Longitude weaponize time against Harrison when he attempted to collect the prize money?

59. The implementation of time zones wasn't just about "synchronizing clocks." What role did time zones play in establishing dominant narratives? What are some implications of calling the global standardization of time "cosmic time"? Why is equating colonial time with the cosmos dangerous?

60. Liberia was the only African nation at the International Meridian Conference (IMC) in 1884. Expand on the United States' role in the establishment of Liberia. Why was Liberia created? Who acquired the land, and how was the land acquired?

61. Following its independence, how did Liberia remain temporally entangled with the ACS? How did Liberia exercise temporal autonomy in the face of these challenges?

62. How was the Berlin Conference of 1884–1885 an effort to seal the fate of Africa's wealth? What did national attendees of this conference intend to do to Africa's land, resources, and Indigenous political systems?

> **"Miraculous and Horrific things are happening to us, and we can't explain or make sense of them in a linear timeframe…the unknown is also its own character." —Camae Ayewa, Prime Meridian Unconference workshop, 2022** (p. 166)

63. How is Daylight Savings Time (DST) an extension of temporal imperialism? What are its origins and purpose, and how does it impact local, cultural, and Indigenous rhythms and cycles?

64. What are the benefits of restoring local/community timekeeping practices that follow the sun (day) and moon (night) cycle?

65. How does Phillips define "Black SpaceTimeMatters"? Why is it essential to create and nurture Black temporal and spatial realms? For non-Black readers benefiting from this material, reflect on how you specifically benefit from the nurturance of Black temporalities. What does reciprocity look like?

"Standing at the center of the room, one could simultaneously experience both tracks, akin to a particle existing in a state of superposition, instead of having to collapse into either..." (p. 178)

66. How was "holding space" defined in Celeste Winston's "Black Fugitive Infrastructures" workshop? What are some examples of holding space in Black temporalities? What are some examples of holding space in your culture(s) of origin?

67. What physical and metaphysical refuges and sanctuaries have held and held space for you while enduring hostile environments? What about these spaces make you feel held?

68. When you think of reparations, material resources and wealth redistribution may immediately come to mind, but during the Phillips' Prime Meridian Unconference, Joy Tabernacle-KMT presented another kind of reparations. What is "Grief Reparations," and why are space and time necessary components of reparations?

69. What would grief reparations look like in your life? What do you need to grieve, and what reparative efforts would support your ability to grieve and heal?

70. Explain how Joy Tabernacle-KMT connects time stolen from Black people to the extension and preservation of white lives. For white readers: how does Tabernacle-KMT clarify your role as accomplices in realizing grief reparations?

71. Explore materials from the Protocols (https://timezoneprotocols.space/diy/), the Time Zone Generator (https://timezoneprotocols.space/generator/), and the Just In Timekit (https://timezoneprotocols.space/timekit/) developed by Phillips' Time Zone Protocols.

CHAPTER 5: RACE AGAINST TIME: CENTERING BLACK TEMPORALITIES FOR LIBERATED HOUSING FUTURES

"Law is fundamentally about time." —Renisa Mawani (p. 193)

72. Describe Phillips' community lawyering practice. Why is community lawyering an important legal resource for marginalized communities?

73. In what ways has legal time's tendency to "assimilate and absorb other temporalities" impacted your housing experiences or Black housing in your city, neighborhood, or block? How has your Blackness, gender, and/or class affected your housing experiences over time?

74. Take a moment to reflect on the meaning of home. What does home mean to you? What does home look, feel, and smell like? What supports help you to sustain this home? Who eats at your dinner table? What nourishment is being served?

75. How does the law's temporal order perpetuate time poverty and other injustices?

76. Describe Michael Hanchard's examination of "racial time." What are some of racial time's impact on multicultural communities?

"...Black communities were not only spatially segregated but also trapped in a temporal loop of economic stagnation." (p. 202)

77. In what ways do you notice the spatial and temporal segregation mechanisms of the slave codes and Jim Crow law still functioning in your community to lock Black and other racially marginalized communities out of the future?

78. How did practices of exclusionary zoning, federal redlining policies, sundown towns, racially restricted covenants, and urban development initiatives work together to spatially and temporally oppress Black communities?

79. Though monetary reparations are required, the amount of time lost in deferred dreams, evictions, legal/lawful injustices, and generations of premature death is insurmountable and unquantifiable. Paint a holistic, speculative, queer picture of reparations that addresses intersectional and compounded loss.

80. What changes would need to occur in the field of Urban Planning to adequately address and repair the violence inflicted on Black and immigrant communities through exclusionary zoning practices and federal redlining policies?

81. North Philly's Columbia Avenue was renamed Cecil B. Moore Avenue following the Columbia Avenue Riots of 1964. Reflect on Cecil B. Moore's work and why he's a prominent historical figure for Black Philadelphia.

82. Reflect on the etymology of the term *nostalgia*. What are you nostalgic for? What home (person, place, or experience) do you long to return to? From where—or from whom—have you been displaced? How might that ache serve as a bridge, connecting you to the suffering of other marginalized people?

83. Margaret Farrar describes place memory as "a sense of place that is inextricably linked to memory formation, which is, of course, crucial to identify formation, both at the individual and collective levels." Use this concept of place memory to reflect on relationships between a land and its people. If we have place memory, might we consider a land's capacity to remember its people? Why is it essential to return a land to its people? What land do you long for, and what land longs for you?

84. What happens to those unable (or unwilling) to align with the white supremacist idea of the future? Why is it urgent to reclaim, establish, and implement our own temporalities and visions of the future?

"When we rely on Black temporal frameworks, time can in fact be created, reclaimed, resourced, and redeemed." (p. 230)

85. How does temporal scarcity appear in your personal, communal, and professional life? What changes would practicing temporal abundance require you to make? What's a small but impactful change that you can begin making today?

86. What are ninety-nine-year ground leases, and how do leveraging these ground leases help maintain a neighborhood's cultural integrity?

"...[challenge] the exclusionary, government-sponsored narratives that paint residents as complicit in their own poverty..." (p. 238)

87. What does Phillips mean by "non-deterministic futures"?

88. Recall an experience of "time penalty" in which being a few minutes or days behind a deadline costed you months, years, or even decades of your life. What was that like? How long did it take you to get back on track?

89. Why is it necessary to dismantle narratives that paint those struggling with housing stability and homelessness as deserving of a "future that does not include them"? How do your personal beliefs about people experiencing housing instability and homelessness perpetuate or combat these narratives?

90. How was the political temporality of the COVID-19 pandemic used to strategically expedite the implementation of Philadelphia's Renters Access Act (RAA)? What are its mandates?

CHAPTER 6: WAITING, WADING WEIGHTING TIME

"...the experience of waiting, often involuntarily imposed, is a significant form of temporal oppression...it represents a psychological and emotional battleground where hope, anticipation, and despair intermingle..." (p. 252)

91. How has waiting been used to temporally oppress our communities? How are waiting and delay presently weaponized against Black and other culturally marginalized people? What delays—imposed by oppressive institutions and systems—have wasted your time?

92. In what ways was Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation a political and military maneuver? Were the liberation and well-being of enslaved populations the priority of this act?

93. What are some ancestral memories tied to January 1st before the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect? Why does Phillips consider it a "deeply ambivalent temporal marker" to formerly enslaved Black communities?

"There were many other means by which enslaved people collected and disseminated information among themselves and with distant communities that evaded the enslavers' awareness." (p. 258)

94. In what ways did work songs serve as a technology for enslaved Black communities? What were work songs used to communicate?

95. Reflect on quantum entanglement while taking in the sounds of your environment. Though each sound comes from individual sources traveling through time at distinct paces, they instantaneously influence each other and you, resulting in the soundscape you hear. Are you able to "untangle" the sounds around you? What information are you able to glean from this entanglement?

"The two Freedom Days that the US recognizes (January 1 and June 19th) as historical *fact*, and the idea that on either day enslaved Black people in *fact* became liberated, demonstrate the fallacy of facticity..." (p. 265)

96. How do you personally define truth? When do you consider something to be true? How does truth feel as it travels in your body? Does your body respond to facts the same way it responds to truth?

97. Recall a time when you felt something was true but could not pinpoint the time or date that it happened. Did not having a date or time diminish its status or impact how other people perceived it? How so?

98. Do you feel that your past (your genealogical history, ancestral cultures, and Indigenous knowledge systems) and future are accessible to you? In what ways do you feel you are trapped in the present moment? What is your relationship with escape, and how are your attempts to escape tied to temporal oppression?

99. Name some modern-day examples of "wading time," which Phillips defines as averting the gaze, avoiding surveillance, and reclaiming space and time.

100. How were Harriet Tubman's actions a form of temporal rebellion? How is "Wade in the Water" a freedom technology?

101. How did Harriet Tubman leverage the temporal pace of information in the daytime to conduct her operations at night?

102. How have sacred holidays and political events been manipulated to quell the resistance of the oppressed? Give an example <u>not</u> mentioned in the book.

103. How does Phillips use quantum space-time collapse to describe the white gaze's impact on Black holidays like Juneteenth and Emancipation Day? What does the act of observation by the white gaze do to Black joy?

104. What does the act of observation by the white gaze do to your Black joy? Does it foreclose upon your ability to access your internal world?

105. How have curfews historically (and presently) served as a form of temporal oppression against Black communities in the United States?

106. How do we "generate a vortex large enough to…forge a barrier of protection…throw off the gaze…and open a portal to endless degrees of temporal freedom"? What spells and rituals have you and your community created to avert the white gaze?

CHAPTER 7:
PROJECT: TIME CAPSULE

"…the unearthing of these capsules is often a byproduct of upheaval and loss… even a hypothetical return would not restore their original state or erase the scars of displacement." (p. 289)

107. As a future ancestor, what items would you put in a time capsule for your descendants to find? What narrative would your time capsule tell: a reflection of the times you're living in? A cautionary tale? A message of empowerment? The wisdom of your heritage? Are its contents different from a time capsule intended for your ancestors? In what ways?

108. Have you ever experienced "root shock"? What is the impact of root shock on your life and present-day sense of security? How is your experience of root shock connected to your reflections on nostalgia back on question 83? How do you bear your scars of displacement?

109. Have you ever just existed in a state of quantum superposition, embodying all potential versions of yourself simultaneously, but then an observer came along and collapsed you into a definitive, fixed version of yourself? What restorative work do you do to reclaim your possible versions?

110. How do we recover from the seemingly opposing extremes of systematic erasure/exclusion and hypervisibility under the white gaze? What are some benefits of Black obscurity?

111. Do you think the energy of a new development built on top of a mass burial is at all impacted by what took place on the land before the new building was developed? Why do you think proper burial rites for the dead are important to the harmony of those still living?

112. Are there historically Black cemeteries or potter's fields in or near your neighborhood or town? Are they well-maintained? By who? What is the history of the place(s)?

"What information can the past glean from the future? What can the future transmit back to the past?" (p. 320)

113. What (if any) aspects of African Spiritual Traditions, Rootwork, Hoodoo, or folk medicine do you recall from your childhood and family culture?

114. How does New Age spiritual practices appropriate and advance colonial efforts to erase Indigenous spiritual traditions? How does colonialism show up in New Age approaches to crystal healing, somatic arts, and astrological narratives?

AFTER ECHOES: A COSMOGRAM

115. What themes spoke loudest to you in this book? What new meanings and insights shape how you relate to the themes in the cosmogram?

116. If your future self were to borrow your current body to write a message to your present self, what would the message say?

"...perhaps liberation cannot be measured in terms of 'when.' The notion of 'when' presupposes a linear progression toward a definitive endpoint, a concept that seems increasingly inadequate in capturing the complex reality of Black liberation." (p. 285)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR OF THIS GUIDE

Austen Smith (they/them) is a writer, housing researcher, and Keeper of ImaginationDoulas, a spirit-led creative learning space that supports Black and other culturally marginalized cultural producers in developing a spirit-led creative discipline through dreamwork and ancestral reverence. This guide was inspired by the ImaginationDoulas framework, formulating questions designed to bridge *Dismantling the Master's Clock* with the reader's felt knowledge. To learn more, visit: www.imaginationdoulas.com.