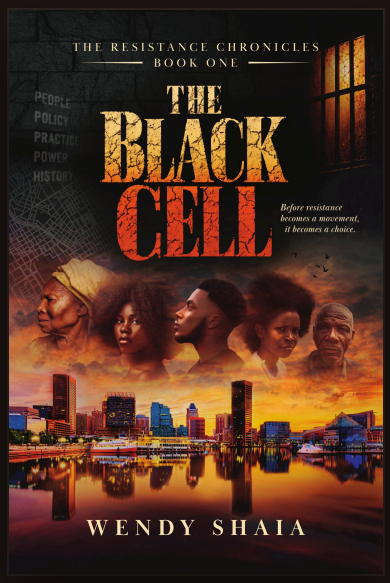

MEDIA SHEET · THE BLACK CELL

THE RESISTANCE CHRONICLES

The history of a movement determines its future.

A near-future Baltimore. A clandestine Black resistance movement. A question about what liberation demands.

Wendy Shaia, EdD, MSW · Author · Scholar · Creator of the SHARP Framework

Published by Roots & Wire Press

Finalist, Urban Fiction
2022 American Fiction Awards

Honorable Mention, Fiction Novel
2022 Royal Dragonfly Book Awards

In a near-future Baltimore where racial inequity has deepened rather than disappeared, a clandestine Black resistance movement is growing. Its members have built a hidden community around a radical proposition: Black people should no longer have to negotiate for their humanity within systems designed to deny it.

But resistance carries consequences. As the movement grows, its members must navigate surveillance, betrayal, competing visions of liberation, and the personal costs of challenging the racial order. The novel combines speculative fiction, political suspense, and deeply human storytelling to explore what happens when a community stops asking an unjust system to change and begins imagining freedom on its own terms.

WHY THIS BOOK, WHY NOW

At a moment when questions about race, state power, belonging, and the limits of institutional reform remain deeply unsettled, *The Black Cell* asks readers to consider a more provocative question: What happens when Black people stop waiting for existing systems to deliver justice and begin imagining freedom on their own terms?

A NEW EDITION. A LARGER STORY.

First published in 2022, *The Black Cell* returns December 1, 2026 in a new Roots & Wire Press edition as Book One of The Resistance Chronicles. Book Two, *Seeds of Resistance*, reaches backward into the histories that shaped the movement's leaders before carrying their struggle forward.

THE BLACK CELL

The Resistance Chronicles · Book One

PUBLISHER
Roots & Wire Press

PUBLICATION DATE
December 1, 2026

ISBN
979-8-9983257-0-0 paperback
979-8-9983257-1-7 eBook

PRICE
$19.95 paperback · $6.99 eBook

AUDIENCE
Adult

GENRE
Black speculative fiction / dystopian / political fiction

Seeds of Resistance

Book Two · Forthcoming June 1, 2027

ISBN
979-8-9983257-2-4 paperback
979-8-9983257-3-1 eBook

> *Before resistance becomes a movement, it becomes a choice.*

THE QUESTION AT THE HEART OF THE SERIES

"Scholarship examines what is. Fiction asks what might be."

What becomes possible when fiction is used not only to expose systems of oppression, but to imagine what people might resist, build, protect, and become together?



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

WENDY SHAIA

Author · Scholar · Creator of the SHARP Framework · Founder of Roots & Wire Press

Wendy Shaia, EdD, MSW, is a British-born Jamaican American author, scholar, and creator of the SHARP Framework for antiracist practice and leadership. Raised in Kingston, Jamaica, and now based in the United States, her work examines how race, power, history, and human relationships shape the systems and communities people inhabit. Her fiction extends those questions into imagined worlds, using story to explore choices, consequences, resistance, and possibility.

ENDORSEMENT

> *A powerful and necessary story that stays with you long after the last page.*

Kimberley Richards, PhD, Executive Director
The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, home of the Undoing Racism® Community Organizing Workshop

CONVERSATIONS WITH WENDY

01 What does liberation require beyond resistance?

02 What can fiction reveal about race and power that scholarship cannot?

03 Why center Black political imagination in speculative fiction?

04 Why Baltimore?

05 Why did you take your novel back and build your own press?

SELECTED STORY ANGLES

Black Speculative Fiction and Political Imagination
What becomes possible when Black characters define freedom for themselves?

Baltimore as Speculative Ground
Race, state power, community, and autonomy in a familiar American city.

From Framework to Fiction
A scholar of antiracist practice turns to speculative fiction to ask questions scholarship alone cannot answer.

Why an Author Took Her Book Back
Reclaiming *The Black Cell* and building an independent press to steward the larger series.

ROOTS & WIRE PRESS

Shaia established Roots & Wire Press to steward *The Black Cell* and the larger Resistance Chronicles with creative independence. Roots evoke history, ancestry, memory, nourishment, and community. Wire evokes boundaries, systems, constraint, and danger. *Sometimes roots grow through wire.*

THE BOOKS

DECEMBER 1, 2026

The Black Cell

The Resistance Chronicles · Book One

A clandestine Black resistance movement begins imagining freedom on its own terms.

FORTHCOMING JUNE 1, 2027

Seeds of Resistance

The Resistance Chronicles · Book Two

The histories that shaped the movement's leaders collide with what comes next.

MEDIA / REVIEW MATERIALS

Author interviews · Review copies · Book excerpts · Author bio · Cover art · Roots & Wire Press information · Event and panel conversations

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