

*African
American
Review*

Poetry

Author(s): Cherise A. Pollard

Source: *African American Review*, Vol. 37, No. 4 (Winter, 2003), p. 644

Published by: [St. Louis University](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1512396>

Accessed: 08/11/2013 09:53

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at
<http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



St. Louis University is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *African American Review*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

Cherise A. Pollard is a Cave Canem Fellow ('97-'99) and Assistant Professor of English at West Chester University of Pennsylvania. Her poems have appeared in *5AM*, *Cave Canem Anthologies* (nos. 2-5), and *The Drumming Between Us: Black Love and Erotic Poetry*.

Criminal Family

It's summer outside, but in here
you need a sweater. I always
forget that when we're rushing
to get in before the book closes,
we all must put down our names,
street addresses, and the inmate
we're visiting. Sometimes
I screw it up, put his name as visitor,
put myself as inmate, put my Pittsburgh
address, not my Jersey, and I don't know
if the guards even notice. They know us
soon as we come through the metal detectors:
visit for Pollard and a head nod.
We do not know just how much we'll miss
this next year, when we'll be new again.
We sit with the other criminals' families:
if you drop the possessive, we become
what we fear we've always been.