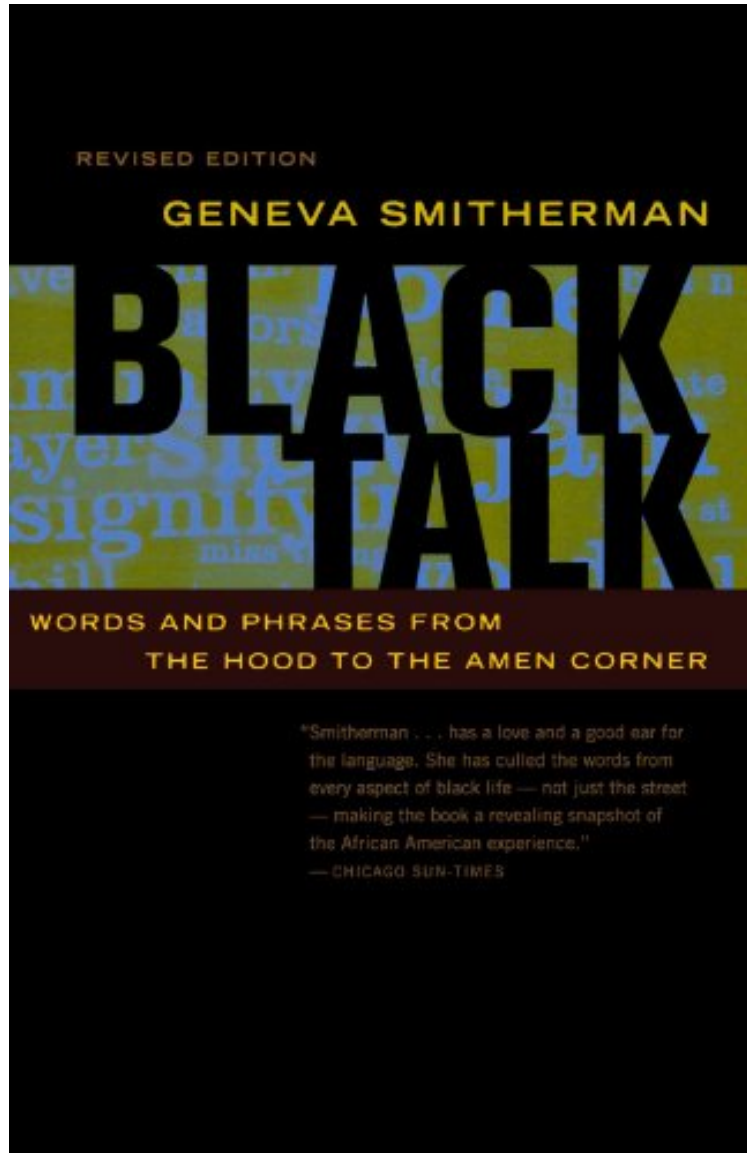


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## Black Talk: Words and Phrases from the Hood to the Amen Corner

Geneva Smitherman

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Geneva Smitherman : Black Talk: Words and Phrases from the Hood to the Amen Corner before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Black Talk: Words and Phrases from the Hood to the Amen Corner:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Reference Library Must for Writers By A Customer This is a great

reference. As a working screenwriter and published novelist, I find I use this book almost every day. One nit, however: it would be a lot more helpful if the book were cross-referenced so that you could look up a common word and find the Black Talk "translation." Just a thought for those of us who aren't hip. BTW, this author is very good, a fine writer and her work is extremely well researched. Check out her other books.

1 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Gag gift  
By Teresa Thomas  
So, I hate to say this, but my husband's father is a terrible racist. So for Christmas, I decided to buy him this book in hopes that he would learn some respect for people. Needless to say he hasn't said anything around me ever since.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. My Testimony  
By KayDee the DaytimeStar!  
This is an important book. Dr. Smitherman has been a longtime champion for black language. I took a class with her using her book *Talkin and Testifyin*. I enjoyed both and took them seriously as did most. However, I do remember a woman angrily walking out of the class. She did not return. Unfortunately this is the way many people react to "Ebonics." They see it as wrong, lazy talking, ignorant, and so forth. The hypocrisy comes to light when whites co-op what black people say and sell it back to us in entertainment, on t-shirts, ball caps, key chains, and the list goes on. I have witnessed black people who know the talk pretend they don't understand it and listen disapprovingly. They are ashamed of its usage and angrily denounce it. Many forget it is necessary in some communities and situations. It is also the first/home language for a majority of us. They feel we should leave it behind and master "standard" American English. People whose first language - such as French - are seen as legitimate but a novice to English may face similar treatment if their command is - how you say? - not good. However, the scorn that is reserved for black people may not be present or presented. C'est la vie. I explain to people in my writings that just as a person may learn another language does not mean they have to leave the other behind. And so it is with black language. I advocate for it as well as other colloquial languages. However, I encourage others to learn the dominate language of where they find themselves so as not to be restricted or disparaged when the language is preferred and expected. And that includes learning to speak the language of other countries my fellow Americans!

I wanted the book to go into more detail about where the words originated and how slang, hip hop, etc. are offshoots and what keeps the language fresh and more useful in present time. Many of the popular ones have merely been recycled. And I know Dr. Smitherman knows that black language is just like any other. It has roots, rules, and a multitude of users. That fact that our president and first lady do not hide their usage and knowledge of it has makes headlines. The Obamas are not pretentious as those who reserve it for home only. They appear totally comfortable applying the language when it suits them and the situation. But no one can deny their facility at what is known as code-switching. An Ah knows Ah'm a perfect xample a dat ... guys. P.S. I attended a book signing of author Diane Proctor Reeder on the same issue and she says a new term is being used to describe how we switch: code-MESHING! Dig that!

Fully revised and updated -- the ultimate guide to black talk from all segments of the African American community. Do you want to be down with the latest hype terms from the Hip Hop world? *Black Talk* is the perfect source. "Even if you think you're hip, you'd better look up kitchen, got her nose open, jump salty, and hundreds of other sayings, former or current, that testify to the linguistic originality of Black speakers," said Frederic G. Cassidy, chief editor of the *Dictionary of American Regional English*. This new edition of *Black Talk* includes more than 300 new words and phrases and, now more than ever, reflects the ever-changing meanings and uses of this vital and rich part of our language. In a style that is always informative and always entertaining, Geneva Smitherman takes this dictionary far beyond a list of words. *Black Talk* is a cultural map that charts word meanings along the highways and byways of African American life.

From *Library Journal*  
The speech of African Americans has been defined by many terms--black English, Ebonics, African American vernacular, and African American language. Smitherman (*Talkin' That Talk: Language, Culture, and Education in African America*) traces the history of black language, describes its unique features, and demonstrates its impact on "standard English" in her excellent introduction to this volume. She also provides a provocative discussion on the recent Ebonics' debate--whether black youth should be instructed in their "native language" as well as "standard English." The bulk of *Black Talk*, however, is a dictionary of black language. Unlike most dictionaries, this one "concentrates on the historical and contemporary significance of words and phrases in the context of African American culture and the Black experience" rather than providing the origin or etymological history of a word or phrase. This revised edition (the first was published in 1994) gives hundreds of definitions for words in current usage, including recent additions like "jiggy," "flava," "benjamins," and "D.W.B." (Driving While Black). An essential volume for all libraries; smaller libraries that own the earlier edition need not purchase the update. -Louis J. Parascandola, Long Island Univ., Brooklyn, NY  
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From *Booklist*  
We liked the first edition of this book [RBB S 15 94] for its contemporary coverage. This edition has more than 300 new words and phrases and also adds a discussion of Ebonics. Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved  
"Smitherman weaves her own understanding of language into a delightful introduction to the complexities of Black English . . . a must-read." *The Washington Post*  
"Embedded here is the hidden history of a people and their resonant culture. This is a major work of scholarship." -- Henry Louis Gates, Jr.  
"The speech of African Americans has been

defined by many terms--black English, Ebonics, African American vernacular, and African American language. Smitherman (*Talkin' That Talk: Language, Culture, and Education in African America*) traces the history of black language, describes its unique features, and demonstrates its impact on 'standard English' in her excellent introduction to this volume. She also provides a provocative discussion on the recent Ebonics' debate--whether black youth should be instructed in their 'native language' as well as 'standard English'. The bulk of *Black Talk*, however, is the dictionary of black language. Unlike most dictionaries, this one 'concentrates on the historical and contemporary significance of words and phrases in the context of African American culture and the Black experience' rather than providing the origin or etymological history of a word or phrase. This revised edition (the first was published in 1994) gives hundreds of definitions for word in current usage, including recent additions like 'jiggy', 'flava', 'benjamins', and 'D.W.B.' (Driving While Black). An essential volume for all libraries; smaller libraries that own the earlier edition need not purchase the update." *Library Journal*