



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

By Geneva Smitherman

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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.

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Editorial Review

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.

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Review

"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*

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