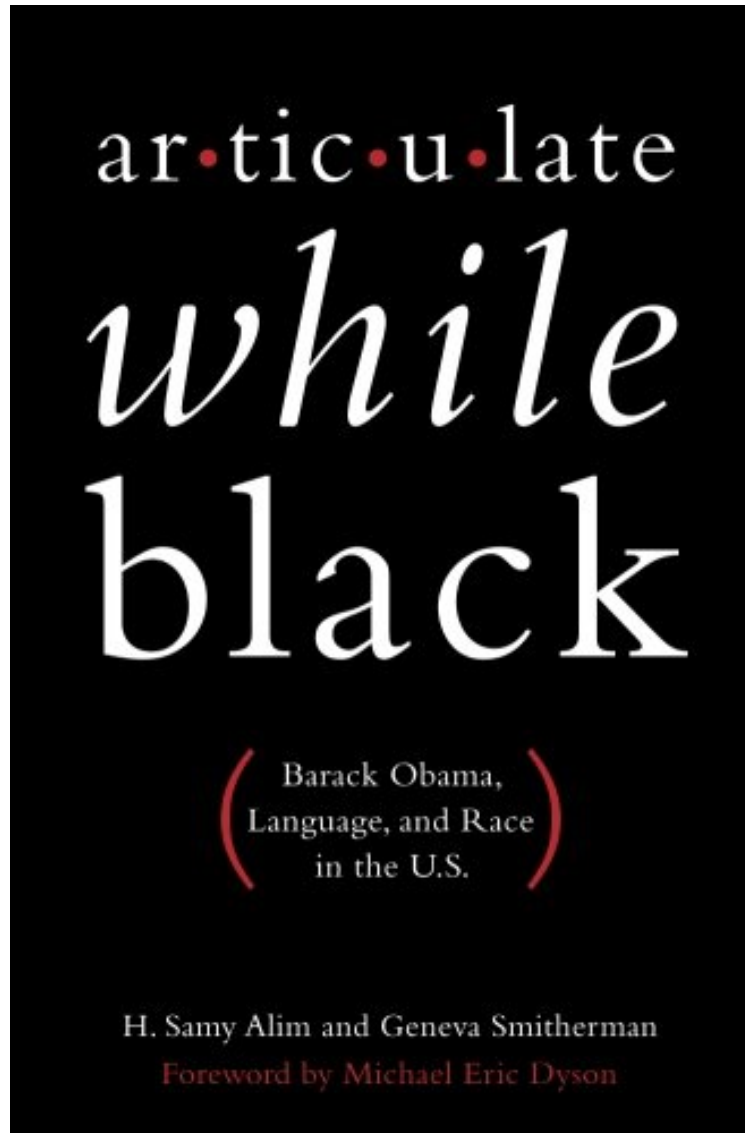


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Articulate While Black: Barack Obama, Language, and Race in the U.S.

H. Samy Alim, Geneva Smitherman

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H. Samy Alim, Geneva Smitherman : Articulate While Black: Barack Obama, Language, and Race in the U.S.
before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Articulate While Black: Barack Obama, Language, and Race in the U.S.:

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Amazing book and great review of Obama's language use and
AAEBy NicoleAlim and Smitherman give a great overview of some of the contemporary issues in the study of African

American English. Through the lens of Obama's language, they explore the intersection of race, class, and culture in the modern U.S. Amusing and lighthearted while maintaining its academic street cred, the book is highly recommended for scholars of language, race, and political science. Real Talk.4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Politics, Rhetorical study, and RaceBy David GreenThe book forwards a new perspective the language and attitudes that remain pervasive elements of racial and political prejudice. But it also offers much needed commentary on the rhetorical savvy of Barack Obama and it's influence on an increasingly diverse audience of constituents.1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. An Excellent Addition for Linguists, Anthropologists, and Students AlikeBy David BucknerThis is an incredibly well written book. It views and analyzes "Black language" through a dual analysis of AAVE and President Obama's use of language--both AAVE and SAE. The language the authors use transitions fluidly from AAVE to SAE and back, providing the reader with an in depth experience of both dialects through the utilization of bidialectism and code-switching, a technique that further expresses the analysis of language. It is an excellent addition to the library of linguists, language students, and those involved in race/ethnicity studies.For those not familiar with these fields, this book is very accessible. One does not need a lot of experience in linguistics or anthropology to understand the content or terminology the authors use. Their examples are relatable and often taken from the media (most of their examples can be viewed/heard on youtube), so, even if one is not familiar with certain examples given about Obama or other individuals discussed within, it would be very easy to find them.Overall, I highly recommend this book to anyone already involved in or interested in learning about AAVE language studies or language studies in general.

Barack Obama is widely considered one of the most powerful and charismatic speakers of our age. Without missing a beat, he often moves between Washington insider talk and culturally Black ways of speaking--as shown in a famous YouTube clip, where Obama declined the change offered to him by a Black cashier in a Washington, D.C. restaurant with the phrase, "Nah, we straight."In *Articulate While Black*, two renowned scholars of Black Language address language and racial politics in the U.S. through an insightful examination of President Barack Obama's language use--and America's response to it. In this eloquently written and powerfully argued book, H. Samy Alim and Geneva Smitherman provide new insights about President Obama and the relationship between language and race in contemporary society. Throughout, they analyze several racially loaded, cultural-linguistic controversies involving the President--from his use of Black Language and his "articulateness" to his "Race Speech," the so-called "fist-bump," and his relationship to Hip Hop Culture. Using their analysis of Barack Obama as a point of departure, Alim and Smitherman reveal how major debates about language, race, and educational inequality erupt into moments of racial crisis in America. In challenging American ideas about language, race, education, and power, they help take the national dialogue on race to the next level. In much the same way that Cornel West revealed nearly two decades ago that "race matters," Alim and Smitherman in this groundbreaking book show how deeply "language matters" to the national conversation on race--and in our daily lives.

"*Articulate While Black* brilliantly dissects the politics of language as embedded in the politics of race...The beautiful thing about [the book] is that it breaks down Obama's oral signifying...and helps us to navigate the complexities of Black linguistic habits and the complications of Black rhetoric writ large... Alim and Smitherman do a great deal of switching themselves, sliding from dense academic prose to streetwise vernacular, proving they are brilliant examples of the very practice they dissect...In the process, [they] leave little doubt about the cogency of their argument: that without being a past master of Black (American) rhetoric, Obama wouldn't be president of the United States." --Michael Eric Dyson, University Distinguished Professor of Sociology, and author of *Debating Race* "A fabulously original work! Two of America's leading authorities on Black Language and Culture draw on their expertise and extensive scholarship to profoundly reshape the national conversation on race--by "linguaging" it. In complicating compliments about President Obama's "articulateness," they brilliantly analyze his artful use of language--and America's response to it--as a springboard to consider larger, thought-provoking questions about language, education, power and what Toni Morrison has referred to as "the cruel fallout of racism." Few sociolinguists tackle these complex issues with as much insight, sophistication, and downright directness as Alim and Smitherman. As they firmly conclude, it's time to change the game - and this book does just that." --John R. Rickford, J.E. Wallace Sterling Professor of Linguistics and the Humanities at Stanford University, and co-author of *Spoken Soul: The Story of Black English* "A sweeping ethnographic and linguistic tour de force that moves between popular culture and political culture with unprecedented academic verve. Daps to Alim and Dr. G." --T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting, Gertrude Conaway Vanderbilt Distinguished Professor, Vanderbilt University, and editor of *The Speech: Race and Barack Obama's "A More Perfect Union"* "The game done changed, and it looks like the iconic figure of Barack Hussein Obama read through the formidable critical lens of leading sociolinguists H. Samy Alim and Geneva Smitherman. Trafficking in the very linguistic style-shifting that the duo charge President Obama with, *Articulate While Black* is a groundbreaking and definitive exploration of the cultural meaning of the nation's first Black President." --Mark Anthony Neal, Duke University, author of *New Black Man* "Sociolinguists Alim and Smitherman bring dual

backgrounds as educators and activists to this metalinguistic analysis of 'racially loaded cultural-linguistics controversies' about Obama, or as they so deftly say, 'we're gonna talk about the talk about the way Barack Obama talks.' Even as their style and tone reflect their command of and respect for the vernacular, their substantial research reflects an equal affinity for the professionally academic... It takes some patience to hang in with the authors' own vernacular, but the reward is a heightened sense of 'the complexity and richness of Black language' and significant insight into Obama's 'mastery of Black cultural modes of discourse' that were 'crucial to his being elected... president.'"--Publishers Weekly"...Obama's mere presence in the White House inspires national conversations about race and citizenship. H. Samy Alim and Geneva Smitherman's new book, *Articulate While Black: Barack Obama, Language, and Race in the U.S.* offers a refreshing take on how language informs those conversations." --Truthdig

About the Author H. Samy Alim is Associate Professor of Education and (by courtesy) Anthropology and Linguistics at Stanford University, where he directs the Center for Race, Ethnicity, and Language (CREAL) and the Institute for Diversity in the Arts (IDA). Some of his most recent books include *You Know My Steez*, *Roc the Mic Right*, *Talkin Black Talk*, and *Global Linguistic Flows*. He has also written for various media outlets, including *The New York Times*, *Al-Ahram Weekly* (Cairo), and *The Philadelphia New Observer*, among others. Geneva Smitherman is University Distinguished Professor Emerita of English, Co-Founder and Core Faculty, African American and African Studies, and Core Faculty, African Studies Center, at Michigan State University. She is a pioneering scholar-activist in the struggle for language rights and for Black Studies. Her list of books includes *Talkin and Testifyin*, *Discourse and Discrimination*, *Black Talk*, *Talkin That Talk*, *Language Diversity in the Classroom*, and *Word from the Mother*.