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Slave Attitudes Toward Masters; Slave Duties and Occupations; Folk Material Culture and Crafts; Folk Narratives; The Religious Experience; Recreation; The Yankee Soldiers Remembered; The Post-Slavery Experience; Summary and Conclusions; Songs, Sermons, and Life-Stories: The Legacy of the Ex-Slave Narratives; Introduction; Interviewing the Interviewer; Social Situation in the 1930's Conclusion The Linguistic Value of the Ex-Slave Recordings; Problems With Conduct of the Interviews; Problems With Reliability of the Data; Problems with Quality of the Data; Left Dislocation; Relative Pronouns; Comparison To Gullah; Summary; NOTES; Representativeness and Reliability of the Ex-Slave Narrative Materials, With Special Reference to Wallace Quarterman's Recording and Transcript; Introduction; Representativeness; Reliability; The Quarterman Transcript; Changes That Make a Qualitative Difference; Changes That Make a Quantitative Difference; Summary and Conclusion; NOTES; Appendix

Is Gullah Decreolizing? A Comparison of a Speech Sample of the 1930's With a Sample of the 1980's; 1. Introduction; 2. The Data; 3. The Morphosyntax of Quarterman's Gullah; 3.1 Quarterman's Speech is Just Mesolectal; 3.2 Gullah Is Not Decreolizing; 4. Conclusion and Some Reflections; NOTES; The Atlantic Creoles and the Language of the Ex-Slave Recordings; 1. The Verb Phrase; 1.1 Creole Unmarked/Anterior versus English Present/Past; 1.2 Progressive and Habitual Aspect; 1.3 Completive Aspect; 2. Forms of be; 3. The Noun Phrase; 4. Pronouns; 5. Prepositions; 6. Word Order; 7. Lexical Items

8. Conclusion NOTES; Liberian Settler English and the Ex-Slave Recordings: A Comparative Study; 1.1 The Liberian Settlers' New World Roots; 1.2 Three LSE Speakers; 2.1 The Verb System: Aspect; 2.2 The Verb System: The Copula; 2.3 The Verb System: done and ain't; 3.1 Variation in Plural Marking; 3.2 Plural Marking in the Ex-Slave Recordings and LSE; 4. Conclusion; NOTES; Appendix A; Appendix B; There's No Tense Like the Present: Verbal -s Inflection in Early Black English; 1.0. Introduction; 2.0. Previous analyses of black English -s; 2.1. Hypercorrection; 2.2. Aspectual marker; 2.3. Verbal agreement marker

## Sommario/riassunto

Debate over the evolution of Black English Vernacular (BEV) has permeated Afro-American studies, creole linguistics, dialectology, and sociolinguistics for a quarter of a century with little sign of a satisfactory resolution, primarily because evidence that bears directly on the earlier stages of BEV is sparse. This book brings together 11 transcripts of mechanical recordings of interviews with former slaves born well over a century ago. It attempts to make this crucial source of data as widely known as possible and to explore its importance for the study of Black English Vernacular in view of