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Jack L. Daniel

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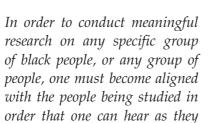*In order to conduct meaningful research on any specific group of black people, or any group of people, one must become aligned with the people being studied in order that one can hear as they hear and see as they see. How can one hear as others hear and see as they see when one perceives others within the context of a world view that is antithetical to those one wishes to understand? . . . To discuss Black communication without an understanding of the primary, religious-philosophical assumptions on which it is based would result in the kind of knowledge one would have of Black music without discussing rhythm.*

(Daniel, 1974, p. x)

❖ INTRODUCTION

A cofounder of the National Communication Association's Black Caucus, Jack L. Daniel is known for his proactive and pioneering communication scholarship concerning the oppressed, his liberation-centered critiques of nonprogressive institutionalized norms, and his kind and loving spirit. As the epigraph above so eloquently states, for one's research to be effective in communities, one must become aligned with the people being studied. Throughout his entire life, Daniel has maintained alignment with the Black communities he has studied. In fact, among his contemporaries and his students, he is sometimes known as "The Conductor." During an interview with the first author of this book, he explained the moniker, which is linked to the Underground Railroad. "It was a heavy responsibility, you know, for the conductor to free the slaves. The conductor had to secure the lives of those who entrusted him or her to deliver them to freedom." First and foremost, Daniel sees community uplift as his personal responsibility. When asked what work he would say he is primarily known for, he modestly replied, "My mentoring of young professionals" (J. L. Daniel, personal communication, March 23, 2003).

Although Daniel's responsibility has always been to God, family, and community before all else, he has also been an influential scholar and a mentor to many prominent and up-and-coming intellectuals. When it was unpopular to talk about class-based and racial oppression, Daniel was completing a dissertation on it (Daniel, 1968), a piece of which was published in one of the top-tier speech journals at the time. Furthermore, within the same year of his doctoral graduation, he moved his scholarship to praxis when he cofounded the Black Caucus of the National Communication Association—formerly the Speech Association of America (SAA)—with Molefi Asante, Charles Hurst, Lyndrey Niles, Dorthy Pennington, and others (Daniel, 1995). In 1969, just one year removed from graduate school, Daniel served as guest editor of *The Speech Teacher,* which is now known as *Communication Education.* Two years later, he was guest editor for another themed issue—on Black communication—in *Today's Speech*, now known as *Communication Quarterly*. His approach for both special issues was one that continually questioned the perceptual stance that oppressed groups were innately inferior and that their communicative patterns were reflective of this perceived inadequacy. These two volumes helped to establish his presence as an intellectual in the field of communication.

Recognizing his natural leadership abilities, progressive approach to intellectual life, and overall scholarship, his alma mater, the

University of Pittsburgh, quickly promoted him from assistant professor to associate professor and Black Studies department chair just one year after receiving his doctorate degree. At that time, there were only a few Black Studies programs throughout the nation, and even fewer departments. Along with Nathan Hare and Molefi Asante, Daniel was among only a few scholars who could claim to be a major part of such an achievement from its inception and in the leadership role of department chair. Thereafter, Daniel's work became more firmly centered in African American studies, with particular emphases on orature and on children and educative cultural practices. His work has become mostly rhetorical and critical-interpretive. Daniel may be most well-known for his piece, coauthored with Geneva Smitherman-Donaldson, titled, "How I Got Over: Communication Dynamics in the Black Community" (Daniel & Smitherman-Donaldson, 1976). That essay is considered so monumental that it stands, even today, as a centerpiece of scholarly dialogues concerning Black cultural communicative continuities. Several other important critical works have been published since then. Daniel's more recent research concerning Black parental naming of children gained some media attention, and he and his wife discussed the topic on ABC News's *20/20* television talk show on August 20, 2004. His myriad community-driven research interests and consistent work concerning Black communication have won Daniel a place among prominent scholars in Black communication studies.

In this chapter, we will discuss Daniel's personal background, academic experiences, and contributions to the field of communication. These discussions will be followed by a conclusion and selected references from his body of writings.

❖ BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Born in the middle of World War II on June 9, 1942, Jack L. Daniel, a native of Johnstown, Pennsylvania, was raised within a family of laborers. His mother, the late Gracie Daniel, was a housewife. His father, the late Russell Daniel Sr., worked on the railroad, in the steel mill, and as a church deacon. Daniel's parents, both of whom were Virginia natives, were not college graduates (his mother had a sixth-grade education, and his father went to Storres Junior College), but they were well-respected and well-known in the surrounding community. Gracie and Russell Sr. raised five children: Russell Jr., Sterlin, Jack, Phyllis, and Stephen. Russell Sr. was a Prince Hall Free and Accepted Mason, Gracie was a

member of the Order of Eastern Star, and they reached the highest level in each organization. Daniel understood at an early age that his father was influential in the community, and he developed an early proclivity toward communal action while watching his father mentor others. The Daniel family was far from affluent. In fact, this family of seven lived in public housing for the first 12 years of Daniel's life. While spending six years building a three-bedroom house from the ground up beside his father—who had no formal carpentry training—Daniel and his two older brothers also learned a few lessons about self-reliance and patience. These lessons were fortified year after year as his family grew enough vegetables and fruits during the harvest season to last them throughout the year. In a private interview with the first author of this book, Daniel notes that he never had a store-bought pie until he reached college because his mother always baked pies "from scratch." As with cooked vegetables, he said, "Most of what we ate, we grew, and I thought that is the way you did things" (J. L. Daniel, personal communication, March 23, 2003). Although both of his parents are now deceased, Daniel notices their presence within him, and their values are reflected in his everyday values. He has instilled those same values in his son, Omari, and his daughter, Marijata. Omari is now a secondary educator, poet, and author, and Marijata holds a doctorate in political science from the University of Michigan. Daniel maintains that his grandchildren, Amani, Akili, Deven, and Javon, have also inherited a strong work ethic. To his grandchildren, Daniel is affectionately known as "Papa Two Times." Daniel recalled having a loving and strict household during his childhood:

> Growing up, we obviously were poor, but I never knew it. I never knew it because of the values and child-rearing practices that we got. We were raised as proud people, people who were capable of doing anything. It was always with the caveat that you had to think, use your brain, get a good education, believe in God, trust in God and there was no toleration for foolishness. Foolishness was anything other than worshipping God, getting in your books, and you don't even think about committing a crime. (J. L. Daniel, personal communication, March 23, 2003)

Despite strong family support, Daniel was not a perfect child. He admits to being a problem child who was an A student in schoolwork, but was an F student in conduct because he was a prankster. In contrast, he was also a responsible child. He worked as a newspaper deliverer and "pin boy" at the bowling alley during high school. In his

senior year, Daniel was a member of his high school's track and cross-country team, which was ranked number one in the country. Athletic involvement became a primary preoccupation of Daniel—to the extent that it contributed to his failing grades. Even after having taken easier classes to make up for these grades, Daniel's grade point average at the time of his high school graduation was a mere 2.0.

❖ ACADEMIC BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE

Upon graduating from high school, Jack L. Daniel was set to enter the military. As a charitable act, however, a White furniture store owner in Johnstown offered to send him and another Black male high school graduate to the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown for a semester. The White man made the offer because he had heard that both of the boys' fathers were ministers, which assured him that they were of good character. Although the man mistook Daniel's father's role as *deacon* to be equivalent to that of a *reverend*, Daniel did take advantage of this remarkable opportunity.

Without applying to the University of Pittsburgh, Daniel was admitted and was told that he could continue matriculating if he maintained a C average and "kept his nose clean," (J. L. Daniel, personal communication, March 23, 2003), Daniel did so, and excelled in the Air Force ROTC on the trick drill team, spinning a bayonet and rifle. Despite Daniel's enthusiasm for the war in Vietnam and the drill team, he was passed over as a commander because of his race, so he quit the ROTC.

Daniel's sustained study at the University of Pittsburgh eventually led him to earn a scholarship to attend graduate school there in the Department of Communication. His undergraduate degree was in psychology, but Edwin Black—the professor of his communication course—wanted Daniel to attend graduate school in the Department of Communication. Black offered Daniel a fellowship with a stipend.

Still ambivalent about whether he wanted to pursue the military or graduate school, Daniel signed up to join the U.S. Army prior to the Vietnam War. He was to be assigned to a depot in Texas and to hold the rank of a noncommissioned officer, When Daniel was scheduled for departure, however, he refused to go because a beautiful woman pleaded with him to stay and take advantage of the full scholarship to graduate school. Jerlean Evelyn Colley, his wife-to-be, was a college junior, and Daniel would be a first-semester graduate student. Although he was quite excited about being a noncommissioned officer in the military, he followed Jerlean's advice and entered the master's program in

the Department of Communication at the University of Pittsburgh, Johnstown. On Christmas day, 1963, Daniel and Jerlean were married.

Daniel became a quick study in this new field of communication and was an exceptional student who found a particular interest in classical rhetoric, research methods, and cross-cultural communication. He studied with Theodore (Ted) Clevenger, who ran a quantitative lab studying general and tonal semantics. Daniel was Clevenger's research assistant and became a statistician specializing in experimental studies. To meet his foreign language requirement for graduate school, Daniel had trained in "high proficiency, scientific Russian." With this talent, Daniel worked with chemistry and physics equations, producing the answers in Russian. He wrote his master's thesis on Blacks' perceptions of White speakers' sincerity, which was one of the earliest studies of culture that examined speaker authenticity and tonal semantics in the field. Later, after entering and matriculating through the coursework of the communication doctoral program, he wrote his dissertation, "Effective and Ineffective Communication on the Parts of Professionals and Non-Professionals When Communicating with Poor People." It marked the beginning of an academic career that would be noted for an emphasis on what Daniel characterizes as "scholarship of the oppressed" (J. L. Daniel, personal communication, March 23, 2003).

By the age of 25, Daniel had been married to Jerlean for four years. He was one year removed from completing his doctorate degree and was an assistant professor at Central Michigan University, although with a meager starting pay of "something like $8500." In retrospect, Daniel laughingly recalled, "I'm thinking, man, I could have been in the military, and they would have covered room and board, and I could have been around the world by now" (J. L. Daniel, personal communication, March 23, 2003). He made the best of that professorship experience, as he has in all his professional positions.

In his entire career, Daniel had only two fiscal year periods away from the University of Pittsburgh. One was from 1967 to 1968, at Central Michigan University as a full-time professor teaching research methods, psychology of speech, and semantics. The other was as an American Council on Education Fellow at Stanford University, from 1973 to 1974. After his period at Central Michigan University, Daniel returned to University of Pittsburgh as an assistant professor. Within only one year, he was promoted and tenured as an associate professor of Communication and Black Studies, as well as becoming the Black Studies Department chair.

During Daniel's transition period to the University of Pittsburgh in 1968, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated. Daniel remembered,

"Before I could process that, my hair got longer and my suits changed to dashikis, and shoes to combat boots. It was on." (J. L. Daniel, personal communication, March 23, 2003). As the new head of a nascent Black Studies *department*, not *program*, he was already engaged in a struggle for freedom and justice. The unit that Daniel headed was named the Department of Black Community Education, Research & Development. At that time, Black Studies programs were not widely acknowledged as important academic programs. In fact, their tenuous status at many schools as mere certificate programs was a signal of academia's general disregard for Black Studies as a legitimate area of inquiry. In short, despite being underfunded and undervalued, Black Studies programs and departments were important sites of intense activism and hands-on learning. Their curricula were not just comprised of a series of classes on civil rights movements and Black history. They were in the midst of a civil rights movement and they were making history as they fought to expand the rights and privileges of generations of Blacks to come. Daniel was at the helm of this insurrectionary activity within higher educational institutions with Black Studies programs and departments. It was 1969 when he became department chair. Daniel was just 27 years old, and this was only one year after receiving his doctorate degree. Although academic contributions by Black scholars about Black people preceded 1968, the naming and character of *Black Studies* departments were new. This is certainly not to slight either the early Institute of Race Relations at Fisk University established by Charles S. Johnson in 1944 or any of the myriad associations for the study of Black Diasporic peoples established in the early 1900s. The fact is, however, that Black Studies experienced its largest thrust into academia because of changing migration patterns, population shifts, and increased Black enrollment at colleges and universities. Marable (2000) posited:

> In 1950, for example, only seventy-five thousand Negroes were enrolled in American colleges and universities. In 1960 three-fourths of all Black students attended historically black colleges. By 1970 nearly seven hundred thousand African Americans were enrolled, three-fourths of whom were at White colleges. Most of these White institutions were ill-prepared for the eruption of Black student protest they would encounter between 1968 and 1972. (Marable, 2000, p. 7)

Daniel was among the few leaders of Black Studies *departments.* Black Studies programs were increasing rapidly. As Marable (2000) noted, college student protests concerning the absence of a Black Studies

curriculum were widespread across the United States—from Washington D.C. to San Francisco. Nathan Hare, who is considered to be the first Black Studies department chair in the United States, had just resigned from Howard University's Department of Black Studies when he was appointed in 1968 to be the nation's first Black Studies chair at San Francisco State University because of the highly publicized student insurgency there. Marable (2000) suggested that the well-organized student protests at San Francisco State offered a template for other student activists seeking curricular reform and the establishment of Black Studies programs and departments within predominately White institutions. Many colleges and universities, especially larger ones, were under pressure to respond. By 1970, Molefi Asante, another recently minted doctor in communication, was been hired as UCLA's Director of the Center for Afro-American Studies. Naturally, Daniel and Asante already knew each other because they were among the very few Blacks within the field of communications who attended the annual SAA conventions.

Daniel had a head start on many of the Black Studies programs in the United States and has since helped to start similar departments at accredited universities such as Central Michigan University, the University of Dayton, and the University of Illinois at Chicago. Whether the protests were at the University of Pittsburgh or somewhere else, Daniel was placed in a precarious position—he was expected to represent the interests of the university while remaining loyal to the civil rights and Black Power movements. For Daniel, this situation was not difficult to navigate because his position was always characterized by his commitment to principle and community.

Due to his diligence and principled leadership, Daniel has had many opportunities, not the least of which was traveling to Tanzania and Nigeria to establish a student exchange program. This experience was followed by his appointment in 1973 as a fellow to the American Council of Education at Stanford University. This was also the year his second child, Omari, was born. Daniel's research and varied administrative positions have taken him around the world to promote and investigate Black communication across the Diaspora, yet he has worked arduously within the communication discipline in general and the National Communication Association in particular.

Cofounding the Black Caucus: One of Daniel's Contributions to the Field of Communication

Daniel's commitment to principled leadership guided his participation in the founding of the Black Caucus of the National Communication

Association, previously called the Speech Association of America (SAA), in 1968. He was joined by Molefi Kete Asante, Cecil Blake, Michael Edwards, Lyndrey A. Niles, Donald H. Smith, Charles G. Hurst, Jr., and Orlando L. Taylor. Daniel also credits Lucia Hawthorne, Melbourne Cummings, Dorthy L. Pennington, and many others for their important contributions to the formative years of the Black Caucus. This group of outspoken scholar-activists would not be ignored. Daniel recounted the details of the Black Caucus's founding in his book, *Changing the Players and the Game: A Personal Account of the Speech Communication Association Black Caucus Origins* (Daniel, 1995). One pivotal moment in the founding of the caucus came during the December 28, 1968, "Open Meeting on Social Relevance" at the Sheraton Hotel in Chicago. This evening colloquium was designed to address issues raised by the ad hoc committee on social relevance of the SAA, a committee that was comprised of a racially diverse mix of 11 liberal communication scholars. With Daniel as chair, the committee prepared "A Manifesto to the Speech Profession," which posed several challenges to leaders and scholars of communication. Each challenge was presented as a question with open queries like this one: "Do the curricula, the textbooks, and the scholarship of the profession do anything to increase our understanding of discourse which is not within the White, middle class norm?" Another such challenge asked, "Why is it that more minority group members are not attracted to the speech profession? What have we done to alleviate this problem, and what have we done to encourage dissemination of ideas and opinions of minority group members who are within the profession?" (Daniel, 1995, p. 3). There were eight such challenges, relating to three categories: the inherent bias advocating European paradigms while dismissing all others within the standard curriculum; the insufficient training of graduate students as future communication scholars who should be able to address socially and contemporarily relevant matters; and the discipline's virtual silence, within all its organs, networks and structures, on social issues pertaining to contemporary society. The manifesto was distributed and discussed before an audience of 200 conference attendees. Daniel began the meeting with an introduction of the committee's concerns. He recalled:

Suddenly and very deliberately, a short Black male . . . wearing a black turtleneck sweater and dark sunglasses, made his way down the center aisle. . . . Without a single word, he mounted the stage, stridently crossed the platform, and politely but in a non-negotiating fashion took the microphone away from me. . . . Charles Hurst

"ran it down" from A to Z, i.e. he told White people about their personal hang-ups, expounded on racism within the SAA, judiciously used a few words of a profane nature, and conjured up an emotional atmosphere that would not permit the ninety-nine percent White members of the audience to retreat from "involvement" with "social relevance." (Daniel, 1995, pp. 5–6)

This speech was followed by a rousing address by Arthur Smith (i.e., Molefi Asante) akin to that of Hurst. Both speeches were apparently delivered in the best of Black rhetorical form, driven by an evocative, academic call to arms. After this two-hour session, Charles Hurst, the chair of Howard University's Department of Communication, invited Black scholars to meet in his hotel room to strategize about the next steps to be taken. It was there that the founding members of the SAA Black Caucus began to organize. They were fortunate to have scholars such as Orlando Taylor and Gloria Walker to consult because Taylor and Walker had already founded a Black Caucus in the American Speech and Hearing Association. That first unplanned gathering of communication scholars in Chicago led to a series of planned meetings and eventually to discussions of a Black Rhetoric Institute, which was to be run as an "independent Black Caucus" (Daniel, 1995, p. 12). Although the institute never materialized because of lack of available funding and administrative personnel, demand and demonstrations aimed at the SAA leadership persisted. Even still, there were key leaders in SAA who continued to acknowledge and offer some funding for meetings that laid the foundation for the Black Caucus. In 1972, there was a significant six-day "Black Communication Conference" at the University of Pittsburgh, organized by Daniel and funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities and SAA, with Daniel as the principal investigator. There were nine papers, which varied in theme and disciplinary approach, delivered by scholars representing Black Diasporic interests. Those authors were David Baker, Lloyd Brown, Lucia S. Hawthorne, Olive Lewin, Jack Daniel, Imogine Hines, Gerlene Ross, Gloria Walker, Fela Sowande, Arthur Smith, Orlando Taylor, and Ronald Williams. The papers, which expounded on Black music, media, rhetoric, discourse, language development, curriculum, and theory, were assembled and eventually published in a volume (edited by Daniel) titled *Black Communication: Dimensions of Research and Instruction* (Daniel, 1974). Incidentally, the year this anthology was released, the SAA Black Caucus held its first election for the presidency of the unit. Professor Dorthy Pennington and her doctoral student Michael Edwards were elected to chair. *Black Communication* was the

first of Daniel's three books published to date. The other two were *Changing the Players and the Game* (Daniel, 1995) and *We Fish: The Journey to Fatherhood* (Daniel & Daniel, 2002).

❖ CONTRIBUTIONS TO COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

Daniel's activistic approach to his research was influenced, in part, by reading Frantz Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth* (1965). He was also influenced by the mentoring he received from ethnomusicologist Fela Sowande and from his colleague, friend, and coauthor Geneva Smitherman-Donaldson. Sowande, an ethnomusicologist trained at the University of London, received an honorary doctorate from the University of Ife in Nigeria and then taught at Howard University and University of Pittsburgh in their Black Studies departments. Daniel had established a collegial relationship with Sowande while serving as his department chair in Black Studies at the University of Pittsburgh. Sowande piqued Daniel's interest in proverb traditions by sending Daniel to Jamaica to study with a few community griots. As departmental colleagues, Daniel and Sowande shared many intellectual exchanges and Daniel recalls enhancing his own understanding of African Diasporic discourses through that relationship. Their intellectual camaraderie also expanded the boundaries of Daniel's research concerning Blacks in the United States. This line of inquiry was strengthened by Daniel's association with Geneva Smitherman-Donaldson, who is indubitably the leading scholar on Ebonics in the United States.

The three areas in which Daniel has left an indelible impact on the field of communications are class-based communication studies, African American language and discourse studies, and research concerning institutionalized racial bias, as described in the following sections.

Class-Based Communication Studies

Much of Daniel's early work was situated around the proposition that Blacks, and certainly Black Studies scholars, could not afford to speak strictly of race and culture without addressing the economic and political conditions of underprivileged Black communities. Foundational scholars such as Carter Godwin Woodson, St. Clair Drake, Horace Mann, Melville Herskovits, and W. E. B. DuBois understood that racism was as much political as economic. Slavery and colonialism were as much political as economic. The civil rights and Black Power movements were as much about the political as the economic.

And now, the history and academic study of Blacks had to include the politics and economics (or political economy) of race, lest the knowledge gained from the struggles for freedom be forfeited. Daniel's decision, during his doctoral program, to investigate how professional and nonprofessional people communicate with poor people was consciously driven by both the political-economic trend in civil rights rhetoric as well as retrospective reflections on his own personal experience. Many major civil rights initiatives and events took place around the time Daniel was completing his dissertation. It was Freedom Summer in 1964, and the Civil Rights Voting Act of 1965 had just passed. Consequently, those who were historically disenfranchised had the right to vote. Thus, they had the democratic privilege of asserting their own opinions and of having those opinions count. Shortly thereafter, the Black Panther Party and Maulana Karenga's organization Us were expanding operations in the West and throughout the nation. In 1968, the Black Power movement was at its height, despite the assassinations of two major civil rights leaders—Malcolm X in 1965 and Martin Luther King, Jr., in 1968. Several political initiatives were at the foundation of Black Power movement activities: educational access, voter registration, community stability and safety, and enhancement of cultural consciousness. All these initiatives emerged from oppressed people asserting their voices.

In his dissertation, Daniel wanted to explore the chasm between oppressed and nonoppressed groups. His communication-based approach considered the way in which the cosmological differences between the two groups prevented social cohesion. In his study, which was later published in truncated form as an article in *Today's Speech*, Daniel wrote that his research "is concerned with revealing some possible communication breakdowns resulting from the poor being alien in an affluent society" (Daniel, 1969a, p. 15). He conducted an ethnography of poor and middle-class people in the Hill District of Pittsburgh, which was then primarily populated by lower-income Blacks. Daniel wanted to know if the indigenous nonprofessional people could communicate more effectively with poor people than the professional middle-class people could. In the article, he presented a review of literature related to class and interaction differences. The purpose of Daniel's study was to examine the perspectives of "nonprofessional," marginalized in-group members and their communication patterns vis-à-vis the dominant, professional, middle-class out-group members' communication patterns. This comparative analysis revealed that if there is a "culture of poverty," it is outwardly manifested via the divergent attitudes between the two groups. These

attitudes, according to Daniel, were associated with everything from notions of authority, goal-setting, and religion to delinquency, violence, sex, and money. Daniel explained that the problems that accompanied poverty might not be understood by middle-class professionals who presumed absence or tardiness from school. For example, the poverty might be due to living conditions instead of actual initiative or enthusiasm on the part of the student. The different ranges of experience of these two groups led to different worldviews that affected what they thought about what should happen and when. Even the peer group networks, socially learned behaviors, sources for news and information, and overall standards for communicative effectiveness were distinct, so the criteria for competent communication shifted significantly from one class-based community to the other. The attitudinal and communicative nuances of each class group were accented by Daniel's everyday examples, illustrating how the nonverbal communication of a middle-class professional can intimidate and alienate poor nonprofessionals. For instance, Daniel discussed the encoding and decoding of messages such as the middle class professional's "facial expression of fear and disgust" (Daniel, 1969a, p. 20) when he enters a poor person's home. He concluded by indicating that there was a direct and proportionate relationship between perceived, shared similarities and understanding as well as valuation of others.

This early-career research by Daniel demonstrated another way in which his disciplinary work has been precocious. In 2004, published journals and books centered within the discipline of communication were beginning to comment extensively about issues of class. Although critical-cultural communication scholars have implied class differentials in their work concerning patriarchal hegemony, much of the class-related research has been left to other fields, such as sociology, economics, and labor and industrial relations.

African American Language and Discourse

Although Daniel's earliest work concerned class-based oppression, he is perhaps best known for his groundbreaking work concerning traditional African American oral discourses and their linkage to African carryovers. Two primary areas of research have served as subsets of Daniel's work on oral discourses: communal-oral discourse and the proverb tradition.

Communal-Oral Discourse. Daniel's initial writing on African American rhetoric was in a Black Studies journal called *Black Lines*, published in

1970. This article was followed up years later, in 1976, with a study coauthored with Geneva Smitherman-Donaldson, and published in the *Quarterly Journal of Speech.* The article, titled "How I Got Over: Communication Dynamics in the Black Community" (Daniel & Smitherman-Donaldson, 1976), has been one of the most reprinted and cited of all Daniel's works. During a time when Black communication research was treated as an accessory to "more formidable" mainstream, Eurocentric communication studies, scholars such as Daniel, Molefi Asante, Lucia Hawthorne, Orlando Taylor, Melbourne Cummings, Lyndrey Niles, Dorthy Pennington, Marcia Clinkscales, Charles Hurst, and others were building this most important rubric of communication scholarship from the ground up. Of course, these scholars had to develop and define the conceptual foundations of the field. Although Geneva Smitherman-Donaldson is a sociolinguist and anthropologist by training, language studies were much more well-connected to communication studies than they are today. So it was only natural for Daniel to collaborate with her on a discussion of "the sacred and secular dynamics of the African American communications system . . . which has served to extrapolate, ritualize, and thus preserve the African essence of Afro-American life" (Daniel & Smitherman-Donaldson, 1976, p. 26). With a particular emphasis on the "traditional Black church," Daniel and Smitherman-Donaldson explicated the distinctions between "surface" and "deep" structures of reality as follows:

> Surface structures are objective, empirical, subject to relatively rapid change, constrained by time and space, and non-generative in nature. Deep structures are intangible, subjective, archetypal, not culturally bound, and generative in nature. (Daniel & Smitherman-Donaldson, 1976, pp. 26–27)

In trying to address the range of oratorical patterns within the sacred-secular continuum, Daniel & Smitherman-Donaldson uncovered several now commonly understood aspects of Black discourse: call-and-response, holism, spiritual diunitality, and polyrhythm.

Call-and-response is often witnessed most overtly within church settings, in which there is interaction between the preacher and congregation. The preacher "calls" by saying something similar to "Y'all don't hear me!" or "Can somebody give me an amen?" The congregation's "response" is usually a reply such as "Amen, reverend!" "Preach!" or "Tell the truth!" This call-and-response pattern can also be nonverbal, as exemplified with a handclap that initiates a thunderous

applause or a tambourine accompanied by the organ, both "calling for" holy-dancing, "speaking in tongues," and "catching the spirit." In nonchurch encounters, call-and-response might be misunderstood as interruptive depending on the nature of the conversation as well as the interactants involved. It can be considered by out-group members to be interruptive if someone is speaking and the verbal or nonverbal response overlaps with the talk. Nonetheless, in-group members know that the speaker and his or her message are simply being affirmed, which is facilitated via call-and-response.

Holism is another aspect of Black oral discourse that recognizes the connectedness between all activity produced by humans, nature, and the universe. Naturally, holism applies to the link between surface structural differences in customs, language, and discourse and the deep structural similarities among African peoples, such as the reverence for orature. The concept of holism also contributes to the comprehension of harmony between the body, worldview, and communicative events and processes. Consequently, there is interdependence among notions of self, how to construct a sense of self, and God-given spiritual essence.

Spiritual diunitality is another way in which African American discourse is permeated and vitalized. *Diunitality* refers to a "unity throughout" something, so spiritual diunitality is the unity throughout religiospiritual practices and approaches. By referencing John Mbiti's notable work *African Religions and Philosophies* (Mbiti, 1992), the authors elucidated the idea that spirit and matter are not opposite; they are coextensive. In the essay, which emerged from the authors' experiences as members of Baptist churches in Pennsylvania and Tennessee, they claimed that spirituality extends beyond religious, cultural, and temporal boundaries, but remains influenced by and linked to each of them in everyday spiritual discursive practice. This is the same type of balance that also permeates holism and polyrhyhm.

According to Daniel and Smitherman-Donaldson, polyrhythm can be explained as the way in which "the universe moves by the many rhythms that are created by the various, complementary, interdependent forces" (Daniel & Smitherman-Donaldson, 1976, p. 31). Within the church setting, it represents the rhythms present in oratorical delivery, audience response, chronemics, instrumental performance, and spiritual coalescence with God. This dynamic, communally-driven interplay between multiple energies coexisting in the same context is fascinating.

Each of these aspects of oral discourse—call-and-response, holism, spiritual diunitality, and polyrythm—is continued in Daniel's later writings on African American rhetoric.

Proverb Tradition. There's an old proverb from Sierra Leone that says, "Proverbs are the daughters of experience." They are the instructive paraphernalia of everyday life that advise, guide, and direct individuals to be ethical, wise, and cautious citizen-achievers. In three of Daniel's articles on proverbs (Daniel, 1972; Daniel, Smitherman-Donaldson, & Jeremiah, 1987; Daniel & Effinger, 1996) he illuminated these and other functions of proverbs within African, African American, and Caribbean American lives. Daniel, Smitherman-Donaldson, and Jeremiah defined proverbs as "figurative epigrammatic statements that express widely accepted strategies for addressing recurring situations" (Daniel, Smitherman-Donaldson, & Jeremiah, 1987, p. 483). The functions of proverbs, according to Daniel's ethnographic study of proverb usage (Daniel, 1972), are as follows:

- "To store and disseminate the speech community's attitudes, beliefs, values, philosophical assumptions, virtues and vices, and in general much of its worldview" (p. 483)
- To be used by parents to socialize children
- To facilitate and enhance abstract thinking and reasoning
- To serve as rhetorical devices in argument
- To assist in resolving conflict and maintaining harmony
- To advise
- To entertain
- "To reflect ideal behavior and values" (p. 486)
- To reflect history, language and culture
- To introduce moral lessons in a more truncated form than narrative
- To demonstrate eloquence
- To provide insights

As Daniel, Smitherman-Donaldson, and Jeremiah discussed the use and function of proverbs (Daniel, Smitherman-Donaldson, & Jeremiah, 1987), they were careful not to claim African origin for all proverbs used by Africans. They were also conscientious about noting comparisons between different Caribbean and African tribal interpretations, variations, and usages of proverbs. The proverbs discussed in this study were collected from three different locations: Pittsburgh, Detroit, and Antigua. Two hundred of the proverbs emerged from interviews with respondents in Pittsburgh. Incidentally, this list of two hundred proverbs resulted in an earlier self-published monograph, written by Daniel: *The Wisdom of Sixth Mount Zion from the Members of Sixth Mount Zion and Those Who Begot Them* (Daniel, 1979). The

categories that evolved from Daniel's cluster analysis were virtues and vices, human nature, sacred and secular commandments, child development, and the nature of reality. The Detroit sample, which contained fewer proverbs (n=80), was part of a larger pilot study on the de-Africanization of Black language. Smitherman-Donaldson led a team of trained researchers in data collection and analysis. Although Daniel's Pittsburgh sample was comprised entirely of church members, Smitherman-Donaldson's sample was constructed from community survey data used by the Center for Black Studies at Wayne State University in Detroit. Her active involvement in recruiting and training interviewers ensured some success in data collection and analysis. The interviews yielded a corpus of 800 proverbs, the most popular of which included "What goes around comes around," You reap what you sow," and "What happens in the dark must come to light." According to Daniel, Smitherman-Donaldson, and Jeremiah, these popular proverbs accented the inevitability of certain outcomes. Another interesting finding was that proverbs were used to teach children about color consciousness and self-esteem, and although churchgoing Black women used proverbs most frequently, they did not necessarily know more proverbs than others did. Also, heuristic discoveries included the fact that fundamentalists and women did not contribute significantly more proverbs than nonfundamentalists or men, contrary to commonly held beliefs based upon prior "proverb use" research (Daniel, Smitherman-Donaldson, & Jeremiah, 1987).

The African Diasporic oral tradition inherent in proverb use among African Americans is indicative of a highly significant literary form that has traversed generations. In their study of "bosom biscuits," Daniel and Effinger explained that "recurring oral nurturing messages" help to develop the "psychological, cognitive, affective, and spiritual selves of African American children so much that adults recall the proverbial advice given to them by their primary caregivers during adolescence (Daniel & Effinger, 1996, p. 186). Daniel and Effinger specifically concentrated on bosom biscuit advice given to African American faculty and administrators early in their lives. Of the 31 participants, they discovered that their maternal caregivers, many having only a high school education or less, gave most of the bosom biscuits. Additionally, the majority of the respondents' primary caregivers came from lower-income backgrounds. As expected, the participants reported that they listened to this advice frequently during childhood, but even more so later in life. The major lessons learned were those concerning ethics, hard work, discipline, altruism, spirituality, education, independence, and achievement (Daniel & Effinger, 1996).

Institutionalized Racial Bias

Child development has been a consistent underlying theme of Daniel's program of research. Whether it is learning through proverbs or via institutionalized constructions of race, Daniel has been concerned with the effects that formal and informal learning has on children. Similar to the way in which the Daniel & Effinger (1996) study explored primary caregivers' guidance of their children, Daniel and Daniel's (1999) essay concerning "the hot stove" as a metaphor for racism was particularly insightful as a way to examine the kinds of effects that lifelong parental advisement has had on children's self-esteem, resiliency, and adaptability. This study was especially unique in the field of communication because adaptive and protective factors associated with racism were rarely discussed in the literature. Daniel and Daniel shared a series of personal and vicariously learned anecdotes related to racism directed at Black children, and note that many African American primary caregivers have come to rely on the transmission of "survival messages" composed of narratives and proverbs as key strategies for preparing their children for the future prospect of racism directed solely at them. Without denying the complexity of parenting, as well as children's message receipt and meaning-making, Daniel and Daniel clearly offered sound considerations for parents faced with the responsibility of protecting African American children's identity development (Daniel & Daniel, 1999).

Part and parcel of the discussion of identity development is naming. Sociolinguists and communication scholars have long maintained that the act of naming is one of the most important privileges and facets of being human. It is not only a creative activity but also an empowering and defining one. In their article, "Preschool Children's Selection Of Race-Related Personal Names," Daniel and Daniel contended that names could hold certain stereotypical perceptions and presumptions regarding destiny, intelligence, age, attractiveness, ethnicity, religion, gender, and activity (Daniel & Daniel, 1998). They reminded readers that one of the most powerful and damaging aspects of slavery was the required change to slave names. By taking away their given names, slavemasters stripped away both the slaves' sense of entitlement to self-definition and a claim to a distinct familial lineage and cultural heritage. This disintegration of children's linkage to a larger cultural collective posed a severe identity complex and initiated a cycle of "de-Africanization" as Daniel, Smitherman-Donaldson, and Jeremiah (1987) called it. This was evident in the early doll studies conducted by Kenneth and Mamie Clark and also in Daniel and Daniel's study (1998), which was a spin-off of the Clarks's

study of 1939. Instead of using dolls as a stimulus for researcher-child interaction about friendship selection and personality attributions, Daniel and Daniel used personal names. The sample was drawn from White and Black children who lived in Pennsylvania between 1990 and 1993 and were participants in a Pennsylvania Head Start Program. Interestingly, Daniel and Daniel chose to omit any skin color information to see whether children would still use personal names only as a basis for racial stereotyping. To ascertain whether stereotyping occurs at such an early age, the researchers introduced the children to two games: "Guess who?" and "Who looks like you?" This symbolic play presented the children with scenarios in which they had to figure out who did positive or negative things. In the study, 102 Black and 80 White 4- and 5-year-old participants were asked this question: "Who looks like you?" The results indicated that through this symbolic play, 70 percent of the children selected common White personal names. These names came from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Health, Division of Health Statistics and Research's 1990, 1991, 1992, and 1993 listings of the most frequently given White names. The Black names used in the study were also gathered from this database's listing of the most frequently given Black names. Although Black and White respondents tended to associate more negative traits and behaviors with the Black names, there was a significantly greater propensity to do so among the White child participants. So, young children as young as 4 years old were already developing racial stereotype associations with personal names. Naturally, this stereotyping schemata often continues into adulthood (Daniel & Daniel, 1998).

In an August 20, 2004, interview broadcast on the ABC News program *20/20*, Daniel and his wife explained that those subscribing to negative social constructions of race have facilitated stereotyping people because of their names, but concluded that it is not necessarily a reason to avoid Black-sounding names for Black children. In fact, the couple indicated that they rejected White-sounding names for their own children, Omari and Marijata, because they did not want to allow the "assimilation process [to] dissolve who we were as a people" (ABCNews.com, p. 2).

The assimilation process is also a primary intermediating factor in formal learning processes among children. The curricular bias within academia was another subject critiqued by Daniel. He began writing about this in 1971, shortly after beginning his career in the professoriate. Immediately, he found that the predominate educational resources and literature at his disposal were Eurocentric. Of course, this was problematic for two reasons: It was the only kind of curricula offered

to students and it was dismissive of all non-Eurocentric approaches to communication studies. As a result, Daniel decided to write fervently and frequently about this topic, beginning with mainstream communication journals such as *Today's Speech, Speech Teacher,* and the *Journal of Communication.* Likewise, he exposed this conundrum in interdisciplinary Black Studies journals such as *Black Lines* and *Black Scholar* and as part of communication textbooks. This was redoubled by his efforts within the Speech Communication Association as he helped to lay the foundation for the emergence of the Black Caucus, whose primary mission was curricular and disciplinary reform.

❖   CONCLUSION

Throughout Jack L. Daniel's entire career, he has been a champion for radical progressive change. He has tirelessly fought for cultural inclusiveness and distinction. He has taught, mentored, and led communication scholars. His research has influenced generations of scholars—and does so today. In his latest book, *We Fish: The Journey to Fatherhood* (Daniel & Daniel, 2002), he and his son Omari developed a work of "creative nonfiction" that surpasses while integrating the genres of nonfiction and creative writing. They did so while sharing their autobiographical narratives about family, manhood, fatherhood, culture, and intergenerational learning. This book, with its unbridled depiction of their lives, was complemented by recollections of fishing, their principal father-son bonding activity. Through poetry, letters, and prose, the authors revealed the deeper multifaceted meanings of everyday life as someone's child, brother, husband, uncle, and relative, but also as Black men living in a country that regularly dismisses and pathologizes Black males. The book is designed to innovatively address these concerns "outside the confines of sociopolitical texts" (Daniel & Daniel, 2002, p. 2), and they do so with forceful accuracy, compelling narrative, and powerful imagery.

We Fish: The Journey to Fatherhood is an excellent example of why Daniel is considered a pioneer in communication research. He was not the founder of the field of African American communication, but that his originality, his commitment to positive social change, and his approaches to communication inquiry have significantly affected the development of communication studies on class, African American oral discourse, and institutionalized racial biases. As a pioneer of communication research, Daniel rightfully has been nicknamed "The Conductor" because of his undying dedication to community uplift.

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