

The Extracurriculum of Two Black Preachers: A Descriptive Study of Culturally

Learned Practices

By

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Submitted to the graduate degree program in English and the Graduate Faculty of the University of Kansas in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Learned Practices

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Date approved: April 16, 2014

Abstract

This study examines the “extracurriculum” of the black preacher, the extracurriculum as theorized in **Rhetoric & Composition**, a subfield within the discipline of **English**. The extracurriculum is a concept characterized by one scholar (Anne R. Gere) as the various ways people learn to write outside the walls of the academy by forming their own community groups, workshops, and clubs for the purposes of improving writing, making a difference in one’s community, and creating opportunities for self-publishing. Along these lines, in studying the literacy traditions in black churches, another scholar (Beverly J. Moss) makes a case for valuing a different kind of text, a text collaboratively authored by congregation and preacher working together—and therefore, in one sense, a community text: the black sermon. This authorship results in the dialogue that the congregation gives to the preacher during delivery, and she/he depends upon that resource, “without whom the sermon event would be impossible,” as explained by Henry Mitchell in *Black Preaching: The Recovery of a Powerful Art* (112-13).

Thus, I seek to demonstrate how written and oral texts, primarily sermons, get learned *elsewhere*, acquired tacitly through such informal ways as merely growing up inside the lived discursive practices of a community; the sometimes (but not always) intentional modeling of predecessors, elders, and mentors; the everyday transmission of verbal customs from one generation to the next, and so on. My investigation centers upon the following question: *What literacy practices of the black preacher originated in the extracurriculum of her/his training, and do those practices have any pedagogical implications for writing, particularly for college students who witness those practices in their daily lives?*

To acquire the qualitative data needed to understand this extracurriculum, I selected two predominantly (though not exclusively) local African American churches. I conducted oral

interviews with twelve subjects in this study; six from each congregation, and the interviews were recorded. The subject population consisted of the following: 1) Two preachers (male and female) from two denominations (Baptist & Methodist), each of whom possesses formally certified training or degreed education, as well as at least ten years in the pulpit; 2) Four parishioners (from each congregation), two of whom were recommended by the pastor, and two of whom were randomly selected (parishioners must represent different age groups and genders, and must be active churchgoers; 3) Two personal witnesses, one from each church, who provided insight about the preacher's development. Also, I conducted participant-observations in order to give a full description of the black church environment and the black preacher's congregation, the audience. Additionally, I collected audio-visual recordings of observed worship services. This description and analysis will give a rich account for the complex interplay of the communally learned elements crucial to the black preacher's effectiveness. Therefore, examining the extracurriculum of the black preacher may reveal culturally-specific rhetorical acts that have yet to be adequately examined in the context of writing instruction.

Acknowledgements

First, I would like to thank the Creator for giving me life and for, as the old saints of my community would say, “keeping me in my right mind” through this roller coaster- of- a- ride- period of my life. I would also like to thank the Creator for grace and mercy, leading me, guiding me, and giving me the wisdom to ask for help and to seek help when needed by trusting in the human spirit to achieve this goal, regardless of race, gender, class, or sexual orientation.

Second, my family has been my strongest encouragers —where on Earth would I be without their love?—and this degree belongs to them as well. Their names deserved to be called: Marlene (Ma), Alfonza (Dad), Ebony (Sister), Cedric (Brother). Thank you for your unwavering support and commitment, for I simply could not have done it without all of you. I love you.

Third, I would like to thank my committee members for their willingness, valuable advice and assistance in this endeavor. In particular, I would like to thank my Committee Co-Chairs, Dr. Frank Farmer and Dr. Dorthy Pennington for their patience and tireless efforts, meeting with me during and beyond the academic year to help me with this project. The way in which you’ve assisted me is a model that I will take with me and adapt as my own when I become a professor in my own right. Also, you not only advised a future academic but also mentored me, the person, the woman, and I thank you.

Additionally, I would like to thank other family members that have been supportive. My family is so large that the names are too numerous to list, but here are a few: Todd, Trevor, Kesia, Tremain, Kayla, and of course my one and only niece, Tia—thank you so much for your own particular way of showing support, especially when I’ve come home for the holidays. To others, I’ll just say thank you to the Fullwood and Parker families and friends for your support through cards, phone calls, email and text messages.

And last but certainly not least, I would like to thank the Department of English for allowing me to use their digital recorder to record the oral interviews that I conducted with my research subjects (that saved me so much time and money!). Also, I would like to thank the department for the Dissertation Graduate Research Assistantships that I applied for and was one of the students awarded. This gave me time off from teaching, so that I may fully concentrate on dissertation writing and research.

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CHAPTER 1

SITUATING THE EXTRACURRICULUM PRACTICES

OF THE BLACK PREACHER: A REVIEW OF THE RELEVANT LITERATURE

Introduction: A Personal Narrative about Black Preaching

Preaching is a service-centered career, a vocation for those in the ministry to adhere to the biblical mandate: “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.” (*New International Version*, St. Mark 16.15). With traditional African American preachers,¹ one may often hear them use the terms “call” or “calling” in their discourse about becoming preachers. Moreover, one may also hear them acknowledge this vocation as one not made by their own choosing but through a mysticism of acute hearing—obedience to the divine call from God to preach the gospel. Additionally, even children of preachers understand “the call” as something not only significant but sacred, even though there are pressures from peers to make them somewhat ashamed of being a “preacher’s kid,” such as the pressures I have experienced.

Growing up in a religious household with a father as a preacher was not something that I always admired and revered. It seemed that he preached everywhere every single Sunday (quite frequently preaching twice on Sunday), and he preached at week-long revivals and evangelistic programs, so attending church was endless. Many of those services extended beyond sixty minutes, sometimes two hours or more! At some point, I began noticing his habits of practice and preparation; he would occasionally *tune* parts of his sermon around the house; he would begin writing parts of his sermon during the week; he would stop and read the Bible along with other ancillary texts like commentaries and study guides; then, he would go back to writing and tuning. *Tune*, as used within the context of black preaching, is a verb, meaning to vocalize phrases of a sermon (something that a black preacher does) to prime herself for preaching,

invoking the presence of God and the Holy Spirit to work through her in the delivery of a sermon. *Tuning* is also similar to *humming* or *chanting*, a metrical and rhythmical sound that a black preacher uses during, and even throughout, delivery.²

During his earlier years as a preacher, however, he received no formal seminary schooling because of what he was taught by his father, as well as his community, and therefore believed that his call to preach the gospel was a direct mandate from God. In other words, his community taught him that if he was indeed called, then God would equip him with the necessary tools and skills to preach; no formal schooling was needed. Moreover, he was part of a community that had a sustaining, rich tradition on which to rely: namely, black people, individually and collectively, who served as reservoirs of cultural knowledge, in addition to his family—a father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, as well as three brothers and a sister, all of whom were (or are) preachers, yet none of whom received formal seminary schooling.

Growing up on a farm and doing the arduous labor of maintaining the crops and animals, my father developed (oftentimes begrudgingly) an intense work ethic, his father ensuring that he knew the value of hard work. His father would often leave in the middle of tending to the fields and go into the woods; it was there that my father saw his father engaged in the curious (at least to some) practice of preaching to the trees, the birds, etc. My grandfather made a retreat in the woods where he would go and practice preaching, with mother-nature as his auditor. Then, my grandfather would come back to the fields to resume his work, but my father would hear him tuning parts of his sermon while working. Seeing grandfather develop this practice implanted an epistemological and axiological seed, a way of knowing and doing ministry that my father would adopt and adapt into his own form.

My father would also learn from preachers in the community, preachers now referred to as “old-time black folk-preachers,” by listening to their tuning, watching their performances on Sunday—how some would sing before beginning a sermon, how some would reach a climax during the sermon and engage in a black preaching style called “whooping”—and noticing their engagement with church and community members. *Whooping* is a rhetorical styling in which the black preacher engages in vocal techniques—a guttural sound and a kind of “tonal semantics which triggers a familiar sound chord”³—while the congregation engages in call-and-response thereby resulting in paroxysms. *Tuning*, noted earlier, may be incorporated into *whooping*, but they are still two distinct actions because *whooping* cannot be entirely meshed with *tuning*. These techniques used by the old-time preacher were not merely a means of entertainment, but they were communal skills that informed my father’s spirituality.

As he branched out from his small, rural community, he met other black preachers who mentored him, encouraging him to go to college and then to seminary. Now educated in the practice of ministry, homiletics, and an instructor of preaching, these old ways have never left him, for in an interview he states: “All preaching, but black preaching especially, is based on one’s socio-cultural location . . . homiletical performance is shaped by a distinctive preaching culture or ethos of the pulpit and to a much lesser extent formal training.”⁴

Having grown up with this knowledge, I began critically contemplating parallel moves in one discipline, homiletics, and another discipline which I am currently pursuing, English, more specifically rhetoric and composition. As with my father’s academic training in homiletics, the concept of composing persuasive, written texts (along with the influences of the oral on the written) are studied in English, in general, and especially so in my chosen specialty. But what is of particular interest to me is how the texts (primarily sermons) composed and performed by the

black preacher get learned *elsewhere*, acquired tacitly through such informal ways as merely growing up inside the lived discursive practices of a community; the sometimes (but not always) purposeful modeling of predecessors, elders, and mentors; the everyday transmission of oral customs from one generation to the next, and so on. I believe that examining such written and oral texts, and the formal and informal ways in which these texts are composed within diverse communities and cultures, will, most likely, have positive value and could prove beneficial for a dynamic composition classroom. This assumption, in fact, is the guiding premise of my study. While there are numerous models to use to exemplify and further this critical interrogation, black preaching offers tremendous potential for exploring those cultural/communal nuances that contribute to knowledge in the writing/composing task which are oftentimes missed or ignored.

Many scholars in rhetoric and composition probe similar questions in hopes of making the writing classroom a more culturally informed space. In their overview of the field in the *Bedford Bibliography for Teachers of Writing*, Nedra Reynolds, Patricia Bizzell, and Bruce Herzberg assert: “At the turn of the century, responding to diversity remains one of the most significant issues in writing studies. . . Scholars’ and researchers’ efforts to rewrite composition history, to formulate new theoretical perspectives, and to analyze new media and technologies provide signs that responding to diversity requires not only an examination of student identities but also a full accounting of diverse histories, theories, and curricula” (16). Their use of “full accounting” suggests that scholars need to go beyond just a basic recognition of diversity. Two such scholars, Anne Ruggles Gere and Beverly Moss, are extending the use of diversity in their respective scholarship on writing and literacy.

Anne Ruggles Gere’s “Kitchen Tables and Rented Rooms: The Extracurriculum of Composition” discusses the various ways people learn to write outside of the walls of the

academy. Many people form their own community groups, workshops, and clubs to bring about change in their immediate locations—be they social, political, or economic—and articulate their experiences, good and bad, in order to nurture well-being. She reminds composition scholars that these interactions and engagements with writing tend to a variety of situations, and often serve the purposes of improving writing, making a difference in one's community, and creating opportunities for self-publishing—strengths that are likewise emphasized in the composition classroom (78). Gere also acknowledges that an *extracurriculum* existed in African American communities, particularly during the nineteenth century. This period in American history shows that secret schools were formed in the South to teach reading and writing to slaves; self-help and literary societies were formed by middle-class African Americans in the North where there would be “discussions on education and liberty” and where members “entered the meeting room, placed their anonymous weekly compositions in a box from which they were later retrieved and criticized” (83-84). Along these lines, in studying the literacy traditions in black churches, Beverly Moss also makes a case for valuing a different kind of text ignored in the academy by tapping into practices of the black community—specifically, the congregation and preacher—who, together, author a community text. Moss's initial work, *The Black Sermon as a Literacy Event*, charts a course of study for differing views of literacy by examining “the relationship between oral and written language in the sermons of African American ministers who ‘composed’ their sermons using varying degrees of writing” (10).

Moss' emphasis on differing views of literacy, combined with Gere's notion of the *extracurriculum* providing opportunities for more cultural work to be completed, encourages scholars and pedagogues to search for, and then explore, other types of discourse not usually studied in the academy. Due to my particular interest in the black preacher, this *extracurriculum*

comes by way of acknowledging the traditional African American church as a rich site of not only cultural traditions but literate ones as well. Viewing the traditional black church as such is very timely, for scholars in myriad fields, like English, Education, Anthropology, and Linguistics, have extended the definition of literacy beyond academic prescriptions and etiquette. The black preacher, historically understood, is the anchor of one such literate tradition. Why and how so? The following section will give a review of black preaching and the black preacher to examine why he or she has been a leaning post for the black community, a person to lean and depend upon, religiously, spiritually, morally, socially and aesthetically.

The Art of Black Preaching

A Description

What is black preaching? Is black preaching only limited to particular cultural practices? Black preaching inhabits a both/and dichotomy, for it is a distinct cultural practice but it is also intercultural to audiences that cover a broad spectrum due to its general practice as a kind of communication to a God who possesses universal benevolence to believers of the faith. Thus, black preaching is “freedom of expression; it is knowing and understanding white culture; it is affirmation and support of selfhood; it is Christianity fused with the African worldview; and it is multicultural instead of monocultural” (Mitchell 36-37; 42-43).

The book *Black Preaching* by Henry Mitchell shows the overriding impulse of African culture still coursing in the veins of blacks, still influencing their collective practice of Christianity. This spiritual feature of African culture, of course, was manifested through the legacy of the African American experience in this country, especially the institution of slavery. The slaves brought with them a distinctly African worldview of spirituality and

interconnectedness with the world, for, as Mitchell states: “The intensity of Black faith and the rapid spread of Christianity among Blacks were due in part to the fact that their deeply spiritual worldview had not been contaminated by white rationalism and materialistic manipulation.

What was mistaken by whites for child-like, simple faith was in fact the product of a sophisticated African spiritual heritage which had already achieved profound transcendence over material things”(34). Maintaining an African worldview, in other words, makes the Black church distinctive. Blacks can count on the Black Church as an institution allowing them to be visible, visible as human beings, even if only to one another.

Humanity, then, is crucial to black preaching, for the traditional black preacher has had to preach to a congregation who suffered dehumanizing treatment in the secular world. To deliver a sermon, the black preacher has to tap into an experience that renders an emotional connection between preacher and congregation. However, Frank A. Thomas differentiates between “emotion” and “emotional context”; it is through the latter that black preaching occurs at its best. In his book *They Like to Never Quit Praisin’ God*, Thomas discusses the act of “celebration” in preaching, and this emotional context is filtered through an experiential encounter.⁵ He asserts: “The nature and purpose of African American preaching is to help people experience the assurance of grace (the good news) that is the gospel of Jesus Christ. The African American sermon was designed to celebrate, to help people experience the assurance of grace that is the gospel” (3). If this is the nature and purpose of black preaching, then, a strictly cerebral process of learning could not possibly encompass the direct experience of grace.

Thomas continues his argument by asserting that an audience’s reception to a preacher is emotional as well as cerebral. What can a preacher do to fully engage the emotional process? Thomas claims that there are five key elements in emotional process: “1) the use of dialogical

language; 2) appeal to core belief; 3) concern for emotive movement; 4) unity of form and substance; 5) creative use of reversals/paradox” (7-13). These elements help a preacher make some conscious decisions about the celebrative act in her planning and preparation, and even though planning this act may appear arbitrary, it is still a spiritual gift aided by God which a preacher can celebrate with integrity, according to Thomas. He calls a preacher “a conscious celebrator” because she “intends celebration by fashioning affirmative images that strike people in their inner core, and the Holy Spirit utilizes the images to help the hearer experience the transforming and liberating power of the gospel” (35). In other words, with the help of God, the black preacher uses language that touches the hearts and souls of a people who are bound together by a particular experience, even though the gospel, generally speaking, is universal.

Nonverbal cues, e.g. gestures, hums, and tuning in which the preacher and auditors are still interacting and dialoguing with one another also help in the celebrative moment. These nonverbal cues manifest themselves in the cadences and the stirring of emotions, “for black religious culture is emotional, it moves people, changes lives, and is, therefore, meaningful and effective to them” (Niles 49). This is why Lyndrey Niles, in his “Rhetorical Characteristics of Traditional Black Preaching,” says the following: “Traditional black preaching is not simply preaching or sermonizing by Blacks. An attempt to identify and describe the underlying qualities of Black preaching will, therefore, be made . . . to distinguish Black preaching from all other forms of homiletics” (42). Niles does not wish to say that, in making this distinction, black preaching is so different that it falls outside the realm of Christian preaching. Rather, Niles seems to imply that it is important to recognize and respect a particular kind of communication, rooted in a particular history, and one that entails multiple modes, forms, and media. The

distinctions are not meant to be isolating but instead, meant to ensure that scholars do not judge black preaching merely through a myopic lens.

African Antecedents

To begin tracing the African-ness of black preaching, it is crucial to return to Henry Mitchell, the scholar mentioned in the previous subsection. He continues his inquiry into African impulses in black preaching but does so through the notion of “art” in *Black Preaching: The Recovery of a Powerful Art*, published twenty some years later after his original work that was cited earlier. He claims that the black preaching tradition is a representation of art forms passed down through generations; additionally, Mitchell asserts that there is a relationship between black sermons and other distinct African American genres—for example, the slave narrative. As Mitchell says, “slave narratives recall sermon stories and pictures with astounding accuracy. . . it was only because of the phenomenal memories of descendants of West African culture that the Bible took foothold from such limited exposure. . . the chief original teacher of African American pulpit oratory was the folk-religious tradition of Africa” (34, 40). An example of these art forms is the griot, an African storyteller. If the black preacher inherited a folk-tradition from Africa, then the delivery of the sermon sustained that tradition.

Yet, in what manner or mode is that tradition sustained, and does the West African art form permeate the black sermon in its entirety? The author of “West African Poetics in the Black Preaching Style,” Walter Pitts, illustratively answers this question by discussing how the content of black sermons are like the African panegyric, or, rather, African praise poems, for “the black sermon often praises Biblical personalities and events instead of fearless hunters like the African poems” (139). The African praise poem is built around “the breath-group unit as the basic line of verse,” and the griot depends upon a musical instrument called the lute to make his

language rhythmical. Similarly, the black preacher in the black church environment “becomes more animated as organ and piano simulate melody of his evolving chant as though the instruments were speech surrogates in a call-and-response interaction”; additionally, the black preacher’s lines have “hyperventilated sounds and innumerable pauses that increase the rapidity of speech as the sermon gains momentum” (139, 144). The author further notes that the griot uses gestures in his or her delivery “to enliven, punctuate, and contextualize the meaning of his discourse” and the same holds true for the black preacher (140). Lastly, but certainly no less important, is Pitts’ exploration of the prosodic organization of the black sermon and its shift in language functions: “between semantic reference and verbal aesthetics found in the pre-climatic and climatic stages” (137). Pitts’ exploration of the black sermon’s ancestral and linguistic ties to West Africa, along with his analysis of its language and discourse functions, is analogous to the work of other scholars who devote attention to the antiphonal and expressive dynamics of black preaching. Such books as Evans E. Crawford’s *The Hum: Call and Response in African American Preaching*; James Weldon Johnson’s *God’s Trombones*; and the latest anthology edited by Martha Simmons and Frank A. Thomas, *Preaching with Sacred Fire*, show that black preaching is an art of cultural performativity, not illiterate buffoonery.

Just as Pitts alludes to the griot’s dependency on music, W. C. Turner, Jr.’s “The Musicality of Black Preaching” explains how the seemingly excessive elements of black preaching help to communicate “a surplus” that is neither visible nor tangible but is a crucial moment of delivery called “celebration—that point to which the preacher leads the congregation in moments of thanksgiving and transport—wherein the skills of musical delivery are unsurpassed in attaining the exalted moment,” the same term discussed by Thomas earlier in this chapter (Turner 21). Similar to the other authors in this section, Turner traces the element of

music as an art form of black preaching to African culture. The African worldview may not be in full manifestation because African descendants eventually became American citizens but some residual effects of their African heritage still remain; this surplus comes from African cultures:

. . . where human life exists in synthesis with other forms of life and in relation to rhythmic patterns observable in the natural order. . . Connection between rhythm and life is the primal nexus from which the manifold expressions of culture flow. In its unity, rhythm/life surges forth in the multifarious forms through which the world is known: language, art, society, religion, government and so forth. It is therefore only a short step to the realization that the very force of life that pulsates through individuals and communities is given objective tangible expression in rhythmic motion and music, and that musical rhythm is the aesthetic signification of the force of life sustaining the people. (Turner 25-26)

Even though Turner discusses music as a “surplus” significant to the celebration, he also makes an implicit argument that it is an essential element to the art of black preaching; this musicality is essential because rhythm to African peoples (and their descendants) is more than beats and movement but a structural unit of a spiritual life-force that preserves a community.

A Multi-Disciplinary Subject

Scholars in other fields, such as American Literature and Theology, are also concerned with tracing a trajectory of concepts related to black sermonic delivery, a genre that, as I have noted, is often misdiagnosed as a debased art form. But a key question remains: How are a black preacher’s rhetorical ideas generated, and more importantly, what are their influences and what or whom has a black preacher influenced?

Such questions also pique the interest of scholars in American Literature, for Dolan Hubbard's *The Sermon and the African American Literary Imagination* discusses the influence of the black preaching tradition on African American literary writers and the literary genres that they have written. He views the preacher as a creator who "moves the spirit of the people beyond social order to create new forms of human consciousness" (5). Hubbard aims to show how black preaching and the black sermon affect the invention of literary authors as they "transform historical consciousness into art," authors like Frederick Douglass, Frances E.W. Harper, James Baldwin, and Toni Morrison (19). He does so by analyzing and unpacking their respective texts to "offer a hermeneutical discourse on the modes of religious expression that developed out of the African encounter with the New World and to investigate how these modes of expression have been transformed into the scribal tradition and have influenced the structure as well as the theme"(Hubbard 18).

Similarly interested in black preaching for literary analysis, yet approaching the genre from a different angle, is Chanta Haywood's *Prophesying Daughters*. This book explores "prophesying" as a literary trope that nineteenth century black female preachers used in writing their autobiographies; Haywood challenges literary scholars to consider how religion influenced the literacy of these women, for she states that "very little attention had been given to the religious component and its influences on the literary strategies blacks had adapted to writing" (x). She further claims that a text prophesies when its writer critiques oppressive religious ideology and social, political conditions; Haywood thus asserts: "My aim is to explore how this idea of prophesying plays itself out as a rhetorical literary device and as a political strategy for black women preachers of the nineteenth century. . . they sat down to write within a social context of reader distrust. . . the women were able to use markers of Christianity such as

conversion, apostolic travel, and biblical interpretation in their writing to challenge sociological restrictions” (20). Both Hubbard and Haywood’s scholarship reminds scholars of literature that American forms do not only have European antecedents and that the social context of literacy is not limited to secular traditions but includes religious ones as well, particularly in the literature influenced or written by preachers.⁶

Sociological restrictions also impact theology; theologian James H. Cone discusses a similar reassessment by taking to task American theologians’ efforts in upholding Western theological traditions without the consideration of adequately thinking about other theologies that may have emerged—theologies emerging due to a New World reality which produced a lived experience of oppression. He states: “Theology is *contextual* language—that is, defined by the human situation that gives birth to it. . . . Theology is not only rational discourse about ultimate reality; it is also a prophetic word about the righteousness of God . . . Although God is the intended subject of theology, God does not do theology. Human beings do theology” (xi-xii, xix). Furthermore, he states that because black life and experience is grounded in survival, black theology becomes a theology of survival as it attempts to make sense of its socio-political ramifications of blacks as non-human in a world in which they understand God to have made. And since God made the world, they are human beings in that world. He also iterates, “Because black theology is survival theology, it must speak with a passion consistent with the depths of the wounds of the oppressed. . . . The sin of American theology is that it has spoken without passion. It has failed miserably in relating its work to the oppressed in society by refusing to confront the structures of this nation with the evils of racism” (Cone 17-18). Cone’s discussion of theology is also a criticism challenging scholars, particularly American theologians, not to easily dismiss other factors contributing to how a people view and understand God. Since “human beings do

theology,” then human beings’ strengths and weaknesses get filtered through their understanding and practice of theology in daily living.

Socio-Cultural Location

To conclude this review of black preaching without a discussion of socio-cultural location would be an egregious blunder; moreover, the authors mentioned previously have already made implicit arguments regarding such. Just as Cone emphasizes that American theology is contextual language, so too is black preaching. For example, in black preaching, direct feedback from the audience is very important. Mitchell’s text, *(Recovery of a Powerful Art)* previously mentioned, discusses audience responses as a valuable resource for ideas in the black context of preaching. He asserts, “From a preacher’s point of view, the black congregation with its contagious response is the best group in the world to whom to preach the gospel. The dialogue is freeing and affirming to the preacher. . . . The richness of the Black pulpit tradition is inextricably bound up with this oft overlooked resource, the congregation, without whom the sermon event would be impossible” (112-13). Further emphasis on this resource is discussed in *The Heart of Black Preaching*, where the author suggests that black preaching is not distinctive due to rhetorical creativity and emotion (for those techniques are not exclusively black) but to an epistemology which results in a “communal interpretive strategy”:

. . . historically the African American sociocultural context of marginalization and struggle has required the enunciation of a God and a gospel that spoke to their plight in a meaningful, practical, and concrete way A God who acts mightily on their behalf is simply a part of their reality at the deepest levels of their communal experiences. This formative hermeneutic is not imparted to blacks

through formal theological study. . . . Rather, it seems to function intuitively in the black preacher's preparation process. (LaRue 19)

To unpack the "how" of this intuition that LaRue discusses, one must understand the mentality of a black preacher in terms of her thinking about the world, life, religion, and God.

Charles H. Long, a religious historian, asserts this understanding in his acknowledgement of not only similarities but dissimilarities between Black and African theological thinking. Long claims that slaves did not come to America "with a religious tabula rasa. If not the content of culture, a characteristic mode of orienting and perceiving reality has probably persisted" (10). Having a distinct consciousness of Africa is too historically removed for some descendants of Africans in America, yet the New World slavery experience helped to engage a social memory of Africa deeply embedded in the subconscious of its descendants, constituting "a complexity of experience revolving around the relationship between one's physical being and one's origins" (Long 58). In asserting the dissimilarities between Black and African theologies, Long continues by saying that Africans have no need to invoke Africa because they already have a concrete relationship with the continent, for

the facticity of the land for the African allows his religious thinking and theologizing to be tempered by *topos* in a manner that Black American theologians tend to be *utopian* in their theologizing with a little of the tempering effect of *topos*. By *topos* I mean the sense of being in a place and knowing what that place means and having traditions, languages, modes of life that make that place an intimate and familiar place. . . (12-13).

The simultaneous tension of this cognitive temperament and the Black American having to come to terms with the negativity of her physiological condition helped her “transform and create another reality. . . producing new cultural forms” (Long 14).

Long’s analysis of the *topos* vs. *utopian* effect resulting in new cultural forms proves to be an insightful frame of reference; additionally, while Long was making this analysis within his own discipline, another scholar does the same in the field of communication. Gary Hatch’s “Logic in the Black Folk Sermon” asserts that “the appeals to reason in Black folk sermons are embedded in narratives, comparisons, and biblical references chosen by the preacher; these relationships constitute a type of poetic logic in which reasoning is neither inductive nor deductive, but rather analogical and appeals to the intellect and imagination as well as the emotions” (228). Hatch further claims that inductive and deductive reasoning in the classical rhetorical sense is too confining for the black folk preacher, for that reasoning only allows the preacher to have a thesis followed by support or claims backed by evidence and analysis. Hatch answers Long by analyzing a new cultural form and explaining how that form does not fit Western conceptions of rhetoric.

This new production is a phenomenon not quite fully explored to its potential, particularly in rhetoric and composition. *Topos*, a word of significance in the study of classical rhetoric, especially Aristotelian rhetoric, is used metaphorically to help a speaker determine what to say and how that “what” could be addressed in oral delivery. However, *topos* has a very different resonance for African-Americans. Due to the history of slavery and its legacy of racism in the United States, and in concurrence with Long, I assert that African-American thought tends to be more *utopian*, using prophetic language to produce new cultural forms. *Topos* does not bear any metaphorical significance for African Americans; in the literal sense, their geographical

location is not one that is inherently theirs but “one that is legally and sociologically defined” (Long 12).

An undercurrent of Long’s emphasis runs through all the literature reviewed in this section. Black preaching exhibits rhetorical flexibility, for it is freedom of expression yet dialogical in nature; it affirms humanity through a prophetic yet compassionate theology; it is celebratory; it is musical; and it has literary value. This expression derives from a people whose historical experience reduced them to a restrictive and oppressive sociological structure of everyday life. What is powerfully intriguing is that these restrictions did not hinder creativity, but birthed new aesthetic and cultural productions that simultaneously conform and do not conform to American values. Thus, the *utopian* effect—using penetrating and uncompromising language in the hope of a better place—is the impulse undergirding African American thought in the transformation of reality.

Black Preaching in Rhetoric & Composition

Does black preaching bear any relevance to the field of rhetoric and composition, either theoretically or pedagogically? When discussing preaching standards and the historical relationship between rhetoric and homiletics, what literate practices from black preaching are applicable to rhetoric and composition? These questions ought not to warrant responses suggesting black preaching is not Christian preaching or is a wholly exotic phenomenon; rather, they are questions that recognize black preaching may have something important to contribute to our cumulative knowledge about the theory, teaching, and practice of writing. Additionally, they are questions that may lead us to an awareness (and appreciation) of what a particular culture knows and does—in other words, questions that allow us to see its perspectives, traditions, and

practices in operation, sometimes in concert with Western epistemologies of preaching, sometimes not. To demonstrate this simultaneous tension, I will discuss black preaching's treatment in the field through related and interlocking threads—subfields within the discipline that deal directly or indirectly with black preaching's utility in composition classrooms. Doing so will assist in peeling the intricate layers of black preaching to disclose its resourcefulness beyond the domain of religious or homiletical studies.

Religion, Pedagogy, and Composition

To begin my review of black preaching in rhetoric and composition, my point of departure will come from a location with a connection to preaching: religion, not merely as a subject but as a part of culture. Culture and diversity were major themes in the research efforts of composition scholars in the 1990s (and into the 2000s as well). During that period, however, some scholars began challenging the field's understanding of culture and diversity as a phenomenon only theorized from the critical perspectives of class, gender, and race. This criticism particularly targeted those who advocated critical pedagogy; for example, Amy Goodburn reminds pedagogues that the field has neglected the importance of religion to a student's identity, and as such, rhetoric and composition has disregarded how students' belief (whether in a Supreme Being or multiple deities) aids in a developing discourse of social critique, which could result from a differing worldview offered in the classroom alongside other, more conventional perspectives (333-34).

Goodburn's article "It's a Question of Faith: Discourses of Fundamentalism and Critical Pedagogy in the Writing Classroom" discusses how by not thinking of religious identity as critical, pedagogues have been unable to adequately engage students who embrace religious views: "I believe this absence of discussion about the role of religious identity with respect to

critical writing pedagogies has left teachers who espouse critical principles unprepared to address student resistance rooted in religious belief” (333). Goodburn uses her experience teaching an intermediate-level college writing course focusing on differences in the U.S. as an example; one student was very resistant to many of the reading and writing projects she assigned, particularly to the assignment exploring a revisionist reading of the biblical story of Lot’s wife (337-47).

While reflecting on this experience, Goodburn traces the historical background of Christian fundamentalism, thereby discussing its five tenets to illustrate its validity as a standard Christian philosophy; however, she acknowledges that this history is obscured by the fact that Christian fundamentalism’s contemporary orientation within this country “conjure[s] images of people with narrow or extreme attitudes . . . the term is used more broadly to include groups of people for whom religious belief constitutes an all-encompassing personal and social identity that is threatened by secular social forces” (336).

Goodburn learns that one of those tenets is the belief in the bible as the “literal and unmediated word of God,” and thus she now understands the student’s resistance to the critique of the story (339). Additionally, in learning more about fundamentalist belief, she began appreciating commonalities between fundamentalist and critical pedagogical discourses, for example, “their oppositional stance to the status quo and their critique of mass culture” (348). She humbly admits (during this reflection) that the student’s writing responses were “the most engaged in terms of participating in social critique and in developing a critical consciousness about his identity position in relation to the class texts . . .” (348). Thus, Goodburn is not promoting Christianity as a mandatory religion in the academy; she simply wants the field to remember that religion, too, is an academic discipline that is myriad and complex with rich, philosophical differences in which many of our college students have vested interests.

Likewise, in the same theoretical vein as Goodburn but with no particular pedagogical example, Lizabeth Rand's "Enacting Faith: Evangelical Discourse and the Discipline of Composition Studies" states that "religious belief often matters to our students and that spiritual identity may be the primary kind of selfhood more than a few of them draw upon . . . we would benefit from extended conversation of the ways that faith is 'enacted' in discourse and sustained through particular kinds of textual and interpretive practice" (350). Rand contends that composition scholars' belief in non-abstract knowledge—a belief influenced by postmodern theories—causes them to not only ignore religious identity but also consider its discourse as "naïve or rhetorically unsophisticated" (351, 361). While Rand is a proponent of engaging the religious discourse of students from diverse faith communities, her primary concern is "evangelical expression of Christian faith" (350).

One kind of evangelical expression, witnessing, may show up in the personal narratives of students, and in doing so, those students, according to Rand, "die daily"⁷. . . they must regularly make an act of self-surrender. Only then will they acquire agency" (359). Rand asserts that the notion of dying daily is similar to what social epistemic scholars ask of their own students, for they "posit that none of us are 'unified subjects' or 'autonomous beings' refuting the idea of a rational, coherent self fully in control of its own destiny" (359). Rand concludes by claiming that writing instructors should consider that for some students to have a sustaining practice of faith is already considered radical because there are many who do not have such convictions. If writing instructors use a student's knowledge of the Christian faith as a critical lens, then they "can call upon a rich understanding of the language of Christian faith to engage students in further conversation about the complex negotiations of selfhood that they undergo" (359, 363). Rand is not calling for pedagogues to convert to Christianity in order to engage their students but

is simply asserting the validity of its discourse—an evangelical one that is tantamount to other discourses that have already been accepted, studied, read, and written about in writing classrooms.

Though Goodburn and Rand take critical pedagogues to task on their ignorance of students' religious belief influencing social critique, Donald McCrary builds upon critical pedagogy scholarship, which questions “the efficacy and ultimate effectiveness of privileging academic discourse and forcing it upon other-literate students” (53). In his article, “Speaking in Tongues: Using Womanist Sermons as Intra-Cultural Rhetoric in the Writing Classroom,” McCrary does not focus on religious identity but rather on the discourses of a theological branch, womanist theology, generated within a community that empowers people toward wholeness. Womanist theology is not only a discourse about the knowledge of God from a black female theological perspective but also a critique which speaks to the “tridimensional reality of race, sex, class oppression that many black women face” (55). McCrary, like scholars Patricia Bizzell and Mary Louise Pratt, criticizes the usefulness of academic discourse to other-literate students.⁸ He challenges the above-mentioned scholars, who are proponents of hybridity and contact zone teaching, to not only focus on intercultural rhetoric but intra-cultural rhetoric as a discourse producing limitless possibilities for academic success. The questions implied in McCrary's critique are these: “Why look outward from a student's community to find success when one could look inward for the same result? Why look at intercultural rhetoric as ‘a way to build bridges from academic content to the prior knowledge that students from less privileged social groups bring to the schools’ when intracultural rhetoric can possibly do the same? (54). Doing so, McCrary asserts, will help other-literate and marginal students tap into their reservoirs of cultural and linguistic knowledge to engage issues, and thus becoming critically astute students.

He asserts that womanist sermons are one form of intra-cultural rhetoric, and they “are useful in the writing class because they represent familiar, accessible hybrid linguistic forms that are grounded in other-literate culture but cognizant of the language and culture of the dominant society. . . and offer provocative, liberating critically conscious arguments and strategies for uplifting oppressed peoples” (McCrary 56).

Thus, McCrary uses sermons by Suzann Johnson Cook and Chandra Taylor Smith for class discussions by asking his students to read and write about the rhetorical strategies used. Both sermons use cultural signs as motifs and are “overtly political and includes traditional and non-traditional approaches to rhetorical meaning making, including womanist hermeneutics, popular black cultural references, and predominantly black scholarly authorities” (57-61). After having the students grapple with the sermons, McCrary gives a writing assignment in which students are asked to write a secular sermon, drawing upon the rhetorical knowledge that they gained from the womanist sermons and to “exercise their own understanding of language and writing. . . becoming more aware and attentive to audience. . . and offers students a structure which is by nature playful, which allows them to explore their own rhetorical awareness without the burden of institutionally imposed correctness or compliance” (63-69). McCrary seems to suggest that womanist sermons provide an outlet for other-literate students to believe in themselves and the knowledge that they know they have within them and not be overcome by authorities who may, intentionally and unintentionally, suppress their voices. Doing this exudes the quality of respect for students, not necessarily “respect” as if the students are the authority, but *respect* for meeting other-literate students where they are and knowing that they have potential to succeed beyond their limits.

When interrogated more closely, this notion of *respect* is grounded in the roots of critical pedagogy. Scholars in the field who advocate this pedagogy, usually and quite vehemently, maintain a deep reverence for Paulo Freire, who had an enormous impact in the religious and political climate of Latin America. For Freire, this notion of *respect* is synonymous with *love* “not the sentimental or romantic love that dominates U.S. popular culture . . . but an act of courage and commitment to others” (Stenberg 274). This definition of *love* comes from a prophetic tradition, and while pedagogues acknowledge Freire’s roots in Marxism, they neglect to acknowledge that his work is highly informed by Christianity, but from a movement that critiqued established Catholicism as practiced by the elite and dominant classes: liberation theology (Stenberg 271). Shari J. Stenberg’s “Liberation Theology and Liberatory Pedagogies: Renewing the Dialogue” provides some background on this movement, and further asserts that pedagogues need to understand the “ties between critical pedagogy and Christian liberation theology.” Knowing this, she claims, could “enrich” their efforts in achieving goals for the writing classroom (272). According to Stenberg, liberation theology is Christ-centered, focusing on his life, death, and resurrection, but liberation theologians’ nuanced understanding of this orientation is not in waiting for life in the “better by and by,” but having a good life before death; they believe in a spirit of communion among all people, no “top-down enterprise, or one designed to free only the poor.” So, there is no distinction between theory and practice because “conscientization requires praxis: action and reflection . . . spirituality is their methodology” (273-75). For Freire, then, his teaching is prophetic in that he assisted in developing critical literacy to the oppressed, the kind of literacy that facilitates a conscious awareness of oppressive social structures.

However, in the U.S., this sense of spirituality was lost when issues of faith and religion gradually diminished from the academy in the 19th century. When American culture began to emphasize material wealth, schooling became tailored toward economic progress and upward mobility. Americans needed no longer to concentrate on the spiritual self but to focus on practical knowledge to bear fruit economically (Stenberg 276). So, generally speaking, scholars and teachers relegated religion and faith to the private sphere. Today, Stenberg claims, “there is a growing body of work by scholars who help to demonstrate how the critical tradition of the left could be enriched by rethinking the relationship between the spiritual and the intellectual” (277). Some scholars who promote the incorporation of the prophetic tradition into critical pedagogy say that it is critical pedagogues’ lack of focus on the ethical and moral that keeps it from actualizing its visions.⁹ To put that actualization into practice, the teacher would start with compassion and solidarity with students.

Remembering, then, that critical pedagogy has roots in the prophetic tradition helps scholars and pedagogues not to use teacher authority to overcome student knowledge (283-84). Stenberg concludes by stating that for students working in the prophetic tradition, the goal is not just merely to critique but “to act in ways that alter them,” and the goal for teachers of the prophetic tradition is “to remember that this process will likely not occur on a purely intellectual level” (288). Pedagogues need “to return to roots that might better allow us to realize the goals of liberatory education: valuing student knowledge, enacting a reciprocal teacher-student relationship, enriching critique with both compassion and action, and participating in ongoing reflection and revision” (288-89).

Stenberg makes another noteworthy point. She states that scholars in the field interested in liberatory education ought to look to scholars in other fields “who also ascribe to critical

teaching to see how this element of the prophetic tradition is enacted” (287). This move ought to be familiar for scholars in rhetoric and composition. As an already interdisciplinary field, we look at how other factors from discipline-specific areas contribute to the study and practice of writing, like geography (physical locations and environments); psychology (cognitive processes); sociology (social processes); history (writing’s development during early America); rhetoric (influences of the oral on the written); and education (pedagogy). For example, scholars and pedagogues have used and still use the texts of Martin Luther King, Jr. in composition readers to analyze his ability to use language and the rhetorical situation in which it is used, spurring lively discussion and writing projects from students. Examining King’s rhetorical choices, however, is usually done in a non-contextual manner, for grounding King’s roots in the prophetic tradition is a project still waiting to be undertaken. But, Bradford T. Stull is keenly aware of King’s potential influence, especially in cultivating what he calls “emancipatory composition,” and to that end, he not only focuses on King but also Malcolm X and W.E.B. DuBois.

Thus, knowing that rhetoric and composition takes mostly a liberal, democratic stance in the study and teaching of writing, with little to no effect of how the spiritual is enveloped in that stance, Stull asks these poignant questions: “What is the sociopolitical telos of composition? To whom does composition serve?” (1). In his book, *Amid the Fall, Dreaming of Eden: DuBois, King, Malcolm X and Emancipatory Composition*, he claims that composition upholds a specific worldview, for taking off for a comma splice when other cultures, like the British, view and use it as a valid syntactical structure, is, indeed, promoting a dominant worldview. Cultural literacy is, as E.D. Hirsch defines it, a vocabulary grounded in a national experience that all should learn. But, Stull asserts that this vocabulary is embedded in cultural and class oppressive structures, posing as hindrances to emancipation. He does not use as examples speakers and writers who

come “from a place of emancipatory privilege”; rather, he uses exemplars who are non-dominant natives of this country (DuBois, King, and Malcolm X) and analyzes their writings and speeches, their compositions, because these men had a critical awareness of how this vocabulary “is defined, used, and abused,” knowing that it is “crucial to the emancipation of human beings” (Stull 3-4). Stull’s use of “emancipation” is borrowed from liberation theologians’ use, which “suggests that to work for emancipation ‘is to labor for fundamental social and cultural change. . . where each and every person is to be the active subject of his or her history instead of merely its passive object’” (6). Also, Stull does not use the term “literacy” because it (reading and writing) has been over-theorized in the educational endeavors of this country, while listening and speaking has been devoid of attention. Instead, Stull uses “composition” because “composition is a state of intentionality . . . one can compose a piece of writing just as one can compose oral discourse . . . one can read a text just as one can listen” (6).

While Stull endorses the initiatives of emancipatory (critical) literacy theorists (like Freire, Giroux, and Shor), he also criticizes them for having a one-dimensional view of the poor and also challenges them for “speak [ing] monologically and forget [ing] the radical possibilities of conservatism” (9). Many of these theorists opposed the Right, especially the conservatives who endorsed Hirsch’s concept of cultural literacy. But Stull offers an “alternative to theories of composition propagated by the Right and Left alike” (Stull 6). Stull does this by focusing on the political tropes, such as the Fall, the Orient, Africa, and Eden in relation to these men, for they pose as “*koinoi topoi* or commonplaces” in their texts (17). However, what is also worthy of note is that Stull shows how those tropes are “constitutive of the American experience and are an integral part of American discourse” (18-19). Ultimately, Stull illustrates how King, Malcolm X, and DuBois, as emancipatory composers, 1) knew the dominant language well—grappling with

and overcoming its tensions; and 2) embraced Kenneth Burke's "comic attitude"—using the dominant discourse and discovering its suppression but also using the same and shaping its transformation. As a result, one who advocates emancipatory composition should be flexible enough to embrace some stances of conservatism as well as radicalism (Stull 120, 123-25).

Though the above-mentioned authors are not dealing with preaching *per se*, their pedagogy is affected by it, and students learn those views not by happenstance nor by just their families or communities, but by the preachers of their respective congregations. All five texts mentioned here critique critical pedagogy and academic discourse, and the authors are advocates of accepting and wrestling with all writing practices and literacies of students, not partial or selective ones. To select one kind of writing practice or literacy of students but reject others would be to deny (or even despise) their existence. But implied in all these authors' scholarship is the notion of how religion, particularly Christianity, provides the mechanisms for students to grow and become self-aware, supporting both individual and communal identities of expression. Lastly, these authors imply that there is no individual-communal dichotomy, a dichotomy vigorously debated in the field in the late 80s/early 90s; religious identities and discourses envelop all of it, bridging gaps for marginal and mainstream students to grapple with the complexities of the world and other world views.

Preaching and Rhetoric

Since scholars and pedagogues articulate the need to accept and take more seriously the influence of religion on students, what, then, does this say about the language used to shape student identities? To gain critical import into language, one must return to rhetoric, particularly its classical orientation. The classical figure most prominently noted in regards to the relationship between knowledge and rhetoric is Aristotle. Aristotle's *Rhetoric* assumes that the

uses of rhetoric are universal, for when he says that it is “the faculty of discovering in any particular case the available means of persuasion,” he assumes that every situation is amenable to change, to persuasion, by the very procedures he intends to reveal (181). Aristotle viewed rhetoric as *technē*, “an art which entailed knowledge of effective rhetorical strategies and provided a guide for rhetorical action” (Lauer 50). To find ideas, Aristotle developed certain categories of thought that could be systematically indexed, called *topoi*, a geographical term literally meaning place. Aristotle, in effect, believed that the rhetor might consult these (common) places of the mind to find arguments suited for any particular rhetorical occasion. From these common places, the rhetor develops artistic proofs, based on the knowledge required to persuade the audience. The three means of persuasion are *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*, arriving “from the three constituents of the speech-act: speaker, audience, and speech respectively” (Kennedy 82).

But as noted by Long in the previous section, *topos* does not universally resonate with a marginalized group like African Americans whose sense of place, geographically, is not historically theirs but legally defined. As stated in the beginning of this chapter, when an African American preacher says that “she has been called to preach the gospel,” what does that really mean? If one were to take this statement literally, one might respond (understandably) with the following inquiries: “Well who called you, and why did they choose you specifically?” Also embedded within that statement is not just an illumination of an individual, Christian journey but an articulation of an experience grounded in African American history and culture. Scholars who study communication (public address) discuss how speaking is linked to culture. When we speak publicly, as noted in Janice D. Hamlet’s “Religious Discourse as Cultural Narrative,” our “cultural background affects all of our actions and reactions, thus simultaneously

reflecting and creating a cultural context” (11). Africans were transported to the New World and were coerced into slavery, but they did not leave their culture and religion behind. Even though Africans were Christianized by preachers guided by European thought, their receptiveness was filtered through an African worldview of spirituality where “there is harmony and balance between superhuman and human communities. . . . belief in and worship of a ‘Higher God’ and lesser spirits . . . unity between the sacred and the secular . . . the community made, created or produced the individual . . . the belief in Nommo, the power of the spoken word” (Hamlet 12). As a result, this cultural context serves as a “conduit through which the message of the text comes through . . . serv[ing] as the medium”(Hamlet 13). Culture-specific elements may appear to have primacy over the message in the religious discourses of African Americans, but they really only function as the medium.

As far back as early America, where “serious analysis of African American oratory dates back to the nineteenth century,” many African American rhetors were preachers (Gilyard 2). For example, orators who spoke for women’s rights and abolitionism, like Maria Stewart, Sojourner Truth, and Frederick Douglass were all preachers, and it was through their “calling” that they then branched out from the duties of the Christian sphere to the social ills of the public sphere. This is easily noted as a relevant point of departure for the study of African American rhetoric; in Keith Gilyard’s essay “Aspects of African American Rhetoric as a Field,” he asserts the following:

Religious oratory . . . has been central to the African American rhetorical tradition from the outset and was the primary channel by which millions of Blacks came to comprehend and speculate about the social world of which they were part.

Richard Allen, Absalom Jones, Henry Highland Garnet, and Francis Grimke, for

example, were all preachers. Therefore, the study of Black pulpit oratory as well as scholarly treatment of the Black church in general are necessary components of research in African American public discourse. (4)

To illustrate Gilyard's point, Douglass' life narrative is a prime example, for he admits to a "calling" (or selection) apart from other slaves, which led to his success: "Going to live in Baltimore [at the Auld plantation] laid the foundation, and opened the gateway, to all my subsequent prosperity . . . It may be deemed superstitious, and even egotistical, in regarding this event as a special interposition of divine Providence in my favor. . . . This good spirit was from God, and to him I offer thanksgiving . . ." (273). Maria Stewart also iterates this same other-worldly prod; in making a public address to an integrated audience at Franklin Hall in Boston, she states, "Why sit ye here and die? . . . Come let us plead our cause before the whites . . . Methinks I heard a spiritual interrogation—'Who shall go forward, and take off the reproach that is cast upon people of color? Shall it be a woman?' And my heart made this reply—'If it is thy will, be it even so, Lord Jesus! . . . I possess nothing but the teachings of the Holy Spirit'"¹⁰ (110). When considering Gilyard's statement in light of the public discourse of Douglass and Stewart, both figures exude a deep, religious spirituality in their writings and speeches.

For many in the field, then, the foundational question is this: What is African American rhetoric? In the book *African American Rhetoric(s)*, Elaine B. Richardson and Ronald L. Jackson II state the following: "African American rhetoric(s) is the name we prefer for the study of culturally and discursively developed knowledge-forms, communicative practices and persuasive strategies rooted in freedom struggles by people of African ancestry in America" (xiii). These scholars also consider aspects of African American rhetoric(s), such as literary, cultural, discursive, and linguistic features, "as indivorceable components of a larger study of the

universe of Black discourse” (xiii). Obviously, one aspect of the rhetoric of the black preacher is, indeed, sociolinguistic. Theorizing on the social nature of language in relation to black preaching is Geneva Smitherman; her book *Talkin and Testifyin* discusses the rhetorical qualities of black discourse; one of those qualities, “spontaneity,” comprises the sacred-secular oral tradition which is grounded in an African worldview. To illustrate the close affinities between, for example, preachers (sacred) and rappers/speakers (secular), Smitherman observes that

The rapper is free to improvise by taking advantage of anything that comes into the situation—the listener’s response, the entry of other persons to the group, spur-of-the moment ideas that occur to the rapper. For example, the preacher will say, “Y’all don want to hear dat, so I’m gon leave it lone,” but if the congregation shouts, “Naw, tell it, Reb! Tell it”, he will. Rarely does the rapper have a completely finished speech, even in more structured ‘formal’ kinds of speech-making, such as sermons or political speeches” By taking advantage of process, movement, and creativity of the moment, one’s rap seems always fresh and immediately personalized for any given situation. (96)

Smitherman’s explanation of “spontaneity” is a reiteration of her earlier argument—an argument which asserts that *language* and *style* overlap in black expressive culture. While the listeners in the above-mentioned quote may appear, on the surface, to be discourteous, they are not. The spontaneous way of answering back to the preacher builds momentum for her, and it functions as a rhetorical move, an urgency to continue preaching. The fact that the same phrase can be uttered in a different manner by listeners accounts for the *style*. To outsiders, this cultural difference in usage might possibly be misunderstood as disruption (and possibly even arrogance)

instead of expression, a specific expression occurring within a broader cultural and rhetorical context other than how it is overheard by others.

Making a similar argument but through discursive and cultural traditions, Keith Miller discusses how black preachers use “voice-merging” to create a pulpit ethos for themselves. In his essay, “Voice Merging and Self-Making: The Epistemology of ‘I Have a Dream,’” Miller says that “ministers often create their own identities not through original language but through identifying themselves with a hallowed tradition. . . Like their slave predecessors, contemporary black preachers often conclude their sermons by chanting and then singing” (24). Responding to scholars who often cite King’s knowledge and rhetorical prowess as evidence of his philosophical education taught by white scholars and academics at Boston University, Miller argues that King gets this from a “typological epistemology of the black folk pulpit and from the methods of voice merging and self-making that proceed from the epistemology” (23). The cultural traditions are not only used as imitative features in delivery, but, Miller argues, a discursive practice of knowledge making through a typological history stemming from their ancestors; these predecessors, slaves, often “affirmed the inseparability of the sacred and secular through double meaning of spirituals, which pointed to both salvation in heaven and to freedom on earth” (24). As a result, slaves identified with the Old Testament book of the Bible, citing Hebrews’ bondage in Egypt and creating sorrow songs that retold stories of the Jews, punctuated by their own understanding that if God delivered the Jews, then the same will be done for them. Miller states that King’s “I Have a Dream” speech is paradoxical, for it is a speech that “invokes a national past of Jefferson and Lincoln and embraces Old Testament prophets” but simultaneously “catalogues a nightmare. . . damns the horror of a status quo that demeans all black Americans” (23). Such a montage of themes and imagery does not merely come from his

reading of Niebuhr, Tillich, or Thoreau during his graduate education; King received knowledge from the black folk pulpit during his early years of attending church with his father and grandfather, who were both preachers who advocated social change (Miller 25).

Even in his speech, which could be considered a national sermon to America (though many consider it merely a political speech), Miller argues that King utilizes two techniques of black sermonizing: a “calm-to-storm manner that begins in measured, professorial phrases and swings gradually to a powerfully emotional climax” and a “call-and-response interaction with listeners that sends and returns an electrical charge back and forth between pulpit and pew” (25). As examples of the point of voice merging and self-making, Miller studies particular stanzas of the speech where King speaks (preaches) about the injustices and sufferings of black Americans then ends with echoes of the rhetoric of prophets Amos and Isaiah; this is a prime example of the typological epistemology of the black folk pulpit and engaging in this technique underlies “the process of self-making. . . the assumption that personality reasserts itself in readily understandable and invariable patterns that govern all human history, patterns exemplified in scripture, music, liturgy, prayers, and sermons” (27). Not only does King echo Old Testament prophets, but also black ministers before him. The black minister and politician, Archibald Carey, Jr., in giving a speech to the Republican National Convention in 1952, cited the hymn “My Country Tis of Thee” and then proceeded by citing national landscapes in this country where freedom can, indeed, ring. Miller asserts that King, when doing the same in his speech, got that from Carey and challenges scholars who say that King plagiarized his speeches, noting that he borrowed “homiletical material” from preachers of old—a common practice of the black folk pulpit tradition (Miller 28-29).

Miller's study of voice merging and self-making have implications for the writing classroom through a contentious rhetorical strategy: imitation. Lena Ampadu discusses the use of imitating texts in "Modeling Orality: African American Rhetorical Practices and the Teaching of Writing," where she espouses the view that prominent African American writers and orators have been influenced by the oral tradition. The author continues by stressing the fact that many textbooks use American speeches as models in the efficacy of discourse, but "African American texts are overlooked as exemplars of literacy . . . [so African American texts] should move to the fore of the writing classroom and exercise some influence on the writing skills of college students, regardless of racial and ethnic background" (Ampadu 138). She uses the schemes of repetition identified in classical Greek rhetoric, anaphora, antithesis, chiasmus, and parallelism alongside African American rhetorical practices to also show that repetition is a longstanding tradition in African American culture. Ampadu demonstrates, through the speeches of black orators/preachers of the nineteenth century, like Maria Stewart, Frances E.W. Harper, and twentieth century orators/preachers like Martin Luther King, Jr., the use of *Nommo*, the efficacy of the spoken word. Through modeling this elegant, clear style that moves and fascinates audiences, Ampadu claims that students can build an influential ethos for themselves (140).

While many oppose the use of imitation to teach writing, Ampadu includes empirical research in which students created writing samples imitating the language/stylistic choices of famous orators/preachers, thus showing its success (144). What is particularly interesting to note is that Ampadu's students, while using *chiasma*, an inversion of word order in the second of two parallel sentences, also relied on "commonplaces peculiar to African American culture" (152). This demonstrates students' participation with a community that espouses values and beliefs different than those espoused by the academy. Thus, another paradigm, an African American

one, can be used to motivate students, instead of relying only on the Euro-American paradigm, because “writers participate in a rhetorical tradition grounded in a dynamic oral culture with strategies that help the rhetor create messages spontaneously and captivate audience” (154).

To extend the African American paradigm further, Dorothy Pennington reminds scholars that when examining African American rhetoric, it “requires going beyond the textual analysis of words to comprehending words or other forms of discourse as a part of a larger cultural and rhetorical context comprised of dynamically interrelated parts, including spirituality” (293). However, knowing that African American men are usually studied as exemplars of rhetoric, and also citing scholars who argue that “gendered racism separates the experiences of Black women from those of Black men,” Pennington begins with an overarching assumption that places African American rhetoric as one that is impartial, asserting that commonalities exist between both black women and men’s discourse, even though her primary focus is on women (293). In her essay, “The Discourse of African American Women: A Case for Extended Paradigms,” Pennington shows an interest in studying black women’s discourse not as that which opposes black men’s discourse but in identifying only “what is true for African American women’s discourse” (293). The rhetorical and cultural dynamics come to the fore of African American women’s discourse when Pennington studies and uses (as her exemplar) the preacher and abolitionist Sojourner Truth.

Truth’s discourse is enveloped with spiritual and religious dimensions; Pennington asserts that African American female rhetoric is, too, not just about expression or communication but more about spirituality as a kind of knowledge, an “archetypal epistemology” (293). She examines Truth’s speech, “Ar’n’t I a Woman” (not the Frances Gage version but a more authentic version recorded in a Salem, Ohio newspaper) and determines that this speech, as well

as Truth, is an archetype, defining archetype as a “primary or dominant image, impression, or symbol that recurs often enough in a body of literature or orature to be considered as an element of the whole experience” (Pennington 295-96). So, while showing that what is true for black women is also true for black men (due to slavery and its legacy of racism), Pennington extends the African American rhetorical paradigm so that the studies or theories in African American rhetoric will remain dynamic.

In reviewing the paradigms, Pennington shows how the rhetoric is usually analyzed and critiqued through a Eurocentric or Afrocentric lens. But, some scholars note that using such binary terms as “fixed, singular, and essential categories” do not comport with culture as an on-going phenomenon which is never complete (297). Pennington cites how scholars, particularly Shirley Wilson Logan, have used both critical lenses and others to analyze the discourse of nineteenth century black women, noting that they “realize that African American women practice multiple identities in ways that are not reflected in simple theoretical constructs and frames” (297). This both/and dichotomy proves “a complex discursive map” of analysis for Sojourner Truth’s discourse; the fact that scholars also view her as a feminist, according to Pennington, exemplifies Truth’s discursive complexity.

Furthermore, Pennington begins to show the larger cultural context in which this discourse operates by noting the spiritual impulse embedded in African American rhetoric, in general, due to the rhetorical situation of New World slavery, which conjured a social memory of an African worldview of spirituality and interconnectedness with creation and all things. She then studies the discourse of other black female rhetors, like Maria Stewart and Mary Ann Shadd, to show how “African American women are particularly inclined toward the spiritual” (299-304). Pennington concludes by showing how the discourse is “vast and varied,” for she

notes that “some women’s spiritual discourse results from a theological base, while for other women, spiritual discourse derives from the psychology of a spirit within themselves” (304-05). Thus, she creates a “paradigm blueprint” as a way to show the dynamics involved in the discourse, noting that the rhetorical tools used for analysis should be multiple, as well as “refined, and utilized” for deeper understandings of particular experiences (305-06). To be sure, Pennington’s emphasis is on the rhetorical aspects of African American discourse, but her gendered awareness may have unexplored implications for African American female students, and the writing they do in our classrooms.

Building, and re-building, onto experiences brought by culture-specific knowledge is what Adam Banks studies, then theorizes upon, to illustrate how these rhetorical strategies are and have been rich, interpretive frameworks in the use of technology. He uses the griot, an African storyteller, and a primary oral practice stemming from it, like the DJ, as a model because “the DJ provides the figure through whom African American rhetoric can be reimaged in a new century” (2-3). Additionally, Banks further explains why this figure is significant in his book *Digital Griots: African American Rhetoric in a Multimedia Age*:

Understanding the DJ as a current manifestation of the griot—as a digital griot—and linking the practices of the DJ to other griots throughout the tradition (the storytellers, the preachers, the standup comics, the spoken word poets, and others) will allow an approach to African American rhetoric that is fluid and forward looking yet firmly rooted in African traditions. The exemplary DJ is a model of rhetorical excellence, and even the everyday DJ is often a model of real rhetorical agility. (3)

For Banks, the theoretical and practical frameworks that scholars and pedagogues deal with in multimedia writing result in the same practices that the DJ engages. She is that figure that can bridge the past with present and future African American rhetorical traditions; the past because the current DJ is the legacy of early black radio deejays; the present because of the way the DJ (of Hip-Hop culture) samples music; and the future because of the digital, audio/visual, and oral modes used in the DJ's art form of mixing and remixing. Searching for the right music to play (which is crate-digging), knowing what the people want to hear, honoring the culture, having the skills and ability to "move the crowd"—this tradition offers "teachers and scholars powerful ways to link oral performance, print literacies, and digital technologies in a truly multimedia approach to writing" (Banks 155).

Another oral practice stemming from the African griot is black preaching and its rhetorical production, the sermon. Because of the rhetorical history embedded within the black sermon and because of the "complex epistemological, theological, and linguistic codes that enable the preacher and congregation come together to literally make the word flesh," Banks sees the sermon as an opportunity for writing instruction, allowing teacher and student to explore the means of access in a digital age, since the black sermon is historically drenched in addressing human inequity and "has given African Americans the greatest public entrée into public discourse in the attempt to both gain access and transform America" (Banks 125). But what is critical for Banks is not necessarily the "performative elements of the black sermon and the discursive forms that make it such a special element of the African American vernacular tradition," but its proclivity toward liberation, "getting people willing to act. . . move beyond their fears . . . beyond the resignation that leads people to take comfort in status and material things" (124). This thinking or movement is found in a black theology of liberation. (I

discussed black theology in the previous section on the art of black preaching, and I discussed liberation theology in relation to pedagogy earlier in this section).

Thus, Banks looks to black theology as a kind of critical pedagogy in the study and teaching of writing in the digital age, for it “can encourage transformative work with technologies” (126). Furthermore and similar to Miller’s point of voice merging, Banks asserts that by using griotic principles of the DJ and black preaching, a student-writer “never discards the original text,” for borrowing from the past helps the student create a new text and that new text helps to build future texts. In doing so, the student is building community, remembering ancestors and elders and keeping those literacies central to future visions. Thus, Banks considers this more of a “digital humanities project—intellectual work connecting technologies . . . to humanistic inquiry,” extending beyond the parameters of just multimodal and multimedia composing (154, 156).

Beneath the surface of Banks’ idea of using black preaching to address the critical needs of digital access is an argument for listening. He actually says that the field has borrowed a practice from African American rhetorical traditions and has not fully listened to or understood the ethics behind it before incorporating it into our writing classrooms (Banks 2-4). Krista Ratcliffe also challenges the field to listen, for she says “we have been slow to imagine how listening might inform our discipline” because we have paired listening with oral discourses only (198-99). Her article, “Rhetorical Listening: A Trope for Interpretive Invention and a ‘Code of Cross-Cultural Conduct’” asserts the bias of the primacy of reading and writing to the field’s appropriation of “Western rhetorical theories to theorize writing and the teaching of writing,” a theory that focuses on the production and analysis of enthymemes (198). So, Ratcliffe offers a listening that differs from reading, for it “proceeds via different body organs, different

disciplinary and cultural assumptions, and different figures of speech,” thus allowing our logocentric culture to use all phenomena to fully engage the logos, instead of from a logos that speaks only (202-203).

What is particularly interesting about rhetorical listening in relation to black preaching are the echoes of *prophecy* and *critical pedagogy* infusing Ratcliffe’s theory and discussion. She asserts that when one engages in rhetorical listening, it comes with an ethic of listening, as well as questioning, what is just and fair, and it encourages the listener to use an inclusive logos that renders her or him positively vulnerable to “*hear* things [they] cannot *see*” (203). To employ an all-inclusive logos means to understand discourses differently, “listening to discourse not *for* intent but *with* intent—with the intent to understand not just the claims, not just the cultural logics within which the claims function, but the rhetorical negotiations of understanding as well” (205). Thus, understanding is inverted to *standing under*, which means to simply acknowledge other discourses and listen for the unknowns, the silences, and then move forward by “consciously integrating this information into our world-views and decision-making” (207). For Ratcliffe then, rhetorical listening becomes an ethic of relation, not power over others, similar to the prophetic tradition’s focus on transformation and critical pedagogues’ problem-based teaching so as not to overcome student knowledge.

Vorris Nunley complements Ratcliffe in that his scholarship is also concerned with how rhetoric, particularly, African American rhetoric, is heard and used in ways that do not subscribe to Western notions of rhetoric. An example of this different subscription is through the use of “space” as a critical lens for African American rhetoric—cultural geographies where African American knowledges proliferated—so Nunley offers spatiality as an “explicit fourth element in the rhetorical situation” (223). In Nunley’s essay, “From the Harbor to Da Academic Hood:

Hush Harbors and an African American Rhetorical Tradition,” his rhetorical interest leads him to pursue “how spatiality, the politics and poetics of space, mediate rhetorical performances” (222). Nunley coins the term *hush harbor rhetoric*, and defines it as places where African American rhetorical performances flourished, for “African Americans have utilized camouflaged locations, hidden sites, and enclosed places as emancipatory cells where they can come from the wilderness, untie their tongues, and speak the unspoken and sing their own songs. . . in their own communities” (223). Historically speaking, American slaves called these spaces “cane breaks, bush arbors, or hush harbors” (Nunley 223). According to Nunley, these spaces are more than just safe houses displaying rhetorical difference, for reducing hush harbor rhetoric as such is to make it merely ornamental. He aggressively asserts these sites as resources replete with rhetorical theory, a non-Western theory of rhetoric (229-30).

Nunley further asserts that African American hush harbor rhetoric is not distinctive due to skin but to an epistemology of forms, discursive strategies, and subjectivities informing them (224, 232). Thus, *commonplace*, ‘any statement or bit of knowledge that is commonly shared among a given audience or community,’ becomes a marker of identity in hush harbor rhetoric for Nunley. Commonplaces for African Americans are drenched in experiences, and are “therefore understood differently and are more likely to be persuasive within African American hush harbors” (233). In relation to preaching, hush harbor rhetoric audiences fully understand the commonplace of the black preaching tradition of borrowing. Similar to Miller’s focus, Nunley says that this tradition has “different culturally mediated evaluations and receptions” that otherwise would be devalued in other non-hush harbor rhetoric sites (233). A hush harbor rhetoric audience values how the sermon is delivered—its style, its performance, its purpose, and how the preacher uses the material—not the originator. Thus, Nunley unearths the deep

structure and epistemologies of African American hush harbor rhetoric as a phenomenon beyond tangible elements that renders it as an imitative and misused art.¹¹

Nunley's deep analysis of rhetoric as a phenomenon that is something more than how it is seen and heard by others links all the literature in this subsection into a coherent whole. All of the authors agree that Western conceptions of rhetoric do not constitute a one-size fits all theory, nor should they act as the right, default manner in which to theorize all kinds of rhetoric, particularly when analyzing the rhetoric of the black preacher. Also, one cannot analyze black preaching without a discussion of her audience, and to do so one must study the scene in which this interaction takes place. Taking all of these dynamics into account when studying black preaching assists in preventing the temptation to pathologize rhetorical works from non-Western rhetorical traditions as different or offensive.

Conclusion

At the outset of this chapter, I mentioned the important work of Beverly Moss who has provided our discipline with the fullest account of the Black preacher. Moss studied three African-American male preachers from mainstream Protestant denominations in which the traditional African-American worship style is practiced. Not all of the preachers in Moss's study composed their sermons before delivery, for one identifies himself as a "non-manuscript" preacher. Through her participant-observations, fieldnotes, interviews, and collection of artifacts, Moss conducted an ethnographic study that ultimately culminated in her book, *A Community Text Arises*. Using Shirley Brice Heath's definition of "literacy event"—an action of one individual or several individuals in the production and consumption of texts—Moss takes to task what counts as a literate text, asserting that the literacy event (the preaching moment) in the

black church is not only an individual act engaged by the preacher but a collaborative one in which the parishioners are involved.

Moss urges scholars to think of African American churches as “richly, multilayered sites where literacy often functions and differs widely from the notion of literacy in the academic sense” (5). Hence, Moss aims to demonstrate the complexity of literacy as a social process involving multiple participants, intertextual relations, and “cultural norms and ideology that shape the way participants, intertextuality, and discourse interact.” Viewing African American churches as a place where literacy is complex—studying all cultural artifacts—allows scholars to study process as well as product (6-9). Moss further claims that there is no boundary between form and content in the African American sermon, for it “would destroy the sermon as it exists” because how and what a black preacher says creates a community, “for having something to say and knowing how to say it is more about form and content but about community expectation and values, fixed and blurred boundaries, and using a text to establish and maintain a community” (63-64). The sermon delivered by a black preacher is a dialogical interaction, allowing the parishioners to talk back to build community among people from multiple communities (Moss 65).

Perhaps more than any other scholar, Moss’s research has inspired others in rhetoric and composition to explore the larger meanings and implications of preaching in general and the Black preacher in particular, and the cultural work she performs. One such publication, *The Gendered Pulpit*, is an examination of the material and spatial conditions of the American pulpit. The author, Roxanne Mountford, draws from the fields of rhetoric, anthropology, cultural geography, and architectural history to reveal how the act of preaching, as well as the profession, has historically and rhetorically been gendered masculine. Mountford asserts the following:

“The twin legacy of a textbook tradition privileging the masculine body of the preacher and an architectural/cultural tradition that gives that body a home sustain gender bias and leave contemporary women preachers searching for ways to accommodate themselves to the physicality of preaching” (3). To trace the impact of this bias, she completes three case studies of women pastors in mainline Protestant churches to chart their successes or non-successes in accommodating or rearranging space. One among the three women pastors is an African American. Mountford shows that this gender bias affects women of both races, but she situates this preacher within the context of a prophetic tradition of the Black Jeremiad. However, as a “prophet outsider” who uses “frank speech,” this preacher uses a “womanist narrative strategy” to resist the male-dominated preaching tradition and restore progressive possibilities that laid dormant in her members, particularly on issues of African American heritage (Mountford 102, 108-15).

Thus, Mountford challenges the field to look at rhetorical space as “the geography of a communicative event, and, like all landscapes, may include both the cultural and material arrangement, whether intended or fortuitous, of space” (17). These conditions have impacted the space of not only preaching but any rhetorical performance, for she also considers rhetorical space as “material spaces surrounding the communicative event, like lecterns, auditoriums, and platforms” (16-17). For Mountford, then, the writing classroom is also a rhetorical space needing further study because the physical arrangement assists in setting the expectations of the participants: teachers and students.

Recent master and doctoral theses have devoted studies to the black preacher and black preaching alongside other disciplinary concerns within the field like pedagogy, literacy, and rhetoric. For example, Brittney Boykins’ thesis, *Orality in the Composition Classroom*

Audience: Now You See Me. Now You Don't endeavors to heighten audience awareness for student writers through orality. She uses the black church as a resource from which to draw upon, for, in following Moss' scholarship, the black sermon is a community text engendering call and response. Thus, Boykins encourages her writing students to see themselves as speakers first by turning writing assignments into oral forms by engaging in oral workshops. Next, Aesha R. Adams' dissertation, *As the Spirit Gives Utterance: The Language and Literacy Practices of Contemporary Black Women Preachers*, asserts that black women preachers can transcend audiences and contexts due to their everyday spirituality. Adams' use of literacy is taken from the literature of New Literacy Studies which dismisses the autonomous model of literacy and studies the embedded social, political, historical, and economical functions of literacy practices. She places Black women's language practices front and center of her an ethnographic study of two black female preachers to highlight their experience and world view. Her ethnographic study is more analytical than descriptive, and she looks at how audience responses shape black female preacher's rhetoric, and unlike Moss's study, she includes audience feedback within her text. And finally, Paul A. Miniffee's dissertation, *Roots of Black Rhetoric: African Methodist Episcopal Zion's Pioneering Preacher-Politicians*, engages in archival work to retrieve letters and speeches of top nineteenth century black preachers, like Bishops Jermain Loguen and James Hood. He argues that the AME Zion church is an oft overlooked resource of African American history, and that these men used all three rhetorical appeals in their sermons. Miniffee offers an alternative perspective in his analyses by de-emphasizing emotional appeal but heightening the logical appeals these ministers used to show their skills as intellectuals aware of the competing philosophies of that period.

Even though the field is now producing more studies in black preaching, there still remains even more work to be done. My interest in unpacking the *extracurriculum* of the black preacher serves as part of this much larger work, seeking to unearth new discoveries yet building onto the work of my scholarly predecessors. I aim to elaborate but also revise traditional concerns with the theory and teaching of writing. To this end, my investigation of the black preacher intends to show that this “extracurriculum” is enormously influential on her composing practices. By closely examining these practices, it may be likewise possible to identify the value of honoring the “extracurricula” of all students’ language experience, and to incorporate this knowledge into our pedagogies.

But, how does one closely examine such practices? How can the *extracurriculum* influence composing strategies? And, what values emerge from it? This chapter demonstrates that black preaching is a diverse but unified art form warranting further scrutiny in our conversations of writing in a global, twenty-first century classroom. What research methodology has the potential to show how all of these dynamics work through the field’s understanding of the *extracurriculum*? The following chapter will explain the methodology I used to not only *describe* but *explain* a black preacher’s preparation process and delivery.

CHAPTER 2

USING GROUNDED THEORY AS A METHODOLOGY TO INVESTIGATE THE BLACK PREACHER'S EXTRACURRICULUM: A RATIONALE

Introduction: Two Noteworthy Methodologies

Preaching is a subject of study not only limited to those within the formal disciplinary areas of homiletics. Scholars in other fields, particularly literature and folklore, have conducted research on the sermon, tracing its roots, its development, its evolution, and its performance within American history and culture. For example, Bruce Rosenberg, a medieval English literature scholar who became interested in folklore and the way it interacts with literature, used American oral compositions to challenge the oral-formulaic theory of Milman Parry and Albert Lord, scholars who conducted their research in Yugoslavia. Rosenberg's issue with those scholars is that their theory was drawn from a language and culture that few American scholars could understand or analyze. Thus, Rosenberg's book, *Can These Bones Live?: The Art of the American Folk Preacher*, uses the American folk preacher as his model to address concerns of oral-formulaic theory through an examination of their composed and performed sermons.

However, something emerged during data collection that changed the course of his research, for Rosenberg became enthralled by the oratorical gift of folk preachers: “. . . the compelling expressive power of American folk preachers commanded attention in its own right . . . my research and that of others concentrated as much upon the preachers themselves and their talents as upon the principles of composition in Homer and a sprinkling of medieval narrators” (4). So, Rosenberg's human subjects were no longer models for the study of oral compositional processes but subjects of study in and of themselves (Rosenberg 4).

Likewise, but through a culture-specific lens, Gerald L. Davis, a scholar in the area of folklore, conducted research in black preaching; his critical inquiry focused primarily on the performed African American sermon. His book, *I Got the Word in Me and I Can Sing It, You Know* challenges Rosenberg's use of Parry-Lord's oral formulaic theory to examine American folk sermons. He asserts that this theory is not applicable to African American folk sermons because the "definition [Parry-Lord's theory] is too narrow, too confining, to embrace the concurrent generating processes of language and eurhythmic structures that attend the deployment of formula systems in African American sermon performance" (53-54). Furthermore, when Rosenberg says that the American oral preacher "subordinates everything he has to say to the demands of his meter" (Davis 24), and that "in few other arts is the message so clearly the medium as in this kind of preaching" (Rosenberg 61), he draws from literary distinctions of phrasing that have a steady pattern, asserts Davis. African American sermons may look irregular when printed, but "[are] made regular and seemingly metrical in performance through the use of music and sound production principles" (Davis 25). Thus, Davis claims that African American culture is not oral statically but oral dynamically, and that one needs to study the expressive systems from which the culture emerges to obtain answers.

These methodologies are noteworthy because of my interest in using the black preacher as a model for unpacking the multiplicities of rhetoric and composition's *extracurriculum*. The analysis of the black preacher is not only important in arguments acknowledging such, but she emerges in discussions of the teaching of writing and in discussions of pulpit oratory and spirituality in African American rhetorical traditions. Even though this statement derives from the literature review in the previous chapter, an underlying belief undergirds the selection of scholarship reviewed, which sets the tone for this chapter. Acknowledging this belief is very

important, for in their article “Competing Paradigms in Qualitative Research,” Egon S. Guba and Yvonna S. Lincoln assert that questions of paradigm take precedence over questions of method. They define paradigm as “the basic belief system or worldview that guides the investigator, not only in choices of method but in ontologically and epistemologically fundamental ways;” they fervently believe that no researcher should delve into inquiry without recognizing “what paradigm informs and guides her or his approach” (105, 116). Thus, at the outset, I wish to disclose the assumption guiding the way I have conducted research, and that assumption is that knowledge is socially constructed; this assumption is situated within a paradigm of *constructivism*, which values local realities, subjective epistemologies, and hermeneutical and dialectical methodologies (Guba and Lincoln 109). Broadly speaking, it is a paradigm familiar to researchers in writing and rhetorical studies.

However, in acknowledging this paradigm, I enter a vigorous yet contentious debate among researchers and scholars of *grounded theory*, my chosen methodology. Grounded theory was founded only as far back as the 1960s but has rapidly developed into “the most widely used and popular qualitative research method across a wide range of disciplines and subjects” (Bryant and Charmaz 1). In the following sections, I will give a general discussion about grounded theory, providing a context for grounded theory’s birth, defining and exploring some of these tensions. Next, I will discuss my study, showing its timeliness with other rhetoric and composition scholars who also use grounded theory to effect change of a critical and social nature in the study and teaching of writing, thereby providing in-depth explanations of student identities and diverse theories. Also in discussing my study, I will explain the procedures I used to uncover the black preacher’s preparation and delivery, detailing and describing the data collection and data analysis. Eventually, my goal is to develop theories from my data to

elucidate the possibilities emerging from the field's understanding of the *extracurriculum*.

The Methodology of Grounded Theory

Context and Definition

Grounded theory methodology was formed by two sociologists from different but complementary research backgrounds who shared concerns for how data was used. Barney G. Glaser came from Columbia University, a “background comprised of rigorous training in quantitative methods under the methodological and theoretical guidance of Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Robert K. Merton”; Anselm L. Strauss was a student and then professor of the Chicago School, a school of thought steeped in the “traditions of George H. Mead’s social psychology, ethnographic field research, and symbolic interaction” (Bryant and Charmaz 32). Both scientists saw gaps in their research traditions where there was “a great need to stick to the data, be in the field, and generate theory that respects and reveals the perspectives of the subjects in the substantive area under study” (Glaser 17). This “great need” was sociology’s stance on theory and empirical research during Glaser and Strauss’ formative years as students and even into their professional years as researchers and scholars. Social sciences during the 40s, 50s, and 60s endeavored to be more scientific than qualitative, and this scientific way was filtered into the abstract theories deductively formed on the one hand, and the empirical research quantitatively conducted on the other. Glaser and Strauss were critical of what was termed “armchair sociology” where theories were developed within the walls of academia, so they advocated for theories to be developed from the realities of the world. Their ground-breaking book, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* published in 1967, defined grounded theory as a “general methodology for developing theory that is grounded in data systematically gathered and analyzed” (Strauss and Corbin 273). Ian Dey further notes in

“Grounded Theory” that both men deemed armchair sociology as “the epitome of unproductive social science. . . they set out to devise a different relationship between theory and research, one that would liberate theory from the seductive comforts of the armchair and empirical research from the uninspiring and restrictive confines of analysing variables and verifying hypotheses” (82).

To unpack Dey’s statement for further clarity, the prevailing paradigm was positivism. This paradigm fostered the belief of “reality as apprehendable, to be driven by immutable natural laws and mechanisms;” knowledge, then, becomes the rationale for the way things are, ontologically speaking (Guba and Lincoln 109). Additionally, the investigator engaged in research undergirded by positivism studied her research participants as if she were looking in a “one-way mirror”; the participants became objects to study, for the investigator viewed them as a natural phenomenon simply functioning as the way things exist because “the investigator and investigated are assumed to be independent of one another” (Guba and Lincoln 110). Research guided by the positivist paradigm provided tangible results from deductively formed hypotheses, which could be tested and applied to representative cases so as to generalize to populations from which they were drawn. Thus, positivism executed by quantification methods allowed scientists to establish facts or laws that became the “received and accepted view” guiding scientific productivity (Guba and Lincoln 105-106).

Furthermore, Glaser and Strauss strived to show that qualitative research could achieve validity and reliability through the conscientious and deliberate attempt to develop a systematic practice of studying and analyzing one’s data. In the essay, “Grounded Theory in Historical Perspective,” Antony Bryant and Kathy Charmaz historically attest to the original aim of grounded theory:

They [Glaser and Strauss] intended to show how such research projects could produce outcomes of equal significance to those produced by the predominant statistical-quantitative, primarily mass survey methods of the day. . . . Glaser and Strauss offered a method with a solid core of data analysis and theory construction. Their method contrasted with the strategy of those who sought procedural respectability through collection of vast amounts of unanalyzed, and often un-analysable, data. (33)

For Glaser and Strauss, then, procedural respectability could also be achieved in qualitative research because “theory evolves during actual research, and it does this through continuous interplay between analysis and data collection” (Strauss and Corbin 273). Because both scientists shared a belief in life evolving and the complications and variables contributing to such, theory or theories emerging from one’s data is never fixed (Glaser 15).

Qualitative and/or Quantitative Data

In her article, “Orthodoxy vs. Power: The Defining Traits of Grounded Theory,” Jane C. Hood notes the difference between research using a generic inductive qualitative method from that of research using grounded theory as methodology; whereas the former uses data to describe subjects, environments, and concepts, the latter encompasses a systematic practice of multiple data collection: using processes of coding data for emerging concepts; developing categories from concepts; sampling and theoretical saturation of categories and related concepts through a constant comparative method; and exploring the fit or relevance of theoretical codes to produce hypotheses (Hood 152-55). An additional distinction is that grounded theory is a flexible methodology that incorporates qualitative and quantitative methods for theorizing. In other words, grounded theory seeks not only to describe but explain situations and settings. Whether

one only uses certain types of data, such as interviews, mass surveys, or a combination of both, warrants no concern for the researcher engaged in grounded theory. The mantra of grounded theory, as Glaser articulates, is “It’s all data for the analysis. Whether soft or hard, it is just grist for the mill of constant comparison and analyzing” (11). This mantra promotes grounded theory as a methodology bound to no specific discipline nor bound to a specific research paradigm or epistemology.

Also, Glaser emphasizes grounded theory’s initial start as a general methodology of analysis; he also asserts that “qualitative analysis may be done with data arrived at quantitatively or qualitatively or in some combination, but [he] focuses on a qualitative analysis of qualitative data” (11). Also emphasizing a similar point in their book, Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin assert that a researcher may use any form of data or technology, “for the aim of theorizing is to develop useful theories. . . we do not believe in the primacy of either mode of doing research” (27). Qualitative and/or quantitative procedures can be used to achieve the density necessary to develop emergent theory; Strauss and Corbin call this “the complex flow of work that evolves over the entire course of any investigative project” (29). They also urge researchers not to merely think of qualitative and quantitative methods as complementary or supplementary but as interplay between methods (Strauss and Corbin 29, 31). While there are specific differences in the processes of data analysis offered in both books, the authors assert a commonality: grounded theory allows a researcher to give an in-depth analysis of her research through varied procedures and multiple forms of data.

Emergence vs. Forcing

When Strauss collaborated with Glaser, it was the variable analysis background of Glaser’s training that somewhat rescued the methods of qualitative researchers from the

condescension of the academy (Holton 269). But, Glaser and Strauss' ideas evolved and even became more nuanced—into opposing viewpoints—as grounded theory began to mature and develop into a more rich and complex methodology. Unfortunately, Glaser and Strauss outgrew each other and began collaborating with other researchers and scholars who held similar views congruent to each one's vision of grounded theory's future. As noted in Strauss' book with Juliet Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research*, they remained true to the essentials of grounded theory, but Strauss' ideas evolved due to his continued “conduct[ing], teach[ing], and discussion of research methodology with colleagues and students,” inadvertently causing differences between he and Glaser (Strauss and Corbin 10). Corbin was Strauss' former graduate student, and the two of them further evaluated grounded theory's coding procedures in response to students and researchers' questions or concerns regarding them. However, Strauss and Corbin encouraged researchers to use their book as a supplement to the earlier work of the co-originators, not to totally abandon the earlier work for their book.

Yet even in giving the original work more prominence than their book, Strauss and Corbin's coding procedures, according to Glaser, deviated from grounded theory's emphasis on emergence. Due to Glaser's background in variable analysis, these coding procedures derailed objectivity, which is achieved through controlling variables. But objectivity takes a different orientation in qualitative research, for it is “openness and a willingness to listen to respondents; hearing what others have to say, seeing what others do, and representing these as accurately as possible . . . while recognizing that researchers' understandings often are based on the values, culture, training, and experiences that they bring to research situations and that these might be quite different from those of their respondents” (Strauss and Corbin 43). To return to Glaser and Strauss' initial coding procedures, Judith A. Holton's “The Coding Process and Its Challenges”

explains the types of coding:

There are two types of coding in a classic grounded theory study: *substantive coding*, which includes both open and selective coding procedures, and *theoretical coding*. In substantive coding, the researcher works with the data directly, fracturing and analysing it, initially through *open coding* for the emergence of a *core category* and related concepts and then subsequently through *theoretical sampling* and *selective coding* of data to theoretically saturate the core and related concepts. *Theoretical saturation* is achieved through *constant comparison* of incidents (indicators) in the data to elicit the properties and dimensions of each category (code). (265)

This method was very innovative and radical; the methodology was *innovative* in the sense that data selection was not predicated on a random sample but through theoretical sampling, choosing sites and sources to test emerging theory from data; additionally, it was *radical* in that it set out to rescue empirical research from the constrictions of academy walls. Glaser and Strauss shifted their field's focus from abstract theory to a more substantive theory grounded in the realities of the world. Yet, that systematic way does not capture the in-between moments or messiness of research where it "rarely proceeds as planned" (Strauss and Corbin 32).

In contrast, the coding procedures that are explained in detail by Strauss and Corbin are different (even though it builds from the original procedures), for they implement a type of coding that encompasses the orientation of objectivity in qualitative research. This kind of coding is called *axial coding* and it occurs after *open coding*, which they describe as equivalent to opening a text to expose ideas. Axial coding is "reassembling the data to relate categories to their subcategories to form more precise and complete explanations about phenomenon;" this

coding is “termed ‘axial’ because coding occurs around the axis of a category, linking categories at the level of properties and dimensions” (Strauss and Corbin 123-24). Once *axial coding* is completed, the researcher moves to *selective coding*, which is “the process of integrating and refining categories to form a larger theoretical scheme,” then theoretical sampling to saturate the categories (via constant the comparative method) to make sure no “new properties, dimensions, or relationships emerge during analysis (Strauss and Corbin 143).

These detailed explanations are the crux to the schism between the co-originators. Glaser thinks that Strauss’ coding procedures are too cumbersome, and it creates unnecessary work for the researcher. Furthermore, he vigorously claims that the analyst forces data when engaging in *axial coding*, and the way in which questions are asked “will produce preconceived conceptual description which is an entirely different goal than generating theory” (43). Glaser reminds Strauss that in the original work (“Discovery”), the researcher engages in analysis (open coding) for a core category then to sampling and selective coding, theoretically saturating categories via constant comparison; it is through the constant comparative method that a central category will emerge. Thus, the term “classic grounded theory” designates research conducted in the manner Glaser specifies above, a distinction that does not make one’s research a purely traditional and descriptive research paradigm.

Grounded Theory after Glaser & Strauss

Glaser and Strauss’ work “inspired graduate students in sociology and particularly in nursing to pursue more qualitative research with far more confidence” (Bryant and Charmaz 38). But burgeoning researchers and scholars, many of whom were graduate students of Glaser and Strauss and are now professionals in their own right, began questioning the seemingly unacknowledged epistemology of grounded theory as it matured into a bona fide methodology.

Even though it seemed that discussions of epistemology were ignored, other scholars in sociology of the 60s and 70s were already publishing books in areas that shifted the epistemology of the field—social construction and ethnomethodology—toward a constructivist mode. Among those books responsible for the epistemological shift was *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* by Thomas Kuhn,¹ so “by the early 1970s, within the general domain of the social sciences, the issues of epistemology, science versus non-science, and the relationship between knowledge and knower(s) had emerged as central concerns” (Bryant and Charmaz 38).

However, grounded theory became a methodology “far too readily open to a more scientific reading” and clearly situated within positivism (Bryant and Charmaz 34-35). From this epistemological perspective, grounded theory became a method to capture the objective reality of subjects due to “a lack of explicitness in the seminal work of Glaser and Strauss”; thus, when burgeoning researchers and scholars developed more nuanced positions during grounded theory’s maturity, positions that “set out the boundaries and distinctions between and among the espoused research paradigms and associated issues of ontology, epistemology and methodology,” grounded theory became fractured into a multitude of methods trying to accommodate such issues (Holton 267). For example, later scholars positioned grounded theory among competing paradigms, like positivist and constructivist. In spite of the multiple paradigms explored during the maturation of grounded theory, some researchers and scholars faithfully claim grounded theory as a methodology that “transcends the specific boundaries of established paradigms to accommodate any type of data sourced and expressed through any epistemological lens;” those scholars who do so, like Glaser, refer to themselves as “classic grounded theorists” (Holton 268).

As illustrated in this section, grounded theory holds a lot of promise for researchers and scholars who desire to make a contribution to their field, a contribution that differs from traditional, standard practices of testing a hypothesis on a sample to represent the mass population. Yet, grounded theory can also be problematic; because of its many criticisms, it leaves a researcher (particularly a novice one) in a kaleidoscopic maze of possibilities and in a bewildered state of indecision that possibly veers her or him off course. However, these variations of grounded theory really have more to do with the methodology's maturation beyond Glaser and Strauss' origination. In essence, Glaser and Strauss challenged the field to acknowledge those missing from the sample, for those samples do not embody all within the population, and in doing so, the researcher excludes other voices that may also have something important to contribute to scholarly studies, even if those voices are in the minority numerically. Thus, grounded theory enables the researcher to capture the local knowledge of people—what is true for them—instead of dismissing it because it is not applicable to the masses.

Grounded Theory in the Extracurriculum

How does the previous discussion relate to my research of investigating rhetoric and composition's *extracurriculum* through the discourse of the black preacher? First, Rosenberg and Davis take their subject matter and subjects of study seriously, gaining a greater appreciation of an American art form as they progress through their research. Both scholars rigorously and deliberately used their methodology to unearth and describe the nuances of the oral composing and performing of preaching. However, Rosenberg's methodology, a literary analytical approach, was assumed (by him) to be universally applicable to all preaching, so it yielded questionable results from some of his data. If Rosenberg had theoretically saturated his findings through theoretical sampling and referring back to scholars of music and folklore he

interviewed earlier in addition to other literatures (constant comparison), then he may have discovered, indeed, that Parry-Lord's oral formulaic theory was constrictive for African American folk preachers. What this signals for me as a novice researcher is to immediately acknowledge the assumptions undergirding my research and reveal that so I am conscientious of how it may affect the way I view my data (as I did earlier in this chapter). From Davis, a researcher learns to think small and branch out by starting with a particular cultural lore or nuance; then, she criticizes those nuances within the structures sustaining it—an inward critique instead of an outward one. But Davis, too, could have benefitted from theoretical sampling by testing if other African American folk preachers make their sermons metrical with something other or in addition to sound production principles during delivery; then, he could have refined his initial theory into a narrower or focused theory.

Second, to study the black preacher in isolation is not sufficient for my research, for doing so will shift my project from its primary purpose of investigating extracurricular literacy practices to a project of historical biography or even religion, more specifically Christianity. Thus, my project works in tandem with the scholarship that uses grounded theory to show how rhetoric and composition has developed (tremendously) beyond traditional and conventional concerns with texts and discourses. For example, Joyce Magnotto Neff uses grounded theory to study televised writing instruction, investigating “how participants are constructed as ‘students’ and ‘writers’ in the virtual and material spaces of a televised composition course;” the end result is that the data allowed her to develop five (5) theories on the impact of distance education in the teaching of writing (127). She challenges the field to view their methodologies as social practices, stating, “Our methodologies often remain traditional, patriarchal, and exclusionary. We tout composition as a democratic discipline, but we maintain a researcher-practitioner

hierarchy that can be seen in the marginalization of teacher-researchers and graduate students” (Neff 133). Also, Neff asserts that the analytic procedures of grounded theory require researchers to ask unavoidable questions to peel the cultural, political, and social layers of writing.

In addition to Neff, Suresh Canagarajah analyzes the cultural, social, and political by pushing beyond the boundaries of Standard English proficiency in student writing. He focuses attention away from sentence-level concerns to discourse concerns as he analyzes the abilities of multilingual writers shuttling back and forth between languages to form a diverse rhetorical repertoire, called *translanguaging* (401-02). To challenge the field to move beyond teaching for mere communication to teaching for rhetorical effectiveness while drawing upon the scholarship on African American students and scholars who *codemesh*, Canagarajah posits that *translanguaging* can be a “general communicative competence and *codemeshing* for the realization of translanguaging in texts” (402-03). He uses grounded theory to develop an insider’s perspective on his student’s interpretations and explanations of her writing strategies, which allows him to “generate constructs from the ground up through an interpretation of multiple forms of qualitative data from classroom research,” triangulating the data to identify strategies connecting the oral and written modes of translanguaging (403-04). Canagarajah’s results lead him to theorize (among others) that the field needs to establish a socially-based definition of error, departing from error simply based upon form (414).

These scholars use grounded theory to tap into the potential of student-writers who usually get lost to the larger concerns of teaching writing to the average college student. In summary, research pursued in rhetoric and composition by using grounded theory allows the researcher to theorize from her data; doing so assists in awakening or disclosing pedagogical,

historical, and theoretical concerns about the study and teaching of writing that have been considered irrelevant due to its inapplicability to general writing needs. I attempt to do the same in this study, which is explained below.

Research Design and Method

Objectives and Research Question

There were two overarching objectives of this project: 1) to investigate how the practices of two Black preachers are acquired through the extracurriculum that informs their training; and 2) to determine which, if any of these extracurricular practices might have implications for post-secondary writing instruction. Prospectively, this extracurriculum speaks to the often unacknowledged processes that inform literacy practices outside any official curriculum. My investigation centers upon the following question: *What literacy practices of the black preacher originated in the extracurriculum of her/his training, and do those practices have any pedagogical implications for writing, particularly for college students who witness those practices in their daily lives?*

To answer that question, I used multiple forms of qualitative data, which created space for interrogations of not only formal literacy practices but informal ones as well; those data were preacher interviews, ancillary interviews by church members, participant-observations, audio-visual aids, and communiqués. Also (and explained in much more detail in the next subsection), I purposefully investigated a male and female preacher; however, gender was not the main focus; due to historical experience and the legacy of racism, their preaching was similar when taking into consideration the broader cultural and rhetorical context of black preaching. As a result, this methodology helped me to theorize about the practices of *the* traditional black preacher, with *the* as an all-inclusive definite article signaling a shared history between black female and male

preachers. Therefore, this project not only lends itself to description but also explanation, statements seeking to unravel the intricacies amassed in the knowledge gained during literacy learning and henceforth its use.

Subject and Site Selection

The subjects were selected from the memberships of two (2) churches from the Greater Kansas City area: a *traditional African American church of the Baptist denomination, given the generic name Church A, and an African American church in the predominately White United Methodist denomination, also given the generic name Church B.* The phrase “traditional Black Church,” used interchangeably with African American church, stemmed from C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence Mamiya’s definition in which they identify seven historic black denominations that formed independently from white congregations after 1787 as a protest to their treatment as a public nuisance than as serious worshippers; these denominations are the following: African Methodist Episcopal (AME); African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AMEZ); Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME); National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.; National Baptist Convention of America (unincorporated); Progressive National Baptist Convention; and the Church of God in Christ (COGIC) (Lincoln and Mamiya 1-2).

Of course this history affects the way these churches exist today and the manner in which they govern themselves. For example, the three Methodist churches above came from the parent body, the Methodist Episcopal (ME) Church established by John Wesley in the 1700s. Throughout the period of the 19th century, the ME Church experienced several splits resulting into independent churches, yet those churches merged back with the ME Church again. By the first third of the 20th century, the Methodist Church formed as a result of those mergers. However in 1968, the Methodist Church merged with another branch of Methodism, the

Evangelical United Brethren Church, to form what is now the United Methodist (UM) Church. Even though “episcopal” was deleted from the official name, the UM church is still governed by bishops who appoint district superintendents to lead churches in particular geographic areas (Pastor B Interview, October 2012).

The Baptist churches within the three conventions previously mentioned are usually Missionary Baptists, whose purpose was and still is to support missions and to become missionaries themselves, fulfilling the Great Commission of spreading the Gospel to everyone, as stated in the New Testament of the Bible. Also in keeping with New Testament scriptures, Baptists believe in the act of baptism through immersion of water to those who make a profession of faith. While there are elected presidents and vice-presidents of each respective convention, Baptists are a non-episcopacy church, meaning that they are not governed by bishops. Each church is independent and uses a democratic process in selecting pastors for their churches. While Baptists have elders and deacons, they are not above the pastor and neither are they at parity with the pastor. The elders are “given the governance of the church, really more in the context of scripture, New Testament, older men.” They are there to assist the pastor, “helping the pastor with decision-making and structure and order of the church.” Elders are not ordained but deacons are, and in addition to assisting the pastor with governance, deacons serve as the liaison for the church’s outreach in the surrounding communities (Pastor A interview, July 2012).

The Baptist and Methodist churches selected (Church A and Church B) were in towns or cities that had colleges and universities; as a matter of fact, the Baptist church actually had students who became members while receiving their education at the university. The Methodist church did not have that demographic, but they had former youth/teenage members who were

now in college and would visit during the holiday and summer season. Some of the subjects who participated in this study were recent college graduates. Moreover, the overall subjects constituted twelve (12) persons—six from each congregation—representing various age groups as well as both genders in equal proportions. Because of the nature of this investigation, subjects were overwhelmingly (but not exclusively) African American, and there were *three (3) types of subjects: preachers, personal witnesses, and members*.

First, I selected *two (2) preachers, male and female, who pastored the Baptist (Church A) and Methodist (Church B) churches* aforementioned; they were given the generic names of *Pastor A* and *Pastor B* respectively. Both preachers had certified training through their denominations and had ten or more years of preaching and pastoral experience. They received undergraduate degrees from a bible college and a state university in the area, and they received an advanced degree from their religious-affiliated seminaries in a major mid-western city. Pastor A's process in receiving his advanced education was a successful test of endurance, for it took twelve years for him to complete his Master of Divinity degree because he married, had children, worked a job, as well as pastored a young and upcoming church that was growing fast; he would take three hours one semester and two hours the next semester, trying to find a way to balance all of his roles. He stated, "I was a non-traditional graduate student and it took me twelve years versus the standard three just because of the way I went. But I finished and got all of that done." Pastor A was committed to finishing because his pastor-mentor heavily emphasized formal training for the ministry, telling him "there's nothing worse than having an ill-prepared preacher in the pulpit" (Pastor A interview, July 2012).

Pastor B was a school psychologist for twenty years, having received her Master's degree in psychology prior to accepting her call into the ministry. When she entered the ministry, her

former pastor mentored her as well, knowing that she had started her initial training for the ministry through the A.M.E. Church's Board of Examiners' classes. But that church was a small church, so she left, saying, "not that I found anything wrong with A.M.E., but in smaller A.M.E. churches, your pastor is not there full-time. . . it's really hard when you're needing that mentoring" (Pastor B interview, Oct. 2012). So she returned to her church of birth, particularly the denomination in which she was baptized: United Methodist. When she returned to the UM church, the pastor there began to work with her saying, "You know, have you ever thought about seminary? You know in the United Methodist Church, if you're going toward the ministry, you have to have a seminary degree." Her formal seminary training was also a test of endurance—literally. The UM Church's process of preparing ministers is "tight and it takes about 8-10 years to get through the system." Once she enrolled at her theology school, she had to go through the church's formal inquisition where they asked her particular questions about her calling—"What do you really feel more specifically God is calling you to? Are you called to be an ordained elder or an ordained deacon?" (Pastor B interview, Oct. 2012). After that inquisition, she officially declared her candidacy, she immediately received a mentor (which she met with regularly), and she dutifully met with the District Committee on Ministry once a year, or what they call D-Com. Pastor B states, "so during that time, you're going to school, you're reading with your interview group, and then towards the end you meet with a larger group called the Board of Ordination Ministry. . . and in the process you're turning in information, you're writing your papers, you're showing them your practice of ministry." While acknowledging that some people struggle with the UM Church's lengthy process, Pastor B realizes that the church is only trying to make sure that the person is serious and steadfast about ministry.

Others witnessed the seriousness and dedication to ministry that Pastor A and Pastor B exhibited in their daily lives. Those that witnessed this were the next type of subjects called personal witnesses. I selected *two (2) personal witnesses, one from each congregation*, and I solicited the help of the pastors for these. After receiving the suggestions from the pastors, I then selected *an associate minister and a spouse* who provided insight about the preacher's development; their generic names are *Member A1* and *Member B1*, with the letter representing the pastor to whom they were a witness. The associate minister, Member A1, was a recent college graduate who is now enrolled in a dual degree program, Master of Arts/Master of Divinity (and has finished the requirements for the M.Div as of December 2012) at the same seminary as his pastor. Pastor A mentored him, and is "technically [his] father in the ministry, he licensed and ordained [him], and I dialogue with him frequently about various things" (Member A1 interview, Aug. 2012). The spouse, or Member B1, became a devoted Christian after meeting Pastor B, stating that "I didn't have a really good relationship with church because my family really didn't go to church in Chicago." They met when they were in college, and he even witnessed her devotion of just simply being a Christian young woman while they were dating. He states, "I didn't go to church until I met my wife. . . We went to church together, we've been in church a long time since we've been dating" (Member B1 interview, Nov. 2012). Both personal witnesses dialogue and/or critique Pastor A and Pastor B on their sermonic delivery, as will be explained in the next chapter.

The last type of subjects was the remaining *eight (8) members, four from each congregation*; two were recommended by each pastor, and I randomly selected the other two. They, too, were given generic names ranging in the numbers of 2-5 with the letters A and B preceding those numbers, signifying the Pastor with whom they were affiliated (Member A2,

Member B2, etc.). The members represented different age groups and genders and were active churchgoers, holding positions and participating on committees. All of the members were not long-time members; some were only members for as little as 7 years but their level of commitment was equivalent to their fellow members who had been active 50-plus years. Some of the committees in which they participated in and the positions they held were the following: pastor parish relations committee, stewardship committee, chorister, deaconess and treasurer, just to name a few.

Data Procedures

Due to the many variations of grounded theory, I used Strauss and Corbin's *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*; it provided an explanation of grounded theory that was not only methodical but pedagogical, for they gave step by step procedures and thorough explanations. However, I also referred to some of Glaser's *Basics of Grounded Theory Analysis* because he offered some very poignant advice about analysis that helped a novice researcher as well. Similar to Strauss and Corbin's understanding of description, the book *Composition Research* emphasized that the qualitative descriptive method allows researchers to "discover variables that seem important for understanding the nature of writing, its contexts. . . and its successful pedagogy" (Lauer and Asher 23). To begin understanding the nature of *the extracurriculum*, I began collecting data.

First, I concentrated on a single church per few months (which ended up as four months for each church), conducting digitally recorded and structured interviews² with the subjects, as well as doing observations of worship services. I began with a preliminary meeting with the pastor to explain my research and answer questions. During that meeting, I also sought his or her recommendation for personal witnesses and members to interview, and I discussed the

Sundays I would use to conduct participant-observations. The main purpose of this meeting was that the prime subjects, meaning the pastors, needed to have a semi-understanding of my research, and as leader needed to be aware what was going on in their congregation; the other purpose was the she or he could also be that mouthpiece, a promoter of the research to their congregation as well.

Some of the questions for the interviews were: *for pastors*, 1) How long have you been in the ministry; 2) What influenced you to go into the ministry; 3) Did you have a mentor; *for personal witnesses*, 1) What is your relationship with this preacher; 2) Who influenced or mentored her; 3) Has she ever preached a bad sermon; and *for church members*, 1) How long have you attended this church; 2) What office or position do you hold; 3) How important is the worship experience to you? In addition to the structured questions, impromptu questions emerged as a follow up to an answer given by the subjects. Appendix B shows the entire structured questions that I used to interview each subject, and Appendix C shows a representative sample of the actual interviews (excerpts of interviews).

Second, I interviewed the pastor. Of course during the preliminary meeting we established that he or she would be the first to interview, so we scheduled another time for the interview. Then, I conducted *observations of four (4) or more worship services*. But knowing that I would be observing a group of which I am a member of and observing a cultural practice in which I, too, partake, I decided to become a *participant-observer*. How does one participate and observe? Sharan B. Merriam asserts the engagement of study from a participant-observer is “like a schizophrenic activity,” for she or he must participate and observe simultaneously and that can be difficult; however, observing without participation may not give an understanding of the activity as adequately as observing with participation (qtd. in Kawulich, para. 22). Thus,

and more specifically, I *conducted participant-observations of worship services* in which the pastor delivers the sermon at her or his respective church. Most of the worship services I observed were consecutive Sundays in a month; others were not because of the pastor's previously scheduled plans or the pastor preaching elsewhere. However, I still maintained a consistency within the non-consecutive period, which was to observe the first and second Sundays out of one month, and then observe the third and fourth Sundays the subsequent month. Appendix C shows a selection of field notes from the worship services I observed.

Also, the interviews that I conducted enhanced this observational data, so while I separated them into distinct sets, these data complemented each other. According to Glaser, grounded theory, "by almost any definition, deals with what is going on in the action system" of the subjects observed in order to provide a language for understanding quotidian practices; simply using participant-observations as a primary source of data is too restrictive and will not provide the channel for the analyst to "get at the meaning of what is observed" (49). Similar to a participant-observer that contributes her knowledge to the activity or event observed, Glaser, too, acknowledges that the assumptions and experiences of the analyst are "helpful in bringing alertness or sensitivity to what is going on in the data." However, he cautions the analyst to not superimpose those experiences onto the activity system studied, for "they are not the subject's perspective" (49).

After conducting a few participant-observations, I would remain after church service to approach personal witnesses and church members that the pastor recommended for interview. Ideally, I sought to interview all five members (including the ones I randomly selected) first, then transcribe and do the remaining participant-observations, but it did not happen that way because of scheduling and finding suitable locations in which to interview. So, with those in-

between moments, I began transcribing the completed interviews or collecting other data, like the *audio-visual recordings* of the worship services I observed and of old-time and contemporary black preachers. More specifically, I procured compact discs (CDs) and digital versatile discs (DVDs) of the preaching moment at worship services and at various other occasions. I listened to old-time preachers such as Rev. C.L. Franklin preaching at his church in Detroit to contemporary preachers such as Dr. Katie Cannon delivering a sermon on social justice through a CD of multiple samples of black preaching. I also listened to and viewed ministers who were featured preachers at church-sponsored or religious conferences. The internet proved helpful as I viewed YouTube videos of other contemporary black preachers, who, if not well known to the world, are well known within larger U.S. black communities.

The recordings of the observed worship services gave a fuller understanding to the interviews and observations studied, at times functioning as a checks and balances mechanism to account for what the subjects said they were doing; other times, the recordings provided a more live medium of accessing the complex interplay of the communally learned elements crucial to a moderate or fully successful worship experience. Furthermore, the recordings of other black preachers were used to corroborate the evidence from the interviews and observations; also, it aided in grounding the rhetoric as a socio-cultural phenomenon that extends across U.S. black communities but simultaneously shows the black preacher creating a sense of community while preaching to her or his own members (Moss 63-65). I also collected church bulletins and other communiqués. This did not figure prominently in my research; rather, the church bulletins were only used to refer to the order of worship.

Data Analysis

After conducting the interviews and observations, collecting other data, and transcribing the interviews (totaling eight months of procedural work from June 2012-January 2013), I began coding the data. As mentioned earlier, Strauss and Corbin's coding procedures for grounded theory was helpful *because I endeavored to give a qualitative, interpretive, word-based analyses from which themes were abstracted. The goal of grounded theory is to formulate theory from those themes.* So, I began to do *open coding* of my transcribed interviews, asking myself, "What is going on here? What are they discussing? How and in what manner are they discussing it? How do they see things? From those questions, I used the language of my subjects from the interviews. This helped in developing categories from the perspectives of my subjects. All of this coding was done on the printed transcription, bracketing, underlining, and writing marginal comments; then I wrote coding memos to discuss what I had done, to analyze my ideas of the codes and categories, and to have a record of analyses. The purpose of open coding is to "open the texts to expose ideas" (Strauss and Corbin 102).

Then I engaged in *axial coding*, which was reassembling the data and organizing them according to properties and dimensions of the categories established during open coding, telling myself, "Now that I've taken the puzzle apart, how can I organize it to put it back together?" During this step, less *in vivo coding* was used, for more of my own paraphrasing of categories was used. I also continued writing coding memos, providing a rationale of my thinking at the time of coding. The purpose of this coding is to make categories front and center for analysis. After doing this, I went through the data to not only look for more examples of core categories but to look for examples that challenged the core categories. Also at this point, more cohesive themes emerged; this was called *selective coding*, and Strauss and Corbin said that the analyst

“refines categories to form a larger theoretical scheme,” actually building theories from the themes (143). To illustrate what I have just discussed, below is a visual conception of the coding process:

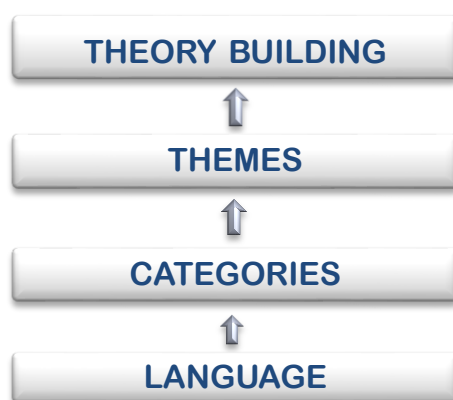


Figure 1: Grounded Theory in Action

This meticulous kind of coding could not be contained to just underlining, bracketing, and marginal commenting on the transcription, something done during open coding. So, to show the process of coding and to organize the data, I created a table in Microsoft Word 2010. One column in the tables shows the questions asked in the interview, and the remaining columns use the titles in the Figure 1 blocks as headers, showing each step of coding for the subjects. The tables of all twelve (12) subjects are attached as Appendix E.

After doing levels of coding, I shared my emergent findings with the preachers and church members in order to see how the findings fit. I also viewed and listened to audio-visual recordings to see if the ideas formulated from coding would work. Additional literature on homiletics, writing theory and pedagogy were consulted, as well as my field notes taken as a participate-observer during worship services. The purpose of these steps was to test my findings and theoretically saturate categories through constant comparison of incidents in the data

(interviews, recordings, literature, and observational notes). I continued to write coding memos while saturating the categories and wrote out those theories.

Conclusion

In closing, I anticipate this project will serve as one of many ways of needed access and acceptance of the particularities of black preaching but with the distinct goal of articulating a language and literacy practice that is applicable to college writing. By particularities, I mean the worldviews that transfer into the everydayness of African American culture. I also anticipate finding from my data that the fusion of rhetorical acts, personal and communal, create an extracurriculum that the black preacher uses as a source and as a characteristic that becomes embedded in her or his disposition—an always already composition of outwardly uttered internal dialogue. Additionally, I anticipate finding that such extracurricular practices are not only influential to, but possibly a constituent element of the black preacher's rhetorical acts, somewhat challenging the rhetorical triangle, or even de-forming the triangle into another shape of multiple angles that broadens the speaker, listener, and audience. Therefore, the extracurriculum of the black preacher may have its own intrinsic value, a value that may or may not be consciously recognized by the preacher herself. Lastly, I hope to find that a black preacher's rhetorical acts have a transcendent quality, using prophetic language to produce myriad forms to reach the hearts of mankind.

Throughout this entire coding process, I recorded not only the thoughts and ideas that emerged but the syntheses of information from my data base through *memoing*, as mentioned earlier. Additionally, I developed diagrams to capture what was going on during analysis of data. In grounded theory, writing is, too, a part of analysis “not a separate ‘translation’ of the logic, proofs, or warrants of prior activities” (Neff 130). So, in writing these findings into a

written narrative, the coding memos not only served as a springboard to generate thoughts for the narrative, but they became incorporated into the narrative. These findings will be discussed in chapters three (3) and four (4). Ultimately, the goal is to pinpoint what exactly in the black preacher's *extracurriculum* can be incorporated into a first-year writing classroom, something that has yet to be adequately examined and elaborated in the context of writing instruction.

CHAPTER 3

‘MY SOUL HAS BEEN ANCHORED’: ENGAGING CULTURALLY LEARNED
PRACTICES AT CHURCH A

Introduction: Details about Church A

A Worship Scene: ‘Homiletical Musicality’ as Invention

During a torrid and unbearably hot Sunday in July, I entered Church A somewhat agitated by the heat, yet eager to do the same work I had done on previous Sundays: that of a participant-observer, taking field notes of the worship services. This Sunday, however, a segment of the service veered from its normal course; instead of the choir jubilantly singing a gospel song or sermonic hymn before Pastor A preached, the musicians decided to perform an instrumental selection. I surmised that the Minister of Music, who is also the church organist, desired to add some variety to the standard format, and based upon his expertise, decided that an instrumental song could easily resonate with worshippers in a meditative or reflective way. As he and the other musicians began to play the introduction, the tune became familiar to me, as I knew the name of the song; it was a gospel song that was more than 20 years old but still popular among African American churches and gospel listeners. Then, the saxophonist branched out from the musicians—the organist, the lead guitarist, the bass guitarist, and the drummer—to play the melody, and that brassy yet smooth, rich sound tuned the following lines: “Though the storms keep on raging in my life, and sometimes it’s hard to tell the night from day, still that hope that lies within is reassured . . .” Choosing this instrumental selection proved that the Minister of Music was attuned to the spiritual needs of the church, for not only did it touch the audience but me as well. (I, too, am a member of this church, having joined since my tenure here as a graduate student).¹ The rest of the musicians accompanied the saxophone solo, but when the

saxophonist played the entire song, he did not stop; as the audience (me included) responded with claps and shouts of “Amen,” and “Yes,” he proceeded to play softly, with the musicians following his lead. They continued in this manner; then, spontaneously, Pastor A stood up and walked to the microphone in the dais. Sincerely yet exuberantly in the exalted moment, Pastor A said, “Ya’ll know better than to do that!” (This was a complimentary response to the musicians, Pastor A marveling at how well they were playing in the Spirit). Then, he began singing the song, picking up the verse that the musicians were playing at that moment. During this climactic period, the audience was even more spiritually receptive through their participatory actions (singing, uttering, and standing), and Pastor A began singing a section of the song repeatedly, as I imagined it deeply stirred his soul, too: “So dark the day, and clouds in the sky, I know it’s alright, ‘cause Jesus is nigh—I know it’s alright! I know it’s alright! I know it’s alright! I know it’s alright! Billows may roll, breakers may dash, not going to move ‘cause He holds me fast—I know it’s alright! I know it’s alright! I know it’s alright! I know it’s alright ‘cause my soul has been anchored in the Lord”²

The fact that Pastor A did this was no shock to the members nor did it disrupt the movement of the service because it returned to its order. Pastor A then took his scriptural text to begin preaching; his style of delivery has always involved singing before, during, or after a sermon. I asked Pastor A about this in our interview a few weeks prior to this service with the following question: “Does singing a song before the sermon serve as preparation for the right mindset for worship, or is it part of the sermon, even though you may not have started out with the notion of singing in your weekly preparation?” Pastor A stated with conviction:

Oh yeah! . . . Right. . . That’s part of that—‘Breathe on this Lord,’ and this may be part of His breathing on the sermon, particularly to the sermonic moment . . . the

pre-introduction. . . . And like you said, it doesn't happen every Sunday, but there are moments where that's—Lord knows that song goes with this sermon. . .

Because I can't tell you the times I've had people come to me and say, 'Pastor, you were all in my house today with what was going on; that song you sang is just what I need to hear, or that song and sermon, I just needed to hear that today.'

(Pastor A interview, July 2012)

This style of singing and preaching is not unique to Pastor A only, for black preaching entails a “homiletical musicality, a musical understanding of the way sermons are heard and the oral response they awaken in listeners, who in turn are heard by the preacher and one another . . . a sonic experience” (Crawford 17). Additionally, scholars in homiletics have now consciously acknowledged and thereby theorized about the musical quality in black preaching; one scholar in particular theorizes it through the vein of “surplus.” Throughout history, preaching has always been “uttered as a word coming from another world,” and because of its otherworldliness, language alone could not be the only vehicle used for preaching's declaration; for example, the use of signs and wonders, in addition to preaching, by apostles in the New Testament (Turner 24). Such is the case with black preachers employing music, establishing a direct connection between “the spirit within the preacher, the word being uttered, and the worshipping congregation . . . operating beneath the structures of rational discourse and producing a mystical, enchanting effect” (Turner 24-25), with their duty to “awaken in others a sense of thanksgiving toward God” (Crawford 16).

The above worship scene in Church A is a real-life manifestation of what these scholars have asserted; yet, it is not the only dynamic happening during worship. Pastor A's above-mentioned interview response, “breathe on this Lord,” refers to some questions I had asked him

earlier about his sermon preparation process. Much more about these dynamics will be disclosed and analyzed in their entirety later in this chapter.

History of Church A: Mission to Serve

Church A is a small, caramel-colored, stone-like brick building, with a tower front to the left. It has no steeple but has another physicality that is usually an indicator that a building is a church: multi-colored stained-glass windows artistically designed. The interior of the church has the standard red or crimson carpet and upholstery on the pews. When entering the sanctuary, one will not proceed down a standard middle aisle; rather, one will see a huge center section of pews and a row of pews on the left and right sides of the sanctuary. Once seated, one will be facing the following: an altar beautifully draped in a cloth-like runner of liturgical colors of the season, with two candles in brass holders on top of the runner and a bible in a brass stand centered between them; the dais, with vibrant flowers symmetrically arranged at the front; a lectern in the dais, with a cloth of liturgical colors cascading down from it; and a box-like choir loft. The baptismal pool is behind the choir loft but situated at an angle slightly above it so that the audience may witness the baptism of a new member at the designated time. An enormous wooden crucifix hangs on the wall behind the baptismal pool, almost as if it has morphed into a permanent fixture, like indelible designs of wallpaper. A huge, grandiose chandelier with radiant lights hangs from the ceiling at the center, with various lighted ceiling fans also hanging from the ceiling and positioned above, below, and around the side of the chandelier for additional lighting, coolness and comfort.

The church situates on the corner of two main streets—one street leading out of a neighborhood and the second as one of the main streets leading to the downtown area of the college town in which it is located. Depending upon the section of the university one wishes to

go to, the church is only about five to seven blocks away. Because of this, Church A benefits from an abundance of college student attendance and participation in numerous church programs and activities. Not only is Church A receptive to college students but also to visitors, for members take the time to recognize them as a part of worship service each Sunday. During that period, a member from the Usher Board or Welcoming Committee officially welcomes the visitors to the church; then, he/she instructs the congregation by saying, “---- Church, let’s meet and greet our visitors,” and the congregation arises, walks over to where the visitors are seated and greets them. Also during this period of greeting, Pastor A usually stands to say, “The bible says if you want to make friends, then you must show yourself friendly,” reinforcing the importance of welcoming visitors to the worship service. Thus, Church A is small in physical size but large in its efforts of connecting with people and the community. However, to add more meeting space, the church has an Education Building adjacent to it and an Outreach Center across the street; these buildings allow for the day to day administrative duties and the execution of church ministries and missions to the community.

Missionary work has long been a part of Church A and its denomination, Missionary Baptist. As far back as the 19th century, newly freed blacks of the Baptist faith held the desire to uphold the “Great Commission”—preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ in this country and even more so on their mother land: Africa. In November 1880, the Baptist Foreign Mission Convention was formed in Montgomery, Alabama to help achieve that endeavor. Six and seven years later, other blacks from different parts of the country formed the National Baptist Convention of America and the National Baptist Education Convention. Through the years, however, these three conventions realized that they would become more successful if they consolidated as one convention. So in 1895, the three conventions met at a local church in

Atlanta, GA to discuss a merger, which was achieved. However, this consolidation would not last long, for a dispute erupted within the convention over the Publishing Board's independence; some members felt that the board should remain under the auspices of the convention while others viewed the board as independent of the convention. Those who believed the board should be independent left and formed their own convention in 1915: The National Baptist Convention of America, unincorporated. The convention that remained was incorporated as the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc., and they established their own Publishing Board. This board published church school literature, bible study and mission guides, commentaries, etc. for the denomination to use for religious education at their various churches. Education beyond the church was important, for in 1925, the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. collaborated with the Southern Baptist Convention to establish the American Baptist Theological Seminary in Memphis, TN, now called the American Baptist College in Nashville.

The National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. continued to thrive during the 20th century with the purchase of several buildings for the purpose of effective administration. But tensions within the convention arose again over differing views of how to address civil rights for blacks. The convention president, Dr. J.H. Jackson, who was elected in 1953, deemed it better to lead the convention toward a more reserved, conservative manner in addressing civil rights than the non-violent direct action of protest that the participants of the Civil Rights Movement espoused. Those within the convention that felt the movement was a critical moment in history and believed that the black church had a theological as well as sociological responsibility toward justice left and formed the Progressive National Baptist Convention in 1961; Martin Luther King, Jr. was part of that group who left. Jackson, the longest serving president in the convention's history, continued to lead the convention until 1982. At that time, Dr. J.T.

Jemison, a pastor from Baton Rouge, LA, defeated him at the Convention's Annual Session in Miami, FL. Under Jemison's leadership, the convention instituted a policy that limited the officers of the parent body of the convention to two consecutive five-year terms.³

Church A has a direct connection to this history, for its former pastor left in 2007 to accept a position as pastor of a Baptist church in Baton Rouge—the same church Jemison pastored before becoming president of the convention in 1982. But similar to their national Baptist history, missionary work has been central to them as well. In 1863, it was established as a Baptist Mission in the Kansas Territory by the New England Immigrant Aid Society under the direction of a Father Bateman. The land on which Church A presently stands was deeded to the Society by the trustees of the Township in 1855. After having gone through several transferals of deed, the trustees of the Baptist mission acquired the deed, and a building was erected at the corner of two main streets in the Township, its current location today, under the direction of Rev. Bedford Drisdorf in 1864. After some disagreements that resulted in a split in membership, with some members leaving to start another Baptist Church in the area, Rev. Washington Mercer was called to pastor the portion of the Baptist Mission that remained. While pastor, he reunited the two memberships, and he then became pastor of this union—a Baptist Church—and named the church after the newly named street on which their lot was located; Rev. Washington remained pastor until 1885. When the city decided to change their east and west streets to numbers, the street on which this church was located became a numbered street, so the church then changed its name to that numbered street; this is still the current name of the church. Church A had numerous pastors who led them into progress during the 20th and 21st centuries with Pastor A doing the same, having taken the pastorate in 2008.⁴

Profile of Church A: Unity in Diversity

Church A is a traditional African American church with a diverse congregation—racially and ethnically—along with varying age groups and varying marital and class statuses. There are a variety of socio-economic backgrounds represented in the church body, and not only is the membership comprised of native citizens of the town, but it also has members who have moved from other cities in state and out of state. For example, one member moved to Church A's town from another city in the state some years ago; since she was a member of a Baptist church there, then logically she sought a Baptist church where she moved. She eventually transferred her membership from the previous church to Church A, and is still active today, having been recognized by the church for her years of service and commitment. Another member moved here from another state, and he and his family actually lived in a neighboring town and were attending another church before moving and coming to Church A's town. As a matter of fact, one of the churches he and his family used to attend was where Pastor A pastored previously.

As noted earlier, Church A has a plethora of college students of varying ages, classes, racial and ethnic backgrounds, and so on, who attend worship services. Students are not only from the local university but from colleges in neighboring towns and cities. The colleges are not only four-year universities but community and technical colleges as well. These students also consist of student-athletes who attend the services regularly. Because of that, Church A always recognizes games, tournaments, or championships won during the service to recognize their hard work and success. However, Church A does not neglect academics, for every year during the month of May, they recognize and give awards to all students (college, high school, middle, and elementary students) for their academic achievements, and they also recognize those who have graduated.

Many of Church A's members serve as officers of the church, and thus serve in positions on committees, and participate in activities, like deacon, deaconess, usher, and the choir, just to name a few. Because Church A is small, many members serve in multiple offices or positions, for example, holding the office of deacon or deaconess and being a Sunday School teacher or member of the Usher Board. However, serving in multiple roles, particularly in administrative ones where the norm is a paid or salaried position, is not something new or unexpected, so the members dutifully engage in the work that needs to be done. Thus, most traditional African American churches have survived for years through the efforts and services of the faithful few "because the average black church is a volunteer organization" (Pastor A interview, July 2012). Church A is no exception; yet, the efforts and hard work of the faithful few throughout the church's existence have paid off, for Church A celebrated its sesquicentennial (150th) anniversary on March 13-17, 2013.

Profile of Pastor A: The Journey to Preach

Pastor A grew up in church, so to speak, for he was exposed to the Christian faith as a small boy because his family was heavily involved in the church. But, he officially claims 30 years for ministry work (even though if one counted his early exposure to Christianity, it would go beyond 30 years), and Pastor A is only in his 40s, as he stated, "I was eighteen when I first started out . . . I accepted my call at a revival service, and talked with my pastor then, and scheduled my trial sermon for Father's Day of 1982" (Pastor A interview, July 2012). He is a native of this town, with his mother from a small farming community in Kansas and his father from Texas. His father was in the military and was discharged at Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas and moved to this town to work for the university, meeting Pastor A's mother shortly thereafter. Also, his father was an ordained elder in the Disciples of Christ church, and his grandmother was

a mother (a revered senior female adult with years of experience in the Christian faith) in the Pentecostal church in town at the time of his boyhood. They lived a block from the Pentecostal church, so he, along with his two sisters, and his grandmother attended worship services multiple times during the week and all day on Sunday.

Additionally, his grandmother would read to him, and during one of those moments, Pastor A asserts: “I just mentioned to her that I knew I wanted to be a preacher. As young as I was, and not really knowing what does that mean, but I just knew that there was something on my life . . . I was nine years old.” As he grew into his teenage years, his focus changed to becoming a lawyer, “a defense attorney for the underdog, to help the poor and downtrodden.” Also as a teenager, he was doing some modeling for department stores like Macy’s and Dillards. However, during this period (ages 15, 16, 17) he, having parental consent, traveled to major cities, particularly on weekends, and was not attending church. Pastor A states, “I never had anything negative about the church, I just wasn’t going. . . I was exposed to a whole new world” (Pastor A interview, July 2012).

This exposure to a new world led him to a permanent modeling job, having to move to California for that position; he signed a contract with an agency, receiving a \$10,000 advance—but he decided not to take the job. Throughout his brief modeling career, Pastor A states, he knew deep down inside that this career was not permanent, for “this was a means to an end. I always knew that I got to get back to what He called me to.” Thus, he returned the advance and explained to the agency that “where I needed to be was with my call.” This was the end of the year of 1981, and thus, as mentioned earlier, he received mentoring from his pastor and preached his first sermon in 1982. He attended bible college, graduated, married, had a family, and then received his first church to pastor at the age of 25, a small, family church. Being a young

married preacher with small children is why the church was attracted to him and sought him out as pastor. Thus, other younger families started attending, and ministries and programs were formed, so the church was rejuvenated. Pastor A said that he was “so wide-eyed, bushy tailed, going to change the world,” describing the level of energy he had as a young pastor beginning ministry. As he graduated from bible college and began to develop into a pastor in his own right, his instructor-mentor from the bible college paid for his first semester at Central Baptist Theological Seminary toward the Master of Divinity degree. “And the rest is history,” as the saying goes, and Pastor A still continues in full-time ministry.⁵

Discussion of Results: Data Grounded in Realities

Reiteration of Methodology

In chapter two, I emphasized the black preacher as a model for further study and scrutiny and as an embodied illustration of Anne Ruggles Gere’s concept of the “extracurriculum.” Additionally, I provided a general overview of grounded theory, discussing issues and tensions with the originators and researchers of the methodology; then, I discussed grounded theory as used by scholars in rhetoric and composition, showing how the methodology can be engaged as a kind of critical methodology and a form of social and equitable practice; this emphasis on critical and social practice reflects grounded theory’s commitment to build theory from data. The co-originators of this methodology, Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss, sought to relieve empirical research from certain constraints of standard research protocols by using data to develop a more substantive theory grounded in the realities of the world. Through the revelations of the subjects, grounded theory enables the researcher to demonstrate how local knowledge contributes to the advancement of science and research in one’s discipline, instead of the researcher only

developing universal knowledge to account for the grand scheme of things in seeking answers to research inquiries.

In the context of this methodology, my research centers upon the following question:

What literacy practices of the black preacher originated in the extracurriculum of her/his training, and do those practices have any pedagogical implications for writing, particularly for college students who witness those practices in their daily lives? To answer that question, I engaged in procedural work for eight (8) months, conducting and collecting the following data for qualitative analyses:

- Participant-observations of worship services at two (2) local African American churches, given generic names: Church A and Church B;
- Structured interviews of the preacher and five congregants of each church, given generic names complementing the church they represented: Church A = Pastor A and Members A1, A2, A3, A4, A5; Church B = Pastor B and Members B1, B2, B3, B4, B5;
- Audio-visual recordings (CDs & DVDs) of some of the observed worship services and of other black preachers within larger U.S. black communities.⁶

As mentioned above, grounded theory enabled me to dissect the language of my subjects through a very systematic and deliberate coding process; this process begins with a general reading of the transcribed interviews, looking at the language that the subjects used. From that general reading, I developed categories. Then, I made the categories front and center for further analysis, re-reading and re-organizing the data around them. As categories became more refined, themes emerged, and I formulated theories from those themes. This process afforded me the opportunity to give analyses from the data that are word-based and descriptive, as I shall demonstrate in this

chapter. Also, I will engage in this same process for chapter four, and I will use the same structure in which to write the chapter even though a different set of data will be used.

The descriptive themes that emerged from the data were not merely an attempt to answer the research question but to explain where the literacies of the extracurriculum originate, how they are engaged during worship service, and then practiced beyond worship service by the subjects. The most pronounced themes to emerge from my interviews and observations were the following: A) Learning from everyday relations; B) Perfecting skills through imitation; C) Intentional, structured, and implicit interaction; D) Culturally-specific and universal preaching; and E) The sermons as experiential, instructive and supportive. Each of these themes will be discussed in its own section, and I will display the excerpts from the interviews to reveal the subjects' voices, showing their responses as the main component to the respective theme in bold type. Overall, the themes delineated how literacy is conceived, as well as received, and the rhetorical skills deployed during the preaching moment for a fully interactive worship service. To further engage these themes, I will also discuss them within the context of scholarship in the field of English, along with other sources outside the field but nonetheless germane due to the interdisciplinary nature of my study e.g., African American Studies, Homiletics, Religion, etc. This scholarship will not be exhaustive, as I will only use pertinent sources to show connecting strands of thought to the themes as a way of foreshadowing future theories and pedagogies that may emerge in chapters four and five. Then, I will provide a separate concluding section explaining what all of this means and the emerging theories, if any, the field may need to consider and/or reconsider for college writing classrooms.

Learning from Everyday Relations

Scholars and theorists of English have inquired as to how one acquires knowledge, and how such knowledge in the abstract is not the only realm of learning. Knowledge can also be gained through the functional and practical realms. However, the word “relations” is packed with numerous meanings, and one of those meanings could signify relations in which one person or group has power over another. In this case, knowledge could be gained or acquired through duress, which may result in lingering effects. Mary Louise Pratt discussed this effect in her article “The Arts of the Contact Zone,” where she states that contact zones “refers to social spaces where cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today” (519). But through that contact zone, African Americans have preserved cultural knowledge among themselves to sustain a kind of literacy learning, particularly through oral literacies and discourses, e.g., playing the dozens, rhyming, and storytelling. Such cultural art forms are embedded with linguistic codes and meanings about life.

Another scholar, Barbara Christian, says the same, for she attacks “theory” as it is used in academia, and more particularly in post structuralism, questioning its relevance to people of color. Christian asserts: “. . . people of color have always theorized—but in forms quite different from the Western form of abstract logic. . . in narrative forms, in the stories we create, in riddles and proverbs, in the play with language, since dynamic rather than fixed ideas seem more to our liking. . . speculating about the nature of life through pithy language that unmasked the power relations of their world. . . my folk have always been a race of theory” (621-22). So, it seems here that Christian is talking about learning and theorizing from that which the academy tends to

ignore at times: family and everyday folk who rear and mentors a person (meaning non-academic people but who are no less smart than academic folk).

The aftermath of such relations of power is fitting for this theme because the subjects come from a history of such domination, that of slavery. So, relationships—those which come through familial and mentoring relationships, like the ones experienced by my research subjects – the everyday relations—are very important to one’s learning and even one’s career path or vocation. In the following subsections, I will provide excerpts from the interviews of two (2) research subjects, Pastor A and Member A1, with bold-face print to indicate the words or phrases that contributed to this theme.

Pastor A

When asked the following questions, “What can you tell about birth family, parents’ professions, and tell about your formative years,” Pastor A stated:

Pastor A: My mother was from ---- KS, a small farming community, town still exists. The town is south Kansas, southeastern KS. Really a small town and my father was in the military and when he was discharged, he was discharged to Ft. Learned, KS and ended up working for the University. He worked at the University for 36 years, the rest is history. He and my mother met and married. **My dad was an elder in the church** here in town. The church doesn't exist anymore, but it was _____ , Disciples of Christ. **So early on through life, through family, had experience with church, an early upbringing in church, and exposure to the Gospel, yeah.**

Fullwood: Okay, alright.

Pastor A: **And, my grandmother was probably my greatest influence, as far as Christianity and faith. She was a mother in the Pentecostal Church,** and so we lived probably a block from the church, so, we were there morning, noon and night. Usually 3 days out of the week, and then of course all day Sunday.

Fullwood: Okay, ah ha, I know just what you mean [laughing!!]

Pastor A: **So at the age of, I think I was nine, I just mentioned, my grandmother's reading to me, and I just mentioned to her that I knew I wanted to be a preacher.** As young as I was, and not really knowing what does that mean, but I just knew that there was something on my life.

Pastor A stated above that he received “early exposure to the Gospel” through family. Because of my own experience as a preacher’s kid, I can surmise that this exposure, no doubt, came by watching his father and grandmother meeting the obligations of their positions in the church—their actions and interactions with people, what they said and how they said it. And then, of course, his grandmother reading to him also influenced his thinking about life and the world. Pastor A’s family members were not academics but were still knowledgeable people who lived meaningful lives and gained wisdom not through abstract theories but through the practical theory of living life every day.

This theme of *learning from everyday relations* continued to be relevant; not only did Pastor A’s learning come from watching his family live everyday life but through his own life experience, what he called “kind of the journey” to preaching. The next question asked, “What influenced you to go into ministry, and this was his response:

Pastor A: So, I knew I wanted to be a preacher, and as I grew of course, you know I got into teenage years, start thinking about college, what am I going to do. Then I decided I wanted to go into law, so I wanted to be a defense attorney, you know, kind of the underdog for the poor and downtrodden, and **I was doing some male modeling for a couple of the agencies in Kansas City.**

Fullwood: Pastor A, you used to be a model?!!!! [laughing]

Pastor A: Yes, for Macy’s, Dillards, a couple local stores here, [smiling], but during that transition and time **I had an opportunity to go to California, I had signed a contract with a large agency there, but God had other plans, and so it was around that time I started going back to church. I was kind of out for a minute. Never left Christ but just wasn’t in church, a typical teenager.** And, it was during one of the revival meetings that I really felt again the call of God back on my life. And I was like, well, “Lord I’m going to California,” and the Lord said, “That’s not what I want you to do.”

Fullwood: Right.

Pastor A: And so I accepted my call at a revival service at our home church _____ And, talked with my pastor then, and scheduled my trial sermon for Father’s Day of 1982. **Preached my trial sermon and then from there went on off to bible college. And graduated, kids, married, family,** and then in 1990, **we were called to our first church in a South Central city in Kansas, _____ church,** when I was 25, that’s about right . . . yeah, 25 when we got called to our first church. So, wide-eyed, bushy tailed, gonna change the world. But it was a wonderful experience, a small church, a family church, and our children were very small, so for them it was life coming back into the church, small children.

And so it attracted young families to the church, we were there 2 years and 2 months, and it was a fast 2 years. And a lot happened in that time frame, to see the church come back to life, ministries were formed. And others started again. **So kind of the journey, you know, I've known, you know, the formative times, through grade school, junior high, high school, never really got into any trouble. I came from a very strict home. My grandmother raised myself and my two sisters. And, it just wasn't very many options to get in trouble. School was emphasized, education was a big deal. And, so that's kind of, you know, the journey up to where we are today.**

Fullwood: So, it sounds like, based upon what you just said, that even when you had the opportunity to model, you know, in Kansas City and to go to California, you were exposed to other perspectives and worldviews, even though you said you were not in church then, but it still sounds like to me that although you were modeling and everything, there was still something within you that you knew that this is just temporary, this modeling, even though I'm enjoying it. It's still something within, where you knew that this wasn't going to be a permanent thing, but "I've always wanted to be a preacher, and, you know, I hear the call."

Pastor A: Right, right.

Even through Pastor A's own journey of life, he carried those relations (what was instilled in him by his family) as he began to develop into a teenager then to a young adult, through all of the exposure, flash, and glamour of a budding modeling career. And he said that he knew during those formative years, as early as grade school, that the opportunities that would lie ahead were mere stepping stones to his ultimate vocation of preaching. Additionally, when Pastor A discussed his appointment to the first church in his pastoral career, he did not say "when I was called to my first church," but instead he said, "when we were called to our first church," meaning his own family (wife and kids). This showed that he continued that tradition of the influence of family relations for his own particular life of learning and preaching.

Pastor A continued to show this family influence through everyday living as he finished discussing his life's journey:

Pastor A: You know, you'll hear some say that "I ran from the call." I don't necessarily think that I ran in the traditional sense of the word ran like Jonah, I wasn't Jonah. But, you know I was just out of church. And there was a 2 or 3 year period in time, like I said never had anything negative about the church, I just wasn't going. Doing modeling and a lot of the shows we did at the time were on the weekends, Friday, Saturday, and even on Sundays. **So I got caught up in that life, and travel, and you know I was 16, 17, well, 15--I started at 15-- so I had to get parental consent, was traveling all over. Chicago, New York, LA, doing shows, so I was exposed to a whole brand new world.**

Fullwood: Right.

Pastor A: Coming from little -----, KS to go to major cities. And the money that was being made, you know at the time was well, but you're right, deep inside I knew, this is not permanent. **This is a means to an end. But I always knew, you know, I gotta get back to what He called me to because of the foundation that my grandmother set for us, when we were little. The need for Christ, a relationship with Christ, and she'd always say, "You need to find a church, you going to church?"** Even when we were traveling, you know, if I had a Sunday morning to find a church that had maybe an early morning service, and so I'd go periodically, just to keep, you know, hearing His voice. So in 81, was the end of 1981 when I had the opportunity to go to California, and I had asked then [his girlfriend] now First Lady____, "will you go with me?" 'Cause I was gonna go, I couldn't go until after I'd graduated from high school, and I would of been of age. And so, she was like, "well if my mom can go." And I was like, "well I didn't ask your mom!"

Fullwood: [Laughing!]

Pastor A: Back then, it was the Lord's Divine way of saying that's not where I want you to be. So I sent back, I had gotten an advance with my contract of \$10,000 and I was gonna make \$100,000 at 18 with this agency. So I sent that back, told them thank you, but I knew where I needed to be was with my call. So, that happened for me and the rest is history.

Overall, what is interesting about how Pastor A used "family" was that not only did they influence him privately but publicly. In particular, his grandmother influenced him the most as a young child, reading to him and making him attend church multiple times during the week. So the private/personal devotion of his grandmother—her reading the bible and the position of being a "mother" in the Pentecostal church—helped Pastor A in choosing service-related jobs and public vocations, e.g. choosing to become a lawyer but then adhering to his call to preach (through the persistent reminder of his grandmother about his roots). Additionally, when involved in that short-lived modeling career, the future family he desired ultimately steered him back into preaching as well because his girlfriend, who is now his wife, would not go with him to California.

Family members and spouses were not the only ones to influence Pastor A in his "journey to preaching." Church and community elders also played a major role in his upbringing and in his decision to have a vocation of ministry. In the excerpted interview below, Pastor A was answering the question about his informal and formal preparation for the ministry, and he was not condescending in discussing this informal learning. Similar to Christian, mentioned

earlier in this section, Pastor A treasured this kind of learning from the elders, for they theorized through the way in which they served their church and community, just the way they lived their lives:

Fullwood: Describe the preparation that you had for the ministry, both formal and informal, and in framing that question, Pastor A, I'm really making an assumption based upon what I know and how I've seen my father trained.

Pastor A: Right.

Fullwood: My father first was heavily influenced by not only preachers but elders or mothers in the community.

Pastor A: Um uh, absolutely.

Fullwood: And so that's kind of how I framed that question in mind thinking that a majority of black, traditional black ministers, probably have that influence, like they started out being influenced by members of the community and their church. And then later on they decided to go to seminary or divinity school or something like that, so that's the background of that question.

Pastor A: You hit the nail on the head. Like I said, my grandmother was very influential, as well as several others. **I can think of elders, and even ministers.** We used to have a traveling evangelist in the church I grew up in, _____ Church, Elder _____. **I was always fascinated by him. His use of the Word, his relevancy of the Word, but his seriousness of the Word; his life matched the Word. He wasn't just a preacher who would blow in and blow out. And I knew, you know just kind of watching and listening and seeing others who were committed not just on Sunday, but those that I were influenced by, I saw them live out their faith.**

Fullwood: Uum uh, That's exactly right!

Pastor A: **In their everyday life, so kind of informally that was the draw.** Then, once I announced my call, my pastor was very emphatic about you need to go to school. His point was there's nothing worse than having an ill-prepared preacher in the pulpit. And he said you don't want your members, because someday you're going to pastor, (and I was like okay), you don't want your members to be more educated than you. And he said not that you think that you're better than them, but if we're on the same level educationally, now grant it, I think my pastor had a bachelor's degree and a master's, but he didn't pursue doctoral work, but he said that the point was, especially then in the 80s, you know, he was head and shoulders above those in the pews and most of them were college grads, not graduate school. So that was his emphasis, you need to go to school, don't be a dumb preacher. . . And so, you know the process of not only formal education, **but also just sitting among church men and women and being influenced by their devotion to their church and to their community. When the church really moved beyond the 4 walls, that was a big, big piece for me, seeing the local church not just content with meeting on Sunday. And so, a lot of that had influence on me.**

Fullwood: Okay. So even, Pastor A in, according to, you know, academic standards, you know we would call that informal, in terms of what you just said, what I learned from elders, mothers, preachers in the church and in the community.

Pastor A: Right, right.

Fullwood: We would call that informal, but still it's learning and training nonetheless. Because you hit it, you said those people were not just interested in church on Sunday. They practiced faith in their Christianity every day. You saw that. . .

Pastor A: That's right, that's right.

Fullwood: and that implanted something in you.

Pastor A: Yeah, you know, from their work life, you know the 70s, the town was a different community as far as race was concerned. So, they were still working through a lot of issues with race. So, seeing grandmother, mother, father, **others in the church have to live out their Christianity, turn the other cheek, and all those things, you know trying to make heads or tail of that, as a teenager, you know it just made sense that these were more than just words they were saying on Sunday morning. They now are living this out. And then, the worship experience on Sunday because of all they had gone through in the week**

Fullwood: Right, right.

Pastor A: **and had encountered and experienced, and their worship was authentic. It wasn't canned or staged, it was still generic.** And so, yeah, while academically, I'm grateful for that time of preparation, but some things, though, that the textbook . . . **I had to have something tangible that I could see, touch, feel, and it was sitting among those whom you were saying, in the sanctuary, but also seeing them out and about in the community.**

On a personal note, I remember during the actual interview how Pastor A's phrase of "live out their faith" impacted me, like I was at a road-block, just stuck sitting there, doing nothing but thinking, thinking about what he said. That was not me the graduate student reacting but me, the woman, the Christian side of me coming through. I must admit, in all of my years of growing up in a Christian home with a father as a preacher, there were subtleties about Christianity that I just took for granted, and one was that Christians would live out their faith eventually. But for Pastor A, watching his community committing to the Word beyond Sunday undergirds his role as a pastor whose calling is to help his members live out their faith immediately! In other words, the elders from the community had many more adversities to face but they continued to live their lives in spite of the difficulties because of the faith, and these elders became the model from which Pastor A drew. Even though he valued and knew he needed formal seminary schooling, "sitting under church men and women and being influenced by their devotion" proved to be

invaluable and helped Pastor A develop spiritually. As mentioned previously, this kind of everyday learning served as the principle means to grappling with the literacy practices of the Pastor A's "extracurriculum."

Member A1

Member A1 was the personal witness, one of the three types of research subjects mentioned in the earlier section. As previously stated in chapter two, the personal witness was a person who provided insight about the preacher's development. Member A1 is a recent college graduate and as a college student, he was very much involved in academics, student life, and athletics, for he was a member of the college football team. He is also an associate minister who recently received his calling into the ministry, stating that Pastor A "licensed and ordained me, technically, my father in the ministry" (Member A1 interview, Aug. 2012). Member A1 is also a seminary student, pursuing graduate studies in a dual degree program at a seminary in the midwest: Master of Arts/Master of Divinity (M.A./M.Div). While the M.Div will help him in the practice of ministry, Member A1 also wants to focus on preaching within the context of academia, so he says "I'm also working toward the Master of Arts, and my thesis for that is in homiletics" (Member A1 interview, Aug. 2012).

Learning from relations also influenced Member A1. When asked the following questions, "what is your relationship to Pastor A," and how much about preaching did you know before knowing him," he responded as such:

Member A1: Well, Pastor A has been a bit of a **mentor**, one of many for me while I've been at Church A, and since he's been at Church A, because I've actually been there since before he was there. But, **he is technically my father in the ministry; he licensed and ordained me**, though I received my call when Pastor --- [the former pastor] was there, so I, basically, both of them are kind of mentors in that regard. And, **then I still dialogue with him, I'm an associate minister, so I co-run with him, so I dialogue with him frequently about various things.**

Fullwood: Okay, alright, I think that you've already answered this question, I was going to ask was he preaching when you met, yes of course, so let me go to the next question, how much about preaching did you know prior to your relationship with him, and just explain.

Member A1: Looking back I didn't know anything about preaching, and I think that a majority of what I do know has come from my seminary education. **He has, he has, a lot of the things that he does in preaching, and some of his normal practices I picked up on.** But I don't recall us having any specific conversations regarding, you know, preaching. So I don't recall very many of those, where he was specifically teaching me things, be it because of lack of time or whatever. So a lot of it has, **I've picked up on by association, and then conversations here and there, mentioning one aspect of it or something.**

Fullwood: Okay, that's very important that you said that you "picked up on," I like that, so can you explain some more what you mean when you say you kind of "picked up on," you did say that.

Member A1: Well in essence, you know every, I would say anyone who has been to ____ church consistently has probably, can probably finish some of his sentences that he uses at the end . . .

Fullwood: Yes, that right! That's right.

Member A1: of service or at the beginning, "turn to your neighbor" stuff like that . . .

Fullwood: That's exactly right!

Member A1: and some of those have been bedrock for him in the sense of, I think that brings him comfort when he's in the pulpit.

Fullwood: Okay.

Member A1: **But those types of things that you hear repeatedly like that you pick up on it,** and I probably accidentally adapt it at one point in time, but definitely it's clear that he got some things, probably that **he picked up from whoever his mentor was that are kind of normal for his style.**

For Member A1, the theme *everyday relations* came through in his emphasis on mentoring, Pastor A mentoring him. Even though preaching was not specifically discussed in his mentoring relationship, Member A1 did acknowledge that he "picked up on" some of Pastor A's practices. Now, he is a living manifestation of Pratt's contact zone, for most of what he knows about preaching comes from his seminary education. Yet, there are some practices Member A1 has that are steeped in his culture. Both of these practices are potentially "meeting, clashing, and grappling" against each other as Member A1 is in his forming process of becoming a minister.

Additionally, Member A1's emphasis on mentoring not only applied to himself, but he was also knowledgeable in how Pastor A was mentored:

Fullwood: Do you know who influenced Pastor A, uh, in the few conversations that you all have been able to have, because like you said you all have different work schedules, but you do try to, has he maybe had a chance to discuss who influenced him?

Member A1: He has, and I do not remember the gentlemen's name, **but there was a pastor that, when he was, when he was going to school and first beginning to preach, he was serving under a guy**, I think at ____ ____ [another church].

Fullwood: Okay, alright, ah hah.

Member A1: And, I don't remember the guy's name, but anyway he would , **he would follow him around basically go wherever he went to preach and that's, I think, who he learned most of his practices from. Because he was kind of like his mentor or father in the ministry.** So when he has, normally he has talked about a lot of the things he learned, he learned from this gentlemen, but I don't remember his name.

What was interesting about this theme here from Member A1 was that it somewhat served as a checks and balances frame of reference, not just because they mirrored what Pastor A said, but they showed a kind of cultural knowledge that has been passed on and learned either consciously or unconsciously. This is important to recognize because Member A1 says that he has “picked up on” some things through his association and mentorship with Pastor A. However, *learning from everyday relations* takes on a different manner of thinking from Member A1. While Member A1 respects Pastor A and the tradition of black preaching, he does not rely as heavily upon the informal ways of literacy and cultural nuances like Pastor A did. Member A1 is more influenced by the formal way of learning to preach because his journey to preaching took on a different trajectory. He graduated from college and immediately attended seminary thereafter—he was a traditional college student (traditional age, graduating in 4 or 5 years) so his path was more conventional and linear; Member A1's life did not have a lot of in-between moments like Pastor A, who had to value more of the informal learning because he married, had kids, worked, pastored, and then the formal training came later. Yet, being mentored by Pastor A helped Member A1 maintain and retain cultural aspects of preaching missed in formal preparation.⁷

The theme *learning from everyday relations* complements Gere's emphasis on an "extracurriculum," mentioned in chapter one. She reminds us that there still exists a need to develop and explore the full range of interests exceeding the curriculum offered in American colleges; therefore, literary clubs, fraternities, and athletics provided that outlet. In her critique of scholars Frederick Rudolph and Arthur Applebee, Gere shows that in giving their historical account of the extracurriculum, they limit their discussion to white, middle-class males. Furthermore, Gere observes that composition is implicated in keeping the "extracurriculum" within institutional walls, that it has a history of posing as gatekeepers, helping to maintain the academy's elitism. But Gere says that through studying the extracurriculum, "we can strengthen our vigilance against reductive forms of assessment and against instructional practices and curricular plans that make writing a barrier" (88). In sum, Gere's use of "extracurriculum" is varied and "includes the present as well as the past; it extends beyond the academy to encompass the multiple contexts in which persons seek to improve their own writing. . . and it avoids a reenactment of professionalization in its narrative"(Gere 80).

But, and in concurrence with Gere, what do other people do, other than white middle-class males, with the notion of an "extracurriculum?" What are their ways of learning that we, as a field, can incorporate into our discipline? My research subjects, Pastor A and Member A1, show the continual role that mentoring plays in shaping one's literacy. And, whether the academy wishes to acknowledge it or not, that shaping is often the pathway to formal instruction. For example, when Pastor A discussed how, as a young boy in church, he was fascinated by a traveling evangelist because of his "use of the Word, his relevancy of the Word,"(Pastor A interview, July 2012) that is something that could possibly transfer into the writing classroom. If an instructor witnesses a student's fascination with the use and power of the Word (not just the

biblical), he or she could make inquiries with the student to ask her or him the “why and how” that undergirds their fascination. An instructor making inquiries such as these would tap into the literate arts of the “contact zone” emphasized by Pratt and the theories through storytelling, rhyming, proverbs, etc. emphasized by Christian, scholars mentioned earlier in this section. This would help the student to think rhetorically, assessing the rhetorical situation, which in turn may help her or him think of themselves in that same way when writing. The result could be that the student becomes inspired to do some purposeful writing suitable to her or his needs. More of this will be discussed in chapter five, which will consider the teaching implications of these kinds of practices.

Perfecting Skills through Imitation

The previous theme carries over into this one, for Pastor A and Member A1 articulate a kind of learning through imitation of their mentors. Though a contentious topic—contentious because *imitation* has been deemed as only a mere mocking of habits without knowing the why and how, just copying forms of writing without engaging in knowledge-making —Keith Miller, mentioned in chapter one, has shown through his scholarship where *imitation* is used as a strategy for knowledge and improvement of one’s rhetorical skills. Miller finds this to be truest in African American culture. In using Martin Luther King, Jr. as an example, Miller argues that King’s knowledge about broken systems and societal injustices was not solely based on his formal education in philosophy and systematic theology; he states that King gets this from a “typological epistemology of the black folk pulpit and from the methods of voice merging and self-making that proceed from the epistemology” (23). These cultural traditions are not only used as imitative features in delivery but as a discursive practice of knowledge making through a typological history stemming from their ancestors. Thus, taking on the voices of elder preachers

and imitating many different styles are concepts discussed by my research subjects. In the following subsections, I will provide additional excerpts from the interviews of Pastor A and Member A1 discussing *imitation*, with bold-face print to indicate the words or phrases that contributed to this theme.

Pastor A and Member A1

I must admit that it was not just refreshing but insightful to hear Pastor A discuss his literacy practices because these practices are familiar to me. However, it was like I was re-learning what I already knew because I was not critically thinking about them before. I have witnessed similar literacies from my father, aunts and uncles—preachers in my family. For example, as a child riding in the backseat of our little yellow Toyota on the way to church, I can recall my father putting in 8-tracks of Rev. C.L. Franklin (the father of R & B singer Aretha Franklin) into the cassette player, listening to his preaching. This was consistently done each time we went to church, but the interesting thing about the preaching is that all of the rest of us—my mother, sister, and brother—ended up really listening (and eventually) gaining knowledge about a kind of cultural practice as well. I mentioned this to Pastor A after he articulated a similar kind of imitation in the interview below:

Fullwood: This is so interesting to me because it gets to something I want to theorize about but I won't say it now because I'm supposed to theorize from my data, what you all tell me. But still, number 14 is a hint to what I want to get, too, eventually. Can you describe how you learned to preach?

Pastor A: [pause] Whew! I'll give you the short answer.

Fullwood: Okay!

Pastor A: **I think initially, by observation of course, you know sitting in worship services, revivals, different settings where there was preaching going on.** Of course they're different genres and styles, you know, exegetical preachers, the expository preacher, the topical preacher, the narrative preacher, and you know you see all of those coming, in all facets, not just an African American preacher, our Caucasian brothers and sisters as well. You'll see the varying styles, and the lecturer, and men kind of crack, I think initially in preaching, **if preachers are honest, when you start out, you are not--you don't have your**

own voice. You've taken others, you know, and you're trying to find out, figure out your voice. So today I may sound like pastor or reverend so and so that I've heard that I really liked. Until I come into my own voice, I think in a formal setting, I know, the bible college and seminary, actually take the courses that talk about the art of preaching, and the discipline of preaching, and the steps that go into preparing a sermon-- sermons and delivery and that's the technical side. And then just the opportunity, as Paul says making full proof of your ministry, preach in season and out of season, and getting the opportunity as an associate, when I was in that role, to preach. So you're learning, and even now after 30 years, wow, of preaching, I'm still learning.

Fullwood: Learning, okay.

Pastor A: I'm still, ah, I think you have to adjust to where you are; your setting will determine your style as well. If you're in an academic setting, you can't afford to dumb down your presentation, but at the same time, you can't neglect those who may not be in academia as well. So you got a balancing act of preaching. **So long story short, I think it is seen first, I think preaching is echoed second, meaning you, you know, you hear many voices over time, and then I think third, preaching is finally learned--** in the sense the formal setting and the informal where you're actually doing it. But to learn the discipline of what's behind before I get to the pulpit on Sunday, what are the steps that are taken, and over time, you finally get to the place where you're continually evolving as a preacher. You may have some constants that are with you as a preacher, but if you're really going to grow and be effective, I think you have to continue to evolve--

Fullwood: Evolve, right, right.

Pastor A: as a preacher because if I go in a rural setting, I'm a little different. If I go into a college town setting, or a professional setting where those, the congregants are white collar workers and most will have at least a bachelor's degree, you know, it's going to be a little different. And also what we're accustomed to as African-American pastors, the call and response, that's different too depending upon where you are. So, I think, a long story short, preaching--how do you learn to preach? I think you see, you hear, you learn, and then you do.

Fullwood: Okay, you do. I can recall, actually all three of us, as children, you know not really knowing what's going on, but once we were older we realized what our father was doing on our way to church or when he was preaching or wherever. This is, okay, I remember 8-tracks and the little yellow Toyota that we had, was 8-tracks in the late 70s early 80s, and I can recall him putting in C.L. Franklin's sermon--

Pastor A: Yep!

Fullwood: And we were in the backseat listening to it! So, I guess C.L. Franklin was somebody that he tried to--

Pastor A: He was the epitome of the preachers.

Fullwood: That's right, that's what he told me. So I said, "Dad I guess you were trying to fashion yourself after C.L. Franklin." Then another preacher that he admired was Rev. Jasper Williams down in Atlanta, GA.

Pastor A: And the irony of that, Kendra, is that Jasper Williams was the godson to C.L. Franklin.

Fullwood: Okay, well that makes sense now!

Pastor A: **Jasper Williams started preaching when he was 11, so when Dr. Franklin would be going around--Dr. Franklin and Jasper Williams' father were best friends—he would take Jasper with him to different places, so he was exposed to the cream of the crop of preachers and pulpiteers,** so of course if you hear Jasper Williams' early, some of the early tapes that they have out of Jasper Williams and you play them beside C.L. Franklin, especially when he gets to what we call the close or the celebration, they sound identical.

Fullwood: Oh, okay!

Pastor A: **And so that's why I said early on you learn because of those you're influenced by, you're seeing, you're watching, you're saying, "Oh!"**

Fullwood: Aah hah, right.

To reiterate, Pastor A said that preaching is seen, heard, and then learned. And, he said that preachers do not start off with their own unique voice. They adopt a voice or voices and then they adapt them over a period of time until the preacher develops into her/his own. This is exactly what Miller meant when he said that black preachers develop an epistemology from the black folk pulpit through voice-merging.

After discussing mentors, Member A1 also articulated Pastor A imitating other preachers he admired, as indicated below:

Fullwood: Does he imitate that preaching style or has he developed his own, what do you think?

Member A1: You know what, **my guess would be that he has imitated, a lot.** And, I say that because there's a popular preacher down in Texas by the name of Frederick Haines.

Fullwood: Okay.

Member A1: **Freddy Haines, there are some phrases that I noticed Pastor A started using shortly after Freddy Haines had preached in Kansas City a couple of years back.**

Fullwood: Oh, okay!

Member A1: **And so I think that Pastor A has been influenced, not just by his mentor but also other preachers that he's seen,** and if it works I think he'll try it, and some may criticize that, you know. So I don't know how much is *his style* . . .

Fullwood: Um uh.

Member A1: or rather is it a conglomerate or a kind of a mixture of a lot of different styles.

Now even though Member A1 said that “some may criticize” the *imitation*, he still, nonetheless acknowledged the use of it as a strategy in the development of preaching. Once again, Member A1’s learning and training was linear, where he moved directly from secondary to post-secondary education, and then to graduate education, including the seminary. Furthermore, Member A1 said that Pastor A’s style is not totally his own, which reiterates Miller’s point about the preacher using black folk pulpit preaching as a kind of epistemology for self-making.

This kind of *imitation*—preaching as “seen, heard, and then learned” as Pastor A asserted—helped traditional black preachers to develop homiletically, according to the scholar Henry Mitchell. In his discussion of the development of a tradition in black preaching, Mitchell asserts the same practice with preachers in this country from as early as the late eighteenth century, citing preachers like Harry “Black Harry” Hoosier and Henry Evans. Hoosier was the carriage driver for Bishop Francis Asbury (the father of American Methodism), taking him to various places to preach. When Asbury would announce to his white audience that Black Harry is to preach for the slaves after he finished preaching, the whites would stay and listen to Black Harry too; thus, “by 1782, Asbury was known to ask for Hoosier’s services because the crowds were always larger when it was known that Hoosier was to preach afterwards” (“African-American Preaching” Mitchell 6). Henry Evans was a black shoemaker in Fayetteville, North Carolina, and his preaching “became so effective” that he attracted white members to his meetings, so “the official opposition yielded sufficiently to have a regular Methodist church organized there around 1790” (Woodson qtd. in Mitchell 6). Mitchell says the word “became” is important in the development of this tradition, for “without anyone to tutor him, Evans grew in his preaching gifts” (6).

Furthermore, there are no records, no detailed descriptions of how black preaching evolved, according to Mitchell. These early preachers were unschooled, receiving no formal education nor tutoring from even the white ministers that they worked for. It is only through the informal that these preachers “grew in power as they heard or read the Bible, as they heard the preaching of whites, and as they preached and gained experience for themselves” (“African-American Preaching” Mitchell 5). Mitchell’s emphasis on “became” is something evident with my research subjects as well. What is it about the *in-between* moments of the “became” that is culturally relevant for students coming from the same tradition as black preachers as they come in and are situated in college writing classrooms? What have they seen, heard, and then internalized to learn into a practice? Then once revealed to an instructor, can those practices be transferred into writing knowledge that is powerfully relevant for them? Now as we, the field, are building upon the old to establish new theories and pedagogies for the twenty-first century, I deem it imperative to tap into or unleash those literacy practices that may have been hidden or buried within our students, buried because if revealed, those practices may be devalued. Also, some students may even be ashamed of those practices (such as I was)! More of imitation may emerge in the following chapter, but more detailed discussion of pedagogy will be included in considering the teaching implications of this research, which is chapter five.

Intentional, Structured, and Implicit Interaction

All of the research subjects articulated a desire to participate in the worship service when asked during the initial interview. Also, when asked how they participate, the kinds of participation varied but many of them answered the question through an emphasis on dialoguing during the preaching moment. Additionally, a few of them even recognized that dialoguing is an act specifically done in black churches. Yet, they also recognized that the participation in black

churches is infectious because it encourages others (visitors or people of different races) to participate as well. In the *Concise Encyclopedia of Preaching*, Henry Mitchell notes that traditional black preaching, typically from the predominate denominations of Baptist, Methodist, Pentecostal, is not solely “uniquely” black. There are similar preaching styles in white Pentecostal and rural Southern Baptist churches, but he notes the main difference is that “more typical elements of mainline African American preaching have been largely excluded from ‘mainline’ Euro-American pulpit expression” (3). Also, there is no uniform preaching style, and even though there is no black or white Bible, just the Gospel—the good news applicable to all believers—the “preaching that is preferred among African American masses has far more African influence than the preaching preferred among the middle-class minority” (Mitchell 2-3). The preaching that is preferred among African American masses has three, overall characteristics: 1) intonation; 2) a basic structure that is imaginative, narrative, and prone to generate experiential encounter; and 3) spontaneity, the characteristic most relevant to this theme. In reference to *spontaneity*, Mitchell asserts:

In fact, a universal characteristic of African-American preaching is not whooping, but spontaneity—the ability to respond to the movement of the Spirit among preacher and congregation and to express deep feeling without shame. Even when the preaching is done from manuscript, traditional freedom of expression prevails. The pattern includes not only the preacher’s spontaneity of utterance but also that of the audience. The dynamics of the preaching event include dialogic interaction with the congregation. (3)

While my research subjects did not use the word *spontaneity*, the dialogic interaction that Mitchell refers to above did emerge from their interviews when discussing their participation.

Additionally, some of their answers to my questions described spur-of-the moment responses as well as structured participation within the range of intentional and implicit interaction during worship service. In the following subsections, I will provide excerpts from the interviews of all Members (A1-A5), as well as Pastor A, discussing their interaction and other types of participation, with bold-face print to indicate the words or phrases that contributed to this theme.

Member A1

As stated in the earlier sections, Member A1 is the personal witness, the research subject who is an associate minister that can attest to Pastor A's preaching practices. When asked the following question, "do you participate in the worship experience," Member A1 said:

Member A1: **Most of the time yes, in that I am engaged in any experience, especially in the sermon, you know. If he says something that rings true, I will give him feedback.**

Fullwood: Okay so, when you say participate, participation for you Member A1 is answering back to him, not vocally, maybe nodding or, verbal and non-verbal participation?

Member A1: I think so; **I think it's fair to say verbal or non-verbal. If I'm with him in his sermon, in his preaching, then he can probably look at me and tell that I'm listening in terms of me saying "Amen" or nodding my head or you know, or if it gets real good, I'll stand up. So those are just kind of ways of entering a dialogue of the preached moment; that's a way for me to affirm what he is saying.** That means even in participating in songs that might be sung; I may be standing up and clapping, whereas if I'm not participating, I'll just be sitting down in my own world.

Member A1's *intentional* interaction, admitting that Pastor A "can probably look at me and tell that I'm listening in terms of saying 'Amen'," showed the interdependency of the preaching moment. The preaching of the preacher and the response of the congregant was a kind of dialogue. As mentioned previously by Mitchell, the success of Pastor A's sermon resulted from this dynamic.

Member A2

Member A2 has been a faithful and active member of Church A for 20 years. She became associated with Church A through the previous pastor, meaning she was a member of

Church A before Pastor A was hired. But for Member A2, what she likes about Church A is “the teaching, I like the teaching,” and both pastors are similar, for she likes the way they both took the time to teach and explain the Bible to her, never being condescending toward her but encouraging her to read the bible and attend Bible Study classes to help toward understanding. Also, Member A2 is a chorister, as she said, “I enjoy giving back in my singing . . . the singing and the smile that you give back to the congregation” (Member A2 interview, Aug. 2012). More specifically, she participates in the Sanctuary Choir and governs the choir as president.

When asked the question, “do you participate in worship,” Member A2 readily replied:

Member A2: **Yes, ‘cause if Pastor say something that I agree, I'm the first one to say, “say it again Pastor,” “Amen pastor.” I'm very verbal.**

Fullwood: Uum huh. Is that very important for you, to affirm the pastor? When he really says something that you can relate to and understand, you say, “Say it again, amen, that's right.”

Member A2: It's personal for me, and I think that's the way I deal with the fact that he is talking or saying something I agree with or I saw it or whatever. **He's preaching, I respond to what he is saying. And sometimes I think that is important ‘cause a lot of times you just sitting there, pastor doesn't know if he's hitting someone,** the message is for you or for someone. You know, everybody worship different, everybody feel what he's saying different, and **mine is verbal.**

Fullwood: Okay, so now let me ask you this, are there times that you have given him, say, a participatory response that is, like affirming, without you being verbal.

Member A2: **Yes, yes, I'll raise my hand or through my eyes, because at the moment you don't know what the Holy Spirit is doing within you. Sometimes it's verbal; sometimes it's raising your hands. ‘Cause when the Holy Spirit hit you, you don't know how you're going to respond, and if a message really hit you deep down, you don't how you going to respond** because it could be like, I just had a disagreement with my daughter. And it's been weighing on my mind, so the pastor might say something, and I may not do it verbal, but I might raise my hand or something like that ‘cause I'm feeling it, I know what it feel like.

Fullwood: You know some people say, I just get so full, that you get so full that the only thing that you can do is wave your hand or nod or whatever. So you still are participating even though you're not verbal.

Member A2: Right, right and some people just cry.

Fullwood: That's right, some people just cry. And I used to just think that if you didn't shout to the point where people would know that you're shouting, that you were not feeling anything. But as I grew and matured in the Lord, I realized that everyone expresses themselves differently. And that God values everybody's expression, so while you may not have someone who will jump up and shout and run around the church, you still see that

person over there, tears are just running down, they're not verbal or all loud, but tears are streaming down, so you know that something is going on.

Member A2: Something's going on within.

Fullwood: That's exactly right, so that's participation. That's affirming, like I hear you pastor, you are touching my heart today.

Member A2: Right!

Being a choir member already indicated Member A2's participation within the structure and order of worship service; however, her answer about participation focused primarily on intentional (yet spontaneous) dialogue. I say *intentional* because Member A2 admitted that she is the first person to respond, "say it again, Pastor" or "Amen, Pastor," when Pastor A preaches something that is agreeable to her. She also responded with *intent* because she wants Pastor A to know that she is actively listening, that she has a vested interest to ensure that the preaching moment goes well, for "a lot of times you just sitting there, and pastor doesn't know if he's hitting someone," as Member A2 stated. Yet, this dialogue is *spontaneous* because it is not part of the order of worship; for example, responding or dialoguing is not an item on the printed church program for members to follow.

Member A3

Member A3 has been a member of Church A for seven years. She became a member due to family associations with this church. Her aunt attended the local university and knew the wife of the previous pastor; also Member A3's former pastor went to college with the previous pastor of Church A. Thus, when she came into town to attend this university, she reminded herself about Church A: "Oh, yeah, they're in Lawrence. And it just kind of happened that I came to this church, and it was a lot like my home church that I grew up in" (Member A3 interview, Aug. 2012). Member A3 is the office administrator, having been in the position since January 2012, and she is also a chorister, a member of the Sanctuary Choir. She is married and has a young

child, stating that she likes “the diversity of this church. . . I like that it’s a church with a lot of families, and you know I have a new family” (Member A3 interview, Aug. 2012).

When asked about her participation, Member A3 confidently asserted the following:

Member A3: **Yes, I do. I'm a part of the Praise & Worship team, I'm a part of the choir, I'm also now teaching with the teens. So, I think, and then also when I'm just in the pews, actively listening and participating to the preaching,** I think that when you are taking a more active role as a member, it helps you learn more.

Fullwood: Okay, okay.

Member A3: You're not in the pews going, "why are they still talking?"

Fullwood: Right.

Member A3: It's the same way when you're going to classes; you're an active part of the class, listening and answering questions. You get more out of it. And that mindset, that energy, I think, can add to the class for other people as well. When you sit next to someone that's crying, whatever that energy, you can kind of feed into your own, so I definitely think it adds to the worship experience.

Fullwood: Okay, so just a few moments ago when you talked about, that, you know, that your mind has to be, I think it was the question, “what part of the worship experience you enjoy,” and you said Praise & Worship.

Member A3: Yeah.

Fullwood: And you said Praise & Worship sets the tone.

Member A3: Absolutely.

Fullwood: Now that you have identified that that's the part of the worship experience that you participate in, as a Praise & Worship leader, so you applied that to yourself, that you need to make sure that you, yourself, are in the right mode—

Member A3: Yeah, absolutely!

Fullwood: because you're setting the tone for praise.

Member A3: Yeah!

Fullwood: And what is the right mode?

Member A3: **I think that you have to come in with your mind set on what you're doing. A lot of times, and not always, saying a prayer, getting yourself mentally, “I'm going in here to praise God.” I'm not going in here thinking, what do I have to do as soon as I get out of church, trying to focus on the moment, and then the purpose for the moment, and not just this is something that I have to check off of my to do list today.** I got up and came to church on Sunday to praise God, and not to fill a checklist.

Member A3 proudly discussed her participation as one who makes a conscious decision for *structured* interaction, contributing to the order of worship. She is a member of the Praise and Worship Team and a choir member but also holds the position as a Sunday School teacher of teenagers. This too, like Member A2's participation, is *intentional* for Member A3 is not there engaging in solitary action but there to engage others, to help them become participatory. Also, she stated that she "actively listens and participates in the preaching" while she sits in the pew, saying that the situation of the preacher and the congregant is analogous to the classroom, for students "get more out of it when they're active in class and asking questions." Perhaps the fact that Member A3 was a recent college student has some influence on her thinking of worship as *intentional* interaction. But what is different than what happens in the classroom is the fact that Member A3 says she "participates in the preaching," and one does not participate in the teaching when in a classroom. While I did not specifically ask her what "participating in the preaching" means, it is reasonable to surmise (based upon other data and literature on black preaching) that her participation is filtered through a holistic, experiential encounter of preaching, as theorized by Frank A. Thomas in chapter one; she is not only tapping into the non-verbal expression, listening with her head, but also tapping into verbal expressions, listening with her heart and talking back to the preacher—the cerebral and emotional context of preaching (Thomas 3). As discussed earlier by Mitchell, this freedom of expression that takes place during the preaching moment is *spontaneous*.

Yet, in a later question, Member A3 does discuss the spontaneity in black church worship, in particular, her own *spontaneity*:

Fullwood: when I asked you, the question said is there a cue you get for participation and you did say the pastors will say so and so, or the minister of music will keep you going. **So, I want to know, Member A3, do you have to have a cue to participate, or are there times where you go ahead and participate without having the cue?**

Member A3: **Yeah! I think that's another part of the black worship experience is that you, if something that was said, particularly resonated with you—**

Fullwood: Ah hah.

Member A3: **it's okay to stand up and say 'Amen,' nobody else has to shout with you. But, it's very rare that it's just resonating with one person, in my experience.**

Fullwood: Okay, alright, uum huh. So, you don't have to have a cue in the black church to participate, in the traditional black church, I'll say --

Member A3: Right.

Fullwood: to participate. You can just go ahead and feel free to say it.

Member A3: Aah hah, yeah.

Fullwood: I mean, it's kind of unspoken, you know that.

Member A3: Yeah.

Fullwood: And then you know sometimes when people have gotten up to do the welcome or the announcements, I mean sometimes they even say that, "feel free to do whatever. . ."

Member A3: Yeah, I've noticed that that's the cue given more often when we have more visitors because I have white friends who've said, "I've been to a black church a couple of times; it's usually a lot of fun."

Fullwood: That's exactly right, ah hah.

Member A3: Not that they really learned; it's a different vibe, a different feeling when you come into a black church, a black Baptist church.

Like her fellow members before her (Members A1 & A2), Member A3 surely recognized that one can “feel free to stand up and say Amen, nobody has to do it with you.” But what was also interesting was that she emphasized the communal nature of participation, for she said that based upon her experience, rarely does the preaching just resonate with one person, and that there will also be others participating and dialoguing as well. Member A3 confirmed what Moss says (in chapter one) about the black church as a community “as a broader cross-locational concept of community . . . the African American church is a body of people with a common history of slavery, perseverance, faith, literacy . . . that took root it seems during slavery and its aftermath” (20). In other words, the congregation may not even have a personal relationship with one

another but due to their history of marginalization, they participate because of the cultural knowledge they share—knowing that the black church has always been a kind of safe haven where they are affirmed as a people. Member A3 also noted how others feel when attending black worship services:

Fullwood: You said that your friend, just hearing about some of your white friends that said, **“Oh yeah, I’ve gone to a black church and it’s fun.” What do you think they meant by that, that it was participatory?**

Member A3: **That it was participatory, that it was not so tight; they felt free to clap if they wanted to. I’ve been to a couple of white churches, and it felt a lot more dry.**

Fullwood: Aah hah.

Member A3: Just kind of more rigid--

Fullwood: more rigid, more tight.

Member A3: **Yeah. I think for white Christians, if they choose to start to attend a black church, I think the initial thing for them is the music, the vibe, and then after becoming more accustomed to that—**

Fullwood: Right.

Member A3: **then they can start to get to the point where they’re learning and listening to the preacher and not just being entertained.**

I think that Member A3 gave an interesting perspective about how the black church worship dynamics is received by others who visit. While interviewing her and listening to her response, I was prepared, as a researcher, to ask her not to think of the “fun quality” that her white friends noted as a negative—not that they were denigrating the black church. Their response may be coming from a distinct perspective of one’s experience of worship as a sense of the holy and sacred through formal rituals and liturgies, which calls for no outward expression, no spontaneous participation and/or dialogue. But Member A3 already addressed that in her response as she continued to unpack her answer about *spontaneous* participation; she noted that once they (her white friends or visitors) get acclimated to the traditional black church, the notion

of the worship as being “fun” becomes secondary and the learning becomes primary. More of these dynamics will be discussed further in the next section on black preaching.

Member A4

Member A4 is an active member of Church A, having been a member for seven years. He is a family man with a wife and four kids. He is also a deacon, having been so for six years, and teaches the Men’s Bible Study along with Pastor A. However, Member A4 does not limit himself to his required duties; he also fills in to teach the bible study and Sunday School for the youth. He is very serious about his work as a leader and has a deep understanding of why the church exists. When I asked him about his work in the church, he gave an answer that made me reassess my understanding of the church and how it helps in my own daily life: “The church is a place to go to get the Word, to get filled with the Word, and to get the encouragement so that you can make it to the next day. It’s almost like a hospital for sick people. I’m not saying they’re totally sick, but spiritually you are lacking and we all need to be filled” (Member A4 interview, Sept. 2012).

When asked “do you participate in the worship experience,” Member A4 stated the following:

Member A4: **I would say I participate by, saying “Amen,” I participate when the choir is singing, and I clap my hands, say “hallelujah.” I agree with the pastor when he says something that I agree with a lot of the times.**

Fullwood: Okay, uum huh.

Member A4: It's been a good experience for me, the whole service. I participate not just because, you know, from trying to get everybody else involved. **I participate because I made a promise to God a long time ago** that if you would get me through this trial and tribulation after forgiving me many times that I would be a doer of his Word.

Fullwood: Uum huh, okay.

Member A4: I would praise Him, and that's what this worship service, participation is all about. It's basically praising and worshipping God.

Member A4 discussed his interaction in the worship service as a result of a vow that he made years earlier. Clapping his hands and saying “hallelujah” while the choir is singing is personal. And, he responds by saying “Amen” because he agrees with what Pastor A says in the preaching. Thus, Member A4 comes with the *intent* to interact in a spontaneous way.

Member A5

Member A5 is a living example of longevity and commitment, for she has been a member of Church A since the 1960s—that is 50 plus years. In the past, she served in numerous capacities, having been president of the Usher Board and the pianist/organist for Church A. Currently, she is a deaconess, one that serves as a liaison for the church and community, helping those in need. Professionally, she is a retired school teacher, and she still demonstrates that no matter how old one gets, learning is still important, for she faithfully attends midweek Bible Study. Member A5 asserts: “You learn when you go to Bible Study, and yes, it’s also worship. There’s still a lot that I don’t know about the bible, and I’m still trying to learn, and I admire the people who can start off with scripture. . . I’m still learning to do that at my age!” (Member A5 interview, Sept. 2012).

When asked about participation, Member A5 gave a similar response as the other members interviewed, but hers was also different:

Fullwood: Do you participate in the worship experience? If so, please explain.

Member A5: **Well, just, I guess attending the church, and that's about all I know!**

Fullwood: Okay, well to be more specific with participation, I'm thinking about the order of church worship. So we start off with prayer, the deacon will give the prayer or whatever, and then the praise team will come, and--

Member A5: **I sing along with the praise team.**

Fullwood: Okay, so that's participation, you sing along with the praise team. So then after we have the Praise & Worship, we have the church clerk, I think, or someone to give the announcements and welcome. Okay, so do you participate during that particular time, the announcements and the welcome?

Member A5: Not really, unless I have an announcement to make.

Fullwood: Okay, let's see what else.

Member A5: **Oh! Sometimes during the invitation, the deaconesses have to go up and get names of the people who have come to the front of the church, and then I might announce what their purpose is to come, for instance, if they want to join the church, if they want prayer--**

Fullwood: And that's participation, okay, alright, so then would it be okay for me to say that you are active, that you actively participate?

Member A5: Yes.

As shown above, I had to clarify my question to Member A5, taking her through the order of worship of Church A. At the time of asking about participation in the interview, when she safeguarded herself by saying "I *guess* by attending church, and that's about all I know," the verb *guess* signaled some hesitancy to me as an academic researcher. The reason why is because Member A5 already told me of her years of experience as a member of Church A (50 plus years) and that experience gives her a depth of knowledge that other members may not have. Yet, the Christian side of me understood her guarded response, thinking that maybe it was because of the historical misunderstandings of black preaching and black churches as caricatures, as purely emotional and entertaining, not serious expressions of Christianity. Historically, blacks' predecessors, Africans, syncretized their African traditional religious practices with that of Christianity when brought to the New World as slaves. In explaining black preaching's roots in African culture, Henry Mitchell states, "What was mistaken by whites for child-like, simple faith [but] was in fact the product of a sophisticated African spiritual heritage which had already achieved profound transcendence over material things" ("Black Preaching" 34). However, another perspective to Member A5's guarded response could be that she is responding cerebrally, for she has been a school teacher for many years, which also affects her person. So, thinking about all of this, I expanded upon the question, and Member A5 showed that her interaction is

more *structured*. She stated that during the pastoral invitation, in which Pastor A invites non-believers to the altar to accept Christ into their life (a confession of faith) or invites members to the altar for prayer, she goes up to communicate with those people and write down their reasons for coming forward. Then, she announces to the church why people have come to the altar. As a deaconess, doing this is part of her ministry of keeping the church and community connected.

Pastor A

Pastor A's contribution to this theme of *interaction* is different, for it comes from one who is a pastor and an observer of the worship service as he stands in the pulpit. One of the questions asked him was, "what makes for a successful preaching situation?" His response was the following: "The real measure I think of a good sermon or sermons is the transformation of lives of the people. At least that's what I'm coming to at this age of my life. Like Sunday, there was a time that the response that I got Sunday would've thrown me off because it was quiet. . . I remember times, because the silence threw me and I would say, 'Y'all not hearing me, say something!'" (Pastor A interview, July 2012). So, in his acknowledgement of the dialogic interaction in black churches during the preaching situation, my next question asked him the following, "in your judgment, is this different for African Americans than others?" As he responded, I explained why I asked that question:

Fullwood: I phrased that question like that because my focus is still on the traditional black church--

Pastor A: Right.

Fullwood: because now more traditional black churches are more interracial, particularly this church because you have college students from all races and ethnic groups, and you have students coming here from all of the different colleges in the area, but this is still a traditional African American church, so in your judgment is this different for African Americans than others, the preaching situation.

Pastor A: I'm going to say yes and no. **The yes will be just by virtue of what most African Americans, and of course this is a generalized statement, there are exceptions to the**

rule, but by and large, most African American preachers are used to some kind of response--

Fullwood: Aah hah, okay.

Pastor A: from the pew, whereas our Caucasian brothers and sisters are not.

Fullwood: Okay, uum huh.

Pastor A: But again, there are exceptions to the rule . . . **And even in the context of the African American setting, everybody doesn't respond the same way. The vast majority does, but, you know, you have some who, they're not emotional--**

Fullwood: Right.

Pastor A's response showed a kind of unspoken knowledge that exists between the black preacher and congregation. This *implicit* interaction is an understanding that two-way engagement is important for success. Additionally, this understood interaction could be a literal response from the congregation, or the black preacher may use other kinds of expressions in the middle of preaching. For example, in my participant observation notes for one worship service:

Pastor A preached a sermon titled "Passing the God Test." After having given his biblical text, Genesis 22: 1-14, he began in a formal introductory mode, explaining the Bible story to give a context. During this explanation, there are light, subdued responses of "Mmm huh" and "yes." As the sermon progresses, Pastor A begins applying the biblical text to life-situations, saying that as God tested the Jews, the congregation, too, will be tested as they go through trials. Even though the congregation is attentive, Pastor A says, "I wish I had two folk in here who would say 'I know you're right!'" The congregation responds by saying, "Yeah, yeah!" "Tell it!" "Well, well!" "Go ahead Pastor!" Then, he discussed three concepts from the story of the Jews that members should apply to their lives. In the midst of the momentum of preaching, Pastor A uttered, "Oh,

I'm preaching now!" And a deaconess (one other than Member A5) replied saying the same: "You preaching now!" (Notes, July 1, 2012).

This note shows the implicitness of black preaching between the black preacher and the audience but it also shows the intent of their actions. But where does this come from, and from whom do these subjects take their cue to participate? The members state the following:

Member A2: **"Jesus Christ gives me the cue."**

Member A3: "Well, like during Praise & Worship, we open the services, so that's just a given. **The call to worship, the altar prayer is done, then we know it's our time. The Minister of Music or Pastor A will let us know when to go on or stop.**"

Member A4: "... when Pastor says something that reminded me how good God has been to me, I don't have a problem saying 'Amen'. . . . **My cue comes from God.**"

Member A5: **"The pastor gives the cue. Sometimes he says 'there are 2 or 3 points I want you to note.'** So, what I do is I have a notebook, where I take notes, take the scripture."

These members show all three types of interaction, as well as the spontaneous nature of how the intangible works in the worship service with them and the black preacher.

Additionally, *intentional, structured, and implicit interaction* has linguistic implications. Linguistic scholar Cheryl Wharry claims that the African American sermon is both a conversation and lecture discourse, for the sermon has similarities and dissimilarities to both because those features represent the connection to an oral tradition that is practiced and expected in the traditional black church (208). The participant-observer notes above showed Pastor A's expectancy of a response because he was engaged in a conversation: "I wish I had two folk in here who would say...." While the congregation did not literally say what Pastor A wanted, they still responded by saying "yeah!" "tell it!" because he issued the call. Referring to earlier subjects in this section, Members A2 and A4, they both said that they are the first to respond to Pastor A ("say it again, pastor," "Amen") when concurring and/or letting him know that they are with him. However, Wharry's study demonstrates that the Black preacher's utterances ("Amen,"

“Hallelujah,” “Praise God,” etc.) may elicit something else other than a *call-response* function (208-09). She identifies other discourse functions prevalent in the performed sermon than *call-response*, and one such function is that called *rhythmic markers*; this function “reinforces the importance of preachers’ establishing a rhythmic balance both within the sermon itself (as an individual performer) and with the audience (as a co-performer). This type of function shows the importance of discourse community knowledge for comprehension of the roles formulaic expressions can have” (Wharry 210-12). In the above-mentioned note, Pastor A later says, “Oh, I’m preaching now,” and the deaconess responded with the same phrase. Since Pastor A uttered this phrase at the height of his preaching, “establishing a rhythmic balance,” he was the performer and the deaconess was the co-performer, like she was preaching along with him. But to be more specific, these functions, *call-response* and *rhythmic markers*, are mostly embedded in the *intentional* and *implicit* interaction of my research subjects, not the structured. More discussion of black preaching and how it is received will be shown further by the research subjects in the following section.

Culturally-Specific and Universal Preaching

The previous theme of *intentional* and *implied interaction* is also relevant to this theme because much of the interaction involves the preacher. The research subjects in this study make claims about the cultural-relevance of black preaching, and they also make claims about the nature and purpose of black preaching from a Christian perspective. This perspective tends to black preaching’s effect in a universal way, to any believer of the faith. As already discussed in chapter one, scholars in the field of homiletics have described and discussed specifics of black preaching through critical inquiry and research, answering questions such as “what is black preaching” and “what makes it distinctive.” Their purpose was not to present an argument

asserting black preaching as better than other kinds of preaching nor were they attempting to set it apart from its function within Christianity as a kind of communication to God. These scholars simply wanted to give black preaching its due in the field as a serious subject of study. In the following subsections, I will provide excerpts from the interviews of Members A1, A3, and Pastor A, discussing how they preach, what they think about preaching, and how they receive it, again, with bold-face print to indicate the words or phrases that contributed to this theme.

Member A1

As mentioned previously, Member A1 falls under the subject category of a personal witness. He is an associate minister who can attest to Pastor A's preaching process. He is also someone who has preached a few sermons at Church A, and he is a student at seminary in a major city of the Midwest, the same seminary from which Pastor A received his Master of Divinity degree. Even though Member A1 has received mentoring from Pastor A and the previous pastor, he is more influenced by his seminary training when thinking about preaching, for when asked "what makes a good sermon," he stated: "What makes a good sermon—I think there are several elements. The very important one is that the person deals adequately with the biblical text for that sermon. . . and to scratch the surface of a text is okay for a lot of folks, but for me it's not, and I blame that on seminary" (Member A1 interview, Aug. 2012). The rest of the interview asked some specifics about cultural aspects of preaching, which is shown below.

Fullwood: Okay, okay. How imperative is it or not for a black preacher to have participation?

Member A1: **Well, for our tradition, it is very important. I don't think it should always be, but it is, culturally it is. If I stand up to preach at ____ church, and I don't get any feedback, I'm going to at least feel like I'm not preaching. Like something I'm saying is not connecting or something.** I'm gonna have those feelings that something's wrong with the sermon.

Fullwood: Yeah, at least an amen or something, right?

Member A1: Right, if I get no feedback, it's gonna feel as though I'm not preaching quote unquote, you know. **Whereas if I had the people all up in a tizzy and everybody's shouting and stuff like that, that makes that preacher feel like, "man I preached today."** Of course other people will say that with a lot more humility than that statement I just made. You're not gonna be like man I preached, because the next Sunday you'll bomb!

Fullwood: Or something like that [laughing!]

Member A1: **I think, in our tradition, it's very significant to have feedback.**

Fullwood: Okay, so that's why I came up with this next question, okay. Since it is important, because of our cultural tradition, can a preacher still preach without participation? Please explain.

Member A1: **Absolutely, a preacher shouldn't, needs to be able to preach without participation. If I'm preaching a sermon that is convicting, there may not be a whole lot of feedback. There may be some contemplation taking place, you know. But a preacher needs to be able to preach despite feedback and no feedback. Now, it's uncomfortable to preach that way, especially if you're in a tradition like ours that is a feedback tradition. If I go to a primarily Caucasian church and that's not the norm, then it doesn't affect me. The same sermon preached is received differently, and it makes me feel differently as a preacher depending upon where I'm at. Now in a black church like _____, if there's no feedback, then it could be an indication that something is not right in the moment. But I firmly believe that preachers should not rely on feedback.**

Fullwood: Or it could be as you said that you are actually preaching a sermon that is convicting our hearts, and even though we're not saying like, "alright Minister A1 preach," it's like its heavy, well actually it's thought-provoking, you're making us think about some things. But even in doing that maybe that's participation, but a quiet participation.

Member A1: Perhaps but the preacher won't sense the encouragement.

Fullwood: Oh! okay, I see.

Member A1: **So, but that should not deter the preacher from preaching the message. But I do think there's something significant about the feedback because a lot of times a preacher could prepare a message, and let's just say there was not much study, and it's unfounded the claims the preacher is making, and it's not a good sermon. And nobody says Amen. Well, if that preacher is so insensitive to the feedback, "well it's nothing wrong with the sermon, I preached fine." And thinking that the person is doing enough, when maybe it's that they've been lazy and they have not prepared. So I think there's a tension between should I pay attention to feedback and should I not.**

Member A1 discussed the both/and duality of black preaching. He stated that for a black preacher, it was important to have feedback from the audience, for Member A1 even said that when he preaches and there is no feedback, he will feel like he, as a preacher, is not connecting with his audience. Yet, Member A1 recognized the fact that a preacher should be able to preach

anyway without it because the preacher's job, regardless of race or culture, is to preach the Gospel despite the circumstances.

Member A3

Drawing from the previous section, Member A3 continued her discussion of her participation in relation to black preaching. The question asked her: "Is the same kind of participation used during the preaching moment?" Member A3 replied:

Member A3: It's a different kind of participation because it's not about--I'm not one of the people that participate in the preaching moment, so I think it's being on the other side of it and giving the participation that I'm hoping people would give during Praise & Worship with the preacher. When he says, "you missed you're shout cue."

Fullwood: Yeah, Pastor A loves to say that!

Member A3: So, giving him that feedback, I heard what you're saying. Taking notes, he's giving points. Or if he opens with a song, sing it along with him.

Fullwood: Okay.

Member A3: I think it's a different kind of participation, but I feel like it's just the opposite side of what I'm doing, 'cause I'm not the one doing the call.

Member A3 said the participation during the preaching moment was different for her because she no longer initiates it like she does as a Praise & Worship leader. During the preaching moment, she was receiving it. So she made sure she actively listens and responds to Pastor A because she knew how it feels to be in front of people. Even though her answer was about participation, Member A3 talked about culturally-specific and indivorceable components of black preaching. She also acknowledged that not only is the dialogue about participation but also is about rhetoric:

Member A3: During Pastor's sermons, we take our cues from him.

Fullwood: Okay, ah hah.

Member A3: It's like you said, if you're listening, he tells you, "hey, this is something you may want to note, or these are my points, or if you listen, we'll be out." Even if we've had some guest ministers who have said "I'm an old country preacher, if you say 'Amen,' we may get out of here a little quicker. If I know you're listening to me, it will help propel me on--"

Fullwood: Right.

Member A3: don't be so dry.” **And I don't care what anybody says, saying ‘Amen’ does not make any sermon last any less.**

Fullwood: [laughing!!!]

Member A3: **What I do think it does, is it makes you an active participant, and therefore you're not paying attention to the time. So, I think it's sort of a little trick that pastors do, personally.** But that's one of the things that makes, that active participation from the congregation is **one of the things that make a black church so unique** and so dynamic and enjoyable for so many different people.

Fullwood: Okay, you said, like, a lot of things I was thinking about building onto the questions on your responses. Okay, you said that when a preacher, usually Pastor A or some of the other preachers say, "I need to get an ‘Amen,’ because if ya'll say ‘Amen’ that'll help me get out of here faster." And as you just said, no it doesn't!

Member A3: [laughing!!]

Fullwood: As a daughter of a preacher, I know that isn't true. And I've told some congregation members that you ought to know that saying that means something else because he's been your pastor for some years. Maybe to keep the congregation involved, but some congregation members still take him literally! Now, he's gotten better in terms of being cognizant of time constraints, but for a traditional black preacher, saying ‘Amen’ doesn't help at all! [laughter!!!]

Member A3: **And so one guest pastor that we had, he said it's like for him, “it's like telling a dog ‘sic him,’ I'm just going to go that much harder!”** [laughter!!]

Fullwood: Ah hah, that's exactly right! My father would always say, “Alright, I'm bout to close, I'm bout to close.” He'll say that about 15 times!

Member A3: Ah hah! [laughter!!]

Member A3 discussed the dynamics of the black church experience as “active” and “enjoyable.” Also, the cues that she gets from Pastor A (as well as other visiting black preachers), “if you say Amen, we’ll get out of here quicker,” did not help him finish quicker. But, what it did was to make the pew become active so that church members will not concentrate on the time passing. Member A3 theorized, in her own way, about how the dialogue functions as a rhetorical move to urge the black preacher onward. This is similar to Smitherman’s emphasis (discussed in chapter one) that talking back to a black rapper (speaker) is not discourteous but helpful (96). This is also similar to Wharry’s discussion about the *call-response* function, as well as other discourse functions of the language used during the preaching moment, discussed in the conclusion of the

previous section on interaction. All of these dynamics in preaching are not merely done for entertainment purposes, but it does take a kind of knowledge to understand the dynamics of preaching, as asserted by Member A3.

Pastor A

In the earlier section on *interaction*, Pastor A stated that most African American pastors are used to some kind of response to their preaching. Because he is a Christian minister, I surmised that he would still preach the Gospel if there is no response, and I surmised that he has preached to audiences other than African Americans. And, even though I joined this church as a Watch Care member and I knew the demographics of Church A, I needed to hear how Pastor A thinks of his congregation, and how or if that affected his preaching. Thus, I asked him the following:

Fullwood: What is the racial ethnic composition of your congregation, that's the first part. Then, is your preaching different, meaning do you adapt your preaching to meet the needs of a heterogeneous audience, or is your preaching the same regardless of composition of audience?

Pastor A: **I would say probably about 95% African American and 5% mixed, not just Caucasian but other nationalities as well. And the answer to the second part of that is no. I try to be true to the text and, now I am sensitive, if we have, if it's a Sunday and we have a few more Caucasian members who are attending than normal, especially in the month of February. I try to be real conscious of the fact that I can't make this a black sermon, but at the same time I think I have a responsibility to empower those, the larger audience, especially our young people, to give a positive message and paint a positive picture of African Americans, outside of the church so they can have aspiration and inspiration, while at the same time not vilifying White America.**

Fullwood: Okay, alright, okay.

Pastor A: I've seen that done and been in settings where that's been done and it's distasteful and it turns off, **because the gospel, in my mind, is neither black nor white.**

Fullwood: Okay, um uh.

Pastor A: **It's really a soul issue; you're trying to reach the soul of the man. And if I make it black/white, I think I've done a disservice to the gospel and to Christ's purpose for dying.** And even as Dr. King said that Sunday morning is still the most segregated hour in America, I believe that to still be true today. But there are attempts to dispel that notion, and I think it starts with our preaching, yeah.

Similar to Member A1's comments in this section, Pastor A shows the both/and dichotomy of black preaching. As noted much earlier in this chapter, he was indeed mentored by black preachers and his preaching is steeped in black traditions. But here, he articulated the need for his preaching to be open to all audiences, not just blacks. For as he asserted, the Gospel (Good News) is a message for all people, regardless of gender, class, or race. He continued to stress a kind of universality that preachers are obligated to have when I asked him the following:

Fullwood: Among your ministerial duties, how important is preaching?

Pastor A: [pause] I think it's ironic you'd ask that question, just the past week, long story short, I spent the week in Dallas--

Fullwood: That's right.

Pastor A: at the E.K. Bailey International Expository Preaching Conference. And the general theme of the conference was "Preaching That Looks Up." **So the concept and idea of course is that we as pastors and preachers have to deliver a message that helps people lift above or look above the fray of what they have going on, the reality. Not to deny it but in order to get above it and bring change, we've got to be able to communicate the Word in such a way that we're not just preaching the problem but preaching not only the problem and identifying it, but also the solution and offering people encouragement of change that's possible. So I would say the answer to that question [pause] Christology or preaching Christ-centered preaching--**

Fullwood: Christology, okay that's what that means.

Pastor A: is paramount versus some of the new, and I've been even guilty of it as well, preaching the moment of whatever the trends are, the fads of what's going on--

Fullwood: Oh, okay!

Pastor A: right now. What the popular songs, sometimes social ills, those become the theme, **and so if you're not careful as a preacher/pastor you'll spend a half hour 45 minutes preaching and never once talk about Christ.**

Fullwood: Never once talk about Christ, okay, okay.

Pastor A: So--

Fullwood: Oh, that is powerful!

Pastor A: **I think that's crucial; preaching a Christ-centered message of hope**, even the discipline of Christ to us as believers. He chastens whom He loves, but if we never talk about that, you know, we leave people in a dual world. I'm a saint but I'm also a sinner, and I'm struggling with what I will do. I want to be right, but I keep doing wrong. And we never address either of those worlds but just simply say I'm okay, you're okay, see you next week.

Fullwood: Oh, okay, okay.

Pastor A: I think our preaching fails; as a matter of fact, I know it does.

Yet, Pastor A later articulated that in preaching a Christ-centered message, his preaching style differs, that he does not have his own pure style:

Fullwood: Do you think that you have, you've already said this, do you think you have different styles of preaching? If so, why? I think you actually said this earlier--

Pastor A: Yeah.

Fullwood: when I asked you, like, 13, 14, or 15 when you said that ah--

Pastor A: **I think the long-short of that, the answer would be yes, for this reason. As they told us in preaching classes in seminary but also I took public speaking class as well, and it says know your audience. This may not be this Sunday depending upon the setting, you know, if, for instance, let's say the service starts at 11, and it's a long service before the sermon. If I look at my watch and it's 12:30/12:40 before I stand up to preach, I already know---**

Fullwood: Okay [chuckling!]

Pastor A: I don't have a long time.

Fullwood: Long time, uum huh.

Pastor A: Now there was a day-- not that long ago--where I was like, well I waited on ya'll, ya'll just going to have to wait on me.

Fullwood: Well, that's still a good point, pastor! [laughing!!]

Pastor A: Well it is but the reality is that today's listener in the pew--see our grandparents knew that when they went to church, they were going to be there all day. . . . So I said that to say, those are some of the factors that determine what style I'm going to be. When did I stand up? What happened in the service prior to the preaching moment? Is this a funeral, and if so, is it a sad occasion or is it one, even though it's sad, can we rejoice at it? It's not a tragic event or it wasn't that somebody was killed or stabbed or shot or something like that. So you got to know all of those things to know the audience that you're talking too, yeah.

Fullwood: That's a lot!

Pastor A: Before you go in--

Fullwood: Yeah, aah hah.

Pastor A: **and you got to do that with the knowledge that I've got a diverse group of people who all have different appetites and different eating styles. . . . So, I think the city you live in, the geographical location, where you are, knowing, like I said, who's in your pew, what the background, you know.** When I was in Topeka, I had a good mix but by and large I'd say 3/4 of the congregation were blue-collar workers. So they understood labor and time and you know 8 hours--

Fullwood: Right.

Pastor A: So sitting in church to them wasn't that big of a deal-- a normal day for them versus when I started attracting, not me, meaning the church started attracting the white collar workers from corporate, it was a little strange for them at first because they were like, "It's 1:00 and we're still here; it started at 10:45, it's 1:30!"

Now, I would like to briefly recapitulate scholars' definition and description of black preaching (from chapter one). Henry Mitchell is an early scholar of black preaching, having published his first book (among many) in 1970. Mitchell gives a general description of black preaching as a flexible yet disciplined communication and expression to God, that it is knowing about other cultures, particularly that of whites, that black preaching is indeed Christian preaching with African retentions, and that it affirms the humanity of its congregants (36-37; 42-43). In his later works, he studies black preaching as an art form of African American culture and as similar to other African American genres, like the slave narrative. He also discussed the audience as valuable, that black preaching is "inextricably bound up with this oft overlooked resource" ("Recovery" 112-13). Frank Thomas, building upon Mitchell's work on celebration in black preaching, says the act of "celebration" is the emotional context of black preaching that is filtered through an experiential encounter. Preaching tends to the whole human being, that an audience's reception to a preacher is cerebral as well as emotional (3). He calls a preacher "a conscious celebrator" because she "intends celebration by fashioning affirmative images that strike people in their inner core, and the Holy Spirit utilizes the images to help the hearer experience the transforming and liberating power of the gospel" (35). Cleophus LaRue, who also builds upon Mitchell's work, asserted that black preaching is distinctive due to the black preacher's understanding and view of scripture, an epistemology resulting from the historical experience of marginalization and struggle. This epistemology comes into fruition during the preaching moment when the black preacher and audience engage in a dialogical dynamic, developing a "communal interpretive strategy" (19).

This communal strategy has implications for the composition classroom. Most first-year composition classrooms have a small population of students, as opposed to larger 100-level lecture courses with a greater population, like 200 students or more. A smaller class of students should be able to accommodate a dialogical dynamic. For example, I had my English 101 students watch the movie *The Great Debaters* to look for examples of Paulo Freire's banking-concept and problem-posing methods of education in various classroom scenes. When a student, Henry Lowe, tries to be cunning with the debate teacher, Prof. Tolson, the student is reminded by Prof. Tolson that engaging in acts of questioning by a black man in 1930s segregated South will get him (the student) killed, so the student need not question him (Prof. Tolson) like that again. After Tolson gives him a very brief history lesson of the Willie Lynch theory in the Jim Crow South, Prof. Tolson stands face to face with the student and says directly: "I, and every other instructor on this campus, are here to help you find, take back, and keep your righteous mind, because obviously you have lost it questioning me like that." One of my English 101 students answered back to that scene aloud, saying, "Oh yeah, I know!" Even though he received quizzical looks from his classmates, the looks changed to one of understanding when I briefly explained that the scene and the kind of direct address used by Prof. Tolson resonated with the student—not necessarily the content of what was said but *how* it was said.

While this scene did not show any type of preaching by Prof. Tolson, what black preaching (black rhetoric) engenders, a sense of community and dialogue, came into play. Of Aristotle's three rhetorical genres, epideictic rhetoric sometimes does not get as much emphasis in academia, unless broadly conceived as such within a literature course as something to be read. But what as something to be written, as something that the writer consciously creates to achieve rhetorical effectiveness? Black preaching can be an example of a kind of epideictic rhetoric. If,

as Thomas points out, a black preacher is a “conscious celebrator,” that preaching speaks to the whole person, then that could be a way in which a writing teacher could encourage students to use different rhetorical appeals, instead of solely relying upon logos.

While my research subjects are not academics/scholars by profession (even though many of them are educated), they articulated their understanding of black preaching from what they do in church every Sunday: listening, participating in the order of worship, interacting with others, and as Member A3 said, “participating in the preaching.” This theme of culturally-specific and universal preaching also show the literacies involved for constructing the black sermon as a genre and performing it (when Pastor A mentioned that he has an audience of many different appetites; Member A1 mentioning the importance of dialogue in black preaching but that the preacher should not depend solely on it). More information of the sermon from the research participants will be discussed in the following section.

Sermons as Experiential, Instructive and Supportive

This theme is particularly interesting, for I asked the participants questions about the sermon—I did not say “the black sermon.” So, it seemed that the answers would lend themselves to a discussion about the sermon in general. And it did, but the answers were also about a cultural distinctiveness of the sermon. For example, all of the research subjects that were church members articulated the worship service as not merely participatory acts (even though they stressed the importance of participation) but more of like a way to receive an experience, and the sermon is enveloped in that because it allows worshippers to experience the Good News, learning that there is hope. A sermon that gives hope is something of which black preachers are keenly aware, as discussed by scholars and preachers in chapter one, for “the African American sermon was designed to celebrate, to help people *experience* [italics are my emphasis] the

assurance of grace that is the gospel” (Thomas 3). In the following subsections, I will provide excerpts from the interviews of all church members (A2, A3, A4, and A5) discussing how they think about and how they receive the sermon, with bold-face print to indicate the words or phrases that contributed to this theme.

Members A2, A3, A4 and A5

What is interesting about this theme is that though I used “experience” in my question, I really meant “experience” as participation. But each of the members’ answers took the phrase “worship experience” as something beyond participation. I asked the members (in separate interviews) this question: “How important is the worship experience to you?” Their answers were the following:

Member A3: I think that it's vital; it's what people come to church on Sunday for. **Actually it's the worship experience, you come to Sunday School and bible study on Wednesday, if you make it, to study and learn. But Sunday service is about the worship experience, so I think it's definitely important.** I think it's one of the main ways that you get the church to grow.

Member A4: Well, it's very important to me; it's, you know, I can say it allows me, it fills me up with energy, and it gives me just what I need to make it through a tough week. **It's encouraging, it's hopeful, it builds up your faith.**

Member A5: Very important because it keeps me, I would say grounded, and **it gives me hope, and it keeps my attitude positive.**

These members show that it is not about participating in that single, solitary moment, but it is about “the experience,” the Sunday School and the mid-week bible study, as Member A3 claims. The worship experience to these members is a continual one, not confined to one scene or location. As previously mentioned, experiencing worship was intertwined with experiencing the sermon for the participants. Why so? They used the same language and phrasing to talk about both. To show this, the questions I asked about the sermons were: “How important are the sermons?” and “What do you like about the sermons?” Their answers were:

Member A2: **The pastor's sermon is very important to me . . . Basically what I like about the sermon is that I can look into the Word that pastor's giving to me, and it might be different from the way I thought it should be, and he's giving his input and what God has given him in that scripture.** Me and you can read the same scripture, and you're going to get something out of it different than what I'm going to get out of it.

Member A3: **They're—I don't think that any one part of the service is more valuable than the other except for Pastor A's sermons. But I think Praise & Worship may set the tone, the choir singing, it leads up and builds up to Pastor A preaching;** the offering, it keeps the service going. But Pastor A's sermons--- if you don't have, I don't want to say a dynamic preacher--but a preacher that can bring people in, keep their attention, and teach them while they're there, if he can't do those things, then your congregation is going to dwindle.

Member A4: **Very important. Sermons in general are important. . . . sermons are very important in getting God's word across to His people. And you can take that information and not just use it for ourselves . . . but to give to someone else. . . .**

Sometimes just living your life in front of people, and not saying a word to them. Just living your life, trying to be a Christian, trying to do what's right, trying to do things that's not contrary to God's will. That helps people too. It's just that they may never tell you, but I know that if you live right before an unbelieving person, I know it changes things.

Member A5: **Very important. It keeps me in a positive mood during the week. . . . The sermons are uplifting, and they give me hope.**

These members discussed the sermon as an experience, as something to learn from, and as something that supports them (giving hope) so that they can make it in their daily living. In other words, to those who listen to the sermon, it affects them internally—a change happens. Pastor A said that “the real measure of a good sermon is the transformation of lives of the people” (Pastor A interview, July 2012).

I would like to acknowledge that out of all the preachers and scholars discussed in this dissertation, I have neglected an important preacher-scholar who came out (and was still part of) the black preaching tradition: Martin Luther King, Jr. Even though he was viewed more of a civil rights leader in this country, King was a preacher by vocation. And as a preacher, he had a keen understanding of the purpose of sermons, many of which were given to the public as well. What does King have to say about the sermon that is relevant to this theme? His book *Strength to Love* features edited sermons that he delivered to his congregation during and after the bus

boycott of the 1950s in Montgomery, Alabama. However, he expressed some reservations about printing his sermons:

I have been rather reluctant to have a volume of sermons printed. My misgivings have grown out of the fact that a sermon is not an essay to be read but a discourse to be heard. It should be a convincing appeal to a listening congregation.

Therefore, a sermon is directed toward the listening ear rather than the reading eye. While I have tried to rewrite these sermons for the eye, I am convinced that this venture could never be entirely successful. . . . But in deference to my former congregation . . . and my many friends . . . I offer these discourses in the hope that a message may come to life for readers of these printed words. (xiv)

King said that a sermon cannot be read like an essay, but that it needs to be performed to convince. But he also desires the sermon as printed to transform lives, that the readers may still experience the power of the Word. Also, scholars such as Keith D. Miller show the inventional genius of King. In Miller's book *Voices of Deliverance*, Miller not only traces King's use of imagery and metaphor to old-time black folk preaching traditions but to white liberal preachers and theologians as well. The invention comes into fruition when King puts pen to paper to write/compose and deliver his sermon, mixing the best of both black and white preaching together to come into his own. Thus, my research subjects show what King (as well as other noted preacher-scholars) mean; in this section, they furthered the discussion from the previous theme of *culturally-specific and universal* preaching: the both/and dichotomy of black preaching. While they offered answers that spoke to the overall instructiveness of the sermon, the members also focused on how hearing the discourse affected them—in other words, experiencing the sermon. And, as scholars noted earlier state (Mitchell and Thomas), this experiencing is a

distinctiveness of black preaching because of the sacred-secular tradition (tending to the mind and heart) stemming from an African worldview.

Conclusion: Toward a Grounded Understanding of the Black Preacher

Reiteration of Themes and Explanation of Data

The purpose of grounded theory is to allow theory to emerge from the data so that theories can be grounded in the realities of the world, instead of researchers beginning with already established theories. While it is doubtful that no new, grand theory came out of this process, creative insights emerged that warrants further discussion—a discussion that will be fully explored in chapter five. As of now, a review of the themes is needed.

The themes from this chapter answered a portion of the research question: *What literacy practices of the black preacher originated in the extracurriculum of her/his training, and do those practices have any pedagogical implications for writing, particularly for college students who witness those practices in their daily lives?* To recap, the themes that emerged from the data were: A) Learning from everyday relations; B) Perfecting skills through imitation; C) Intentional, structured, and implicit interaction; D) Culturally-specific and universal preaching; and E) The sermons as experiential, instructive and supportive.

First, what are the literacy practices? The theme of *learning from every day relations* captured that, for Pastor A showed that he learned from his family and community. He stated, “My grandmother was very influential, as well as several others. I can think of elders, and even ministers. I saw them live out their faith . . . in their everyday life, so kind of informally that was the draw” (Pastor A interview, July 2012). Though Member A1 (associate minister) was more influenced by his formal education, he acknowledged being affected by mentoring: “Pastor A is

my father in the ministry, a mentor” (Member A1 interview, Aug. 2012). So, in this case, *literacy* is defined broadly as that (knowledge, abilities) which is learned informally. The word “informally” means things/concepts learned by one’s family, community, or culture. This definition of *literacy*, then, fits within the framework of New Literacy Studies. One scholar-proponent, James Gee, theorizes that “reading and writing only makes sense when studied in the context of social, cultural, historical, political, and economic practices of which they are but a part” (180). He further asserts “the idea of work (as in human effort) to the center of New Literacy Studies” to show how it undergirds the mutually constitutive nature of words and context (Gee 190).

Pastor A articulated a kind of “New Literacy” when he marveled at the abilities of a traveling evangelist that would always preach at his boyhood church: “I was always fascinated by him. His use of the Word, his relevancy of the Word, but his seriousness of the Word . . . And I knew, you know, just kind of watching and listening. . .” (Pastor A interview, July 2012). The human effort, the work of this evangelist in preaching the Word, helped in Pastor A’s fascination in using words to impact people. This was also applicable to his earlier ambition of wanting to become a lawyer to “help the poor and downtrodden.” The “mutually constitutive nature of words” came into play when Pastor A understood that the same abilities that his favorite evangelist used to transform lives is the same ability he could use in becoming a lawyer.

Second, how is the literate skill learned? It is through the theme of *perfecting skills through imitation* that captured this. Member A1 said, “I think Pastor A has been influenced not just by his mentor but also other preachers . . . a conglomerate of a lot of different styles” (Member A1 interview, Aug. 2012). And, as Pastor A reflected on how he learned to preach, he articulated a model of imitation: “Preaching is seen first, I think preaching is echoed second,

meaning, you know, you hear many voices over time, and then I think third, preaching is finally learned” (Pastor A interview, July 2012). This same concept of imitation is used in the teaching of writing in the classroom. Lena Ampadu demonstrates, through the speeches of black orators/preachers, the use of *Nommo*, the efficacy of the spoken word. She includes empirical research in which students created writing samples imitating the language/stylistic choices of famous black orators/preachers, thus showing its success (144). Ampadu’s research shows what African American students are able to thoughtfully do with *imitation*, and not only that, she states that the students also relied on “commonplaces peculiar to African American culture” (152). Pastor A relied on a commonplace, the black church, and saw the power of the spoken word through his preacher-mentors and imitated them.

Third, how are those literacy practices engaged? These practices are engaged through a dynamic of varied interactive moments, as shown through the theme of *intentional, structured, and implicit interaction*. Pastor A and the members show individual ways that they engage in literacy. Many members articulated an intentional impulse in talking back to Pastor A while he was preaching. Member A2 said, “If pastor says something that I agree with, I’m the first one to say, ‘say it again, pastor’ . . . it’s personal for me” (Member A2 interview, Aug. 2012). Member A3 said that she also participates “when I’m just in the pews, actively listening and participating in the preaching . . . you have to come with your mind set on what you’re doing” (Member A3 interview, Aug. 2012). These are spontaneous acts, but this communal environment is impartial, for structured participation works as well. For example, Member A5 said she “has a notebook, where I take notes, take scripture” (Member A5 interview, Sept. 2012). Also, Member A3 takes part in the order of worship when she said “during Praise and Worship, we open the services.”

Additionally, as noted in the beginning of this chapter, these interactions include antiphonal elements that involve the musicians knowing when to respond, chanting, and singing, in this case, singing from Pastor A while in an exalted moment. Music is important in these interactions, for there is an African dictum that says “the Spirit will not descend without song,” that musicians and scholars have used to explain the fundamental meaning yet cultural significance of music in the Christianity of Black Americans (McClain ix). Music is not only the stimulus to this expression but is also at its roots, which helps to invoke the Spirit into black worship. The influence of music originated during the antebellum period of American history, where scholars have attributed the composition and meaning of slave songs or spirituals to black preaching. What happened during this process is that the black preacher’s rhetorical styling, rhythmically and musically stretching out and bending words, “delineated into quasi-metrical phrases with formulaic cadence,” and “was customarily enhanced by intervening tonal responses from the congregation and the responsorial iteration of catchy words, phrases, and sentences resulted in the burgeoning of song. . .” (Spencer 83-84). This describes Church A’s worship service as such, showing how the church members (and the research subjects) created an atmosphere of expressive worship through improvisation.

Last, how does all of this come in to play when discussing composing? The themes *culture-specific/universal preaching* and *sermons as experiential, instructive, supportive* are captured here. Pastor A showed how form and content do not have to be antithetical to one another. He sings an old gospel song or a hymn many times before he preaches, and this singing is not part of the sermon that he wrote during his weekly preparation. Pastor A said the song is still part of the sermon. During his preparation, he says a prayer, asking God to “breathe on this,” to give life into the sermon he has prepared: “It is the sermon, even though it’s not

planned; that's part of that 'breathe on this Lord,' the pre-introduction to the sermon" (Pastor A interview, July 2012). Thus, when thinking about form (the sermon) and content (preaching), particularly in the context of composition, key words like *text* and *delivery* can work together. Other key words, too, encapsulate the other four themes as well: *literacy*, learning from everyday relations; *imitation*, *style*, perfecting skills through imitation; *spontaneity*, *improvisation*, intentional, structured, implicit interaction; and *delivery*, *performance*, *text*, culturally-specific/universal preaching and sermons as experiential, instructive, and supportive.

In closing, these themes have shown that the subjects are "anchored," for this "anchoring" stemmed from their knowledge and human effort it took to respond to preaching, worshipping, and in participation. Also, the double entendre of "anchoring" is that the black preacher, in this case Pastor A, is too, the anchor of the complexity and richness of literacies that take place during the worship service, even as a manifestation in the lives of members after the service. As a matter of fact, these worship practices and cultural nuances serve as the primary route to engage literacies. Will these factors also come to bear on the extracurricular practices of the black preacher in the next set of data? In the following chapter, Pastor B and her congregants will be discussed. Pastor B's church is not a traditional black church; rather, it is an African American congregation under the governance of a predominately white church: United Methodist. As will be shown in the next chapter, Pastor B and her congregants readily and wholeheartedly acknowledge that they are a United Methodist congregation that adheres to a book of discipline for structure of worship and church administration. Yet, they also recognize that they are linked culturally to the traditional black church and consider themselves as part of the black church experience. Perhaps the data there will show more contrast due to this specific dynamic. However, the data will show that through the various contrasts, the difference in the

preaching style, the difference in denomination, and the difference in demographics, cultural and epistemological connections will emerge to show black preaching and the dynamics of a black worship service to be the same, regardless of gender or denomination.

CHAPTER 4

ENTER TO WORSHIP, DEPART TO SERVE: PARTICIPATING IN WORSHIP TO BUILD COMMUNITY AT CHURCH B

Introduction: Details about Church B

A Worship Scene: Antiphony as a Desired Feature of Worship

“I am so glad that it is not snowing,” I was thinking to myself as I drove into the parking lot and got out to enter Church B on the first Sunday of December. “Hello, would you like a newsletter?” the usher said to me, standing in front of the opened, swing door to the sanctuary that said “Enter to Worship” and giving me a church program as I entered. Other members greeted me radiantly, as if the sun was shining on the inside of the church, making me forget about the somewhat grey, cold day outside. I wholeheartedly greeted them back as I chose a pew in which to sit for the morning service. I pleasantly thought to myself, “I’ve only been here a few times, and people are treating me like I’m their own.” Members were also seated in the pews, some quietly awaiting for church to begin, while others were talking softly to each other. Then, the service began with a worship and praise song.

“Oh! She’s standing up,” I said to myself excitedly when I saw Pastor B immediately rise to sing and clap with the Worshipping Choir, a particular choir among a few choirs here at Church B. The song that the choir was singing so exuberantly was titled “We’ve Come to Praise Him” and the lyrics to the song said, “We’ve come to praise Him and lift His holy name. Make a joyful noise unto the Lord; we’ve come to have a good time.” There were a few persons already standing up and clapping, and there were people who were not standing yet clapping and moving with the choir while they were seated in the pews, such as I was doing. But I did not stay seated long, for I, too, stood up and continued clapping with the choir. Listening to the words and

enjoying the harmonious, polyrhythmic music from the organist and drummers, watching them as they moved to the music with the choir while playing, as if they too were enjoying themselves—that coupled with Pastor B’s active participation may have been the thrust that urged me to stand up at that moment.

However, standing up to participate is an individual act I would ordinarily do anyway, and I have done so since becoming an adult. As the daughter of a Baptist preacher, one who has pastored more than 30 years, I had to participate in church either through worship or through church ministries and auxiliaries—no questions asked. Of course as a child I did not fully understand why I was participating, but doing so and engaging in those practices was securing a solid foundation for me, something to sustain me during adulthood. I was reminded of this in my interview with Pastor B, where one of her answers to my question about the preaching situation led her to discuss the importance of dialogue and participation in the black church experience:

I think we require in the black church the understanding that worship is about participating. It’s not just sitting there, whether it’s your choir, your preacher, your liturgist that’s reading the scripture, or the person who’s praying, that it’s just that they’re offering this and you’re just there. But it’s about participating in the prayer, participating in the music, participating in the preaching. It’s participatory, and I think that’s very different for our concept within the black church experience. . . (Pastor B interview, Oct. 2012)

Thus, participation demonstrates belief and faith, and African Americans who are and have been engaged in the traditional black church experience know this intuitively. Also, participation may not even be consciously discussed—it is just done.

And intuition is important here, for also during the interview, Pastor B explained that during her apprenticeship at a white United Methodist church, she could neither engage in nor receive that kind of participation because that was not part of their tradition. While the pastor and members there were very nice and supportive of her training, her “preaching was very different, so much to the point that sometimes [her] stomach would hurt” due to the tightness she felt she had to maintain. But now that she is pastor of an African-American United Methodist church, Pastor B has more active affirmation and interaction from the audience (Pastor B interview, Oct. 2012).

Pastor B confirmed what Henry Mitchell says in his book on the recovery of an art in black preaching, a book discussed earlier in chapter one. He emphasizes the importance of verbal feedback from listeners, that “the black congregation with its contagious response is the best group in the world to whom to preach the gospel,” for it helps the preacher greatly because “in the midst of authentic dialogue, the quality of preaching increases” (112). Additionally, Pastor B’s challenge of preaching non-dialogically at the church of her apprenticeship shows that black preaching is, indeed, shaped by a “communal interpretive strategy,” an implicit knowledge of “a sovereign God who acts mightily on their behalf . . . the black sermon has as its goal the creation of a meaningful connection between an all-powerful God and a marginalized and powerless people” (LaRue 18-19). Thus, dialogue helps an in-dwelling of the Spirit to come forth from Pastor B’s own spirituality, and reservoirs of spiritualities emerge to show the interconnectedness between the pastor and her congregants with the goal of producing an engaged preaching moment.

This deep spirituality is not solely indicative of Pastor B when situated within the larger cultural context of African American rhetoric; this rhetoric has an embedded spiritual impulse

because of its descension from an African worldview, one in which Africans believed that everything is connected and that they are one with nature, “harmony and balance between superhuman and human communities” (Hamlet 12). However, black female rhetoric tends to be “more inclined toward the spiritual through a psychology of a spirit within themselves and/or through theological expressions of the Spirit” (Pennington 304-305). Pennington’s definitions of spirituality complement Pastor B, for not only did she exhibit a sense of spiritual holiness due to her vocation, but when meeting and talking with her, I sensed an overall spirituality from her, as if she were the type of person genuinely interested in the well-being of others (and after interviewing her, I realized that she is). Also, spirituality in general and religious spirituality in particular “help to shape their (African American women’s) coping choices and the meanings that they construct about stressful events” (Mattis 318), acting as a kind of knowledge in developing “language and literacy practices to fulfill a quest for a better world” (Richardson 677). Pastor B has used her concern in the wholeness of people to assist in her counseling, her previous career as a school psychologist. However, she was also skillful in using the language and sentiments of a general spirituality in her counseling as a substitute for the religious spirituality that she really felt called to use but could not use in public schooling; excerpts of her interview showing this tension will be shown and discussed in the next section.

Participation was crucial to Pastor A and Church A in chapter three, and in general, it is a very important element in the historical black church because it affirms the freedom and self-hood of a people who have been traditionally marginalized (Mitchell 36-37). But what is interesting about participation for Pastor B and Church B is that participating seems to be a means to serve beyond the church walls—giving and helping those in neighboring communities

and elsewhere. As will be shown and discussed later, Pastor B embodies a participatory and communal spirit, which comes into fruition in her preaching to her congregation.

History of Church B: Social Issues in Action

Coming from the east, one has to drive by the state capitol building, with its omnipresent dome seen from the interstate, to get to Church B. One also passes other state government buildings, giving off an aura of public importance—major issues of the state debated by government officials on behalf of their constituents—while driving by as well. It is no wonder that Church B is located near the capitol building, a bustling hub where spirited deliberations emerged about social concerns and where policies were made, for their denomination, United Methodist (UM), is historically linked to the many social issues, like the slavery question, having affected the nineteenth century. However, during the UM church's period of rapid growth, 1817-1843, America experienced a fervently religious and spiritual rebirth in the Second Great Awakening. During that period, the UM church, which was then called the Methodist Episcopal (ME) church, experienced an enormous sense of renewal from the numerous revivals and camp meetings that spurred this Awakening. Just like the First Great Awakening of the eighteenth century, the second one brought many unconverted souls into Christianity. Membership in the ME church increased greatly, and “a deep commitment of the general membership was exhibited in their willingness to adhere to the spiritual disciplines and standards of conduct outlined by their churches” (www.umc.org). Not only was this seriousness of Christianity and Methodism propelled by the Awakening, but John Wesley, one of the early founders of the church, reminded early Methodists that there was no place for “the almost Christians” (www.umc.org).

As the century progressed, the slavery question brought more contention within the ME church. In general, John Wesley, along with many church leaders, was strongly opposed to

slavery because they felt that human bondage was a sin. When one of the bishops acquired slaves from his wife's family, the ME church decided to suspend him if he did not free his slaves. He refused to do so, and some factions within the church agreed with him, so at the 1844 General Conference, "they drafted a Plan of Separation in order to organize their own ecclesiastical structure" (www.umc.org). The plan was accepted and the result of the separation was the establishment of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

In spite of this split, the ME church flourished after the Civil War, with further increase in membership and more mission work at home and abroad as its top priority. Among those missionary efforts were helping freed slaves integrate into society for productive living through education, establishing schools for them and their children; perhaps these missionary efforts coincided with the efforts of Church B. They were originally a white ME church, and they sold it to "the Negro congregation in the early 1890s, and Rev. J.D. Evans was their first pastor."¹

Church B prospered through the end of the nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century with several pastors and the remodeling of the church and parsonage. In 1951, Church B was appointed a new pastor; two weeks later, a flood swarmed the area, and even though the church survived, there was much damage to the church building and to members' homes. During that period of repairing the damages, morning worship services were held in the gymnasium of the local YMCA. In 1974, preparations were made to merge with another neighboring church, and plans for a new church building began. The first worship service in the new church building, uniting the two congregations, was October 18, 1975. Since its merger in 1974, Church B has had a number of female pastors. The first pastored during the years of 1981-85; the second during 1998-2001; and the third during 2005-2011. Pastor B makes Church B's fourth female pastor.

Profile of Church B: Open to the Community

Driving down the street where Church B is located, one can see that it is situated in a nice, older, working-class community. As one continues to drive down the street going west, Church B will be on your right, and you will see the title of the church in silver-grey lettering on the brick building, with a flame and cross symbol to the left of it, the official symbol of the United Methodist Church. A maroon and tan sign upheld by brick frames gives the name of the church with its times of Sunday School, worship service, bible study, and after-school childcare programs on it. This sign sets the tone of the church, for it does not simply list the time of the worship, but it says, “10:45am – Winsome Worship”—already emitting a positive and assertive attitude about their ministry as one passes by. The sign is uniquely catty-cornered on the lawn, for Church B is situated at the corner of two streets. Townhomes and apartments are located behind the church and a non-profit community center is across the street.

The church sanctuary has red upholstery and carpeting, and the cathedral ceiling has sloped, wooden beams that when looked upon, it is as if the beams are crisscrossed. Banners with Christian emblems hang along the side walls of the sanctuary, and a wooden crucifix hangs along the back wall paneling of the chancel area. Below the crucifix is the credence table, draped in a fine linen cloth of the liturgical color of the season. The lectern, also draped with linen cloth of the liturgical color of the season, is inside the chancel area as well, and flowers are symmetrically arranged around it. Seats for the ministers are located near the credence table and rows of chairs for the choirs are located to the immediate left of the credence table.

The congregation is very friendly, and the age range is a mixture of middle-aged and senior adults who are active participants in worship and active in church auxiliaries and committees. The congregation also has a membership of youth, from toddlers to teenagers, who

attend Sunday School and participate (singing in the choir and ushering) during Youth Sunday. When entering the sanctuary, an usher will greet one with a smile and a say “hello” and give the person a church bulletin. On the front page and centered on the bulletin in bold print is “Many People. . . One Faith, ----- Community Church, A United Methodist Congregation.” This is important to note, for when entering the church, a sense of community resonates. Also, Church B has a designated time in their worship service, called “Passing of the Peace” in their church bulletin, to meet and greet their visitors, as well as each other, a further indication that they value people in the community, for they are a community church.

Profile of Pastor B: Transition to Preaching

Pastor B is an only child, and she “grew up in a home that practiced the Christian faith.” She was baptized in the United Methodist Church at a young age, and many of her family members attended that church as well. Her grandmother was well-known in the community and a matriarch of the church, for when Pastor B’s parents did not go to Sunday School, her grandmother would “come by and pick me up, with my cousins, to make sure that we got to church.” However, there was no lack of respect for her parents, for Pastor B was able to witness how her parents handled and faced adversity with Christian resolve, particularly when her father won his case against a racist supervisor of the Boy Scouts.

She not only credits her parents in shaping her, but Pastor B also credits having grown up in a strong black church and community that supported her in all of her endeavors. The elders of the church and community were a backbone to her, for she states, “I can always remember the elders of the church being real concerned about who I was and what was happening in my life, encouraging me to make good choices. When I was in school, and I participated in things, they were interested in school and my achievements. They celebrated those things, and that really

meant a lot and influenced me.” Pastor B carried those things with her when she went off to college; she attended a state University in the Midwest and majored in psychology. Then, she did her graduate work in psychology at a university in South Central Kansas.

Having reflected on her life (while interviewing with me), she realized that the elders and those Christian teachings came forth when working with families on her job as a school psychologist. She practiced as a school psychologist for 20 years. During those years, she worked with a lot of oppressed families who were hurting and had experienced many injustices, so she began to use those teachings of encouragement and those teachings of Christianity in an indirect way. Pastor B showed concern and care to those families, and supported them by being their voice when they felt that did not have one. That was the best way she could do her job because “when you work for the school and you’re working with families, you can’t really talk a lot about the faith.” There were times in her counseling of families when she might tell them of how she is strengthened through meditation and prayer, but Pastor B still felt that “she was being restricted and denied.”

Thus, she accepted her call into the ministry. Pastor B went through the inquiry and training of the United Methodist Church. During this inquiry, she decided that her calling was to be an ordained elder, which is “more of your pastor that is more of the shepherd of the local church and deals with administration, the sacraments.” The training portion required her to meet with a District Committee on Ministry once a year and a team that met with her regularly to check on her progress, challenges, or how she was living out her ministry. Because the United Methodist Church requires seminary training, she attended St. Paul School of Theology, a United Methodist seminary. This period was a time of intense and rigorous formal training, for she was “going to school, reading with her interview group, meeting with the District Committee once a

year, meeting with her mentor monthly, and then toward the end you meet with a larger group called the Board of Ordination Ministry, which means you're getting closer to being actually ordained." Pastor B did her apprenticeship at a local United Methodist Church for six years. Then, she was appointed to Church B, so Pastor B is now in a vocation where she no longer feels restricted and denied, and continues in full-time ministry.²

Discussion of Results: Data Grounded in Realities

The descriptive themes that emerged from the interviews of the subjects were an attempt to explicate and then answer the larger research question: *what literacy practices of the black preacher originated in her/his training, and do those practices have any pedagogical implications for writing, particularly for college students who witness those practices in their daily lives*. As in chapter three, there were six (6) participants interviewed from Church B, and they each fit into three (3) different types of subject categories: 1) pastor/preacher, (Pastor B); 2) personal witness, (Member B1); and 3) members or congregants (Members B2, B3, B4, B5). Even though each category had its own set of questions, the themes overlapped and served as confirmation to what each participant said they were doing in terms of their participation during the multiple manifestations of literacy. Broadly conceived, the themes delineated the influences of literacy and the reception of literacy as it is concurrently and dynamically deployed during the sermon for a live and fully-functioning worship service. Based upon my interviews and observations, the most pronounced themes to emerge from my research were the following: A) The importance of credible/ communal affiliations; B) The experience of the word (the Word); C) The influence of sermons that touched the minds and hearts of parishioners; D) The structured and spontaneous cues for participation; and E) Other influences on the preaching

moment. Each of these themes will be discussed in its own section, and I will use direct quotes or passages from the interviews to display the voices of the participants as a crucial element of that respective theme. Also within each section, I will use some relevant scholarship in the field of rhetoric and composition, as well as in homiletics, to show connecting strands of thought to the themes to begin excavating for theory and pedagogy, even though further pedagogical implications will be fully discussed in chapter five. Then, I will provide a separate concluding section explaining what all of this means and the emerging theories, if any, the field may need to consider and/or reconsider for college writing classrooms.

The Importance of Credible/Communal Affiliations

Scholars in our field, as well as others, have theorized about the deep rootedness of identity to literacy, asserting that those “primary identities operate powerfully in the world and have to be productively engaged” (Gilyard 270). Also, literacy can be understood as to how one conceives knowledge, which as a practice is “always embedded in socially constructed epistemological principles” (Street 77). This broadening idea of literacy seems to bear relevance here, as some of my research subjects, Pastor B and Member B1, discussed the importance of people in their lives who sincerely believed in and encouraged them—not only to aspire for greater opportunities but to be a better person. Who are those people? Credible affiliations are family members who represented an ever-abiding presence during the impressionable period of the child’s formation of becoming; these members also served as exemplars of resolve amidst adversity. In the following subsections, I will provide excerpts from the interviews of two (2) research subjects, with bold-face print to indicate the words or phrases that contributed to this theme.

Pastor B

To begin the interview, I asked two questions about the preacher's birth family and parents' vocations; and to discuss their parents' professions and livelihoods, and Pastor B confidently answered:

Pastor B: I grew up in -----, KS and I was baptized into ----- United Methodist Church in -----, KS. My dad was, I should know how old, we were trying to figure this out the other day, but he was born in '39; my mom was born in 1941, so they're in their seventies. I'm an only child—

Fullwood: Okay.

Pastor B: So I grew up an only child, and I grew up in a home that practiced the Christian faith, and I was baptized into that faith. Many of my **family, extended family**, also attended that church. My **grandmother** was like, I guess you would say **like a matriarch of the church**- and very well known, and **she required her children to attend church**, so back then, it trickled down to the grandchildren and so forth. Even when my parents wouldn't go to Sunday School, my grandmother would make sure. **She come by and picked me up**, with my cousins, to make sure that we got to church. I'm not sure what else about my family--

Fullwood: Oh no, this is fine because I have a follow-up question. Now when you say the Christian faith, you don't mean like generally, like say our family is Christian; isn't there a denomination that's the Christian church, is that what you mean?

Pastor B: No, I mean Christian as in the body of Christ. **But my family has, traditionally, always been in the church, so I grew up in the church.** My parents were still heavily involved within the church.

Fullwood: Great. Well you somewhat already told us this, what were your parents' vocation, profession, and livelihood? You said they were heavily involved in church.

Pastor B: **They were heavily involved in the church.** [Pause] **My father worked for the Boy Scouts.** He was a district executive with the Boy Scouts. **My mother worked for, in the travel department, at Boeing,** yeah, where they built airplanes.

Fullwood: Yes, I just realized what you meant when you said Boeing.

Pastor B: And then toward the end of my dad's working career, he worked for the transit in Wichita, so he drove the bus. **It was kind of interesting; my dad, during his tenure with the Boy Scouts, that one period a supervisor started in his department, he was a racist.** And that entered another dynamic there, so my dad had to file a lawsuit against the Boy Scouts. There were a lot of racist things, and so they decided to settle. My dad had a pretty good case, so they settled outside, so my dad won the case. **My dad had quit because he didn't want to work with this individual.** But he was offered his job back if he wanted it, but he didn't.

Pastor B not only discussed parental influence but she also mentioned “church” numerous times during the portion of this interview, as if she simply could not make a distinction between her

family and this institution. She also said that her family was “traditionally involved in the church,” showing that her grandmother was a respected matriarch of the church and the generational mediator—taking her to church when her parents did not—for her family.

Gaining knowledge through credible affiliations, like family members, also stretched to religious institutions, like church, mentioned above. For Pastor B, not only did her family provide a sense of who she was, so did the church: the family and church are intertwined. However, credible affiliations moved beyond familial and institutional relationships to communal ones, as the community plays an important role too in shaping the person. Similar to the spirituality embedded in African American rhetoric mentioned in the introduction, this interaction also stems from an African worldview, in which “Africans believed that the community made, created or produced the individual; therefore, unless the individual was communal, he or she did not exist” (Hamlet 12). Elements of this worldview emerged when the scholar Beverly Moss, who was mentioned in chapters one and three, emphasizes that a literate text is also a community endeavor because it consists of and contributes to the building of shared knowledge (98).

Pastor B strongly believes that her community helped in shaping who she is now, for she reflected on her life when answering the following questions, “Discuss your formative years, and who influenced you to go into the ministry?” Pastor B responded:

Pastor B: When I was younger growing up in the church, I can always remember **the elders of the church being real concerned about who I was, what was happening in my life.** What type of choices I was making, encouraging me to make good choices and when I was in school and I participated in things, they were interested in what I was doing, in school and my achievements. **They always celebrated those things. And so those things really meant a lot and influenced me.**

What was also interesting is that those influences did not just shape Pastor B the person, but the communal affiliations helped to shape her in the first career she held prior to her current vocation of preaching:

Pastor B: As I began to go on, I found that many of those things and those teachings of the Christian faith, and **those interactions and relationships that were there when I was growing up became--it informed me as I began to work with families.** My career, I attended Kansas State University, and majored in psychology, and then I did my graduate work at Emporia State School of Psychology, and **I practiced as a school psychologist for 20 years.** And so as I worked with families who were dealing with situations with children with disabilities, as I worked with families that were often marginalized and oppressed, I just sensed something that was not working and a lot of injustice. **I began to bring forth a lot of what I--what had formed in me--from those years of attending church and with my church family.**

Fullwood: Right.

Pastor B: And what it means to care about people, to support people, to do what you can to be a voice on behalf of people who feel like they don't have a voice. And so that really influenced me, and I began to understand that a lot of healing takes place through our faith. And when you work for the school and you're working with families, you can't really talk a lot about that.

Fullwood: The faith, yeah.

Pastor B: Yes, the faith-- about how your faith strengthens you. And the things that were offered through our belief in Jesus Christ that helps us to be able to work through our trials and tribulations and things that are going on. And so, when I began to see that more clearly, that I wanted to be able to offer them, but I was being restricted and denied that. And then that kind of moved me to: "where can I go that I can fully offer that for, so that people can be encouraged? **So, I guess it's a lot of things; my family, church family. I grew up in a really strong black community, and so all those things coming together.**

Fullwood: Well, did you find that as a school psychologist and, as you just said, in your counseling or helping families, helping children, you simply could not articulate the language that we use in the Christian faith.

Pastor B: Right.

Fullwood: But you still had that within you, so did you, in trying to figure out how you could communicate that to the people you were counseling and you wanting to help them, did you use a different language? I guess what I'm saying, did you use, instead of saying, "Well faith moves mountains" or "Put your faith in God or Jesus," you know, did you say other nouns or adjectives that had equal meaning to the words that we would use if we were in church?

Pastor B: There was still a way, but the way I was able to, this is the thing that I think our Christian teaching becomes so helpful because we have those scriptures that guided and informed us. I was able to **live out the teachings, so through my actions,** although I couldn't quote a scripture or couldn't specifically say, **I think I could use some equivalence of what love looks like.**

This communal influence never really left Pastor B. Even through her college years when, no doubt, she was exposed to differing worldviews and lifestyles, that shared knowledge and sense of community stayed within her. Also, Street's notion of literacy as a "practice of socially embedded epistemological principles" bears relevance here because Pastor B asserted that she needs to use what had been taught to her by elders in the community. Thus, literacy is not only for one to contain in cognition but also for one to release toward action.

Member B1

Member B1 was the personal witness, one of the three types of research subjects used for these interviews. He is the spouse of Pastor B and very active in the church, for example, he is a Lay Speaker, and participates during the worship service (leading the congregation in prayer). Member B1 also mentors youth, particularly boys, in the church and neighboring community. He was a prime example of Gilyard's emphasis on literacy and identity, and how family and personal relationships shape knowledge, for he articulated Pastor B's influence on him, which contributed to his own knowledge about preaching. In a separate interview, two questions were asked of the personal witness: "Was she preaching when you met, and how much about preaching did you know prior to your relationship with her?" He responded as such:

Member B1: Okay, when we first met, she was working on her Master's in college and I was working on my Bachelor's, I didn't have a really good relationship with the church because my family didn't really go to church in Chicago. My mom would go every once in a while and I would go with her. **Other than that, when I was in college, I didn't go to church until I met my wife.**

Fullwood: Okay. How much or not about preaching did you know prior to your relationship with her? Please explain.

Member B1: Well, as far as preaching, primarily in the Baptist church in Chicago, **the only thing I knew about it was, when I did go to church with my mom, I knew that everybody looked up to the person who was giving the Word or the sermon.** I didn't have a relationship to what he was saying, even with regard to people making a living or people dying, and so much crime. My question was, "where is this God that everybody kept praying to?" And to me, He wasn't doing anything in our community, so, none, primarily nothing.

Fullwood: Nothing, okay. So you just had this, I'll say like, a general knowledge about preaching, that whoever the preacher was, it's somebody that you respect. But in terms of personal knowledge or personal application, none.

Member B1: None at all.

Fullwood: You saw a lot of problems--

Member B1: Within our community.

Fullwood: that was within your community that made you question, like, "Okay God, if you're God, why is stuff constantly happening?"

Member B1: Yeah, yeah.

As stated above, Member B1 had a very generic understanding of preaching, and even within that generic sense, his understanding was limited, but he knew that the person "giving the Word" was someone to respect. But through his association with Pastor B—meeting her in college before she became a preacher—he began to see the results of what one's preaching the Word looks like in a person's life. Through Pastor B, he began to see what going to church and being a Christian was really all about. In this case, Gilyard's assertion about the influences of identity on literacy and how they should be "productively engaged" resonates here. As a result, his knowledge about preaching and its purpose grew deeper.

Member B1 also discussed a credible influence in that he shared the deep impression Pastor B's grandmother had in her life; the question asked who influenced or mentored her, and his response:

Member B1: For my wife, **I would say yes, as far as mentors, I would think about her grandma**, you know because when my wife was in college, when you're in college you're kind of far away from the things that you've been taught.

Fullwood: That's right.

Member B1: My wife was born and raised in the church, so when she went off to college, her mom and **grandma would always tell her, "We're praying for you, for you to get back in church."** And so after we started dating, even though we lived and were in school in -----, we would drive back on the weekends and go to church at ----- United Methodist Church.

Fullwood: Okay, so her grandmother mentored her through college--

Member B1: Yes.

Fullwood: and she was there to still kind of say, “Remember how you were raised child.”

Member B1: Yes.

Member B1’s explanation of Pastor B’s influence exemplifies Street’s notion of literacy as a practice of “socially embedded epistemological principles.” Member B1 stated that even though when one is in college and that person is far from their nurturing and teaching, family members who influence the person still have an understanding, a kind of knowledge, that the nurturing really never leaves and still somehow shapes the way the person functions and performs in society.

Hence, this theme of credible and communal affiliations, the influence of family and community on one’s identity, is a very poignant one. As I interviewed Pastor B and Member B1 separately, the effects of having affiliations of credibility exuded through their mannerisms—by the way they thought about and answered the questions with conviction, and by the way they understood the literacies of the black preacher and the black church and articulated those literacies unashamedly (even though part of that understanding came from my explanation of this dissertation project to them prior to interviewing). By “unashamedly” I mean that in explaining my project to them, they immediately responded affirmatively, shaking their heads, saying “uh-hmm,” almost as if they wanted to say “we’ve been knowing this all along.”

These research subjects confirmed Anne Ruggles Gere’s notion of composition’s extracurriculum, discussed previously in chapters one and three. The field of rhetoric and composition can engage literacy practices of students by using their familial and communal knowledge, similar to the way I engaged the research subjects here. Gere further claims that scholars need to recognize ways in which they use the composition classroom as a “gatekeeping function by providing an initiation rite that determines whether newcomers can master the

practices and perspectives of academic discourse” (89). To summarize Gere further, those students who adhere to standardized rules of English and academic writing are deemed more worthy. Those who do not may be the ones who will not continue their education, dropping out after one or two years. Additionally, those who are successful may also realize that to subscribe to academic prescriptions and etiquette slowly isolates them from their families and communities, thus “composition accomplishes the cultural work of producing autonomous individuals willing to adopt the language and perspectives of others” (Gere 89-90). However, and in concurrence with Gere’s notion of the extracurriculum “strengthening ties with the community,” my research subjects show their connectedness to their communities, despite their educational achievements (90). Also, the research subjects provide an insider’s understanding of communal literacy, not an outsider’s view of communal literacy. Further discussion on this theme as an example of composition’s extracurriculum will be provided in the conclusion chapter.

Experiencing the Word

Pastor B, along with Member B2 and Member B5, showed through their responses a sense of worship as something not just contained within the walls of the church. Additionally, when asked about their worship experiences, they discuss it concomitantly with the sermon and with their reception of the sermon. The word (and the Word) as an experience is not only Biblical but also socio-cultural, a context that syncretizes the Biblical and cultural purposes so as to have a more impactful meaning for African Americans. Living life according to the scriptures, according to the mandates of Jesus Christ, is something that is expected for those who profess Christianity as their faith, so this is nothing new. However, the power of the spoken Word is rooted in “an oral tradition, part of the cultural baggage the African brought to America”

(Smitherman 77). Geneva Smitherman's *Talkin and Testifyin* explains further from her study of African orality: "All activities of men, and all the movements in nature, rest on the word, on the productive power of the word, which is water and heat and seed and Nommo, that is life force itself. . . The force, responsibility, and commitment of the word, and the awareness that the word alone alters the world" (Janheinz Jahn qtd in Smitherman 78). The African concept of Nommo, power in the Word, means to speak things, concepts, into being, that nothing exists without it being spoken into life and into action. The research subjects expressed a "living" of or "moving" of the Word (witnessing the Spirit move), and they say that they talk about the worship experience after the service with family and friends. In the following subsections, I will provide excerpts from the interviews of Pastor B and Members B2 and B5, with bold-face print to indicate the words or phrases that contributed to this theme.

Pastor B

The "living" and the "moving" of the Spirit phrase emerged more from Pastor B, for she connected it with mentorship, ministry work, and transformation. For example, continuing to discuss her move from a school psychologist to a minister in answer to the question, what influenced you to go into the ministry, she states:

Pastor B: I think it's the **living out of that Word** within my interaction with families. I was able to **live out the teachings**, so through my actions, although I couldn't quote a scripture or couldn't specifically say, I think I could use some equivalence of what love looks like. And there were times that I might talk and I might say, "I'm able to be strengthened because of my time in prayer [pause] because of my belief." I may not get into detail, but that was a signal to them that there was something much greater than myself that I was relying on.

Fullwood: You said "me," so maybe they could somewhat look at you as a model, so you were not necessarily saying, "Okay, have you tried prayer?" But you said "me."

Pastor B: Right, aah hah, yes, that I share my own belief. I think I have the right to share what I was doing, but I couldn't impress upon them that you do that, but I could say this is what gives me strength, this is what I do and this is how my family works.

Living out one's faith in all areas of life is extremely important to Pastor B, for she used it again when elaborating on the previous question about her influences and mentors in the ministry; she explained that she started her formal training through the board of examiners' classes in the A.M.E. (African Methodist Episcopal) church but returned to her church of birth, the United Methodist, because she "needed to have more, continuing to have more formal teaching and guidance." Pastor B continued to say:

Pastor B: I returned to the United Methodist church, not that I found anything wrong with the A.M.E., but in many smaller A.M.E. churches, your pastor is not there full-time. You have pastors that drive in, and in -----, we had the pastor coming from Kansas City and so it's really hard when you're needing that mentoring, to be able to get that when a person is just there one day a week. And you're not able to see how they are **living out the ministry** every day.

As the interview progressed about her mentorship, she later discussed how she received some mentoring at the A.M.E. church she attended prior to receiving her assigned mentor in the United Methodist church; here the theme of "experiencing the word" as articulated by Pastor B is a witnessing of the Spirit:

Pastor B: When we attended the A.M.E. church, there actually was a couple that really encouraged me. At the time I wasn't responding to my call, but there were just a lot of things that they included my family in. And ways they were examples themselves that helped me to see more clearly how their leadership in ministry was just so valuable and helping people to understand God and Christ, and **how the Holy Spirit works in lives**.

Fullwood: So that couple first as a mentor--

Pastor B: They did, yeah, they did.

Not only did this theme apply to the question about mentoring and influences in the ministry, but experiencing the word evolved to one of transformation, as it emerged in her answers about preaching. The question asked, "What is the racial or ethnic composition of your congregation? Then, is your preaching different, meaning do you adapt your preaching to meet the needs of a heterogeneous audience or is your preaching the same regardless of the composition of the audience?" Pastor B responded as such:

Pastor B: The congregation here is predominantly African American. The church I came from was predominantly white. And I think that there were just 2 or 3 families in that congregation who were black. They never had, first of all a woman in a pulpit, and they never had a black in the pulpit. And they were a church--back in the 70s, there was this initiative in the church where churches had an opportunity in the United Methodist church to say yes we'll accept a woman or yes we'll accept a person of color and this was the church that said no.

Fullwood: Oh my! Okay.

Pastor B: As a matter of fact there were some people that left when I started there. But the pastor there was very open. Very liberal, he was very open, you know kind of long hair with the earring.

Fullwood: Oh, okay [laughing!!]

Pastor B: [laughing!!] He'd say, "Let me tell you, look at me, I'm already different! So he was very nice. And I think one of the reasons why he wanted them to hire me was because he was trying to really push that.

Fullwood: Change the culture of the congregation.

Pastor B: It was very challenging 6 years. And then the things that you say, and how you say it is different, you know, because they don't want to hear, they don't want to be challenged. They just want to come and know that, yeah, we're good, and we love everybody, everybody's been doing okay here, and this is okay. **They don't want you to come and talk about systems are broken, and you've got people who are oppressed, and the church is what God uses to help address those injustices. We are to be pursuing peace, and we are doing these things.** They don't like to hear that, so you are stepping on people's toes, and they already feel like you're being negative. And so the challenges there, you know, and you want people to go with **the understanding that you could leave this place feeling good, but at the same time the reality is there's a lot of stuff going on!**

Fullwood: That's right.

For Pastor B, experiencing the word had the implicit meaning of one undergoing transformation, not merely a philosophical or existential meaning. Here, Smitherman's study on African orality resonates here, "the productive power of the word," "the responsibility of the word," for Pastor B expects immediate transformation when she (as a vessel of God) speaks the Word into existence through her preaching.

Member B2 and Member B5

The research participants here fall under the subject category of congregants. These members are faithful and dedicated to the task of ministry, meaning they participate in auxiliaries

and activities for the betterment of the church and community. For example, Member B2 faithfully “used to wear many hats” and is a member of the Pastor’s Parish Relations Committee, a committee that is like “the pastor’s eyes, ears. . . members come to a pastor’s parish person to vent or express concerns,” and the committee “would have a dialogue with the pastor on a matter of concerns . . . and discuss how to take the proper direction and resolve the issue” (Member B2 interview, Nov. 2012). Member B5 is a dedicated member who asserted, “I got to have church! I need my church family; it is very important.” She is also a greeter on the Usher Board, a person who “participates through greeting visitors” (Member B5 interview, Jan. 2013). Also, both congregants are choristers, for they are members of the Worshipping Choir, one of the primary choirs to provide music for Church B’s worship services.

In reference to this theme, the same was true for the congregants as it was for Pastor B, for to “live out” continued to be a pervading sub-theme within this theme of experiencing the word (the Word) as Member B2 explained it as a movement which leads to action:

Fullwood: Do you discuss the worship experiences with other parishioners, and if so what do you talk about, if you don't mind me asking?

Member B2: I would say yes, there's been many occasions that I've spoken with my husband, with my sister, and other members that you know, **“that was a good Word that went forth,”** and I may even share personally how **it has touched me and moved me:** “It was such a powerful Word.”

Fullwood: Okay, right, right.

Member B2: And how the Holy Spirit **moved me to do something** for someone else. So, yeah, I usually talk about it, uum huh.

Fullwood: And does talking about the sermon or the worship experience, is that like helping you in some way?

Member B2: I can actually grow; it just gives you a good feeling inside. It's just hard to express; it's like God just glows within and you're just bursting! Like it was burning inside! [happily laughing!!] **The Word, the Word is so powerful!**

Even though Member B5 does not necessarily discuss the influence of the Word as leading to action, the “moving,” as an in-dwelling of the Spirit, is emphasized below:

Fullwood: Do you discuss the worship experiences with other parishioners, and, if so, what do you talk about?

Member B5: We usually talk about the Spirit, the in-dwelling of the Spirit. If something is bothering somebody, they know they can trust me with whatever they tell me. We also talk about sports (football), talk about bible study, and we, every once in a while, talk about the message—if it’s a SUPER-DUPER one! **The spirit gets moving, and it’s just a powerful sermon.**

The research subjects use their discourse not only to converse but to apply to life, and it also becomes a part of their disposition, which becomes part of their identity that moves them toward action. I say this because in my observation of these worship services, I noticed these subjects’ character during worship, during their participation as worshippers and choir members. It was their passion, their sincerity in church and their reception of the sermon, listening and processing, that made me approach one of them for an interview (the other was recommended by Pastor B) because I sensed that she would be willing to do so. I wondered: Is it possible that our students, who come from diverse backgrounds, are similarly engaged in their classroom discourses? Earlier in chapter one, I noted the significance of evangelical discourses through Elizabeth A. Rand’s article, “Enacting Faith.” Rand asserts that composition scholars need to challenge their assumptions about religious rhetoric, thinking that it is “sweet, foolish, and immature thought,” which “merely suggests a quaint naiveté”(357-58). For example, if a student from a background similar to my research subjects’ backgrounds wrote a personal narrative about her profession of faith or experience of salvation through Jesus Christ, then that warrants serious consideration (by writing instructors) of an identity being articulated. Why so? It is a valid way of understanding the world and her place within it, just as those who understand and critique the world through the identities of gender, race, and class (Rand 351). And, according to Rand, “religion is a subversive force,” so scholars and pedagogues “should start from the

premise that religious convictions (even those within conservative forms of Christianity) are considered by many to be ‘radical,’ and we should frame our questions in more evocative ways” (361). I would imagine Rand means such critical questions as: “what does it mean to be saved through Jesus Christ; are you setting yourself apart from others in the world, and if so, why?” These questions and others I will return to in my concluding chapter.

Sermons Touching the Minds and Hearts of Parishioners

In the previous subsection, Pastor B stated that she wanted to preach that “we are to be pursuing peace,” though her directness was mistaken for negativity—interpreted as preaching doom and gloom thereby making her listeners feel distraught. This suggested (to me as I interviewed her) that she expected immediate transformation. Her job as a minister of the Gospel is not only to address oppression and broken systems but also make listeners leave feeling valued, renewed, and ready to serve their communities. Recent scholars, too, have expressed an interest in the black sermon, not only in its rhetorical effectiveness but “its proclivity toward liberation, getting people willing to act. . . move beyond their fears . . . beyond the resignation that leads people to take comfort in status and material things” (Banks 124). Even though Adam Banks’ *Digital Griots* deals with digital access and multimedia writing concerns in composition, Banks sees the black sermon as part of that same discussion. Because of the rhetorical history embedded within it and because of the “complex epistemological, theological, and linguistic codes that enable the preacher and congregation to come together to literally make the word flesh” the black sermon is one of the ways the field can deal with issues of access (125). For this theme, the research subjects expressed a similar sentiment. They valued sermons that were comprehensible and challenging yet compassionate, that taught as well

as proclaimed the Word so that they may deal with their problems and confidently face their future. In the subsections to follow, I will provide excerpts from the interviews of all six (6) research subjects, with bold-face print to indicate the words or phrases that contributed to this theme.

Member B1 and Member B2

As aforementioned, Member B1 is a personal witness and Member B2 is a committee and choir member. The personal witness was one who could attest to the formal and informal training of Pastor B, witnessing her preparation of the sermon; the other members, like Member B2, were congregants, meaning active church members. Below, Member B1 “witnessed” for me, as he discussed the breadth of Pastor B’s intellect; the question that I asked of Member B1 was the following: “What makes a good sermon and has the pastor delivered one?” He replied:

Member B1: **She can go really deep in her knowledge and understanding of the scripture.** And, yes, **she has delivered very, very, powerful and knowledgeable sermons to teach** even me, though I’ve been in church for a while. And when I come back, I say, “Girl that was---

Fullwood: that was deep!”

Member B1: Yes!

Member B2 articulated a similar response to Member B1, and what was interesting is that when I interviewed her, she expressed that there is teaching through preaching. While interviewing her, I noticed the manner in which Member B2 emphasized this (her facial expression was one of serious care in giving a thoughtful response), which suggested that she wanted to ensure that black preaching is not portrayed as merely an emotional experience. In response to the following question, “how important are the sermons,” she stressed the importance of teaching and how through that teaching, it helps her to worship:

Member B2: I think the pastor's sermons are very important. **The sermons will teach you lessons from the Bible. The sermons give the Word.** The Word says that if we don't give God the praise then the rocks will cry out.

Fullwood: That's right.

Member B2: So, we are created to give God praise and glory and magnify his name.

Fullwood: Aah hah. And in keeping with Pastor B's sermon preached today, you know as you said, we were created to do that because God gave His Son--

Member B2: Gave His life!

Both members reinforce Banks' point about the black sermon not only having complexity and depth, but, as Member B2 asserted above and in line with Banks, it gets people to "act and to move beyond their fears" (124).

Member B3 and Member B4

Member B3 and Member B4 were congregants, members who were actively involved in Church B. Member B3 is not only a devoted member of Church B but also a devoted congregant of the United Methodist denomination, for he states, "I'm a person who appreciates structure, organization. I appreciate the fact that there is a book of discipline, and it's uniform throughout the entire conference of the United Methodist." He is a member of the Nominations Committee; the nominations committee "makes suggestions and asks people if they're willing to serve on boards and committees," and I chuckled after Member B3 added: "I'm on the Nursery Committee" (Member B3 interview, Dec. 2012). He said that because I met his wife and his two very energetic toddler children after church one Sunday!

Also, I would imagine that Member B4 is a great church member in which to model, for not only does he serve as treasurer but he has demonstrated endurance and longevity, having been a faithful member of Church B for thirty-five (35) years, and he was also one of the members recommended to me by Pastor B. Even while interviewing him, I, not the graduate student conducting research, but I, the woman who is a Christian and identifies with these members through her Christian experience, felt as if I were receiving some sage advice from

him. For example, one of my questions asked about the importance of the worship experience, and Member B4 stated: “It’s pretty important because in your walk with Christ, to participate in the service is being present in the church and it prepares you for the week away from the church. I think how you live and how you walk is important” (Member B4 interview, Dec. 2012). So, both members provided interesting points about the black sermon as explained below.

Member B3 really admired the rhetorical strategies that black preachers employed during the sermon but stressed those strategies as secondary to the message:

Fullwood: How important are the pastor's sermons?

Member B3: Very important. I’d gone to a place where I felt that the worship was good, but the sermon was shallow. **That’s the one thing-- I appreciate the emotional aspects of good preaching from the pulpit-- is the call and response. I definitely appreciate it. I appreciate the rhetorical tools that identify culturally;** you know rhetorical tools that, you know, are meant to elicit a certain type of response or feeling.

Fullwood: Okay, alright.

Member B3: **But I don't want that to be the meat of the sermon.** Because I've been to those kind of churches where people don't have anything to say, but they want to YELL AND GET YOU GOING, AND THEY BREAK INTO A CADENCE, [*Member B3 says this rhythmically and in a guttural sound*] and expect that to do it for me. And that's the end of it! [Laughing!!] And I'm like, listen, **where’s the actual message?**

Fullwood: Right, like you said the meat of it.

Member B3: Yeah.

Fullwood: I recently learned that, I said “recently” because in the past I didn't realize that's what was going on. But now that I've been able to study and get words of wisdom from other pastors, now I see that if you go to a church and a minister starts out like that, they get to the celebration moment of the preaching--

Member B3: Uum huh, uum huh.

Fullwood: If they get to that first, nine times out of ten, they have not studied! [Laughing!!]

Member B3: [Laughing!!] That is so true!

Member B3 provides a literal example of how the black sermon “moves people” in a dual fashion, emotionally and intellectually. This is exactly what Banks asserts, that there is

“rhetorical history and linguistic codes embedded in the sermon,” and Member B3 desires all the cultural aspects of the sermon in that it is the medium which leads to the message.

Similar to his earlier comment about the worship experience, Member B4 saw the sermon as an important element of corporate worship—Pastor B as leading the whole body into a transformative state of mind:

Fullwood: How important are the pastor's sermons?

Member B4: You know it's really important; you know when you come to the church; **it's called corporate worship--**

Fullwood: That's right, the whole body.

Member B4: **It's the whole body worshipping together and so it's important, I think, to have a leader that's leading that worship.**

Fullwood: Okay, alright, okay. And so she does that through her, through the sermons. That's one way of doing that, keeping that body together, is through her preaching.

Member B4: Yes, **through her preaching. And people listen to what she's saying because sometimes I've really been in a service where, maybe there's a little issue or problem about something, so it's like she's preaching or talking to you, specifically talking to you.** And you hear other people saying, “Well, yeah, I think she was talking to me today.” [laughing!!]

Fullwood: Aah hah [laughing!!]

This theme of the sermon encompassing the intellectual, emotional, as well as spiritual faculties, applied to other similar questions. The congregants and pastor mentioned in earlier sections, Member B5, Member B2, and Pastor B, answered the questions in such a way that shows how the sermon touches the heart and mind:

Fullwood: How important are the pastor's sermons?

Member B5: **They're important to me. She prepares us for what is out there and how to handle it with God's help.**

Fullwood: What do you like about the sermons?

Member B5: **I love it when she says, “Can you hear me saints?” Do you know what I'm saying?” That's when I know that the pastor is being led by the Spirit.**

Member B5 echoed the sentiments of Member B3, for she too likes the rhetorical tools that Pastor B uses that members identify with culturally. What was even more interesting is that Member B5 is Italian, but she still identifies with African American rhetorical traditions. And in continuing with this theme, Member B2 shows how “sermons touching the minds and hearts” is not an exclusive practice but one that is inclusive:

Fullwood: What do you like about the sermons?

Member B2: Okay, and I should have indicated that I like Pastor B's sermons, **that they stir a mixture of contemporary and traditional services. I know you've only attended a few times, but she does have that type of service to me. She preaches with an exclusive style, which includes the young, the old, the poor—**

Fullwood: Okay.

Member B2: and people with money to allow everyone to be a part of the service.

Fullwood: Okay, so when you said earlier that she has a contemporary and tradition, do you mean in terms of the way she preaches and delivers the Word? She uses some contemporary stylings or contemporary feel, but it still isn't a break away from tradition.

Member B2: Amen.

Additionally, Pastor B was asked “what makes a successful sermon,” and her response encapsulates all of her members’ answers about the sermon:

Pastor B: **You know, a successful sermon for me is when I know that somebody's heart was touched. You know, it's not even about the, always the, you know they talk a lot about your delivery of your sermon, which I think those things are important because in order to get people to attend to you, there has to be something that draws them in.**

Fullwood: Right.

Pastor B: All of that is really good. But when you come, you'll see my preaching is really different; I'm not a yeller--

Fullwood: That's great! I just like preaching. I do; I don't care about the style.

Pastor B: **I'm a teacher; I want people to understand that this is what this scripture is about;** how do I get it to connect with where you are in your journey; what is it that you can take from it to be able to use that, to continue to help you to grow in your faith, and so, those are the comments that I get back: “It challenged me to think about that a little differently,” “I took that with me,” or “Is there something here I can use when I leave this place.”

Fullwood: Right.

Pastor B: **So I think that's successful if somebody can leave here thinking that I'm different from when I came in.**

I want to briefly return to Bruce Rosenberg and Gerald Davis' research, discussed in chapter two. In studying the American folk preacher, Rosenberg used the same oral-formulaic theory of Parry-Lord in their study of Yugoslavian oral compositions. From his research and observations of the folk preacher, Rosenberg concluded that "in few other arts is the message so clearly the medium as in this kind of preaching" (Rosenberg 61). Davis, in studying the performed sermon of the African-American preacher, critiqued Rosenberg, saying that the theory he used comes from standard literary distinctions, which are too confining for the African American preacher. African American sermons may sound and even look irregular when printed, but "[are] made regular and seemingly metrical in performance through the use of music and sound production principles" (Davis 25). The research subjects noted above, in particular Member B3 and Member B5, appreciated the performance, the rhetorical flair of black preaching, but they also expressed the need for the sermon to have a message, one that they can learn from and apply to their lives. Also, Pastor B emphasized that a successful sermon for her is when "someone's heart is touched" because she is a teacher, wanting the congregation to understand the scriptures and how it connects to their lives. So, the message is not the medium for these subjects, as Rosenberg declared.

However, it is only through the sermon, and all of those dynamics—rhetorical strategies, audience response, teaching—where Pastor B and members emphasize the communality of the black church and how that communal sense manifests itself through corporate worship. The black sermon is intriguing in that the participants' responses show how the "communal interpretive strategy" (mentioned in the introduction of this chapter) as a rhetorical move

increases the quality of preaching. And, the black sermon may elicit responses from people who otherwise are not usually responsive, and it affects the mannerism of the preacher before, during, and after delivery. Thus, this section still carries evidences of the two (2) previous themes discussed: experiencing the Word, and the importance of communal affiliations. A sense of “communal affiliation” takes place when the black church as a community comes together for worship; when they receive the sermon, with all of their minds and hearts, through the preaching and teaching of Pastor B; and in “experiencing the Word” which inspires them toward action. More of this will be discussed in the following subsections, with further discussions on the black sermon and composition studies in the concluding chapter.

Structured and Spontaneous Cues for Participation

Church B is not a “traditional” black church but one that identifies itself as part of the black church experience, with similar black cultural styles of worship. To emphasize “traditional” here is very important, for that word signals the black churches that broke from mainstream white denominations to form their own churches as a means of protesting against mistreatment. For example, in the late 18th century, Richard Allen decided to leave the Methodist Episcopal church in Philadelphia to form the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) church when he and his friends were barred from engaging in the Communion service with white members.³ But what is also important to note is that some African Americans remained with the white churches when those splits occurred. So, even the African American congregations of those churches today have their structure of worship and means of church governance in accordance to that denomination, such as Church B. Therefore, participation may differ in non-traditional African American churches and may very well manifest as calm, spiritual expressions, as opposed to the traditional African American worship (highly-spirited expressions). But for

both types of churches, participation also means to engage in the formal program of worship and/or rituals particular to their denomination.

Moreover, the traditional African American church is known for its participation—dialoguing, chanting, singing, clapping, humming/moaning, shouting/paroxysm—in worship services. Once again, this stems from the African worldview; however, similar expressions were birthed here in America as well, in particular the chanted sermon. Some influences of the chanted sermon were “the emotional and dramatic delivery legitimated by the Great Awakening of the mid eighteenth century, the ecstatic behavior encouraged by the revivals,” and the “renewed stress upon Christian experience fostered by American revivalism” (Raboteau 147). In this nuanced way of understanding Christianity in early America, the African slave was able to give physical expressions (dancing) through a manner “markedly similar to the ways in which their ancestors had responded to possession by the gods” in their practice of African Traditional Religions (Raboteau 149-50). The historian, Albert J. Raboteau, shows not only the connections between the two cultures but discusses Africans’ influence on Christianity:

Black American Christians were filled with the Spirit of the Christian God. . .

Possessed by the Holy Spirit, slaves and freedmen danced, sang, and shouted in styles that were African. More important, ecstatic trance was at the center of their worship as it had been in Africa. In the revivals, African and Christian traditions met on common ground, ecstatic response to divine possession. The African tradition of religious dance was Christianized and the Evangelical Protestant tradition of experiential religion was Africanized. (150)

Participation that warrants such ecstatic behavior was not solely an African endeavor but one in which remnants of African culture could flourish in the New World expressions of Christianity.

Thus, all of the research subjects show these varying levels of expressions as discussed above.

Excerpts of their interviews are provided below; words and phrases are in bold to emphasize the emergence of this theme.

Member B1, Member B3, Member B4, and Member B5

In response to the question, “do you participate in the worship experience,” the participants replied:

Member B1: Sometimes **I get up and do prayer**. And **I've done speeches**, I don't call it a sermon, but I have been up to speak.

Member B3: Yes. I sometimes **sing in the Male Chorus** whenever I get an opportunity to make sure I make all of the practices.

Member B5: Yes, I **participate**. **When not singing with the choir, I'm out in the audience singing in worship and participate through greeting visitors. I just don't sit in the pew.**

Member B4 discussed participation as a kind of denominational leader, something that is recognized and sanctioned through the United Methodist church. This warranted a full display of the answer and explanation:

Member B4: I have **given the message here at the church many times. I sang in the choir, in the Male's Chorus**. So I've participated in that way.

Fullwood: In that way, okay. You said that you've given the message, do you mean like, say, when you said that, the first thing I thought about was maybe you all had a Men's Day or something like that, and you gave a message for Men's Day or you mean some other kind of worship?

Member B4: No, **I've been on the Lay Leadership team for the church**.

Fullwood: Okay, alright.

Member B4: **When the pastor's been away, sometimes we take over the pulpit**.

Fullwood: Okay, so that's what Lay Leaders are for?

Member B4: Yes, we have Lay Speakers in the church, and sometimes they speak for the church.

Fullwood: Okay, and so that's what you all do when the pastor's not here, you speak, that's right.

Member B4: Yes.

Fullwood: Is that a position that you hold for a certain term and then someone else, or how does one become a Lay Leader?

Member B4: **I was a Lay Leader and Lay Speaker in the church. And it's something that you want to do; you volunteer to be a Lay Leader.**

Fullwood: Okay, alright.

Member B4: You serve as long as you like, especially in the lay speaking area; you have to take training to do that; you have to keep your certification up.

Fullwood: Okay, alright, so it's not anything to take lightly, not just something I'm going to do just to do it. No, if you're volunteering to be a lay leader, they say you have to be trained.

Member B4: To be the Lay Speaker.

Fullwood: Oh, to be the Lay Speaker.

Member B4: To be the Lay Speaker. You can choose if you want to speak at other churches when their pastors are away. When you fill out the form at the church for each conference, you can indicate whether or not you're willing to go out and speak at other churches.

These responses demonstrate participation through a structured, order of worship and through auxiliaries/boards/committees in the church, even though I, as the interviewer, meant participation in the traditional African American church context, one that emits highly-spirited expressions of worship. However, I did not interfere because I needed to listen to and respect their answers.

Member B2

To challenge my own assumptions and to ensure that the members voiced their understanding of participation, I followed up with a different yet similar question; this question asked, "Is the same kind of participation used during the preaching moment?" Member B2 had a particular response that also warrants a full display of that segment of the dialogue:

Fullwood: Question 8: Is the same kind of participation used during the preaching moment? If so, please explain. If not, and there is some other type of participation used, please explain this also. Okay, so in other words, you told me, in the previous question that you actively participate through singing, you sing for the Lord.

Member B2: Uum huh.

Fullwood: So, is that the same kind of participation used during the preaching moment, or is there another kind of participation you use during the preaching moment?

Member B2: Well, **I would say that the worship moment on Sunday mornings are powerful, they're moving, and they're so Spirit-filled.**

Fullwood: Okay. So, this is still part of number 8. What is your interaction during preaching, okay? Are you--

Member B2: **Be more specific.**

Fullwood: Okay, do you, are you still actively participating by listening to Pastor B or do you participate through a verbal participation? Do you just participate by just quietly listening to her, or what is your manner during the preaching moment?

Member B2: Okay. I would say that, **because she is the pastor and she's giving the Word, to help educate us to know the Lord better, to encourage us. I would praise the Word, give God the glory; I would clap, I would say "Amen." I would use the appropriate response if the Word moves me, or the Spirit, the Holy Spirit moves, or say "Hallelujah."**

Fullwood: Oh, okay, right, so that's participation?

Member B2: Uum huh.

I will note here that during the interview, I really did not grasp the full meaning of what this dialogue elicited; in reviewing the interview (reading and listening to it), I heard something else, through the different tone of Member B2's voice, the directness in the phrase *be more specific*, and the explanation "she is giving the Word to help educate us." Moreover, in response to the earlier question asking, "do you participate in the worship experience," Member B2's response was the following:

Member B2: **Well, I had given that a lot of thought.**

Fullwood: Okay.

Member B2: **I was going to say no, but yes, I am a choir member,** I love singing for the Lord—

Fullwood: Good.

Member B2: **and forget about myself and concentrate on Christ and experience His presence.**

To explain further, Member B2 said “I had given that a lot of thought” because I, as the interviewer, had given copies of the interview questions to Pastor B to distribute to the members so that they would have time to prepare before the scheduled interview and not be caught off guard. Yet, the fact that Member B2 uttered this phrase suggested some tension, some grappling with the issue of participation, which complements the issues relating to the previous theme, “sermons touching the mind and heart,” just as the responses of the participants ensured that preaching is viewed as an intellectual engagement, that the preacher is also teaching, this member’s response suggested that the participation comes by way of one being educated through the preaching of the Word, and due to the comprehension of the Word going forth, Member B2 can “concentrate on Christ and experience His presence.” The emotive mode is not solely the primary channel in which the black preacher taps a response from the congregation, particularly in the case of Pastor B and Church B.

Member B3, Member B4, Member B5, and Pastor B

Continuing with the same follow-up question, “is the same kind of participation used during the preaching moment,” the rest of the participants also voiced their participation as one that is not solely emotional, demonstrated through the prefacing of an explanation before directly answering the question. Members B3 and Members B4’s answer to this question needed to be reported in its entirety to hear the explanation, beginning with Member B3:

Member B3: Well, you know, for us, I guess from my experience, preaching is a little bit different, in terms of participation. There's no hymn posted up on the projector or in the hymnal, singing a hymn, but usually the pastor will, in a similar way, I guess, have the verse up on the projector. She will show it up there and she will usually go into, and she has a way of doing it that's relevant to the study definitely, using language that relates, and it makes the real meat of the verse acceptable to the general public, people who are not trained in theology.

Fullwood: Right, that's exactly right, uum huh.

Member B3: But still explain the context for us so that we can really understand how it relates to us. And of course, in order **to keep us engaged, the traditional kind of call and response rhetorical factors that most pastors use, especially black pastors. I guess to help us participate in the sermon.**

Fullwood: Okay, alright, so then let me ask you this since you brought up call and response. I told Pastor B when I interviewed her that I am the type of person, maybe because I'm sensitive to speakers because I know what they have to go through in terms of preparing and having to preach or speak before an audience, seeing what my father and other preachers in my family go through, so I'm really sensitive in making sure that the preacher or speaker really knows that I'm engaged. So I do say "Amen," "I hear you pastor," "Alright," and things like that. Do you engage in that kind of talk, or it's participation but say it's a non-verbal participation or how do you?

Member B3: You know always **some kind of giving**, using somehow the mood, **whether its gestures or something to make sure the pastor knows that you're with them.** And you know, we'll say "Amen," I'll say "Amen"--

Fullwood: Right, that's right.

Member B3: **I'll clap to acknowledge that I fully agree with the pastor.**

Fullwood: That's right, uum huh. Say Amen, right.

Member B3: **And I'll say aaaaah ha!**

Fullwood: Okay, yeah [laughing!!], that's right.

Member B3 is the one who stated in the interview (as noted in my description of the members earlier in the section of "sermons touching hearts and minds") that he "appreciates structure" and that he "likes that there is a book of discipline" for the entire United Methodist denomination. I took his explanation of participating before directly answering as one who wanted to ensure that I knew he participates in an orderly, structured fashion. Yet, at the same time, Member B3 also liked the flexibility of a worship service, where he can identify culturally, to clap when he agrees with Pastor B or to say "Aaah ha!" And, similar to Member B3, Member B4 did not directly state an answer. I, as the interviewer, had to engage in some prompting to make sure the question was fully understood. Then, Member B4 started discussing the types of participatory dialogue uttered during worship service:

Fullwood: Is the same kind of participation used during the preaching moment? The participation you told me about before, singing in the choir--

Member B4: Yeah.

Fullwood: the lay-- so is the same kind of participation used during the preaching moment, or is there a different kind of participation used?

Member B4: Well, **it would have to be the same kind I suppose. But the previous question is related to that.**

Fullwood: It is.

Member B4: **And I'm trying to understand--**

Fullwood: Okay, so during, when Pastor B is preaching, you said that you sing in the choir. Is there some singing involved during the preaching moment in the interaction? You said that you are a speaker; do you, is there some speaking involved when she's preaching?

Member B4: **Not when she's preaching.** When she's here, I'm just [inaudible].

Fullwood: Okay, okay.

Member B4: And let me clarify too. I have withdrawn from that position; I've done it 6 years, and I've later withdrawn just because I'm on so many committees in church. I was on 13 or 14 committees, and it was just too much.

Fullwood: Oh my, too much! Okay, so you were a lay speaker of the past; currently you're not because you withdrew.

Member B4: Right, right.

Fullwood: Okay, then the third part of that question was is there some other type of participation used, please explain this also. Now you just said that when the pastor is preaching, you don't do any of that. You sit and listen to what she is delivering.

Member B4: Right.

Fullwood: Well let me ask you, how do you learn, how receptive are you to what she's preaching? Do you listen with all of your ears, with your whole heart, are you actively listening or are you quietly listening, how do you?---

Member B4: **Sometimes there are some "Amen's," sometimes there are some clapping, which you'll see. There are some things that relate to the truth that you're [inaudible] congregation during those times.**

Fullwood: Okay, right.

Member B4: **So there are some "okaying."**

Fullwood: Right, that's affirming what she's saying; I hear you pastor, you know, I understand, uum huh.

Member B4: Yeah.

While interviewing Member B4, I noticed that he shifted to the third person when discussing participation, veering attention away from a sole concentration on him. Similar to Member B2, I sensed there was a little inner tension with discussing participation, and I certainly understood why. I immediately surmised that his somewhat reticent answers to my prompting came from the stigma of black churches by others—that their worship services are strictly emotional, chaotic, and unintellectual. However, Member B5 gave a direct answer, not an explanation before answering about her participation like Members B3 and B4. Member B5 is the one who, during the earlier description of her in the “experiencing the Word” section, said to me immediately that she has to have church and needs her church family. So, her directness about participating reflects that need, even though her answer, too, emphasized thoughtful participation like the previous members:

Fullwood: Is the same kind of participation used during the preaching moment? If so, please explain. If not and/or some other type of participation is used, please explain this also.

Member B5: **Yes. Listening, praising, reflecting and really thinking about what pastor is saying.**

Participation for these members is guided by the structure of worship and by Pastor B as a preacher and a teacher. Yet, some of the participants articulated some flexibility; opportunities arrive that make church members feel that they have the liberty to express themselves during the worship service and in particular the preaching moment. For example, when continuing to answer the question, “what makes a successful sermon,” Pastor B genuinely stated:

Pastor B: **I think that's successful if somebody can leave here thinking that I'm different from when I came in.** Because I heard this, and I can take this and I can use this because now I have a responsibility to help somebody else--

Fullwood: Somebody else, right.

Pastor B: To be able to-- yeah. So that's kind of, **I know that sounds pretty simple or maybe just kind of trite, but to me that's what makes a successful sermon. It's not always about everybody up clapping or yelling or whatever because when they're quiet**

but they are engaged with me that's okay because I know that you're listening and must be processing what I'm saying.

Fullwood: Right, right!

Pastor B: So I'm good with that. **But I do like the dialogue; I think that's interesting because it really is the community working, and if they say things back to me then I'm responding to what they're saying, which is what happens in conversation, yeah so.**

Also, Member B4 expressed that there is freedom to respond within the structure of Church B's service without members being told to do so; Member B3 expressed a similar sentiment when he constantly said earlier that he appreciates the rhetorical tools that allow him to identify culturally in worship. In the following question, "how do you know when to participate, Member B4 thoughtfully responded:

Fullwood: How do you know when to participate? From what or from whom gives the signal or cue to do so? So, just to piggyback on what you said just a few moments ago; you said sometimes there is some clapping, some "Amen" or you know "yeah," "that's right," when the Pastor's saying something that the congregation can really understand, like she's really hitting it home for them.

Member B4: **Uum huh.**

Fullwood: How do you think they know when to do that?

Member B4: **I think that it's what has been said; how it ties in to the individual, the meaning of what's being, what has been said.**

Fullwood: Right, that's how they know. So there's no one to give them a cue?

Member B4: **There's no one to say clap, or say Amen; there's none of that. It's spontaneous.**

Member B4's emphasis on spontaneity correlates with the field notes from my participant-observations. During the worship service on November 4, 2012, I recorded the following:

The choir sang "All Night, I Didn't Let Go." A choir member sang the solo inspirationally, along with the choir singing the chorus joyfully. But after the song was over, the choir member proceeded to give a personal testimony, like a miniature sermon. Now this was not part of the program, and Pastor B allowed

the soloist to do so. What made him want to give that testimony—was it the words to the verses that prompted him, as he kept thinking about what he was singing? And the audience was receptive to him doing this, too.

(Notes, November 4, 2012)

Participation is important in Church B (and in Church A as discussed in chapter three), but the kind of participation varies. Also what is important is that the research subjects have multiple ways of defining their participation. However, the connecting strand that ties the non-traditional black church with the traditional black church together culturally is that the participation comes in multiple forms, it is active, it is heard, and it is engaging, whether it is low-spirited or high-spirited. In particular, when worshippers contemplate their life, experience, and history, it prompts a response. Furthermore, this prompting of a response is a continuation of the previous theme “experiencing the Word,” speaking the Word into existence and acting upon it. Thus, participation is not passive, or as Pastor B so eloquently stated: “We (in the black church experience) understand that we are to participate in worship . . . that He calls us to participate in this relationship with Him and not be bystanders” (Pastor B interview, Oct. 2012).

Other Influences on the Preaching Moment

Emphasis on participation carried over into this theme, as well as spontaneity. In particular, *spontaneity* is a rhetorical quality of black discourse. As explained by Smitherman in *Talkin and Testifyin*, referenced in chapter one, *spontaneity* is a quality that allows for the speaker to “improvise by taking advantage of anything that comes into the situation. . . by taking advantage of process, movement, and creativity of the moment, one’s rap seems always fresh and immediately personalized for any given situation” (96). In other words, Smitherman means that the spontaneous way of answering back to the preacher builds momentum for her, and it

functions as a rhetorical move, an urgency to continue preaching. This kind of spontaneity arose in the research subjects' explanation of further participation during the sermon. The following subsections will list excerpts from the interviews, emphasizing in bold the words of the subjects that helped with this theme.

Member B1 and Pastor B

When asked following two questions, "how imperative is it (or not) for a black preacher to have participation, and can Pastor B still preach with/without participation," Member B1 responded as such:

Member B1: I think that it's imperative because when, especially in the black church, **we go through so much sometimes that when we come to church, we can't stay quiet.** You know, so we realize that when someone says something or the choir sings a certain song, you're crying, you're praising, you take your shoes off. You're doing that because, thank God, you made it to Sunday! **And I want to participate because I have to let loose.**

Fullwood: That's right.

Member B1: Because if I let loose at work, I become an angry black man or angry black woman, I've got this or that. But when I come to church, I'm letting it go!

Fullwood: That's right! And you know I never thought about that, if you let it go out there, it's always misinterpreted as the angry black man.

Member B1: Yes, because they don't know the culture.

Fullwood: Right, aah hah. Can she still preach with or without participation? Please explain.

Member B1: **I think that she can but it wouldn't be--** if she wants--it's like sometimes when she preached at different places, when she was coming into a transition to get a church, at little, small, small type churches, she wouldn't hear--

Fullwood: You could hear a pen drop.

Member B1: She'd say, "I don't know if they are against me," **but she wants them to interact** because she's in the Holy Spirit; she wonders if the Holy Spirit is in them or not or what happened, you know--

Fullwood: Right.

Member B1: **But if she gets it back like "Amen," "I'm going through it," and people crying,** she knows that she's embarking on a path that will change lives. So it's much needed.

Having listened to Member B1 articulate the need for spontaneous dialogue from the audience during the preaching moment, I was reminded of what Mitchell said in his book about black preaching, that it is freeing and affirming of self-hood, mentioned in chapters one and three. But even more interesting was Pastor B asserting how affirming and comforting the participation and dialogue is to her during preaching:

Fullwood: Is this different for African Americans than for others?

Pastor B: Is the preaching?

Fullwood: Uum huh.

Pastor B: When you say "is this," being the preaching situation?

Fullwood: Right, that's what I'm trying to say the preaching situation or the preaching dynamics.

Pastor B: The dynamics of preaching?

Fullwood: Aah hah.

Pastor B: Yeah, it is.

Fullwood: Okay.

Pastor B: **It is, and it's different and it has its [pause]--I think the beauty--I think that really the beauty of the preaching situation in the African American church is actually that you are having that conversation with each other.** It's just so interesting because you don't see that--I mean when you go to a, when you're in a white church or another, you don't [pause]-- people are so quiet and they're not saying anything and they're not responding and you don't--it's really an odd feeling. [Chuckle!] When you're preaching in front--and you never--it's kind of interesting because you really never know is this connecting with them or not because they're sitting like this: *[While sitting, Pastor B's posture becomes upright, face looking forward and motionless, to act out what she means]*

Fullwood: Right, right.

Pastor B: Are they really? **But in the Black church, because you feel like people are engaging with you--I mean they're listening; there's like this whole, like I said before, dialogue and sometimes even with what they're saying, you can tell, like, are you getting me where I need to go? You can tell with their words, so you know. And so when you have all this going on--but it's also a thing of community because even when you have, you know, people in the congregation, a few, then you see others, almost like they're joining in, like, "Okay, I want to join in!"**

Fullwood: That's right, that's exactly right!

Pastor B: It's kind of interesting when they're drawn like that, so it's really interesting to watch all that. But it is; it's really different.

Pastor B continued to discuss the importance of dialogue from the audience even when I asked her two questions following this response. These questions (I thought at the time) would shift the focus away from the audience to a discussion of a different dynamic. While she did discuss those differences, Pastor B still included the audience's responses as part of her answer to the following questions, "once you start preaching, is there anything to influence how you preach, and do you have a way of knowing you're successful while preaching?" She thoughtfully responded:

Pastor B: [pause] Aaah, **sometimes it can be the responses from the congregation.** Aaah, you know, if **I'm noticing sometimes that people are kind of quiet on certain parts, I come off a little bit stronger, or I might move away from my manuscript---**

Fullwood: I see.

Pastor B: So that I can be a little bit more, you know I can use my body, be more vocal so that I can draw them back in.

Fullwood: So that moving a little away from the pulpit, when you're moving from the manuscript, is that also a move away from the pulpit as well?

Pastor B: Aah hah, yes. I don't do it as much, and I know that some people want to see me do that more, but it's just that I do preach from the manuscript. And the reason I preach from the manuscript is because I'm trying to keep it succinct and not go on and on and on about something or get lost in the message.

Fullwood: Right, right.

Pastor B: And by having my manuscript there, that allows me to do that. Because I can be a rambler when I'm up there by myself. And so having my manuscript keeps me moving along so that I'm not doing a lot of going off. **But there are times that when I preach and when I want to be able to push a point harder, I'm able to move myself from behind the lectern,** you know, if I'm really there, or if my voice and the inflection of it, or it's just the change of the tone or whatever. It might be--and sometimes I have my manuscript and I find myself preaching because I'm trying to draw from a point when I'm even away from my manuscript, you know.

Fullwood: Right, right.

Pastor B: **And sometimes, depending on how the Spirit is moving, I do that, so but I do think that knowing when you're being successful during your sermon-- I really am watching the congregation and trying to see if I'm really offering something that they can relate to.**

Fullwood: Right. Do you have a way of knowing when you are being successful during your sermon?

Pastor B: Aah [pause] During my sermon, it's interesting because sometimes after I preach a sermon, I'm like "Oh" [inaudible] and then somebody will send me an email during the week or people are leaving, "Oh you are just talking to me, oh my goodness!" It is really interesting. So then it is successful. It's kind of interesting that my criteria of what I think is a successful sermon may not be what they consider successful, you know. Sometimes I didn't think a sermon, you know, was successful--

Fullwood: Okay.

Pastor B: by what I consider successful, but then someone might say, **"I like the way you made that point." It's just interesting the things that people say. Yeah.**

Fullwood: If they think you really did deliver a good sermon, they'll say, "Oh wow, you really touched my heart!"

Pastor B: **Aah hah, and to me that then makes it a successful sermon when I do that. I mean I don't need to hear that because I think as long as I'm being obedient to what God is doing, and I'm staying true to what God has called me to preach, then I think whatever is being offered, as long as it's coming from God in doing that then it's successfully being done because God is instrumental in making that thing happen. Because it's not me that's making that; it's God and the Spirit moving in me to make that.** But yeah, it's kind of different how my critique of something-- you know.

An implied meaning here throughout Pastor B's responses to the question is that the black preacher, once engaged in the preaching moment, is no longer a preacher/author by herself, that the audience also become a kind of author because they help shape and give added meaning to the sermon through their dialogue and interaction. But an intangible expression or movement also contributes to the spontaneity, the dynamics of the preaching scene, as Pastor B noted above saying "God and the Spirit moving in me." So, while Pastor B is an individual preaching the sermon, there is no individuality in the sermon because of all of these dynamics. However, the next question asked sought her opinion about her preaching style stating, "do you have different

styles of preaching, and if so, why?” Pastor B did not say that she has an individual style, which I really thought was an intriguing response:

Pastor B: I do, sometimes **depending on where I'm wanting to go with the text or how it might be more of a teaching sermon, you know, it might be--sometimes it might be more of I want to touch on the emotional piece here.** And have you connect there. Sometimes--yeah, I do see myself--at first I didn't realize it--but I do see, and sometimes how I approach the text and how I deliver it will be quite different, aah hah.

Fullwood: Okay, okay.

Pastor B: **Depending on what I believe I'm being called to emphasize in the text or where I'm trying to get them to connect in the text or so forth. Maybe it's a particular situation or a group I'm trying to connect with the text so my style might be kind of different.**

Even though this interview was conducted in October 2012, Pastor B's emphasis on the text influencing her style corroborates with the field notes of my participant-observations during a worship service on January 20, 2013. The sermon was titled “Reclaiming Justice,” the first sermon in her Justice Ministry series in celebration of the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. She took her text from the book of Amos, who was an Old Testament prophet. Pastor B began by stating her title, then she proceeded by saying “we need to reclaim, restore the desires that God has put in us, for God is calling us to truth.” I noted that when Pastor B proceeds in a litany of parallel structures, that was when the audience began responding more. For example, she said,

Pastor B: Something's not right when kids are shot with assault weapons!

Audience: Yes! [clapping]

Pastor B: Something's not right when more of our young men are locked up in jail than they are in college!

Audience: Yes! That's right! [clapping]

In using the book of Amos as her text, she explained that Amos was a prophet who spoke out against injustice and reminded the children of Israel about their responsibilities. She connected that to Martin Luther King, Jr., (MLK) for he was like Amos—seeking to restore justice in

America. Pastor B noted that MLK was called an extremist by his fellow clergymen. Pastor B further preached:

Pastor B: The question is not that we (Christians) are extremists, but what kind of extremist will you be? Jesus was an extremist for love! We can not submit to the status quo! Do you hear me saints? (Audience: yes!) We can not submit to the status quo!

Audience: No! Uum huh! That's right! [clapping]

The remaining portion of the field notes ended as such:

In this particular sermon, Pastor B did not use a preaching/teaching mode like the others I've observed. She was more challenging, more authoritative, and, yes, more prophetic. Perhaps it was because she was dealing with the issue of social justice in relation to MLK Day, and perhaps it was because she used as her text a prophetic book of the bible. However, members still responded like they usually do with "Amen," "Yes," "That's right." But they were responding because they were being challenged, like Pastor B was really making them think about the social ills that Christians turn a blind eye to. It's almost like they were saying, 'Right, I have been turning a blind eye to social injustices!'

(Notes, January 20, 2013)

This field note reinforced what Pastor B stated in the earlier excerpt, that her style of preaching depends upon the text (the biblical text) from which she draws to preach. And, the field note also reinforced her point of how she tries to get the audience to connect, not with her, but connect to the text based upon what she feels she is being called or lead to preach on that Sunday.

The research subjects discussed the importance of dialogue from the audience, the importance of the text, and the importance of the "calling" in that moment of preaching. The

congregation and the biblical text help in the creation of the sermon being performed to its fullest. Also, this theme proves to be quite provocative, for not only does it build upon Moss' work on the black sermon as a community text, but also because it suggests other possibilities emerging for the black sermon. Through the examples above, I will show that the black sermon has the potential to enter into recent trends in rhetoric and composition studies. However, African American scholars and pedagogues have ignored or neglected to consider the black sermon as applicable to these trends. This neglect is due to their understanding (well, misunderstanding) that these trends are not relevant or applicable to African American culture. I beg to differ, and I will discuss this further in the concluding section and in chapter five, which considers the teaching implications of the black preacher's extracurriculum.

Conclusion: Toward a Grounded Understanding of the Black Preacher

Reiteration of Themes and Explanation of Data

As stated in chapter three, engaging in grounded theory gave me new visions about older issues in the field instead of grand theories in which to showcase and discuss. These new visions will be fully discussed in chapter five. For now, the themes from this chapter will be discussed further. The themes that emerged attempted to answer the following research question: *What literacy practices of the black preacher originated in the extracurriculum of her training, and do those practices have any pedagogical implications for writing, particularly for college students who witness those practices in their daily lives?* To recap, the themes from this chapter were:

- A) The importance of credible/communal affiliations; B) The experience of the word (the Word);
- C) Sermons that touched the minds and hearts of parishioners; D) Structured and spontaneous cues for participation; E) Other influences on the preaching moments.

First, what, in particular, are the literacy practices? The theme *the importance of credible affiliations* answers this portion of the question, for Pastor B expressed that the relationship she had with not only her relatives but the black community gave her the stability needed to succeed as a child. She stated: “I can always remember the elders of the church being real concerned about who I was, what was happening in my life. . . when I was in school I participated in things, they were interested in what I was doing. . . they celebrated those things and they really meant a lot and influenced me” (Pastor B interview, Oct. 2012). Also, Member B1, a personal witness, confirmed this importance, for in a separate interview he stated: “. . . as far as mentors, I would think about her grandma . . . when she went off to college, her grandma would always tell her ‘we’re praying for you, for you to get back in church’”(Member B1 interview, Nov. 2012). In this case, *literacy practices* are also [“also” used here because *literacy* was defined in a similar way in chapter three] broadly defined as a means of support which keeps one grounded in the knowledge of her family and community. Not only did these affiliations impact her childhood but it impacted well into her adulthood today. This is important to note, for scholars of New Literacy Studies say that “. . . we bring to literacy events concepts and social models regarding what the nature of the event is and makes it work, and give it meaning. Literacy practices, then, refer to the broader cultural conception of particular ways of thinking about and doing reading and writing in cultural contexts” (Street 78-79). This is particularly fitting for Pastor B, for not only does *credible affiliations* keep her grounded in her community, but this kind of literacy practice helped in her career: “. . . those relationships. . . it informed me as I began to work with families . . . I practiced as a school psychologist for 20 years” (Pastor B interview, Oct. 2012). Additionally, the standard use of *literacy* “comes already loaded with ideological and policy presuppositions that make it hard to do ethnographic studies of the variety of literacies across

contexts . . . so it is helpful to develop alternative terms” (Street 78). While the work done in this chapter was not an ethnographic study, an ethnographic lens for studying the data was somewhat used here to understand and interpret interview responses from the research subjects.

Second, how are they engaged? The themes of *experiencing the word (Word)* and *structured and spontaneous cues for participation* captured this engagement. Pastor B and members showed how they each engage the Word and how they participate, which is active, a physical manifestation. In explaining her transition from school psychologist to ministry and what influenced her, Pastor B said, “I think it’s the living out of that Word within my interaction with families. I was able to live out the teachings, so through my actions, although I couldn’t quote a scripture. . . I think I could use some equivalence of what love looks like” (Pastor B interview, Oct. 2012). Member B2 discussed how the Word moved her: “. . . there’s been many occasions that I’ve spoken with my husband, with my sister, and other members that you know, ‘that was a good Word that went forth,’ and I may even share personally how it has touched me and moved me. . .” (Member B2 interview, Nov. 2012). Member B5 discussed an internal “moving” for her when asked if she discussed the worship services with others: “We usually talk about the Spirit, the in-dwelling of the Spirit. . . The Spirit gets moving, and it’s just a powerful sermon” (Member B5 interview, Jan. 2013). And, experiencing the Word is structured and spontaneous, for Member B3, one who stated in his interview that he appreciates governance and structure, even admitted to some spontaneous participation: “You know always some kind of giving, using somehow the mood, whether its gestures or something to make sure the pastor knows that you’re with them. And, you know, I’ll say ‘Amen,’ I’ll clap to acknowledge that I fully agree with the pastor. And I’ll say aaa haa!” (Member B3 interview, Dec. 2012). Some of the more structured participation is an act that is part of the order of worship, for example,

Members B1 and B5 said that they get up to do prayer and they participate through the greeting of visitors as they enter the sanctuary (Member B1 interview, Nov. 2012; Member B5 interview, Jan. 2013).

Last, how does all of this come in to play when discussing composing? The theme *other influences on the preaching moment* captured this question. Similar to Pastor A, Pastor B's preparation includes a personal prayer, asking God to lead her to a text or to help her understand a text. When asked if Pastor B can preach with or without participation, Member B1 stated: "I think that she can. . . but she wants them to interact. . . if she gets it back like 'Amen'. . . she knows that she's embarking on a path that will change lives. So it's much needed" (Member B1 interview, Nov. 2012). Pastor B is a very audience-centered preacher, for she said that she can tell if her preaching is successful from "the responses from the congregation. . . if I'm noticing sometimes that people are kind of quiet on certain parts, I come off a little bit stronger, or I might move away from my manuscript" (Pastor B interview, Oct. 2012). But what is also extremely interesting and affects composing is that Pastor B does not superimpose a style in her preparation. When asked if she had different styles, she said: "I do, depending on where I'm wanting to go with the text. . . depending on what I believe I'm being called to emphasize in the text or where I'm trying to get them to connect. . . so my style might be kind of different" (Pastor B interview, Oct. 2012). So, Pastor B's sermon changes when she delivers it, and all of that does not depend solely upon her, for the dynamics of the preaching situation and the audience still determines the direction of the sermon. Although Pastor B initially composes the sermon by herself, doing all of her word studies and researching historical background of the text, the sermon still changes when she delivers it.

In conclusion, form (the sermon) and content (preaching) do not have to be binary opposites, like they are two distinct acts that are unrelated, but rather they are complementary. Similar to the data in chapter three, key words emerge that work together for the successful composing and delivery of the black sermon. *Text, delivery, style* emerged from the theme other elements of the preaching moment; *literacy*, the importance of credible/communal affiliations; and *spontaneity*, structured and spontaneous cues for participation. When Pastor B and the members (research subjects interviewed) “enter to worship,” they come in knowing that their worship will be structured like a United Methodist church service, for they have to abide by the church governance of that denomination. Yet, they are also receptive to the Spirit moving in the worship, which allows them the freedom to spontaneously respond by clapping or eliciting utterances to show they agree with Pastor B. And, since they call themselves a “Community Church,” as indicated on the front cover of the church bulletins, they enter knowing that their participation in the service will move them to “depart to serve” others in the community. Does any of this, what people do outside of the academy—their composing, their participation, their influences, this “extracurriculum”—have any bearing upon the composing/writing practices engaged upon by students in first-year writing classrooms? In the next and final chapter, I will consider the teaching implications of this research, discussing Pastor B’s process, along with Pastor A’s process, to shed light on how or if these processes have influences in the teaching of writing to college students.

CHAPTER 5

‘SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW’: TEACHING IMPLICATIONS OF THE BLACK
PREACHER’S EXTRACURRICULUM

Introduction: Building onto the Past to Rebuild for the Future

In the previous chapters, I ended my discussion by stating that Pastor A and Pastor B’s preparation process will be explored further in this chapter. Generally, the pastors’ answers to questions about the worship service, the audience, the preaching situation, and the sermon allowed them to articulate a kind of process during their delivery: what they think while preaching, what they see while preaching, and what they do while preaching. In this chapter, I will discuss their process within a scholarly conversation of older theoretical and pedagogical issues that undergird some new concerns in the field. Additionally, these discussions will attempt to fill in spaces left by scholars and pedagogues with the hope of deepening the field’s understanding of cultural rhetorics where there may not yet be a full understanding, especially of African American discourses and their significance to rhetoric and composition. Still, a complete understanding is something that may not ever be attained in any discipline or subject, for I dare say that should not be the goal of scholars and researchers. Rather, our goal should be a better understanding of knowledge as a continual, on-going process.

As I noted earlier, a different and extended understanding of writing, texts, and literacy has been asserted by two scholars of importance, two that served as foundational studies that undergirded my research interest in the black preacher: Anne Ruggles Gere and Beverly J. Moss. Gere discusses an “extracurriculum” in composition in which people do all sorts of writing in their communities and clubs—nonacademic groups fostering productive and supportive writing environments. Moss challenges the standard notion of a literate text by asserting the black

sermon as a community text (and therefore *literate*) that works at its best when co-authored by the preacher and the congregation. My data extends their work by increasing the categories of research subjects interviewed, by collecting audio-visual recordings, by putting a human face to the research, thus offering living proof of what extracurricular scholarship looks like. Yet, my research also differs from Gere and Moss in that it prompts a new way of thinking about an old concept, *rhetorical invention* (especially through imitation) and a creative way of adding to a new concept which draws from invention: *transfer*. I will briefly discuss these terms, unearthing a few older theories that current theories build upon to show *culture* as the filler of the spaces left in the scholarship.

‘Something Old’: The Call To Reconsider

Invention in Early Process Pedagogies

As part of the on-going, continual growth of composition, the field has richly developed beyond a mere discussion of writing pedagogy as “the writing process” or “the composing process” to acknowledging *writing/composing processes*. But in acknowledging that “the writing process” is old, I do not mean to presume that it is no longer needed or useful. A very brief discussion of *process* is useful for reconsiderations, to plot where spaces are available to consider one’s culture.

The *process movement* emerged in the 1960s, and during that period, scholars in rhetoric and composition restored *invention* to a more prominent role similar to that which was held by Aristotle. According to *Invention in Rhetoric and Composition*, Aristotle’s definition of rhetoric, “the faculty of discovering in any particular case the available means of persuasion,” is primarily one that emphasizes *invention*, for Aristotle viewed rhetoric as *techne*, “an art which

entailed knowledge of effective rhetorical strategies and provided a guide for rhetorical action” (Lauer 50). During this decade, an emphasis on *discovery* became significant due to a paradigm shift from product-centered approaches to process-centered approaches in the teaching of writing. This emphasis on process incubated at the 1966 Dartmouth College Conference for American and British English teachers, where scholars focused on writing pedagogy that promoted more individual expression.

Peter Elbow, a major scholar-advocate of expression for the benefit of student-writing, fervently suggested that freewriting can be used as a means to play with language, “to get out of the self: to relinquish volition and planning and see what words and phrases come out of the head when you just kick it and give language and culture a start” (89). D. Gordon Rohman’s “Pre-Writing: The Stage of Discovery in the Writing Process” discusses a similar notion to Elbow but with a different focus, for he is concerned with “thinking that precedes writing. . . that activity of the mind which brings forth and develops ideas, plans, designs, not merely the entrance of an idea into one’s mind” (41). He therefore challenges scholars to not think of writing as made of words but to think of the “meaning of writing as a combination of words,” unearthed from the consciousness of the writer which “clicks for him/her in that moment of discovery” (Rohman 43). Other scholars, too, have continued to focus on *discovery* in the spirit of Aristotle, developing systematic approaches to the problem of generating ideas.

Thus, the term *heuristics*, which refers to discovery procedures, also gained popularity during this period. One of the most famous heuristic procedures theorized by scholars is that offered by Richard E. Young, Alton L. Becker, and Kenneth L. Pike. They use their knowledge of rhetoric, composition, and language to develop an inventional model based upon principles of a tagmemic approach to linguistics. This approach proposed to offer student-writers universal

problem-solving strategies that would enable them to tap into a reservoir of ideas through the tagmemic grid, a device that forced students to consider multiple perspectives on the same theme. Pike, the linguist in the above-mentioned scholar-trio, suggested that grammatical structures lie in the abstract, “beyond the sentence, which is available to linguistic analysis, describable by technical procedures, and usable by the author for the generation of the literary works through which he reports to us his observations” (29). These abstract structures undergird “all human experience as characteristics of rationality itself,” thereby producing a tagmemic approach to writing (30). More squarely in an Aristotelian tradition, another well-known scholar of the period also theorized the benefits of understanding *invention* as a heuristic. Frank J. D’Angelo’s “Topoi and Form in Composition” traces the classical conception of *topoi* in the topic sentence. He states: “In developing paragraphs, the writer is advised to embody the main idea in a “topic” sentence. . . Then he or she is instructed to search for the “means” of developing that subject (comparison, contrast, definition, exemplification, and so forth). . . In other words, the methods of development are presented as inventional strategies for the logical development of ideas, although the term “invention” is seldom, if ever used” (114). So, he challenged scholars and teachers to think of *invention* not as a preliminary act to develop ideas but as a continual act of writing (114-15). But implied in the essay is D’Angelo’s call to the field of composition and rhetoric to understand form as rhetorical invention’s prodigy. He emphasizes *form* as a *paradigm*, part of a heuristic procedure that facilitates a writer’s wealth of information and ideas. Furthermore, he wants to show how form works structurally, “as a model or design that is abstract and general. . . it is an idealization, a conception of a pattern in its absolute perfection” (115).

Richard E. Young's noted essay "Concepts of the Art and the Teaching of Writing" tries to find common ground between expressivist and formal approaches to rhetorical invention; he discusses the contentions with the terms "art," "craft," and "knack" in the teaching of writing by polar opposite camps: New Romantics and New Classicists. He says that New Romantics believe that the composing process should be free of deliberate control, and that art contrasts with knack. For New Classicists, art means knowledge to produce preconceived results by conscious, direct action, which means for one to be able to discuss what those who have a knack do to be successful (196-97). So do New Classicists teach art? No, and to dispel the misconception, Young asserts that New Classicists use heuristic procedures in facilitating the writing classroom, asserting that these questions and operations "are provisional. . . more or less systematic, not wholly conscious or mechanical; intuition, relevant knowledge, and skill are also necessary" (198). Young further claims:

If the creative process has generic features, if some of its phases can be consciously directed, and if heuristic procedures can be developed as aids, then it can be taught. . . We cannot teach direct control of the imaginative act or the unanticipated outcome, but we can teach the heuristics themselves and the appropriate occasions for their use. . . The imaginative act is not absolutely beyond the writer's control; it can be nourished and encouraged. (199)

These early theories of *rhetorical invention* thrived well into the 1970s, but as the discipline moved into the 1980s, expressivist and formalist discussions faded. During this period, there was a shift in the field to the social situation of writing, focusing scholarly attention away from the individual solely absorbed in the writing task before her. Thus, in this "social turn," scholars' disciplinary inquiries resulted in critically exploring how individuality itself is

thoroughly social, and how the intricacies of being a community member are partly determined by the texts that its members compose. And, scholars began to rethink *rhetorical invention* through a social perspective. Karen Burke LeFevre's ground-breaking book, *Invention as a Social Act*, fervently challenged the conception of writing as an individual act. She argued that the field's understanding of the individual is rooted in Western culture and capitalism. She, therefore, posited the idea that "Invention is a dialectical process in that the inventing individual(s) and the socioculture are co-existing and mutually defining" (35). Among other things, she pointed out that the Greek and Latin derivation of the word "action" had a double meaning that many scholars ignored; action is initiated by an individual but the achievement of an action is executed by many. Thus, LeFevre concluded, "To understand rhetorical invention, it is useful to restore this double meaning of "action". . . The inventor thus requires the presence of the other. . . This "other" may be a perceived audience of actual others. It may be a collaborator with whom one invents or a reader whose participation in constructing a text "finishes the enterprise" (38). Invention, for LeFevre was always a participatory act, always realized in collaboration with others.

Even though his work was published before LeFevre's book, James Britton brings a social perspective to invention, and a perspective that is particularly germane to my study. In his essay, "Shaping at the Point of Utterance," Britton encourages scholars to think of the conversational utterance itself as part of an inventive process, for when one utters in the middle of speaking, the person usually continues uttering until the idea is fully expressed, even though the finished utterance is not always known before its completion. He states: "When we start to speak, we push the boat out and trust it will come to shore somewhere—not *anywhere*, which would be tantamount to losing our way, but somewhere that constitutes a stage on a purposeful

journey” (147). In other words, when someone speaks, that person trusts that what is said will somehow make sense. Britton continues by observing that it is social pressure that makes one resolve their thoughts into complete sentences, instead of mere silent brooding. He then discusses how spontaneous invention “frees one’s mind—it’s the freedom of ranging across the full spectrum of mental activity... the right brain and left brain in intimate collaboration” (148-49). Britton wishes to acknowledge the legitimacy of spontaneous invention, but he does not wish to imply that such spontaneity is self-originating, as can be inferred from the following:

I want to associate spontaneous shaping, whether in speech or writing, with the moment by moment interpretive process by which we make sense of what is happening around us; to see each as an instance of the pattern-forming propensity of man’s mental processes. Thus, when we come to write, what is delivered to the pen is in part already shaped, stamped with the image of our own ways of perceiving. But the intention to share, inherent in spontaneous utterance, sets up a demand for further shaping. (149)

As I move forward in discussing Britton, this portion of his piece is worth mentioning because it leaves room to show some tensions and similarities associated with rhetorical invention, even as it is used in the scholarship of today.

To continue with Britton, there are some social aspects of writing that he takes issue with. In referring to Sondra Perl’s research on the process of composing, he acknowledges the benefit of the terms that she has come up with to describe composing: for example, “retrospective structuring—the writer shuttling back and forth between what they want to say and the words on the page—and projective structuring—shaping the material in such a way that the writer’s meaning carries over to the intended reader” (150). Britton claims that it is in the process of

“projective structuring” that “discovery” breaks down; “the set of rigid and critical editing rules” will ruin the shaping at the point of utterance, to the exclusion of retrospective structuring. In this case, he is interested in how “spontaneity” and “invention” complement each other in the writing act, that they may not be two completely different orientations in the process but operate more as a “pre-setting mechanism that affects writing production throughout the writing task” (151). What is important for my purposes is that Britton’s theory makes *spontaneity* and *invention* co-working phenomena in the teaching and practice of writing in a college classroom.

The Black Preacher and Congregants Filling Inventional Spaces

I understand my research as a kind of filler of some vacant spaces left in earlier theories of invention. Intentionally or not, Rohman created an opening through which an emphasis on *culture* in *rhetorical invention* can occur. Even though he does not focus on culture himself, it is implied in his theorizing of the principle of pre-writing. The idea that thinking precedes writing, “the activity of the mind,” does not have to mean that ideas are retrieved from a storehouse of already existing abstractions. For example, one theme related to Pastor A, *learning from everyday relations*, demonstrates this. In discussing his formative years, Pastor A said that he received early exposure to the Gospel through his grandmother, so by the age of nine, “I knew I wanted to be a preacher” (Pastor A interview, July 2012). Pastor A does not mention recalling specific passages from the Bible, or specific beliefs, but rather, he remembers the knowledge of being awakened to a particular desire inspired by his grandmother’s example. And similarly, the theme of *the importance of credible/communal affiliations* demonstrates this for Pastor B. She said, “I grew up in a strong black church and community” (Pastor B interview, Oct. 2012). What is important here is a cultural memory that includes, but surpasses the abstract tenets of her faith. While Rohman is specifically discussing “thinking” within the pre-writing phase, to help

generate writing, I am attributing these themes to contextual knowledge in the intentional thinking that precedes the “thinking” usually ascribed to pre-writing. Along these lines, Frank D’Angelo, in discussing the topic sentence and its logical development of ideas in a paragraph, urged teachers to think of invention as a continual act of writing—not an activity to merely engage at the beginning stage of writing. Even though D’Angelo is talking about continual invention toward a fixed product, the essay, his emphasis on continuity toward a performed product could equally apply to the black sermon as well. If, as I stated earlier in this chapter and previous chapters, the black sermon is a community text composed by the black preacher, *as well as her church members* in its actual delivery, then what emerges when pastors put pen to paper to compose is by definition incomplete or unfinished—*it is invention in process, yes, but that process is incomplete until the sermon is delivered.*

LeFevre’s emphasis on the double-meaning of “action” is very much applicable to the black preacher. For example, the individual action and achievement of that action by many resonates in the theme *experiencing the word*. Pastor B, for example, asserted in her interview that when she preaches the Word (an action initiated by the individual) and applies it to real-life situations, she wants people to leave the service feeling renewed. And apparently it does leave people feeling that way, for Members B2 and B5 said that the Word moves them to do something for someone else, and an in-dwelling of the Spirit occurs. Thus, LeFevre concluded, “To understand rhetorical invention, it is useful to restore this double meaning of “action”. . . The inventor thus requires the presence of the other. . . This “other” may be a perceived audience of actual others. It may be a collaborator with whom one invents or a reader whose participation in constructing a text “finishes the enterprise” (38). Invention, according to LeFevre and confirmed by my research subjects, is always a participatory act realized in collaboration with others.

Britton's emphasis on the social pressure that makes one resolve their thoughts also resonated with the theme, *structured and spontaneous participation*. Member B4 asserted that congregants responded during the preaching moment by saying "Amen" or "Okay," and he further stated that "there's no one to say clap or say 'Amen,' there's none of that; it's spontaneous." Also, Member B3 said that he will clap when he agrees with Pastor B, and further went on to say that he will respond by saying "aah hah!" to show his support of what she is preaching. These members did not say that they come into the worship service with some pre-planned way of responding, but when they do respond, the "social pressure" (continuing in the words of Britton) underlying the response of the members is not the kind of pressure that usually connotes negativity; it is the kind of pressure that is "also a thing of community because when you have all of this going on, even when you have people in the congregation, a few, then you see others almost like they're joining in like, 'Okay, I want to join in!'" (Pastor B interview Oct. 2012). So, Pastor B's preaching speaks to them, and it elicits a response by the members, with "the hope that it lands somewhere on a purposeful journey" (Britton 147). That purposeful journey is the black sermon.

Pastor B and the members also put emphasis on the fact that this utterance, even though spontaneous, is one that is thoughtful, not purely emotional. The word *spontaneous* means to act on impulse, but church members, in line with Britton, reveal that that impulse leads to a kind of invention that "frees one's mind—it's the freedom of ranging across a full spectrum of mental activity" (Britton 148-49). For example, under the theme of *structured and spontaneous participation*, Member B2 directly asserted the thoughtfulness behind her response but also asserted the use of spontaneity:

I love singing for the Lord and to forget about myself and concentrate on Christ and experience His presence . . . I would say that because she is the pastor and she's giving the Word to help educate us to know the Lord better, to encourage us. I would praise the Word, give God the glory; I would clap, I would say 'Amen.' I would use the appropriate response if the Word moves me, or the Spirit, the Holy Spirit moves, or say 'Hallelujah' (Member B2 interview, Nov. 2012).

Thus, acting on impulse does entail immediate thought to act, but once it (the action) lands somewhere, the action may not be productive. But my research subjects show that acting on impulse does not always lead to destructive action. *Spontaneity* achieves productive action when it is uttered *along with* church members, for as asserted in earlier chapters, it is the community dialoguing together to “increase the quality of preaching” (Mitchell 112).

The Issue of Imitation in the Process Movement

To return to Britton's critique of Perl's concept of retrospective and projective structuring, Britton says that retrospective structuring provides an opportunity for spontaneity and invention to occur as a “pre-setting mechanism that affects writing production throughout the writing task” (Britton 151). He says that projective structuring hinders discovery: “the set of rigid and critical editing rules” will not allow for a more fluid spontaneous invention. But what if that kind of projective structuring can be interceded by someone else, someone that the writer deems as trustworthy and credible, like Pastors A & B who both claimed that credible and communal relations shaped who they are today?

During the height of the process period, Muriel Harris challenged process pedagogues by asserting that even though attention has been diverted away from product approaches to teaching,

process teachers still measure the writing successes of students by the very same thing they purport to oppose: the written product. Because of that, Harris asserted a need for methods to evaluate process teaching and to diagnose problems with composing (74). Harris stated: “From the research on modeling as a method of behavior modification, we can discover how to model more effectively so that our students can learn by watching us. The act of modeling, of course, already makes us and our students more active than we are when using prose models, a long accepted practice which requires the ability to abstract concepts from someone else’s prose and transfer them into our own” (77). In her article, “Modeling: A Process Method of Teaching,” Harris shows how she “modeled a pattern of behavior for Mike to observe and try out,” a student that was referred to her writing lab; Mike was described as having a writing deficiency of producing choppy sentences (78). After listening to Mike think aloud as he wrote, Harris realized that the pre-writing technique of freewriting was not as helpful to him, even though he relied heavily on it because of what he was taught previously. Harris then modeled writing for Mike; she asked him to give her a topic to write upon for twenty minutes. She then thought aloud about the rhetorical situation, asking the “who, what, and why,” then, she proceeded to write. As she wrote, she said aloud that she would “plunge ahead and try to finish each sentence without planning the whole sentence beforehand” (78). When she finished, they reversed roles; she then gave Mike a topic in which to write for twenty minutes. After doing several of these sessions with the student, the result was that his writing improved, and that his planning was more productive.

Harris’ work on modeling is an early one, and so now pedagogues and scholars in the field have conducted more research on composing processes. But the issue of *imitation* began to lose some value, as scholars questioned its effectiveness as a pedagogical strategy. One such

scholar, Janine Rider, takes issue with imitating as a means of invention. She takes issue with Bartholomae's inventing, and says that it seems too restrictive, too reliant on past models, "too imitative, too centered on recapturing the forms of the past rather than creating a form of the present" (175). Her answer echoes that of expressivists, for she advocates for students finding their own voice first; then, writing teachers can help in shaping their discourse "to teach them the power of English which will allow them better jobs, an audience for their ideas and more choices" (181). But perhaps Rider's critique of *imitation* and her narrowed understanding of it is due to how it was re-conceptualized during the process movement's emphasis on *creation* and *discovery*, an issue which is asserted in the article "Apologies and Accommodations." Even though the authors readily acknowledge the use of *imitation* as a pedagogical strategy as far back as the classical rhetorical period, they have "witnessed dramatic changes in how we look upon imitation—changes largely influenced by the process movement" (Farmer and Arrington 59). They say that the perception of the *imitation* as dead in the teaching of writing is not the case, for they chart the course of imitation in the field and realize that it is alive and thriving. The notion of imitation's irrelevance or death is due to "tacit rejections" from the field. And due to those rejections, proponents of imitation justify its use in "answer to, and [in] anticipation of, its critical refusal by the community at large" (Farmer and Arrington 60). The authors review the ways in which imitation has been justified by its proponents: through matters of style and invention; as an interventional strategy; and as a strategy for examining social situations (62-72). The authors end by suggesting how imitation can be used in the future by asserting that both Bakhtin and Vygotsky's theories show "how our own words originally—and to some extent, always—derive from someone else's words, might enable us to chart the subtle and complex ways we assimilate, rework, and deploy other people's words for our own purposes" (76). Mary

Minock answers their call, for she integrates postmodern theories with ancient rhetorical practice to “amend and extend our notions of typical imitation exercises in order to capture the diversity of imitation and its sometimes indirect and unconscious direction” (494). She uses Bakhtin and Derrida’s theories to engage her students in acts of experimental reading and responding to non-traditional texts several times throughout the course of a week. Each time, she asks students to read the same text in a different place or location and write a one-page response to it. They share their response with each other in class. Because no one in the class, including Minock herself, has read these texts, the possibility of them being revered the way that traditional texts are, is slim. Therefore, students “interpret their negotiations within the social context of the group without the usual school bias that these texts should be comprehended, explicated, and abstracted for the main idea” (492).

The Use of Imitation as Invention by the Black Preacher

To return to Britton’s critique of “projective structuring” inhibiting spontaneous invention, I agree with him, to a certain extent, that extent being in theory as it is read on paper. But if projective structuring is couched in terms of a dynamic text, not one in a fixed state that is assumed to be perfectly composed and edited, then it may not be as inhibiting as it seems. The body engaged in physical action, as in a person performing, the dynamic of an embodied rhetoric, is that of the black preacher. Building off of Harris’ notion of modeling, my research subjects show that the “projective structuring,” as in projecting oneself in the image of a preacher, one that is admired by the learning preacher, may be helpful to them in their sermon preparation and even delivery. In chapter three, I asked Pastor A to describe how he learned to preach, and he said: “I think initially by observation of course, you know sitting in worship services, revivals, different settings where there was preaching going on . . . you’ll see the

varying styles . . . if preachers are honest, when you start out, you don't have your own voice. You've taken others, and you're trying to find out, figure out your voice" (Pastor A interview, July 2012). Also, in the same vein as Farmer, Arrington and Minock, this kind of modeling of preachers is the "unique speech experience" [of Pastor A] "shaped and developed in continuous and constant interaction with others' individual utterances" (Bakhtin qtd. in Minock 494). Pastor A discussed imitation as one that is done in process to give a minister time to develop through the years. He states that "preaching is seen first, echoed second, meaning you hear many voices over time, and then third, preaching is finally learned" (Pastor A interview, July 2012). Additionally, the use of imitation is varied, for it does not mean the mere repetition of habits and behaviors only. Imitation can be used as a gateway to more formal learning, something used as an interventional tool. This is shown in chapter four; Pastor B did not rely as heavily on imitation, for when I asked her about how she learned to preach, she also said "through observation and suggestions." But after she became educated in theology school, she relied on the knowledge she gained in school to help in her preparation (Pastor B interview, Oct. 2012).

'Something New': Answering and Echoing the Call

Invention in Post Process: A Return to Texts

What happens to invention *after the process movement*? How does all of this discussion on *invention* and *imitation* affect the text that a writer produces? Late twentieth to early twenty-first century scholars of composition and rhetoric assert that process pedagogy has directed attention away from texts. Scholars are now interested in texts as cultural constructs and/or interested in the cultural and ideological assumptions operating in texts written by students and how these assumptions come to bear on the students while writing a text. In this case, *invention* does not have to be confined to matters of process. One scholar in particular echoes the view of

product and process working hand in hand; Richard M. Coe's "An Apology for Form" focuses on the conflict within process pedagogy, stating that the problem was not in that the product approach was non-process oriented but that it is a "renewed process approach" that allows students to see how the product is put together. So, the process approach focuses on the "how of writing that formalists ignore" (14). Coe asserts that writing has many processes, so to focus on the conflict between product and process causes scholars to miss process in its many stages. His conception of form as "sensory input that helps perceive patterns" aids in defining "form in terms of its function in the process of forming" (18). Viewing product in this manner demonstrates that the product approach is dynamic, instead of the static definition promoted by formalists.

Coe continues by stating the various ways "form" can still be used to exemplify its "process of forming." He says that form can be a heuristic that guides a structured search of writing, serving as empty slots that helps motivate students to invent. Additionally, he calls attention to the sociological nature of rhetorical structures, saying that "they serve as a memory of standard response to particular types of rhetorical situations (Coe 18-19). In this case, "form" can help with strategy and problem-solving, keeping one or a student from misinterpreting meaning. Coe ends his discussion by asserting that teachers and scholars need to study form as well as forming in many more contexts: as organic, as construct, as flexible, rigid, generative, as constraint as instrument of creation and meaning (20).

Recent studies in rhetorical genre theory extend Coe's scholarship. Anis Bawarshi's *Genre & The Invention of the Writer* builds upon the work on genre theory by analyzing those cultural and ideological assumptions in genre's function on the subjectivity of students as writers. He challenges the over-dependency of heuristic procedures by composition scholars,

such as pre-writing, following D. Gordon Rohman, as the main heuristic device given to students to start invention. He asks: “. . . what is involved when we say what writers are doing and why they are doing it? Writers, of course, are the ones who do the writing. . . But to designate and treat writers as the sole agents of invention. . . is to overlook the less obvious but just as significant factors that shape writers’ intentions and motivate the choices they make as agents” (50). While encouraging students to think of themselves as writers is important, Bawarshi claims that process pedagogues rejected the modernist notion of an always already and fully formed text, yet “the process movement remains a decidedly modernist practice when it comes to its preservation of the writer as the agent of invention.” Thus, proponents of process forgot about “the sociology of texts,” considering how knowledge is socially constructed (55).

Additionally, Bawarshi concurs with previous scholars that “genres do not simply regulate preexisting activity but constitute the activity by making it possible through its ideological and rhetorical conventions” (24). To further demonstrate the function of genre in the invention process, Bawarshi uses Kathleen Jamieson’s research on George Washington’s State of the Union Address, showing that it was modeled after the King’s Speech; Washington used this genre even after America gained its freedom from the British monarchy. So, Washington adopted (then adapted) an existing genre to respond to a new situation (Bawarshi 95). Thus, Bawarshi asserts the following: “. . . genre function constitutes the way we respond and treat situations and also the subject roles we assume in relation to these situations. Genres have this generative power because they carry with them social motives that we as social actors internalize as intentions and then enact rhetorically as social practices” (96). In other words, Bawarshi reminds scholars and teachers of writing that students do not fully control texts but are controlled by them as well, which helps in discursive production.

Lena Ampadu's "Modeling Orality," discussed briefly in chapter three, espouses the view that prominent African American writers and orators have been influenced by the oral tradition. The author continues by stressing the fact that many textbooks use American speeches as models in the efficacy of discourse, but "African American texts are overlooked as exemplars of literacy . . . [so African American texts] should move to the fore of the writing classroom and exercise some influence on the writing skills of college students, regardless of racial and ethnic background" (Ampadu 138). She uses the schemes of repetition identified in classical Greek rhetoric, anaphora, antithesis, chiasmus, and parallelism alongside African American rhetorical practices to also show that repetition is a longstanding tradition in African American culture. Ampadu demonstrates, through the speeches of black orators/preachers of the nineteenth century, like Maria Stewart, Frances E.W. Harper, and twentieth century orators/preachers like Martin Luther King, Jr., the use of *Nommo*, the efficacy of the spoken word. Through modeling this elegant, clear style that moves and fascinates audiences, Ampadu claims that students can an influential ethos for themselves (140).

While some scholars in the field still oppose the practice of imitation to teach writing, Ampadu includes empirical research in which students created writing samples imitating the language/stylistic choices of famous orators/preachers, thus showing its success (144). What is particularly interesting to note is that Ampadu's students, while using *chiasma* not only relied on this style of repetition but relied on "commonplaces peculiar to African American culture" (152). This demonstrates students' participation with a community that espouses values and beliefs different than those espoused by the academy. Thus, another paradigm, an African American one, can be used to motivate students because "writers participate in a rhetorical tradition

grounded in a dynamic oral culture with strategies that help the rhetor create messages spontaneously and captivate audience” (154).

How does all of this factor into black preaching? The black preachers in this study use the conception of form as “sensory input that helps perceive patterns” when they put pen to paper to prepare the manuscript. Since the sermon will change once it is delivered, one can view the black sermon as a “function in the process of forming.” Why? The black sermon gets re-invented as it is delivered to a receptive congregation who responds by giving dialogue. The black sermon starts out as if it will remain in a fixed state because Pastor A and Pastor B are “perceiving patterns,” but it becomes dynamic in its process of forming when it becomes a co-authored text—the preacher and congregation working together—and hence a community text, as noted by Moss in earlier chapters.

The “generative power” of the function of the black sermon, in the words of Bawarshi, is that dynamic of being an unfinished product, for it engenders flexibility through spontaneity—tangible and intangible expressions—that the preacher and congregation “internalize as intentions.” An example comes through the preaching of Pastor A; in a few of my field notes of the worship services at Church A, I noted that Pastor A says a line that indicates that he is about to enter the moment of celebration during the preaching moment. The line or statement always solicited a call to the congregation, to further engage their responses, even though at this point, they are already participating. In one of my field notes, I noted the following:

Pastor A’s tag line used: ‘Is there anybody here, who knows that weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning?!’ The audience responded and stood up while the musicians played. [I stood up as well because it struck me too].

While Pastor A cited the verse, ‘weeping may endure for a night,’ the musicians

played along with him—a back and forth exchange—with the rhythm of the phrase (a prose rhythm—as Pastor A said one word or part of the verse, then the organist played—and back and forth and back and forth). (Notes, Aug. 12, 2012)

At this point, I had already noted in previous field notes that Pastor A's tag line always begin with "is there anybody here" The phrase is always followed by the claim or thesis of the sermon—something that Pastor A wants the congregation to leave with so that they may be transformed. This is an example of the generative power of the black sermon. Later in my interview with Pastor A, in asking him about his preparation process, he did not say anything about the tag line "is there anybody here." He actually articulated a drafting of the manuscript process. Returning to a portion of my research question—do these literacy practices affect college students who come from the same or similar culture as the black preacher? How can these be transferred into the classroom, and do students know how to tap into their cultural reservoirs for use in the writing classroom? To try to answer these questions, some of Pastor A's process will be revealed in the closing section, with an eye toward transferability.

Conclusion: Writing Processes to Transfer

Pastor A's Process¹

During my interview with Pastor A, I asked him: "How do you prepare your sermons, and what goes into the preparation? Please walk me through your process."

Pastor A: Okay, it's a week's journey; Sundays come fast!

Fullwood: I see, aah hah! [laughing!!]

Pastor A: So I have what's called my Monday readings. That's with my cup of coffee, you know. I'm up in the morning; **I'm not doing real formal, but I may just do a casual reading of the text, just glance at it.** I keep a notepad; but I know with electronics I can record it, but there's just something about the textual writing, and **so I'll keep a notepad, do my Monday readings, spend maybe an hour or two just kind of looking at a verse,**

jotting out some things that may come to mind; nothing real major. Then I have my **Tuesday work** where now **I'm going to take that same passage, pull out some of my commentaries, some of my word studies,** and now kind of start to put some meat on the bone.

Pastor A's first phase of his preparing the sermon is similar to *planning* or *inventing*, usually the beginning of writing processes as discussed in the field. *Inventing* ideas does not only result in writing or drafting out ideas on paper, but it includes a mulling over ideas or brainstorming them, for inventing is "coming up with all the things you want to say in a text and all the ways you want to say them" (Devitt, Reiff, and Bawarshi 105). Pastor A is up "glancing" at the text, and then he keeps a notepad during his Monday readings to "jot some things that may come to mind." The Tuesday work that Pastor A describes is still part of the phase of *inventing*, for he is gathering research and finding further evidence for support, "taking that same passage and pulling out commentaries and word studies." And, even though I should have asked the question to clarify, I can surmise (based upon answers to other questions from the interview and based upon my experience as a preacher's kid) that *text* is the biblical text or scripture that he is casually reading.

As Pastor A continues, his *inventing/planning* phase turns into the *drafting* phase but even while doing so, he is still *inventing*. Engaging in writing in this non-linear way further supports the emphasis on *processes*, not *the writing process*, for "parts of writing processes overlap . . . inventing, drafting, and revising do interact when [one] writes" (Devitt, Reiff and Bawarshi 104). Pastor A states the following:

Pastor A: **Jot out my notes to the word study background; I start pulling in some, maybe illustrations, just kind of write those off to the side, they may not be used.** Then I have my **Wednesday work**, where now I'm taking those abstract thoughts and all of those things and really trying to decide is this going to be the traditional 3 points and a conclusion message. Is this the narrative passage where it's more of a story than it is 3 points? You know people may not leave with a point out of the passage-- Is this more of a lecture-style teaching message that's doctrinal, that's going to get into some church doctrine. And then, so Wednesday now, you're trying to start to kind of trying to get in position to land a plane, as they say. So you're circling the airport, if you will, knowing that

you got to land in a minute. **So you're pulling in some of the abstract and kind of narrowing it down. Then Thursday, you really, I really spend that time taking the word studies, the illustrations, I already determined what style of message this is going to be. So now I'm putting that to get it down to 1 page.**

Fullwood: Uum huh.

Pastor A, in the *drafting* phase, moved from the abstract to the concrete, where he was trying to take all of his studies and notes on the biblical passage and make it simple to his auditors. And yet, he is still *inventing* the kind of ideas that his audience can understand. Even though he did not say this directly, Pastor A considered the *rhetorical situation*, considering his *purpose* and then his *audience* to help him determine what kind of sermonic genre he will preach. In *Everyone's an Author*, the authors state that when one begins their process they should “start thinking about the rhetorical situation early in writing . . . effective writers may conduct this analysis unconsciously and instinctively, drawing upon their rhetorical common sense they have developed as writers, readers, speakers, and listeners” (Lunsford, Ede, Moss et al. 20). Pastor A just began explaining what he does—no reference to “the rhetorical situation.”

Pastor A continues discussing his process:

Pastor A: **And then Friday is kind of a wrap-up of all of that work to now go over and say, “Lord breathe on this. Here is what I believe you've given me, and I've done the prep work.” And then I put it down-- because if I don't, I'm going to go back and say let me add this or let me take away that, so I put it down.** Saturday, I really don't do a whole lot with the text because I've already done the construction and all those things; I'm thinking about it, you know, if I'm going to the grocery store, some of my honey-dos, I'm rehearsing the message in my mind.

Fullwood: Aah hah.

Pastor A: If First Lady [his wife] wants to go to the mall, I'll go, “You go in, honey.” **And so I try to take advantage of that time, she's going to be walking around. I can take, now, my Ipad, I've got the sermon laid out and crafted. I kind of peek over it. Again, I'm not doing anything with it because I have to resist that temptation. They call it chasing rabbits.** Sometimes rabbits will run, and you know, “Oh, I need to say that.” You've added more to it, and that's always been a struggle for me. Personally, a random thought or idea will run through my mind, early on in ministry, I thought I got to chase that. And I'd get lost in the chase--

Fullwood: In the chase, aah hah.

Pastor A: And I'd say, "What was I talking about? **So, Saturday, that's it. I try to really have--physically shut down--I don't do a lot on Saturday evening.** If First Lady and I do something, like a movie or something, we try to do a matinee; **I try to be back home-- and still-- at least by 7. And then I don't do a whole lot,** and then Sunday comes and I'm ready now for the landing of the plane. It's time to deliver that that I've worked on through the week. And then I start all over again in my Monday reading.

It appears in this portion of the process that Pastor A has an aversion to *revising* his draft. But I do not think that is the case; he is further working within the rhetorical situation, "thinking of the larger context . . . thinking about the constraints and how much time and energy [he] can put into it" (Lunsford, Ede, Moss, et al. 22). However, the *revising* phase has not fully been enacted yet, for he is not the sole agent in this phase and it is not restricted to revision only, as I will discuss in the next section below.

Pastor A's Revising (Re-invention)

In the now discredited stage models of the writing process, *revision* was a stage in which the writer could take another look at the entire draft written. This stage supposedly allows for "further developing of ideas, adding examples and details but revising could also mean changing the focus of your composition and adding and deleting entire sections" (Melzer and Coxwell-Teague 49). Changing and deleting sections are things Pastor A does during delivery of the sermon; it is not something he does only during his preparation process, as indicated later in the interview by the following questions: 1) "What kinds of things help you prepare to preach a successful sermon, or are there things that occur during worship that help you to be successful in preaching your sermon? 2) "What adjustments do you make during your sermon when you perceive that they are not going well?" Pastor A's response to the first question was the following:

Pastor A: Uum huh. I'll take the "b" part of that since we answered the "a" part earlier. The b part, are there things that happen in worship to help me--

Fullwood: be successful, aah hah.

Pastor A: **The old church, the old preacher uses, "cut across the field."**

Fullwood: Okay, cut across the field.

Pastor A: **Meaning you got to wrap this thing up!**

Fullwood: Oh, okay! [laughing!!]

Pastor A: They're dictating to you that you don't have all day. Uum, uum, and I still wrestle with that! **Sometimes I get it—I pay attention to cues**—other times it's like, "I'm getting all of this out! So, if you got to go, go!"

Fullwood: [laughing!!] Aah hah!

Pastor A: And the preacher has to resist the notion of his ego, his or her ego getting in the way, aah, **the Holy Spirit will speak to you and tell you, you know, maybe this isn't the time to finish this sermon.** Or there's something you can say to condense what you want to say and still get the message out. Because there--you know, I even did that Sunday; **I looked at my Ipad, it has a little clock on it, and I said okay, it's about 12:10/12:12 that's relatively early, relatively speaking. You know I can come on to this third and final point and tie it together. Was there more I could say and wanted to say, yes. But would it have been effective--it's kind of like a meal that you want, it's like, man, I'm not going to eat this today so I can get to this tonight. I really want this and it's a lot of food and you know you've reached the point where you're full, you're not uncomfortable, you're full but you're looking at your plate going, I got a lot left. Wouldn't it be just as easy to say, "I'm going to need a to go box--**

Fullwood: That's exactly right, aah hah.

Pastor A: and enjoy it later," versus no, 'I'm going to eat all of this, I paid for this,' and you're about to--

Fullwood: Burst wide open!

Pastor A: **Yes; that's what happens sometimes in the preaching moment. You can tell the people are full; they're not uncomfortable, but full. If I keep going-- now they've been full; they were here all day.** So the whole emphasis is lost because now I'm clock watching, the pew's clock watching, attitudes have come in, like you said, certain times in the year, **those are factors you need to take into consideration. It's summer, it's hot, you know, don't do what Pharoah did with God's people; let them go!**

Pastor A does not only "let the people go," but he relinquishes control over the sermon and allows other factors (Holy Spirit, audience) to play into the direction of the sermon. These factors are intangible and tangible—two seemingly opposing elements—but they are cues used for re(invention). And, invention continues to occur non-linearly, for as stated in chapter three, Pastor A uses music quite frequently, for as he stands to preach, many times he will sing a song before delivering the sermon, as indicated below:

Fullwood: **This isn't an official question, so I'm asking this because even before I officially started observing you and this church, this is something that I noticed about you a long time.** Now you can tell me whether or not I'm thinking about it correctly because I certainly do not want to take away from your style of delivery; I want to make sure that I understand. Of course music is always a part, it's very important in the black church experience.

Pastor A: Right, right.

Fullwood: And also in preaching, for African American preaching.

Pastor A: That's right. [. . .]

Fullwood: **So what I've noticed with you and also with my father that, and it's not all the time, now, but it's still quite a lot . . . Could you say that, well, that the actual singing before the sermon, that while that's a preliminary or a kind of prep to actually help you get in the right mindset, and for the benefit of the audience, you know, could I also make an argument that that's still part of the sermon?**

Pastor A: Oh yeah!

Fullwood: That is the sermon too. **Even though, maybe you did not start out, you know, with this in your weekly preparation,** you didn't start out saying okay, I am going to sing this hymn or sing this gospel song before I preach.

Pastor A: **Right. That's part of that-- "Breathe on this Lord."**

Fullwood: Okay. [. . .]

Pastor A: So when I mount the pulpit, I have to do so with the confidence that I did the work during the week, **I asked him to breathe on it, and we say it often, "Lord have your way." And so when He speaks and says here's a song right here, or maybe it's a song the choir sang and you just can't let it go.**

Fullwood: Right.

Pastor A: The Lord is ministering through that song to get us ready to hear the Word.

As a Watch care member of Pastor A's church, I know that college students are part of the congregation and part of this discursive practice. I wish to return to some early situations mentioned in chapters three and four. In chapter three, I asked how an "extracurriculum" is applicable to people other than white males. What are others' ways of knowing that are transferrable to the classroom, particularly as college students who participate in a discursive practice of dialoguing on Sunday. Also, the other situation asked about the nuances and in-between moments of black preachers who *became* good preachers; students from similar

backgrounds need the opportunity to transfer and then articulate what they have seen, heard, and then possibly internalized into a practice. In the words of Gere, teaching students to write in ways that are meaningful helps to not make writing such a barrier, meaning that the assignments given do not have to be so far removed from their worldviews or that an extreme level of difficulty in assignments inhibits their writing. Similar to the black preacher, learning through *imitation* may help in the transfer of knowledge by students. In chapter four, I expressed a similar situation to the one described by Lizabeth Rand in her article on evangelical discourse in writing classrooms. If a student writes a personal narrative about a religious experience, she could be taking her cue from the preacher. That is an identity that she relates to, a credible affiliation that gets filtered through her writing. And, I might add, the student may not even be consciously aware of this, so writing instructors should tap into the glimmer of possibilities emerging from their writing classrooms.

The issue of transferability in rhetoric and composition is already a thriving one, rich with concurrences, dissensions, and contentions about the transfer of writing skills—the transfer of first-year writing to other upper-level courses; the transfer of writing from academic situations to professional situations; the transfer of writing in academic situations to public situation, etc. But the commonality that exists between scholars and pedagogues concerned with transfer is the interest in assisting students with improving writing. One area within transfer—prior skills and knowledge to a first-year writing classroom—provides a place for my research in which to situate the black preacher’s process.

In the article, “Tracing Discursive Resources,” the authors discuss an “increased attention to outcomes—to defining and assessing what students will learn and be able to do at the end of their first-year composition (FYC) courses,” a needed emphasis in writing program

administrations (WPA) in universities across this country. They also discuss increased attention on whether the skills that first-year students develop in their composition courses will transfer to other courses and contexts (Reiff and Bawarshi 313). However, Reiff and Bawarshi assert the need for writing researchers and teachers to think about *incomes*, the skills and knowledges developed by first-year students prior to college. They report on a cross-institutional study of first-year students' use of prior genre knowledge and their ability or inability to transfer that knowledge into their college writing classrooms. Based upon their findings, Reiff and Bawarshi show that "boundary crossers" are more likely to experience the transfer of skills and knowledges into other courses with some success. The other students of the study, the "boundary guarders" are not likely to experience success with the transfer of writing strategies to other contexts. The authors define "boundary crossers" as students who "expressed a lack of confidence in approaching the writing task based upon their prior genre knowledge, and named more strategies than genres used in their writing and reported use of a range of genre strategies;" and they define "boundary guarders" as students who "expressed more confidence in approaching writing tasks, and named fewer strategies than genres used in writing" (324-25). Not only do the authors assert a need for more research to be done to see if boundary-crossers are successful beyond an FYC classroom, but they also contend that teachers and researchers need to consider "what it would take to study prior genre knowledge in its fuller complexity while also attending to the dynamic sociohistorical, cultural, and personal conditions that shape how and why students relate to and make use of their discursive resources" (Reiff and Bawarshi 333-34).

In closing, I would like to reiterate some responses from my research subjects, members of Pastor A's congregation, as an attempt to begin to answer Reiff and Bawarshi's call of studying prior genre knowledge in its fuller complexity. The members from chapter three stated

that sermons are: “very important because you can take the information and not just use for yourself but to give to someone else (Member A4 interview, Sept. 2012),” and it keeps [them] “in a positive mood during the week, for they’re uplifting and they give me hope” (Member A5 interview, Sept. 2012). This kind of thinking about the sermon, a kind of communication with God that is concrete and practical not just a communication made of abstract ideas of an awesome and transcendent God, is what LaRue meant. In chapter one, he stated that “due to a sociocultural context of struggle of African Americans, [it] has required an enunciation of a God that moves and speaks directly on their behalf” (19). Also noted in chapter one is the African worldview of spirituality that persists in the thinking of descendants of Africans: no individual is who she is without the community, “the community made, created or produced [her]” (Hamlet 12). All of these factors contribute to the black sermon as an everyday genre of community-based social action, not just a once-a-week theological genre. Thus, Pastor A’s background and process may be the precursor to “the conditions that shape” the black sermon, but also his preparation may show that *writing processes* are important because it gives students the means to think about writing as an everyday approach to rhetorical situations by using your rhetorical common sense, without memorizing steps as a one-size-fits-all kind of approach to writing.

In closing, the extracurriculum of the black preacher is of profound historical importance to the African American community. But as I have tried to suggest here, it is also of profound importance to the richness of all American discourse, and for this reason, may have something to contribute to the way we teach writing. The field is now devoting more scholarly attention to cultural rhetorics and multilingualism so as to make the writing classroom a more culturally-informed space, one that is inclusive to all ways of knowing that contributes to students’

improved writing performance. The extracurriculum of the black preacher is but one small portal (among many) to achieve this endeavor.

Chapter 1 Notes

1. *Traditional black preacher* refers to a black man or black woman who pastors and/or preaches at one of the seven historically black churches that established independence from mainstream Protestant denominations in the late 18th and 19th centuries. When using “black preacher” in this chapter, I am referring to the *traditional black preacher*. For more information see C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*. Durham: Duke UP, 1990.

2. For more information on *tuning*, see Jo Baldwin’s *Seven Signature Sermons by a Tuning Woman Preacher of the Gospel*; chapter six of Henry Mitchell’s *Black Preaching: The Recovery of a Powerful Art*; and chapter seven of Albert J. Raboteau’s *A Fire in the Bones: Reflections on African-American Religious History*.

3. For more information on “tonal semantics” as a rhetorical quality of black discourse, see Geneva Smitherman’s *Talkin’ and Testifyin’: The Language of Black America* (Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1986), also reviewed in this chapter. For more information on *whooping*, see Mitchell’s *Black Preaching*.

4. Fullwood, Alfonza. Personal interview. 27 February 2010.

5. Frank A. Thomas’ scholarship on “celebration” in the act of preaching is a continuing scholarly conversation; he actually builds from Henry Mitchell’s work, who first theorized on the celebrative moment in black preaching to show its solidarity with and its validity among homiletical scholarship. For more information, see Mitchell’s *Celebration & Experience in Preaching*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1990.

6. The fact that Haywood has to bring the act of *prophesying* to the fore of African American literary criticism as a key, missing element is ironic; the prophetic tradition is very

much a part of African American Christianity; moreover, “prophetic practices” permeate African American life, politically, socially, and economically. Cornel West traces “prophetic practices” of African American livelihood in his theological analysis of American culture in his book *Prophetic Fragments* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988.)

7. “And as for us, why do we endanger ourselves every hour? I die every day—I mean that, brothers—just as surely as I glory over you in Christ Jesus our Lord. If I fought wild beasts in Ephesus for merely human reasons, what have I gained?” In explaining the importance of the resurrection of Christ to the early church in Corinth, the apostle Paul informs them that encountering and dealing with danger, be it physical or mental, is not done in vain. Even if one were to die from danger, believers have the assurance that there is everlasting life beyond the grave. Paul may not have literally “fought wild beasts” but merely used it as a metaphor for the oppositions he faced while traveling and preaching. Thus, just as Christ surrendered his life, believers must also go through acts of self-surrender for the glory of God. (*New International Version*, 1 Corinthians 15. 30-32).

8. McCrary states that the term *other-literate* “designates someone who might be treated as an outsider in society, including school, because his or primary language, culture, and perspective are considered non-mainstream.” See page 53 of his article.

9. Cornel West is the main scholar cited in Stenberg’s work for saying that critical pedagogues do not embrace the ethical and moral aspects of liberation. Noting this is significant because many scholars/teachers in our field are influenced by West and have incorporated his scholarship into their own. For more information on West’s influence in the field, see Keith Gilyard’s *Composition and Cornel West: Notes toward a Deep Democracy*. Southern Illinois UP, 2008.

10. Prominent scholars in the field have devoted serious scholarly studies to the literacy and rhetorical practices of Maria Stewart and other black female rhetoricians of the nineteenth century. See Shirley Wilson Logan's *"We are Coming": The Persuasive Discourse of Nineteenth Century Black Women* and Jacqueline Jones Royster's *Traces of the Stream: Literacy and Social Change Among African American Women*.

11. Nunley's essay on hush harbor rhetoric is now a full-length published scholarly monologue. For more information, see *Keepin' It Hushed: The Barbershop and African American Hush Harbor Rhetoric*, Wayne State UP, 2011.

Chapter 2 Notes

1. I specifically mentioned Thomas Kuhn because of Maxine Hairston; she discusses his influence in shifting the paradigm in science and, by analogy, connects that shift to what was happening in rhetoric and composition in the 80s. For more information, see her article, "The Winds of Change: Thomas Kuhn and the Revolution in the Teaching of Writing." *College Composition and Communication* 33.1 (1982): 76-88.

2. The very last interview I conducted with Member B5 was not digitally recorded; due to a technological glitch (the memory becoming full), I physically recorded the answers to the interview by writing them on notebook paper. I then had Member B5 read her answers that I recorded and received her signature, indicating her approval of the answers that I had written.

Chapter 3 Notes

1. I was eligible to join Church A as a Watch Care member. Typically, people who are transients fit within this membership framework, e.g. those who have re-located to the area due to their jobs, and students who are studying at area universities—people who have already professed their faith and are members of churches elsewhere. This type of membership allows

one to continue practicing her/his Christian faith under the watch and care of a church. Watch Care members have the same privileges and obligations as any other fully-fledged member, with the exception of voting.

2. As indicated in the text, a portion of this moment was captured in my field notes from my participant-observations. The rest was supplemented through my listening of the sermon on CD titled “Pressurized Religion,” recorded on Sunday, July 15, 2012.

3. Much of this information came from the history pages of the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. website www.nationalbaptist.com. Some of it was supplemented from a telephone interview with Alfonza W. Fullwood, Ph.D. on Saturday, March 15, 2014. In the telephone interview, Fullwood stated, “Oh yes, I was there at the 1982 convention. I still remember, just like it was yesterday, when Dr. Jackson took the stage to give his last salute to the entire body of the convention, as it was announced that Jemison would succeed him as president. Jackson was THE black religious leader in the country for years and was also known as a religious leader abroad. His views were similar to those of Booker T. Washington, who believed that blacks could achieve more and gain the respect of whites through a gradual pace toward progress and integration. Yes, Jackson was very conservative. . . I also had to deal with this issue in my research on the life of Dr. Taylor, and of course, the division within the convention arose again when I interviewed him.” Fullwood is referring to Dr. Gardner C. Taylor, one of the most recognized preachers in the country and abroad, and he was a friend of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Taylor and Dr. King played a crucial role in the formation of the Progressive National Baptist Convention of America. Fullwood received his Ph.D. in Homiletics from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in May 2012. The title of his dissertation was

A Study of Gardner C. Taylor's Theology of Preaching as a Decisive Factor Shaping His Theory of Preaching: Implications for Homiletical Pedagogy.

4. Church A's website was used as a reference for this historical information.
5. As of November 2013, Pastor A is no longer the Pastor of Church A.
6. I also collected church bulletins and other communiqués. They were used only as a reference to corroborate what the research subjects said about the structure and order of worship service.
7. Pastor A is not Member A1's sole mentor; the immediate past minister of this church, who also graduated from Central Baptist Theological Seminary, mentored Member A1 as well.

Chapter 4 Notes

1. Historical information on Church B from this point forward came from the church history provided to me by Church B's administrative assistant.
2. As of the Summer of 2013, Pastor B is no longer pastor of Church B and has been appointed to another United Methodist congregation in the area.
3. For a more thorough history of the black church, see C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*. Durham: Duke UP, 1990.

Chapter 5 Notes

1. I only used Pastor A's process to model for teaching implications because his process seems to be linear and not linear. This further supports the issue of writing/composing processes instead of focusing on "the writing process," which the field no longer uses. Yet, the fact that Pastor A's process does start out linearly complements the theme of this chapter of building upon the old to establish something creative and new. Pastor B's process does fit into discussions of transferability as well and will be used in future research endeavors.

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APPENDIX A: HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE APPROVAL FORMS



6/21/2012
HSCL #20213

Kendra Fullwood
ENGLISH
3001 Wescoe

The Human Subjects Committee Lawrence Campus (HSCL) has received your response to its expedited review of your research project

20213 Fullwood/Farmer (ENGLISH) The Extracurriculum of Two Black Preachers: A Descriptive Study of Culturally Learned Practices

and approved this project under the expedited procedure provided in 45 CFR 46.110 (f)(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies. As described, the project complies with all the requirements and policies established by the University for protection of human subjects in research. Unless renewed, approval lapses one year after approval date.

The Office for Human Research Protections requires that your consent form must include the note of HSCL approval and expiration date, which has been entered on the consent form(s) sent back to you with this approval.

1. At designated intervals until the project is completed, a Project Status Report must be returned to the HSCL office.
2. Any significant change in the experimental procedure as described should be reviewed by this Committee prior to altering the project.
3. Notify HSCL about any new investigators not named in original application. Note that new investigators must take the online tutorial at http://www.rcr.ku.edu/hscl/hsp_tutorial/000.shtml.
4. Any injury to a subject because of the research procedure must be reported to the Committee immediately.
5. When signed consent documents are required, the primary investigator must retain the signed consent documents for at least three years past completion of the research activity. If you use a signed consent form, provide a copy of the consent form to subjects at the time of consent.
6. If this is a funded project, keep a copy of this approval letter with your proposal/grant file.

Please inform HSCL when this project is terminated. You must also provide HSCL with an annual status report to maintain HSCL approval. Unless renewed, approval lapses one year after approval date. If your project receives funding which requests an annual update approval, you must request this from HSCL one month prior to the annual update. Thanks for your cooperation. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christopher Griffith'.

Christopher Griffith, JD
Assistant Coordinator
Human Subjects Committee- Lawrence

cc: Frank Farmer



Approved by the Human Subjects Committee University of Kansas, Lawrence Campus (HSCL). Approval expires one year from 6/21/2012 HSCL # 20213

ADULT INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

TITLE OF STUDY: The Extracurriculum of Two Black Preachers: A Descriptive Study of Culturally Learned Practices

INTRODUCTION

The Department of English at the University of Kansas supports the practice of protection for human subjects participating in research. The following information is provided for you to decide whether you wish to participate in the present study. You may refuse to sign this form and not participate in this study. You should be aware that even if you agree to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time. If you do withdraw from this study, it will not affect your relationship with this unit, the services it may provide to you, or the University of Kansas.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study examines the “extracurriculum,” of the black preacher. The *extracurriculum* is a concept characterized by one scholar (Gere) as the various ways people learn to write outside the walls of the academy by forming their own community groups, workshops, and clubs for the purposes of improving writing, making a difference in one’s community, and creating opportunities for self-publishing. Along these lines, in studying the literacy traditions in black churches, another scholar (Moss) makes the case for valuing a different kind of text, a text co-authored by congregation and preacher working together.

My study seeks to demonstrate how the texts (primarily sermons) composed and performed by the black preacher get learned elsewhere, acquired tacitly through such informal ways as merely growing up inside the lived discursive practices of a community; the sometimes (but not always) purposeful modeling of elders and mentors; the everyday transmission of oral customs from one generation to the next, etc. **My investigation centers upon the following question:** *What literacy practices of the black preacher originated in the extracurriculum of her/his training, and do those practices have any pedagogical implications for writing, particularly for college students who witness those practices in their daily lives?*

PROCEDURES

You will be asked to participate in an oral interview by the researcher, Kendra Fullwood. She will have a set of questions to ask about your active involvement in the church; your influences/mentors in the ministry, your sermon preparation (for those who are preachers); your participation/non-participation with the preacher during the delivery of the sermon; what you learned from the sermon and/or the preacher; and/or other practices of literacy that you may engage in church (for those who are church members). The interviews will be conducted on an individual basis, where you will have one-on-one engagement with her



only; no other members will be present while you are interviewed. **The interview will be one hour in duration, depending upon how extemporaneous you are in responding.**

Since Fullwood will use a **methodology grounded in the culture and experiences of the people, the interview will be recorded for the purposes of accurate transcription**, ensuring an honest and credible study of your words and thoughts on which to theorize. Thus, she is willing to share her transcriptions and/or portions of her dissertation chapter with you per your request. Additionally, she will conduct participant-observations in order to give a full description of the black church environment and the black preacher's congregation, the audience. This description and analysis will give a rich account of the complex interplay of the communally learned elements crucial to his or her effectiveness.

Subjects will sign consent forms; however, **none of these procedures will place the subjects in danger, and the interviews are voluntary, so subjects may withdraw if they choose to do so.** Also, in coding and writing the data, the real names of the subjects will not be used; instead, pseudonyms and/or numbers will be used to refer to the participants (*for example, "Preacher A, Preacher B, Congregant A1, Member B1, or Parishioner A2).* The data collected (recorded oral interviews, participant-observations) will be kept in a file for seven years. Furthermore, some of the data may be used for future publications in academic journals.

RISKS

No risks, such as pain, discomfort, burden, or inconvenience are anticipated in this study.

BENEFITS

There are no direct benefits to you as a participant. However, you may benefit from this research indirectly. Your interview will help show that knowledge and literacy skills are also culturally grounded, and that college students bring cultural knowledge and literacy into writing classrooms. In doing so, you are also taking an active involvement in the education of future college students who come from similar cultures/backgrounds. This research also has cross-cultural appeal and application to all college students.

PAYMENT TO PARTICIPANTS

You will not receive any monetary payments for this study.

PARTICIPANT CONFIDENTIALITY

Your name will not be associated in any publication or presentation with the information collected about you or with the research findings from this study. Instead, the researcher will use a study number or a pseudonym rather than your name. **Your identifiable information will not be shared unless required by law or you give written permission. Permission granted on this date to use and disclose your information remains in effect for seven (7) years.** By signing this form you give permission for the use and disclosure of your information for purposes of this study at any time in the seven-year period.

REFUSAL TO SIGN CONSENT AND AUTHORIZATION

You are not required to sign this Consent and Authorization form and you may refuse to do so without affecting your right to any services you are receiving or may receive from the University of Kansas or to



participate in any programs or events of the University of Kansas. However, if you refuse to sign, you cannot participate in this study.

CANCELLING THIS CONSENT AND AUTHORIZATION

This study will be conducted during the Summer of 2012. You may withdraw your consent to participate in this study at any time. You also have the right to cancel your permission to use and disclose further information collected about you, in writing, at any time, by sending your written request to: *Kendra Fullwood, Dept. of English, 1445 Jayhawk Blvd., Wescoe Hall 3001, Lawrence, KS 66045-7590.*

If you cancel permission to use your information, the researcher will stop collecting additional information from you. However, the researcher may use and disclose information that was gathered before they received your cancellation, as described above.

QUESTIONS ABOUT PARTICIPATION should be directed to:

Kendra L. Fullwood
Principal Investigator
Univ. of Kansas/Dept. of English
1445 Jayhawk Blvd., Wescoe Hall, Rm. 3001
Lawrence, KS 66045-7590
(785) 864-4520
kenfull@ku.edu

Frank Farmer, Ph.D.
Faculty Supervisor
Univ. of Kansas/Dept. of English
1445 Jayhawk Blvd., Wescoe Hall, Rm. 3001
Lawrence, KS 66045-7590
(785) 864-4520
farmerf@ku.edu

I understand that if I have any additional questions about my rights as a research participant, I may call (785) 864-7429 or (785) 864-7385; write the Human Subjects Committee Lawrence Campus (HSCL), University of Kansas, 2385 Irving Hill Road, Lawrence, Kansas 66045-7568; or email irb@ku.edu.

KEEP THIS SECTION FOR YOUR RECORDS. IF YOU WISH TO PARTICIPATE, TEAR OFF THE FOLLOWING SECTION AND RETURN IT TO THE RESEARCHER.

PROJECT TITLE: The Extracurriculum of Two Black Preachers: A Descriptive Study of Culturally Learned Practices

HSCL #20213

PARTICIPANT CERTIFICATION:

If you agree to participate in this study, please sign where indicated, then tear off this section and return it to the investigator (Kendra Fullwood). Keep the consent information for your own record.



I have read this Consent and Authorization form. I have had the opportunity to ask, and I have received answers to, any questions I had regarding the study and the use and disclosure of information about me for the study.

I agree to take part in this study as a research participant. By my signature, I affirm that I am at least 18 years old and that I have received a copy of this Consent and Authorization form.

TYPE/PRINT PARTICIPANT'S NAME

DATE

PARTICIPANT'S SIGNATURE _____

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Questions for Preachers:

1. How long have you been in ministry?
2. Do you mind giving me your age range: 25- 30; 31-35; 36- 40; 41-45; 46-50; 51- 55; 56- 60; 61-65; 66- 70.
3. Tell me about your birth family.
4. What were your parents' vocations, professions, livelihoods?
5. Tell me about your formative years. Where were you born?
6. What influenced you to go into ministry?
7. Describe the preparation that you had for the ministry, both formal and informal.
8. Did you have a mentor? Who was he/she?
9. Did your formal learning/seminary training prepare you to pastor a black congregation? Please explain.
10. What is the racial/ethnic composition of your congregation? Is your preaching different, meaning do you adapt your preaching to meet the needs of a heterogeneous audience, or is your preaching the same regardless of composition of audience?
11. How did you learn all of the responsibilities that go along with being in ministry?
12. Is there one part of your ministerial duties that you consider to be more important than others?
13. Among your ministerial duties, how important is preaching?
14. Can you describe how you "learned" to preach?
15. How do you prepare your sermons? What goes into the preparation? Walk me through the entire process.
16. What do you think makes for a successful sermon?
17. In your mind, what makes for a successful preaching situation?
18. In your judgment, is this different for African Americans than for others?
19. What kinds of things help you prepare to preach a successful sermon? Or, are there things that occur during worship that help you to be successful in preaching your sermon?
20. Once your sermons have gotten underway, is there anything that influences how you preach?
21. Do you have a way of knowing when you are being successful during your sermon?
22. How do you define a successful worship experience?
23. How do you define an unsuccessful worship experience?
24. Do you think that you have different styles of preaching? If so, why?
25. What adjustments do you make during your sermons when you perceive that they are not going well?

Questions for Parishioners:

1. How long have you attended this church?
2. How did you decide to become a member of this church?
3. Do you hold an office in this church? Which?
4. What do you like about this church?
5. How important is the worship experience to you?
6. What part(s) of worship do you most enjoy?

Questions for Parishioners:

7. Do you participate in the worship experience? If so, please explain.
8. Is the same kind of participation used during the preaching moment? If so, please explain. If not and/or some other type of participation is used, please explain this also.
9. How do you know when to participate? From what or from whom gives the signal or cue to do so?
10. How important are the pastor's sermons?
11. What do you like about the sermons?
12. How do you define a successful worship experience? Or, what takes place in a successful worship experience?
13. How do you define an unsuccessful worship experience?
14. Do you discuss the worship experiences with other parishioners, and, if so, what do you talk about?

Questions for Personal Witness (spouse, friend, or family member of preacher)

1. What is your relationship with this preacher?
2. If a close friend, how long have you known her/him? If married, how long? If family member, how close are you and/or discuss family/childhood memories shared together.
3. Was she/he preaching when you both met? If family member, did you get some indication and/or did you sense that she/he would adhere to the call to preach during your shared childhood experiences? Please explain.
4. How much (or not) about preaching did you know prior to your relationship with her/him? Please explain.
5. Who influenced her? Who mentored her?
6. Does she imitate that preaching style or has she developed her own?
7. Have you encouraged her during the preparation of the sermon or given her critical feedback when asked?
8. Has he ever delivered/preached a bad sermon? Please explain.
9. Then, in your judgment, what makes a good sermon, and has she delivered one?
10. Do you participate in the worship experience? Please explain.
11. Do you participate during the preaching moment? Please explain.
12. How imperative is it (or not) for a black preacher to have participation?
13. Can she still preach with/without participation? Please explain.
14. Has her preaching evolved or not? If so, how? If not but you have still witnessed some other kind of progressive development, please explain further.
15. Have you seen her make adjustments to her sermon when she perceived them not going well during delivery?

APPENDIX C: REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE OF TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEWS

Interview with Pastor A, Part 1

Location: Pastor's Office

July 2012

Fullwood: This is an interview with Pastor A , pastor of Church A. Pastor A, the first question that I have for you is how long have you been in the ministry?

Pastor A: Thirty years.

Fullwood: Okay, thirty years. Wow, so you started really young!

Pastor A: I was eighteen--

Fullwood: Okay!

Pastor A: when I first started out.

Fullwood: Okay, that's wonderful. Okay, so number 2, do you mind giving me your age or age range?

Pastor A: I'm forty-eight.

Fullwood: Forty-eight, okay alright. Tell me about your birth family?

Pastor A: Two sisters, two brothers. Mother and father, both deceased, but my father was from a town in Texas called Crockett, TX. My mother was from Mapleton KS, a small farming community, town still exists.

Fullwood: Is it near Lawrence?

Pastor A: The town is south Kansas, southeastern KS--

Fullwood: Okay.

Pastor A: by Fort Scott and Iola KS--

Fullwood: Yeah, I know about Fort Scott.

Pastor A: Really a small town and my father was in the military and when he was discharged, he was discharged to Ft. Leavenworth, KS and ended up in Lawrence working for the University of Kansas.

Fullwood: Okay, alright.

Pastor A: Worked at KU for 36 years, the rest is history.

Fullwood: Okay.

Pastor A: He and my mother met and married, and I'm the only child of my mother and father. And, my dad was an elder in the church, here in Lawrence. The church doesn't exist anymore, but it was _____, Disciples of Christ. Grandmother--

Fullwood: Okay, alright. That's the same as Christian Church right? Don't some of them go by Christian, or is that different?

Pastor A: That's different.

Fullwood: Okay, that's different, alright.

Pastor A: And uum, so early on through life, through family, had experience with church, and early upbringing in church, and exposure to the Gospel, yeah.

Fullwood: Right, okay. So when you say "elder" Pastor A, because I've heard people use that term a lot, I'm still not quite sure what that really means, and I think it does vary from denomination.

Pastor A: Right, right.

Fullwood: So what does it mean?

Pastor A: In our context, in the Baptist context, it'd be simply not a deacon but one above the deacon, but not the pastor.

Fullwood: Not the pastor, okay.

Pastor A: Really more in the context of the scripture, New Testament. Older men, because in the New Testament of course, older men, if you made it to 20, 25, or 30 you were an older man.

Fullwood: Okay, alright.

Pastor A: So they were given the governance of the church, kind of helping the pastor with decision-making, and structure and order in the church, so that's really the role of the elder.

Fullwood: So that's the role of the elder, alright. So are elders ordained too as well like deacons are?

Pastor A: No. Well, let me back up. That also depends upon the denomination because my father was ordained in the Disciples of Christ church. Now in the Baptist church they're not.

Fullwood: Okay, alright. What were your parents' vocations or professions, you just told us that. Can you tell me a little bit more about your formative years? You did say that from a young child you were always exposed to the Gospel, could you elaborate some more on that.

Pastor A: Sure, my grandmother was probably my greatest influence, as far as Christianity and faith. She was a mother in the Pentecostal Church, and so we lived probably a block from the church, so, we were there morning, noon and night. Usually 3 days out of the week, and then of course all day Sunday.

Fullwood: Okay, ah ha, I know, I know [laughing!!]

Pastor A: So at the age of, I think I was nine, I just mentioned, my grandmother's reading to me, and I just mentioned to her that I knew I wanted to be a preacher. As young as I was, and not really knowing what does that mean, but I just knew that there was something on my life.

Fullwood: Ah ha, and how young was that, can you recall?

Pastor A: I was nine.

Fullwood: Okay, alright, and you knew you wanted to be a preacher?

Pastor A: I knew I wanted to be a preacher. So as I grew of course, you know I got into teenage years, start thinking about college, what am I going to do. Then I decided I wanted to go into law, so I wanted to be a defense attorney, you know, kind of the underdog for the poor and downtrodden, and I was doing some male modeling for a couple of the agencies in Kansas City.

Fullwood: Pastor A, you used to be a model?!!!! [laughing]

Pastor A: Yes, for Macy's, Dillards, a couple local stores here,

Fullwood: Okay! [laughing]

Pastor A: but during that transition and time I had an opportunity to go to California, I had signed a contract with a large agency there, but God had other plans, and so it was around that time I started going back to church. I was kind of out for a minute.

Fullwood: Okay, right.

Pastor A: Never left Christ but just wasn't in church, a typical teenager. And, it was during one of the revival meetings that I really felt again the call of God back on my life. And I was like, well, "Lord I'm going to California," and the Lord said, "That's not what I want you to do."

Fullwood: Right.

Pastor A: And so I accepted my call at a revival service at our home church _____. And, talked with my pastor then, and scheduled my trial sermon for Father's Day of 1982. Preached my trial sermon and then from there went on off to bible college. And graduated, kids, married, family, and then in 1990, we were called to our first church in a South Central city in Kansas, _____ church, when I was 25, that's about right . . . yeah, 25 when we got called to our first church. So, wide-eyed, bushy tailed, gonna change the world. But it was a wonderful experience, a small church, a family church, and our children were very small, so for them it was life coming back into the church, small children. And so it attracted young families to the church, we were there 2 years and 2 months, and it was a fast 2 years. And a lot happened in that time frame, to see the church come back to life, ministries were formed. And others started again. So kind of the journey, you know, I've known, you know, the formative times, through grade school, junior high, high school, never really got into any trouble. I came from a very strict home. My grandmother raised myself and my two sisters. And, it just wasn't very many options to get in trouble. School was emphasized, education was a big deal. And, so that's kind of, you know, the journey up to where we are today.

Interview with Member A1
Location: Member A1's Workplace
August 2012

Fullwood: This is an interview with Member A1 who is an associate minister of ----- Baptist Church. Member A1, thank you for taking the time to interview.

Member A1: Thank you for having me.

Fullwood: Alright, so first I want to ask you a few personal questions in terms of your relationship with Pastor A, okay. What is your relationship with Pastor A?

Member A1: Well, Pastor A has been a bit of a mentor, one of many for me while I've been at Church A, and since he's been at Church A, because I've actually been there since before he was there. But, he is technically my father in the ministry; he licensed and ordained me, though I received my call when Pastor --- [the former pastor] was there, so I, basically, both of them are kind of mentors in that regard. And, then I still dialogue with him, I'm an associate minister, so I co-run with him, so I dialogue with him frequently about various things.

Fullwood: Okay, alright, I think that you've already answered this question, I was going to ask was he preaching when you met, yes of course, so let me go to the next question, how much about preaching did you know prior to your relationship with him, and just explain.

Member A1: Looking back I didn't know anything about preaching, and I think that a majority of what I do know has come from my seminary education. He has, he has, a lot of the things that he does in preaching, and some of his normal practices I picked up on. But I don't recall us having any specific conversations regarding, you know, preaching. So I don't recall very many of those, where he was specifically teaching me things, be it because of lack of time or whatever. So a lot of it has, I've picked up on by association, and then conversations here and there, mentioning one aspect of it or something, I'm not sure.

Fullwood: Okay, that's very important that you said that you "picked up on," I like that, so can you explain some more what you mean when you say you kind of "picked up on," you did say that.

Member A1: Well in essence, you know every, I would say anyone who has been to ____ church consistently has probably, can probably finish some of his sentences that he uses at the end . . .

Fullwood: Yes, that right! That's right.

Member A1: of service or at the beginning, "turn to your neighbor" stuff like that . . .

Fullwood: That's exactly right!

Member A1: and some of those have been bedrock for him in the sense of, I think that brings him comfort when he's in the pulpit.

Fullwood: Okay.

Member A1: But those types of things that you hear repeatedly like that you pick up on it, and I probably accidentally adapt it at one point in time, I haven't thought intentionally about him, whether or not I want to fall in that line or not, but definitely it's clear that he got some things, probably that he picked up from whoever his mentor was that are kind of normal for his style.

Fullwood: Okay, okay. Okay, do you know who influenced Pastor A, uh, in the few conversations that you all have been able to have, because like you said you all have different work schedules, but you do try to, has he maybe had a chance to discuss who influenced him?

Member A1: He has, and I do not remember the gentlemen's name, but there was a pastor that, when he was, when he was going to school and first beginning to preach, he was serving under a guy, I think at ____ [another church].

Fullwood: Okay, alright, ah hah.

Member A1: And, I don't remember the guy's name, but anyway he would, he would follow him around basically go wherever he went to preach and that's, I think, who he learned most of his practices from.

Fullwood: Okay.

Member A1: Because he was kind of like his mentor or father in the ministry.

Fullwood: Okay.

Member A1: So when he has, normally he has talked about a lot of the things he learned, he learned from this gentlemen, but I don't remember his name.

Fullwood: Okay, so I think he mentioned that same pastor in my interview with him, so I know who you're talking about.

Member A1: Probably so.

Fullwood: So, you could just say that it's the minister at that time of ____ Church?

Member A1: I think so, I think it was ____ [Church].

Fullwood: Okay.

Member A1: Primarily, I mean, I think there probably were a number of people but that's the main one.

Fullwood: The're other ones, but that's the main one.

Member A1: Yeah, that's the main one that I've heard him talk about.

Interview with Member A5

Location: Home

September 2012

Fullwood: This is an interview with Member A5, a member of -----Baptist Church. Today is Sept. 13, 2012. Member A5, thank you very much for taking the time to interview. We'll start with, I have 14 questions here for you, and we'll start with question number 1, how long have you attended ----- Church?

Member A5: Since the 1960s.

Fullwood: Since the 1960s, so is that, let's see 'cause I'm slow with math, that's why I'm in English, that's about 40 some years?

Member A5: Uum huh.

Fullwood: Okay, alright. Two, how did you decide to become a member of this church?

Member A5: I was a member in Kansas City, KS of ----- Baptist church—

Fullwood: Okay.

Member A5: so naturally I just came to the Baptist Church here in Lawrence.

Fullwood: Okay, was there a connection between the churches, or just like when you moved to Lawrence, you found a Baptist church.

Member A5: When I moved to Lawrence. I had attended ---- Church on occasion when I was a student at KU.

Fullwood: Okay, ah hah, so they still keep up that tradition of college students. So they've had college students attend their church a long time.

Member A5: Many years.

Fullwood: Many years, okay.

Member A5: I think way back in the 20s or whatever.

Fullwood: Oh!!

Member A5: The church is approaching its 150th year.

Fullwood: That's right, that's actually older than my home church in NC. I think that we're like 130 something years, so I guess that's not too far. But yeah, that's a long time, 150 years!

Member A5: Yes, and I think that we've had students coming and going since that time.

Fullwood: Ever since that time? Okay, number 3, do you hold an office in this church, and if so, which office?

Member A5: I, at this point, I am a member of the Deaconess Board, but I, in the past, I've been president of the Usher Board, and a past organist and pianist of the church.

Fullwood: Yes! I do remember you playing the piano for one of the Wise Women Build Conferences; you played some hymns, I like hymns. I know a lot of people don't, you know, use hymns.

Member A5: Yeah, I like hymns.

Fullwood: My great-grandmother played for the Methodist church, A.M.E., so we learned a lot of hymns from her. So I still like hymns, I know a lot of people don't!

Member A5: I do too! That's what we grew up on, the hymns!

Fullwood: The hymns, ah hah. Number 4, what do you like about this church?

Member A5: I like the fellowship—

Fullwood: Okay.

Member A5: I like the minister's sermons; I get a lot out of it. I like the Bible Study, and I think, well I'm trying to think. Well anything that pertains to fellowship and getting to know members—

Fullwood: Right, right, uuh huh.

Member A5: and welcoming new members.

Fullwood: Okay, okay, good. How important is the worship experience to you?

Member A5: Very important because it keeps me, I would say grounded, and it gives me hope, and it keeps my attitude positive.

Fullwood: Okay, alright, good. What parts of worship do you most enjoy?

Member A5: Well I like all of it, the Sunday School, bible study, our sermons, and the music.

Fullwood: Okay, so all of that, the Sunday School, bible study, the music, is all of that an opportunity for worship?

Member A5: Yeah.

Fullwood: Because some, you know, I'm asking because some people may think “oh, you don't worship when you go to bible study.”

Member A5: You learn when you go to bible study, and yes it's also worship. There's still a lot that I don't know about the bible, and I am still trying to learn, and I admire the people who can start off with scripture.

Fullwood: Right, me too!

Member A5: And I'm still learning to do that at my age; I'm still learning to do that!

Interview with Pastor B
Location: Church Conference Room
October 2012

Fullwood: This is an interview with Pastor B, pastor of ----- United Methodist Church. Pastor B, thank you for interviewing this morning. So let's get started with the first question, number 1, how long have you been in the ministry?

Pastor B: I feel like I've been in the ministry my whole life; I actually accepted my call into ministry while I was attending an African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E) church in -----, KS.

Fullwood: Uum huh.

Pastor B: And that was around 2002, and I began with their board of examiner's classes--

Fullwood: Okay.

Pastor B: at that time, so I started with that church. So I would say about 2002.

Fullwood: Okay, great. Do you mind giving me your age range? You don't have to if you don't want to.

Pastor B: No, that's fine. I'm 49--I think. [Fullwood and Pastor B laughing!!]

Fullwood: Okay, number 3, tell me about your birth family.

Pastor B: My parents are Mother X and Father X, and they're still living.

Fullwood: Okay.

Pastor B: I grew up in -----, KS and I was baptized into ----- United Methodist Church in -----, KS. My dad was, I should know how old, we were trying to figure this out the other day, but he was born in '39; my mom was born in 1941, so they're in their seventies. I'm an only child—

Fullwood: Okay.

Pastor B: So I grew up an only child, and I grew up in a home that practiced the Christian faith, and I was baptized into that faith. Many of my family, extended family, also attended that church.

Fullwood: Okay.

Pastor B: My grandmother was like, I guess you would say like a matriarch of the church--

Fullwood: Okay.

Pastor B: And very well known, and she required her children to attend church, so back then, it trickled down to where the grandchildren and so forth, even when my parents wouldn't go to Sunday School, my grandmother would make sure. She come by and pick me up, with my cousins, to make sure that we got to church. I'm not sure what else about my family--

Fullwood: Oh no, this is fine because I have a follow-up question. Now when you say the Christian faith, you don't mean like generally, like say our family is Christian; isn't there a denomination that's the Christian church, is that what you mean?

Pastor B: No, I mean Christian as in the body of Christ.

Fullwood: Okay, alright.

Pastor B: But my family has, traditionally, always been in the church, so I grew up in the church--

Fullwood: Okay.

Pastor B: My parents were still heavily involved within the church.

Fullwood: Great, number 4, well you somewhat already told us this, what were your parents' vocation, profession, livelihood? You said they were heavily involved in church.

Pastor B: They were heavily involved in the church. My father worked for the Boy Scouts--

Fullwood: Okay.

Pastor B: He was a district executive with the Boy Scouts. My mother worked for, in the travel department, at Boeing, yeah, where they built airplanes.

Fullwood: Yes, I just realized what you meant when you said Boeing.

Pastor B: And then toward the end of my dad's working career, he worked for the transit in Wichita, so he drove the bus. It was kind of interesting; my dad, during his tenure with the Boy Scouts, that one period, a supervisor started in his department and he was a racist.

Fullwood: Okay.

Pastor B: And that entered another dynamic there, so my dad had to file a lawsuit against the Boy Scouts.

Fullwood: Okay.

Pastor B: There were a lot of racist things, and so they decided to settle.

Fullwood: Okay.

Pastor B: My dad had a pretty good case--

Fullwood: Right.

Pastor B: so they settled outside, so my dad won the case.

Fullwood: Okay.

Pastor B: My dad had quit because he didn't want to work with this individual.

Fullwood: Okay.

Pastor B: But he was offered his job back if he wanted it, but he didn't. So he was getting toward the end of his career; he tried to find something to finish out his time. And my mother--well they're both retired now. They're doing really well, they're very healthy, they're traveling.

Fullwood: Great!

Pastor B: Yeah, so they're still involved in a lot of community work, activities and so forth.

Fullwood: Alright, Pastor B that's wonderful! Well, we already touched on number 5, tell me about your formative years, where you were born. Number 6, what influenced you to go into the ministry?

Pastor B: I should be able to answer this clearly; I've written about it so many times at school [chuckling].

Fullwood: Okay--[chuckling]

Pastor B: What influenced me greatly was growing up in a strong black church. One of the things that I appreciated about the black church experience is the church was such an important part in the lives of families, of the black families.

Fullwood: Yeah.

Pastor B: And when you went to church you were strengthened and empowered in your journey and you came together as a community; you understood supporting each other, you understood about lifting each other up, encouraging each other.

Fullwood: Okay.

Pastor B: When I was younger growing up in the church, I can always remember the elders of the church being real concerned about who I was--

Fullwood: Okay.

Pastor B: what was happening in my life--

Fullwood: Uum huh.

Pastor B: What type of choices I was making, encouraging me to make good choices and when I was in school and I participated in things, they were interested in what I was doing--

Fullwood: doing, uum huh.

Pastor B: in school and my achievements.

Fullwood: Right.

Interview with Member B2
Location: Church Classroom
November 2012

Fullwood: This is an interview with Member B2, a member of ----- United Methodist Church. Member B2, thank you very much for participating in this interview.

Member B2: You're most welcome.

Fullwood: And we'll go ahead and start with question number 1, how long have you attended this church?

Member B2: I've attended ----- church at least 25 plus years.

Fullwood: Okay, good, a longtime member; 25 plus years, good. Number 2, how did you decide to become a member of this church?

Member B2: Well, I am a, born and raised into the Methodist--

Fullwood: Good!

Member B2: I was a Methodist at ----- United Methodist in ----- KS.

Fullwood: Okay.

Member B2: And I have heard through my childhood a lot about this church. There have been people such as Member S, who was a member here; he was also an attorney and he [inaudible] in the community--

Fullwood: Aah hah.

Member B2: and through my upbringing and through the ----- United Methodist, I had kind of focused, well when I graduated from high school, and then when I graduated from college, I decided, well if I come to the city where my older sister had lived, I would like to attend this church, so that's how I started--
-

Fullwood: Okay, so that's how you started, okay, alright, good. Number 3, do you hold an office in this church, and if so which office?

Member B2: Back in the day, no!

Fullwood: Okay [laughing!!]

Member B2: I used to wear many hats; I am part of the PPR, Pastor's Parish—

Fullwood: Pastor's Parish Committee, okay, alright, PPR, Pastor's Parish. Okay, so, this is not an original question but I just wanted to ask you because I'm not United Methodist, even though I'm familiar with Methodist; my mother's A.M.E., my father is a pastor. He pastor's currently in North Carolina, a Baptist. Just for me what is the Pastor's Parish? Is it like a Pastor's Aide Committee where you assist the pastor?

Member B2: We are the pastor's eyes, ears, and all that.

Fullwood: Oh, okay, uum huh.

Member B2: Members come to a pastor's parish person to vent or express concerns--

Fullwood: Oh, okay!

Member B2: We would have a dialog with the pastor on a matter of concerns, or if a certain member would come to the pastor vice versa, she (the pastor) can come to the PPR--

Fullwood: Right, okay, okay.

Member B2: And discuss the issue of how to take the proper direction and resolve the issue.

Fullwood: Okay, you know I like that. It sounds like to me that you all are a ---

Member B2: A sound board for her.

Fullwood: Like a grievance committee, members come to us first and then let us convey your grievance to the pastor and we can all work together.

Member B2: Uum huh, work together.

Fullwood: Good, okay. Number 4, what do you like about this church?

Member B2: I like many things about this church--

Fullwood: Okay.

Member B2: I love this church, the people are extremely friendly, caring, loving, the elderly and young people take care of one another; it's more of a huge family.

Fullwood: Uum huh, good, good, good. Alright, that's what I like to hear. Number 5, how important is the worship experience to you?

Member B2: Well for me worship is where we express God's Word to us in our lives. Worship creates a atmosphere for the Word of God to flow and for God to move in our lives corporately and individually.

Fullwood: Aah hah, good, alright. Number 6, what parts of worship do you enjoy most?

Member B2: I enjoy the entire worship service.

Fullwood: Uum huh.

Member B2: To magnify and exalt the love, and absorb the only true God, Jesus Christ. I love the spiritual feed that I receive.

Fullwood: Yes, okay good. Number 7, do you participate in the worship experience, if so please explain.

Member B2: Well, I had given that a lot of thought.

Pastor B's Church
Interview with Member B3
Location: KU Campus
December 2012

Fullwood: This is an interview with Member B3, a member of ----- United Methodist Church. Member B3, thank you very much for your interview.

Member B3: Thank you, my pleasure.

Fullwood: And, we'll go ahead and get started with these 14 questions. Number 1, how long have you attended this church?

Member B3: I became, I started attending ----- United Methodist Church when I first moved to ----- in 2005.

Fullwood: Okay.

Member B3: So it will be seven years.

Fullwood: Seven years, okay. Number 2, how did you decide to become a member of this church?

Member B3: Well, I went to a lot of different churches upon moving to ----- . I was living in Wichita, and I attended ----- United Methodist Church; very similar to this church, structure, tradition, denomination, everything.

Fullwood: Aah hah, okay.

Member B3: So this church was the first one I visited, so I had a little bit of loyalty at that point, to ----- United Methodist Church and the denomination. But I tried; I went to probably about 10 other churches.

Fullwood: Oooh, okay!

Member B3: to try and figure out what church I liked, and ended up coming back to settle on this church.

Fullwood: Uum huh.

Member B3: I think it had all of the, probably all of the things that I thought I was looking for.

Fullwood: Looking for, okay. And if you don't mind me asking, this isn't an official question, what were those things you were looking for?

Member B3: The things I was looking-- definitely, I'm a person who appreciates structure, organization. I appreciate the fact that there is a book of discipline, and it's uniform throughout the entire conference of the United Methodist.

Fullwood: Uum huh, okay, the United Methodist.

Member B3: In my mind it kind of keeps with the whole, being a government person--

Fullwood: That's right; you're a political science person, that's right!

Member B3: and since I was working in state government, it keeps with the whole rational, legal, basic principle of government, bureaucracy, where you would have it organized.

Fullwood: Aah hah.

Member B3: There would be a clear chain, you know everything is clear. So I like the fact that, clearly I wanted to go to a church that I identified with culturally--

Fullwood: Aah hah.

Member B3: with the style of worship. I hate to admit it, but the old adage is true about the 11:00 hour on Sunday.

Fullwood: Yeah, yeah.

Member B3: The worship was good, and I appreciate having the kind of relationship or being able to have an admiration for the pastors--I also liked the pastor.

Fullwood: Okay, alright. Let's see, let's go on to number 3, do you hold an office in this church, and if so, which office?

Member B3: I am a member of the, I'm not an officer in terms of being in a leadership; I'm a member of the Nominations Committee. I was a member of a couple of other committees—

Fullwood: Okay, alright.

Member B3: Pastor Parish Relations Committee. In the United Methodist Church, that's the core committee that meets with the pastor specifically on staff issues of the church; all of the kind of juicy issues--I got off of that one.

Fullwood: Okay! [Member B3 and Fullwood laughing!!]

Member B3: I'm on the Nominations Committee now where we find, we make suggestions and ask people if they're willing to serve on the board of trustees, on the pastor parish relations committee, and all that, the stewardship committee. I'm also on Stewardship.

Fullwood: Okay, you're on the Stewardship Committee.

Member B3: So we do the stewardship moment and serve; every month we go to the rescue mission and serve food.

APPENDIX D: REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE OF FIELD NOTES

Church A

July 22nd

How to Get the Glory Back

* Isaiah 6:1-8

Worship Observation - After choir sang "Grateful" the pastor got up and said "Are u grateful" I looked out into audience and y'all act like you ain't grateful! The musician continued playing song while Pastor says this, and choir and audience began singing chorus softly.

- When pastor begins by introducing text, very quiet, audience listening
 - But when pastor really began to unpack verses 1, 2, 3 (explaining thru his word study) audience began reacting verbally and physically (raising hands)
- "Yeah" "That's right" "Preach pastor!"
(those verses discussing seraphims saying holy, holy - pastor explaining what that means)

* "Oh that's your shout cue, y'all just missed it!" - Pastor said this after explaining that God immediately helps those who need it and blesses them. He says that we can't depend on each other for help or blessings - when humans help, they have to go thru clearance. When God helps, there is no clearance!

* "Is there anybody here..." (this is the climax - the whoop) that knows that God can play around your broken ^{keys} keys?

July 22nd

During this climatic period, pastor says Holy, Holy and musician is playing in rhythm w/ him - back and forth, back and forth - he says Holy - then musician plays, then says Holy, then musician plays

* Even after the cool down period, pastor still explaining text while musician plays, which is really the invitational moment.

Afterthoughts: I quickly thought that he was not good enough to answer the call (he's broken). Pastor then moved from there to use a real-life application - he tells the story of Stevie Wonder playing the piano and singing "Amazing Grace" at Johnnie Cochran's funeral. After singing song, Bishop Blake walks Stevie from piano to his seat and while doing so, Stevie tells the Bishop that he has broken keys on piano. Bishop was astonished because Wonder played piano masterfully and beautifully. Wonder says "he's a piano virtuoso, classically trained, and he knows how to play around broken keys. That's when it hit home to congregation and they responded exuberantly with conviction. Then Pastor ~~transitioned~~ transitioned to his tag line/signal line "Is there anybody here who knows God can play around your broken keys!"

Church A

August 12, 2012

- * Pastor ~~XXXXXX~~ began sermon w/ prayer that moved into song "Thank You Lord" and ended with that - Musician playing softly in background - prompted white to sing

Text: Genesis 29:15-35

Title: The Ugly Duckling

- * Began w/ the scenario about family drama at family reunions, weddings, funerals to apply to the character Jacob's situation in being tricked by Laban into marrying Leah instead of Rachel

* 1e Pointers

1. Sin does you, you don't do sin.
2. Life on earth marked by cosmic disapp.
3. We make our own lives worst thru idolizing families
4. God works with weak people
5. God works thru weak people
6. God works in the weakest of the weak

Good
news
pointers

- * Pastor ~~XXXXXX~~ tag line used - "Is there any body here that knows that weeping may endure for a night but joy comes in the morning" Audience responded and stood up while musician played (I stood up as well because it hit home to me!) While Pastor cited the verse, "Weeping may endure for a night", the musician played along w/ him - back-n-forth exchange w/ the rhythm of phrase (saw rhythm as he said one word/phrase, then organist played and back n forth)

Church B - First Sunday of Advent

12/2/12 - ~~Advent~~

- Church began with worship & praise song "We Come to Praise Him" which set the tone - people who were quietly awaiting for service to begin, they began standing up singing clapping and praising the Lord
- After the responsive reading, the choir sang "At the Cross"
- After the choir sang that hymn, Pastor ~~reiterated~~ reiterated the words to the hymn - almost like a sermon with relating the words to the hymn to the season of Advent, this is the first Sunday of Advent - "At the Cross, where I first saw the light, and the burden of my heart rolled away... and now I am happy all the day." she explains that "happy" is different than a happy as in seeing Santa Claus, but a glory, hallelujah, celebratory happy - glorifying the birth of Christ and praising him
- Choir sang "We Come to Praise Him and we come to have a good time" and Pastor ~~stood up~~ stood up and clapped with the choir

12/2/12 - Church B

Broken Promises or Misdirected Possibilities
Text: Jeremiah 33: 14-16 / Luke 21: 25-36

- Pastor ~~XXXXXX~~ began by using the Powerball Lottery as an example of people's hope and possibilities and excitement of what the money could do
- Then she says that as Christians we should have that excitement about our faith in Jesus Christ
- Congregation immediately said "Amen"
- When Pastor ~~XXXXXX~~ raised her voice excitedly, emphasizing words, that's when the congregation said "Yes, yes," "Amen, Amen"
- Pastor ~~XXXXXX~~ preaching style is a mixture of teaching as well
- When she preached through the text she becomes more explanatory and uses gestures during that time
- Then she shifts back to a running rhetoric like she's preaching
- She ended her sermon using an HAVE structure "We all ~~do~~ won the lottery" (through our faith and trust in Jesus Christ)
- Stating just like we have hope - Jeremiah as a prophet, reminds the children of God the hope that lies ahead - He shows/reminds them of the vision
- This is Communion Sunday -

Church B

Sunday, 1/20/13 - Youth Sunday
Reclaiming Justice - Amos 5:18-25

(1st sermon in justice ministry series)
in celebration MLK, Jr.

- Reclaim, restore, the desires that God has put in us - God is calling us to truth
- when Pastor ~~proceeds~~ proceeds in a litany of parallel structures
- "Something's not right when kids are shot w/ assault weapons"
- "Something's not right when our young men are locked up in jail than they are in college"
- This when the audience began responding more - answering "yes" and clapping
- she uses the text of Amos - Amos was a prophet who spoke out against injustice - and reminded the children of Israel about their responsibilities
- she tied that to MLK, Jr - he was like Amos - seeking to restore justice
- she preached that MLK, Jr was called an extremist by his fellow clergymen
- she put the question: It's not that we are an extremist, but what kind of extremist will you be?
- Jesus was extremist for love!

1/20/13 - Youth Sunday - Church B
 "We can't submit to the status quo"
 "Do you hear me saints? We
 cannot submit to the status quo!"


Reflection: In this particular sermon, Pastor ~~did~~ not use a preaching/teaching mode of preaching like the others I've observed. She was more challenging, more authoritative, and yes, more prophetic. Perhaps because she was dealing with the issue of social justice in relation to MLK, Jr Day, and perhaps because she used as her text a ~~prophetic~~ prophetic book of the bible: the book of Amos, who was an Old Testament prophet. However, members still responded like they usually do w/ "Amins", "Yes", "That's right". But in responding, they were responding because they were being challenged, like Pastor ~~was~~ was really making them think about the social ills that Christians turn a blind eye to, like they were saying "Right, I have been ~~turning~~ turning a blind eye to social injustices!" This Sunday was also Youth Sunday, where the youth conducted the worship services, leading in prayer, announcements, etc.

APPENDIX E: TABLE OF CODED INTERVIEWS OF SUBJECTS


SUBJECT	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES	CATEGORIES	CATEGORIES	THEMES
PASTOR A	1-2. How long in the ministry & age range?	"30 years," age = "48"	---	---	---
	3-4. Preacher's birth family, parents' professions?	only child; working-class family; a religious family; active church members; grandmother respected in the church	Familial relations fostered vocation	Religious/Family Influence	LEARNING FROM EVERYDAY RELATIONS
	5-6. Tell about formative yrs., what influenced you into the ministry?	early exposure thru grandmother; "I knew I wanted to preach at 9 yrs. old;" aspirations for secular vocation & life; renewing call of God; "kind of the journey"	Familial relations as part of the journey	Journey of Preaching	LEARNING FROM EVERYDAY RELATIONS
	7-8. Discuss prep for ministry (informal & formal) and discuss mentors.	elders (community & religious) & pastor biggest influence; "living out their faith (church beyond Sunday);" "informally they were the draw;" seminary was formal training	Community living everyday faith	Informal Learning	LEARNING FROM EVERYDAY RELATIONS
	9-10. Did formal training help w/ black church; what is racial/ethnic composition of church & do you adapt preaching to heterogeneous audience?	Formal training didn't prepare; predominately black but interracial church; "I don't vilify;" "empower the larger audience;" the Gospel has no color	Universal Gospel yet preaching for Af-Americans	Preaching the Gospel to all	CULTURALLY-SPECIFIC AND UNIVERSAL PREACHING

There were three (3) types of subjects interviewed for this study: **1) a pastor/preacher;** **2) a personal witness—a spouse, associate minister, steward, deacon, etc.;** **3) four congregants,** making a total of **six (6) subjects interviewed from both churches.** In grounded theory, coding is systematic, beginning generally by using *language (responses from interviews)* to develop *categories* from the subject's perspective; as coding becomes more refined, *themes* should emerge, with the goal of formulating *theory* based upon themes. **Above is the coded information for Pastor A,** continuing through pages 264-66. Pages 267 – 270 are the coded information for his personal witness, Member A1, and for his congregants, Members A2-A5. Words highlighted helped the most in developing categories and themes, and the arrows signal different but similar categories in which a theme emerged. Also, Pastor B and her congregants follow on pages 271-78.


Pastor A's Interview

SUBJECT	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES	CATEGORIES	CATEGORIES	THEMES
PASTOR A 	11. How did you learn responsibilities that go along with ministry?	"talking to my pastor and other pastors;" training for practice thru black church workshops	Extra training from local pastors	Effective mentoring from pastors	LEARNING FROM EVERYDAY RELATIONS
	12. Is one part of ministerial duties more important than others?	evolving to "administrative piece of ministry;" the average black church is voluntary; black pastors (traditionally) living up to unrealistic expectations	----	----	----
	13. Among duties, how important is preaching?	Christ-centered preaching as important; preach solutions not problems; preaching hope so people won't live in a dual world	Preaching salvation not condemnation for all	Compassionate Preaching	CULTURALLY-SPECIFIC AND UNIVERSAL PREACHING
	14. How did you learn to preach?	learning by observation; "sitting in worship services;" learning from different styles; setting affects style; "don't have your own voice;" learning doesn't stop	Learning through observation & imitation	Learning/Imitating Preachers	PERFECTING SKILLS THROUGH IMITATION
	15. How do you prepare sermons, what's involved?	week-long preparation; the journey; landing the airplane; (readings, word studies); decide type of sermon & style of preaching; "Lord, breathe on this." (prayer)	Abstract, practical, & metaphorical thinking	Multiple modes in preparation	----
	16. What makes a successful sermon?	preparation; discipline; "there's nothing worse than a lazy preacher;" not all about emotion but listening equally important	Abstract, practical, & metaphorical thinking	Multiple modes in preparation	----

Pastor A's Interview

SUBJECT	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES	CATEGORIES	CATEGORIES	THEMES
 PASTOR A	17. What makes a successful preaching situation?	Lord & Holy Spirit helps the preaching situation; preaching not about preacher or emotion from pew; transformation (of members) makes a good sermon	Intangible & emotional expressions for successful preaching	Preaching for transformation	CULTURALLY-SPECIFIC AND UNIVERSAL PREACHING
	18. Is this different for Af-Am churches?	"yes & no;" in general Af-Am preachers are used to response; no response for White preachers; "in Af-Am context, everybody doesn't respond the same way"	Two-way response important for success	Dynamic participation	INTENTIONAL AND IMPLICIT INTERACTION
	19. What kinds of things help success or what occurs during worship for success?	worship style & format helps; members bringing something in	Worship format helps members receive	Successful order of worship	STRUCTURED INTERACTION
	20. Once you start preaching, is there anything to influence how you preach?	the audience; growth & maturity over the years help with excitement (because of who preaching about)	Awareness of audience helps w/ success	Audience Influence	INTENTIONAL INTERACTION
	21. Do you have a way of knowing you're successful while preaching?	success due to feedback from audience; now, internal voice (of knowledge having studied & prepared)	Awareness of audience helps w/ success	Audience Influence	INTENTIONAL INTERACTION
	22-23. How do you define a successful or unsuccessful worship experience?	sermonic moment as culmination of worship; success also preaching if no feedback; audience "not the sole measurer of what's bad;" but "preacher not above critique"	Awareness of audience helps w/ success	Audience Influence	INTENTIONAL INTERACTION

Pastor A's Interview

SUBJECT	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES	CATEGORIES	CATEGORIES	THEMES
	PASTOR A				
	24. Do you have different styles of preaching, if so why?	style of preaching depends upon audience; time determines style and length of preaching; context and geographical location determine style	Preaching style depends on rhetorical situation	No purely individual style	CULTURALLY SPECIFIC AND UNIVERSAL PREACHING
	25. Adjustments to sermon made when you perceive not going well?	"in the old church, the old preacher uses, 'cut across the field' — meaning you got to wrap this thing up;" pay attention to cues; Holy Spirit helps with adjustments	Traditions passed down to help w/ preaching	Traditions help w/ rhetorical situation	LEARNING FROM EVERYDAY RELATIONS CULTURALLY SPECIFIC AND UNIVERSAL PREACHING
	**26. Does singing a song before the sermon serve as preparation for right mindset and mood, or is it part of the sermon?	it is the sermon, even though not planned; "that's part of that 'breathe on this Lord,'" the "pre-introduction" to the sermon	---	---	---
	** This question was not a part of the structured questions and is only applicable to Pastor A. I asked this because Pastor A sings quite frequently before preaching.				

Member A1's (Personal Witness') Interview

SUBJECT	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES	CATEGORIES	CATEGORIES	THEMES
MEMBER A1	1-2. Relationship w/Pastor, how long have you known her/him?	A mentor ; a member before his pastorate; "father in the ministry"	Knowledge of preaching through associations	Preaching Associations	LEARNING FROM EVERYDAY RELATIONS
	3-4. Was she/he preaching when you met; how much about preaching did you know prior to your relationship with her/him?	Little known about preaching; Pastor A helped w/preaching informally; things "picked up on and adapt it at one point;" more knowledge from seminary education	Learning from informal preaching	Informal Learning	LEARNING FROM EVERYDAY RELATIONS
	5. Who influenced/ mentored the pastor?	Mentor —his father in the ministry	Effective mentoring helps with preaching	Mentor for Preaching	LEARNING FROM EVERYDAY RELATIONS
	6. Has she/he imitated that style or developed his/her own?	Imitates and influenced by mentor and famous preachers; not own style but mixture	Fusion of styles to develop own style	Imitating preachers	PERFECTING SKILLS THROUGH IMITATION
	7. Have you encouraged her/him during prep. or given critical feedback?	General feedback but given critical feedback indirectly; giving honest yet gracious feedback	----	----	----
	8. Has pastor ever delivered/preached a bad sermon?	non-substantive sermon as superficial dealing of text	----	----	----
	9. What makes a good sermon and has pastor delivered one?	good sermon is that person "deals adequately w/biblical text"	----	----	----
	10. Do you participate in the worship experience?	participate by giving feedback	Active participation through feedback	Active engagement in worship service	STRUCTURED INTERACTION

Member A1's (Personal Witness') Interview

SUBJECT	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES	CATEGORIES	CATEGORIES	THEMES
MEMBER A1	11. Do you participate in the preaching moment?	verbal and non-verbal participation; "most of the time I participate. . . if he says something that rings true, I will give him feedback."	Active participation during preaching	Intentional feedback	INTENTIONAL INTERACTION
	12. How imperative is it (or not) for a black preacher to have participation?	participation is important; "for our tradition, it's very important; I don't think it should always be, but it is, culturally it is"	Culture-specific worship entails participation	Participation is very important	INTENTIONAL, STRUCTURED AND IMPLICIT INTERACTION
	13. Can she/he still preach with or without participation?	preachers can preach w/out feedback; a sermon which convicts may result in quiet thinking by members; still depends on cultural location			
	14. Has preaching evolved or not?	Preaching "ebbs and flows"	----	----	----
	15. Have you seen her/him make adjustments to sermon during delivery?	Yes; caters to the demographic in which he's speaking to get them to pay attention	----	----	----

Member A2-A5's (Congregants') Interviews

QUESTIONS	RESPONSE MEMBER A2	RESPONSE MEMBER A3	RESPONSE MEMBER A4	RESPONSE MEMBER A5	CATEGORIES	CATEGORIES	THEMES
1. Years of attendance at this church?	--20 years	-- 7 years	-- 7 years	--50 plus years	---	---	---
2. How did you decide to become a member?	--associated with previous pastor	--became member thru familial assoc. w/previous pastor	--became member by association	--member of Baptist church in KCK; kept Baptist affiliation	---	---	---
3. Do you hold an office?	Chorister (president, choir)	--office admin/ 8 months & chorister	-- deacon	--deacons; past usher and pianist	---	---	---
4. What do you like about this church?	--likes the teaching	--likes diversity; likes preaching	-- like pastor & atmosphere; church is to minister	--likes fellowship and sermons	Church meeting all types of needs	Multifaceted church	CULTURAL & UNIVERSAL NEEDS OF MEMBERS
5. How important is the worship experience to you?	--very important; "but what you bring in when you come into the church" -- the most important	--important b/c service about experiencing worship	--important b/c it helps and gives people hope	-- "very important b/c it keeps me grounded & gives me hope & keeps my attitude positive"	Worship expecting to receive something	Worship experience as intentional	INTENTIONAL INTERACTION
6. What part(s) of worship do you most enjoy?	--enjoys singing; most important is the Word	--praise & worship sets tone	--enjoys all of it; comes to service happy and ready to worship	--enjoys all; learning is worshipping too			
7. Do you participate in the worship experience?	--engages in verbal and non-verbal participation (feedback & gestures)	--participates as chorister, p & w team; "have to come in with your mind set on what you're doing"	-- active, verbal participation; participation as vow to God (relationship)	- congregational singing; helping members during pastoral appeal			
8. Is same kind of participation used during preaching?	yes	--different b/c she's not leading but receiving; singing along w/ Pastor A & taking notes	--yes, saying "Amen"	--takes notes during sermon; a passive participant	Church members worshipping through dialogue	Dialogue/feedback integrated as worship	STRUCTURED, INTENTIONAL INTERACTION


Member A2-A5's (Congregants') Interviews

QUESTIONS	RESPONSE MEMBER A2	RESPONSE MEMBER A3	RESPONSE MEMBER A4	RESPONSE MEMBER A5	CATEGORIES	CATEGORIES	THEMES
9. How do you know when to participate?	--"Jesus Christ gives me the cue;" the words to songs are moving	--take cues from musician and pastor; saying "Amen" urges more preaching	--gets cue from God (when thinking about blessings)	--Pastor A gives her the cue	Tangible & intangible expressions during worship	Myriad interactions during worship	STRUCTURED, INTENTIONAL INTERACTION
10. How important are the sermons?	--very important; knowing the Word thru preaching then study for self	--sermons are valuable; other elements of worship set tone	--Pastor A's sermons are important; all sermons are	--sermons keep her in a positive mood	Sermons as instructive & supportive	Importance of sermons	SERMONS AS EXPERIENTIAL, INSTRUCTIVE, & SUPPORTIVE
11. What do you like about the sermons?	--learning the Word in a different way	--preacher "can bring people in, keep their attention, and teach"	--words from sermon strengthens & enables you to help	--sermons are uplifting & gives her hope	Experiencing the sermon	Importance of sermons	
12. How define a successful worship experience?	--"Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit shows up and is in there"	--successful worship is good feeling; your relationship w/Christ; worship success as perpetual	--someone professing the faith and learning from sermon as a successful worship	--don't have to be emotional to enjoy sermon; can be quiet & devotional	Members' responsibility for success or unsuccessful worship	Members determine success of worship	INTENTIONAL INTERACTION
13. How define an unsuccessful worship experience?	--distractions; sitting in the back pew	--unsuccessful is coming in with the wrong attitude; bringing other members down	--letting evil thoughts stop you from learning	--when one has a load on their mind			
14. Do you discuss worship experiences with members?	--discusses worship w/friend at work	--banter w/members; discuss w/non-Christian friends	--discuss with wife, family, & members; discuss w/friends	--discuss worship and sermon w/family	Experiencing worship beyond its physical location	Worship beyond church walls	SERMONS AS EXPERIENTIAL, INSTRUCTIVE, & SUPPORTIVE


SUBJECT	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES	CATEGORIES	CATEGORIES	THEMES
PASTOR B	1-2. How long in the ministry & age range?	"feels like my whole life;" age = "49"	----	----	----
	3-4. Preacher's birth family, parents' professions?	only child; working-class family; "I was baptized into the United Methodist church;" "traditionally always been in the church;" grandmother respected in church	Strong family & matriarchal support during childhood	Family is very important	IMPORTANCE OF CREDIBLE AFFILIATIONS
	5-6. Tell about formative yrs., what influenced you to the ministry?	"growing up in a strong black church;" black church about building community; "elders of the church being real concerned about who I was;" this support helped in profession	The community shapes the person	Elder & communal influence	IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNAL AFFILIATIONS
	7-8. Discuss prep for ministry (informal & formal) and discuss mentors.	elders (community) "living out of that Word;" informal learning from community of faith; seminary was formal training	Seeing one's faith inform their life	Living the Word	THE EXPERIENCE OF THE WORD
	9-10. Did formal training help w/ black church; what is racial/ethnic composition of church & do you adapt preaching to heterogeneous audience?	"yes & no;" came from and preached to a white church; perception of preaching negatively by white members; black church allows her to respond to Holy Spirit; want members to know problems but "leave this place feeling good"	----	----	----

Above is the coded information for the second preacher, Pastor B, continuing through pages 272-74. Pages 275 – 278 are the coded information for her personal witness, Member B1, and for her congregants, Members B2-B5. Words highlighted helped the most in developing categories and themes. In addition, words highlighted helped the most in developing categories and themes, and the arrows signal different but similar categories in which a theme emerged.


Pastor B's Interview

SUBJECT PASTOR B	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES	CATEGORIES	CATEGORIES	THEMES
	11. How did you learn responsibilities that go along with ministry?	training for ministry thru apprenticeship at white church after seminary	-----	-----	-----
	12. Is one part of ministerial duties more important than others?	"community, outreach and missions;" doing something with sermon after it's heard; "build community with those that are beyond the wall"	Hearing the sermon beyond the church walls	See a sermon thru community action	SERMONS TOUCHING THE HEARTS OF PARISHIONERS
	13. Among duties, how important is preaching?	evangelism; serving others; "making disciples;" other things that goes along the way w/hearing the Word	-----	-----	-----
	14. How did you learn to preach?	through observation and suggestions; getting a advice; asking God to "guide me to a text, help me to understand" (prayer)	Preaching comes by meditation and observation	Observational learning & spiritual guidance	INFLUENCES ON PREACHING
	15. How do you prepare sermons, what's involved?	hermeneutical work; using other sources; everyday issues help; following the lectionary; "Lord, how do I connect it?" (prayer)	Preparation involves mental & spiritual faculties	Literary and spiritual resources	INFLUENCES ON PREACHING
	16. What makes a successful sermon?	successful sermon touches heart; delivery only vital to draw people; not only about shouting; teaching while preaching; "I do like the dialogue... community working together"	Sermons touch the heart yet teach	A teaching & compassionate sermon	SERMONS TOUCHING THE HEARTS & MINDS OF PARISHIONERS

Pastor B's Interview

SUBJECT	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES	CATEGORIES	CATEGORIES	THEMES
 PASTOR B	17. What makes a successful preaching situation?	conversing; sharing the Gospel; "helping people to connect to God's Word;" taking preaching outside of church	Preaching as successful beyond walls	Preaching w/out Walls	INFLUENCES ON THE PREACHING MOMENT
	18. Is this different for Af-Am churches?	"yeah, it is;" beauty of black church is dialogue/ getting others to participate; black church has implicit knowledge that worship is about participating; blacks have understanding that God is involved in life	Dialogue as participation	Building community thru participation	SPONTANEOUS PARTICIPATION
	19. What kinds of things help success or what occurs during worship for success?	worship team helps with success; order of worship helps	Structure of worship helps with success	Worship order important	STRUCTURED PARTICIPATION
	20. Once you start preaching, is there anything to influence how you preach?	responses from audience; manuscript keeps on track; moving from pulpit to drive home point; being open to Spirit	Feedback from audience influences preaching	Being receptive to the Spirit	OTHER INFLUENCES ON THE PREACHING MOMENT
	21. Do you have a way of knowing you're successful while preaching?	feedback from members; criteria of good sermon varies from preacher to members; true success in preaching comes from obedience to God			
	22. How do you define a successful worship experience?	successful worship about action; the ability to use what's heard; expects immediate action	Successful worship throughout the week	Living the worship experience	EXPERIENCING THE WORD/SERMONS TOUCHING MINDS

Pastor B's Interview

SUBJECT	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES	CATEGORIES	CATEGORIES	THEMES
 PASTOR B	23. How do you define an unsuccessful worship experience?	"I don't think so . . . b/c God is always working all the time;" worship is an every day experience; no response doesn't mean unsuccessful worship	Successful worship throughout the week	Living the worship experience	EXPERIENCING THE WORD
	24. Do you have different styles of preaching, if so why?	style of preaching depends upon what she emphasizes in the text	Style of preaching not purely individualistic	Textual influences on preaching	OTHER INFLUENCES ON THE PREACHING MOMENT
	25. Adjustments to sermon made when you perceive not going well?	stop and draw sermon to a close; feedback from spouse and members	-----	-----	-----

Member B1's (Personal Witness') Interview

SUBJECT	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES	CATEGORIES	CATEGORIES	THEMES
Member B1	1-2. Relationship w/Pastor, how long have you known her/him?	--spouse of Pastor B; married for 22 years	Knowledge of preaching through relations	Relations	CREDIBLE AFFILIATIONS
	3-4. Was she/he preaching when you met; how much about preaching did you know prior to your relationship with her/him?	--met in college & wife not preaching but Christian; only understood preacher as someone to respect; did not understand preaching as a vocation			
	5. Who influenced/ mentored the pastor?	--grandmother heavily involved in church; she influenced mentored her	Influenced by family	Mentored by family	CREDIBLE AFFILIATIONS
	6. Has she/he imitated that style or developed his/her own?	--she developed her own style of preaching: "I can't see someone she preaches like"	Creating own style but influenced by others	Influences on style	INFLUENCES ON PREACHING
	7. Have you encouraged her/him during prep, or given critical feedback?	--help her grow through constructive criticism (she asks for it)	Constructive criticism for growth	Criticism	-----
	8. Has pastor ever delivered/preached a bad sermon?	--theological knowledge and study create dry sermon but not bad one (at times)	-----	-----	-----
	9. What makes a good sermon and has pastor delivered one?	--knowledge helps her preach deep and powerful sermons, sermons that teach	-----	-----	-----
	10. Do you participate in the worship experience?	--participates by giving prayer during worship;	Active thru order of worship	Active thru participation	STRUCTURED PARTICIPATION

Member B1's (Personal Witness') Interview

SUBJECT	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES	CATEGORIES	CATEGORIES	THEMES
Member B1	11. Do you participate during the preaching moment?	preached for Lay Sunday (a Lay Speaker)	Active thru denomination	Participates in worship	STRUCTURED PARTICIPATION
	12. How imperative is it (or not) for a black preacher to have participation?	--participation is imperative culturally	Culture-specific worship entails dialogue	Dialogue to participate	SPONTANEOUS PARTICIPATION
	13. Can she/he still preach w/out participation?	"I think that she can;" but feedback needed for Pastor B because she values interaction			
	14. Has preaching evolved or not?	--named "crying preacher" b/c she cried/ full of Holy Spirit; now a more controlled emotion but still Spirit-filled	-----	-----	-----
	15. Have you seen her/him make adjustments to sermon during delivery?	--when not reaching audience, put notes aside and preaches from the heart	Non-rigid preaching to reach audience	A flexible sermon	SERMONS TOUCHING MINDS & HEARTS

Member B2-B5's (Congregants') Interviews

QUESTIONS	RESPONSE MEMBER B2	RESPONSE MEMBER B3	RESPONSE MEMBER B4	RESPONSE MEMBER B5	CATEGORIES	CATEGORIES	THEMES
1. How long attended this church?	--25 plus years	--7 years	--35 years	--8 years	-----	-----	-----
2. How did you decide to become a member?	--born and raised Methodist; heard about this church thru childhood	--attended UM church in Wichita; moved, visited other churches but remained loyal to UM	--visited church & liked friendliness of members & Pastor	--transferred from another UM church b/c no spiritually fed	-----	-----	-----
3. Do you hold an office?	--Pastor Parish Relations Committee	--PPR Committee; Nominations & Stewardship Com	--treasurer for 7 years	--greeter; Christian Ed. Board member	-----	-----	-----
4. What do you like about this church?	--caring & friendly; church like family	--structure & organization; cultural identity	--the people are friendly and are like family	--spirit-filled and loving church	Church meeting familial, cultural & spiritual needs	Multifaceted church	-----
5. How important is the worship experience to you?	--worship important for expression of God's Word to move in lives	--very important; mixture of structure & emotion	--important b/c it helps in daily life w/Christ; prepares you for the week	--needs church family in life	Active worship & participation for emotional & daily needs	Importance of worship & participation	STRUCTURED PARTICIPATION
6. What part(s) of worship do you most enjoy?	--"I enjoy the entire worship service."	--structure simple & the same; choir singing sermonic song	--enjoys learning from sermon; enjoys choir for spiritual filling	--singing; Praise & Worship			
7. Do you participate in the worship experience?	--participate as choir member; "I love singing for the Lord"	--sings in audience & Male Chorus	--singing in Male Chorus; speaking as a Lay Leader	--singing in worship; greeting visitors			
8. Is same kind of participation used during preaching?	--saying "Amen" or "Hallelujah" when Spirit moves; Pastor B is educating them about God	--she encourages participation thru visual aids; feedback for concurrence w/Pastor B & clapping	--there is verbal participation; "there are some 'Amens,' there are some 'okaying'"	--yes, listening, praising, and reflection	Spontaneous and intangible expressions	Spontaneity during preaching	SPONTANEOUS CUES FOR PARTICIPATION

Member B2-B5's (Congregants') Interviews

QUESTIONS	RESPONSE MEMBER B2	RESPONSE MEMBER B3	RESPONSE MEMBER B4	RESPONSE MEMBER B5	CATEGORIES	CATEGORIES	THEMES
9. How do you know when to participate?	--lay person or laities give the cue	--Pastor B gives the cue	--what's been said resonates w/individual so it's spontaneous	--know format of worship so know how it's conducted	Spontaneous and intangible expressions	Spontaneity during preaching	SPONTANEOUS CUES FOR PARTICIPATION
10. How important are the sermons?	--sermons very important because they teach lessons from Bible	--very important; rhetorical tools to elicit response but not meat of sermon	sermons important b/c she is leading the whole body in worship	--important b/c it helps with problems	A teaching sermon as worship	Importance of learning	SERMONS TOUCHING MINDS & HEARTS
11. What do you like about the sermons?	--sermons mix contemporary w/traditional; inclusive of all ages & statuses	--likes that Pastor B teaches and she's serious	--like sermons that are clear & understandable; no moaning & groaning	--"I love it when she says, 'Can you hear me saints?'" indicate being Spirit-led			
12. How define a successful worship experience?	--descending of Holy Spirit; in communion with one another	--successful worship is relevant sermon that explains but not condemning	--successful when people receive the Word by coming to altar for prayer or profess their faith	--success is getting out what you put in	Successful worship as varied expressions	Types of Worship Experiences	EXPERIENCING THE WORD/SPONTANEOUS PARTICIPATION
13. How do you define an unsuccessful worship experience?	--no unsuccessful worship because God's Word is going forth	--unsuccessful if dead and devoid of life; if sermon is disingenuous	--people attending for wrong reasons; selfishness & not participating in ministries	--there are no unsuccessful worship experiences	-----	-----	-----
14. Do you discuss worship experiences with members?	--discusses with family & members; moves her to help others; a good feeling/overflow	--rarely does but when doing so, it's w/wife and Male Chorus talk about interesting parts of the sermon	--rarely discuss with other members but when do it's about sermon to apply to life	--discusses the moving of the Spirit w/other members	Experiencing worship beyond its structured format	Worship within and beyond church walls	EXPERIENCING THE WORD