

1 ~~777777~~
pt. 1

This is to certify that the

dissertation entitled

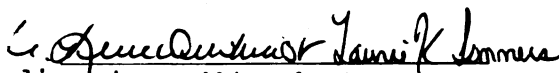
THE GOSPEL ANNOUNCER AND
THE BLACK GOSPEL MUSIC TRADITION

presented by

DEBORAH VERDICE SMITH BARNEY

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY degree in ENGLISH/AMERICAN
STUDIES


Dissertation directors Major professors

Date August 4, 1994

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES



3 1293 01027 5984

LIBRARY
Michigan State
University

PLACE IN RETURN BOX to remove this checkout from your record.
 TO AVOID FINES return on or before date due.

DATE DUE	DATE DUE	DATE DUE
SEP 30 1996 5223707 78	APR 27 2001 APR 27 2001	
SEP 24 9		
DEC 2 1997 11-78-1080 1080		
FEB 20 2001 112901		
041907 041901 MAR 19 2001		

MSU is An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Institution

c:\circ\datedue.pm3-p.1

**THE GOSPEL ANNOUNCER AND THE
BLACK GOSPEL MUSIC TRADITION**

BY

Deborah Verdice Smith Barney

A DISSERTATION

**Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of**

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of English/American Studies Program

1994

ABSTRACT

THE GOSPEL ANNOUNCER AND THE BLACK GOSPEL MUSIC TRADITION

By

Deborah Verdice Smith Barney

The popularity of gospel music has increased steadily since its emergence at the turn of the century due, to a great extent, to its presence on Black radio. Gospel music received its first radio exposure through church broadcasts in the 1920's. Its next boost in popularity came as a result of its inclusion on two kinds of programs: the first featuring sacred quartets and the second hosted by disc jockeys who featured both secular and religious music.

All of these broadcasts helped to pave the way for the emergence of gospel announcers, disc jockeys who, beginning in the 1930's, hosted programs centered around gospel music. Today gospel announcers present such programs on more than 500 outlets around the country, 100 of which play gospel music 24-hours a day. The performances of gospel announcers, both on radio and within the live concert setting, are guided by a pervasive Black aesthetic that also undergirds the work of gospel singers and Black preachers.

The nucleus of this dissertation is a performance-centered analysis of the work of three of gospel music's most visible announcers: Al "The Bishop" Hobbs, Delores "Sugar" Poindexter, and Edna Tatum. The analytical models influencing this study are contained in three works --

"Verbal Art as Performance" by Richard Bauman, an examination of the characteristics of speech used by ethnic communities during public exhibitions; "The Black Gospel Music Tradition: Symbol of Ethnicity" by Mellonee Burnim, which documents the presence of a Black aesthetic in the presentations of gospel singers; and I've Got the Word in Me and I Can Sing It, You Know in which Gerald Davis outlines the components of a sermon deemed by the Black community to be competently performed.

Special attention is given to the various dimensions of the performances of gospel announcers: the manipulation of the physical realm (attire and kinesics); text (rhetorical devices, metanarration, and Black Semantics); sound (pitch, intonation, timbre) and time (real and perceived). Similarities and differences are also drawn between the work of gospel announcers and that of preachers and gospel singers.

Copyright by
Deborah Verdice Smith Barney
1994

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, Rosa Lee Smith, and to the memory of my late father, the Reverend Elmer W. Smith, who taught me to love great talk and music passionately. It is also dedicated to the legacy of my friend, Edward M. Smith, who helped me secure important information and interviews and gave me much needed practical direction for my dissertation; he died right after the first draft was accepted.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation was completed because of the support and cooperation of numerous persons and institutions.

Special thanks to all of the following:

-- The gospel announcers, artists, promoters, and advertising sponsors who allowed me to interview them for this study. I am particularly grateful to Al Hobbs, Delores Poindexter, and Edna Tatum, who gave me permission to place their wonderful work at the center of my project.

-- My doctoral committee: Dr. Jim McClintock, my committee chair, whose wry anecdotes and eleventh-hour arrangements for financial aid will never be forgotten; Dr. Kurt Dewhurst, co-director of this dissertation, who recruited me and never let me sink in spirit or finances; Dr. Harry Reed for demystifying history and taking me on one sorely-needed walk; and Dr. Laurie Sommers, co-director of this dissertation, whose critical eye and available ear made her the perfect combination of friend and mentor for this journey

-- Drs. Mellonee Burnim (thanks for the topic!), Portia Maultsby, and Bill Wiggins, Jr., of Indiana University; for their coursework and support. They, along with Drs. Geneva

Smitherman of MSU and Gladys-Marie Fry of the University of Maryland, have also demonstrated that well-trained "insiders" can be formidable scholars

-- Dr. Marsha MacDowell for keeping me employed and for displaying unwavering faith in my abilities

-- My many family members and friends, especially Marilyn Bell, Elnora Austell, and Gail Jones, who provided expertise, prayers, and encouragement when my spirits lagged

-- Larry McMurtry, for helping me to translate the verbal artistry of gospel announcers onto the printed page

-- Lisa Melvin, for her assistance with printing

-- Basil Pollard for friendship and support above and beyond the call of duty

-- My fellow members of SIS (Sisters in the Struggle), a Detroit-based group dedicated to helping Black women complete their doctoral studies, who gave me a boost during the last year

-- The various departments and funding organizations within Michigan State University that provided me with financial support, including a Minority Competitive Doctoral Fellowship, a King Chavez Parks Fellowship, and a College of Arts and Letters fellowship.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	ii
Copyright Notice.....	iv
Dedication.....	v
Acknowledgments.....	vi
 CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION.....	 1
Problem Statement.....	1
Hypothesis.....	4
The Rationale.....	7
Definitions and Nomenclature Pertinent to This Study.....	15
"The Black Church" and Related References.....	15
Gospel Music Terminology.....	16
Nomenclature and Categories Relating to Gospel Announcers.....	17
Descriptive Statement Regarding the Announcers Surveyed for This Research.....	20
End Notes.....	23
 CHAPTER II. RESEARCH DESIGN.....	 24
Methodological Description.....	24
Fieldwork.....	24
Oral Histories/Interviews (24); Performances (26); Feedback Interviews (27); Commercial Sound Recordings (31); Archival Retrieval (32); Questionnaire (33)	
Key Paradigms and Works Influencing This Study....	35
Performance-Centered Theory (35); Performance Theory and the Black Aesthetic (40);	
Other Works Influencing This Study.....	43
African American Gospel Music Performance (43); African American Oral Performance (46); Black Radio--History and Announcers (48); Popular and Industry Magazines (50)	
The Gospel Announcers.....	51
Researcher's Background.....	53

CHAPTER III. THE CONVERGENCE OF RADIO AND GOSPEL MUSIC. 57

The 1920's: Black Performers Debut on Records and Radio.....	58
The Emergence of the Black Church Radio Broadcast.....	62
Jubilee and Gospel Quartets.....	64
Local Businesses and the Sponsorship of Gospel Programming.....	68
National Broadcasts Expand the Audience for Gospel Music.....	71
Gospel Records Debut on Radio Via Secular Broadcasts.....	73
Gospel Announcers and the "Golden Age of Radio"	76
The Proliferation of Gospel Announcers.....	82
Pioneering Women in Gospel Announcing.....	86
Gospel Announcers Emerge in California.....	89
Gospel Music: Backbone of Early Black Radio Programming.....	92
The Fall and Resurgence of Gospel Radio -- 1960's - 1990's.....	97
Conclusion.....	103
End Notes.....	106

CHAPTER IV. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GOSPEL ANNOUNCER.. 109

The Gospel Announcer: Main Media Source of Gospel Music.....	110
The Gospel Announcer: Source of Inspiration.....	118
The Gospel Announcer: Recreating the Church Experience.....	125
The Gospel Announcer: Concert Host and Facilitator.....	142
The Gospel Announcer: Link Between Adver- tisers and African American Consumers.....	147
The Gospel Announcer: Esteemed Member of the Community.....	162
End Notes.....	165

CHAPTER V. THE GOSPEL ANNOUNCER IN PERFORMANCE..... 167

The Gospel Announcers.....	172
The Broadcasts.....	178
Hobbs and Poindexter in Concert Performance.....	182
Outline of Hobbs' Tribute.....	183
Edna Tatum in Concert Performance.....	190
Appropriateness of the Performance Sites.....	194
The Physical Realm.....	195
Attire.....	196

Kinesics.....	201
Text.....	205
Metacommunication.....	208
Solicitational Frame.....	212
Rhetorical Devices.....	221
Sound.....	229
Pitch.....	238
Time.....	242
Functional Dimensions.....	246
Conclusion.....	249
End Notes.....	251
 CHAPTER VI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.....	253
Suggestions for Future Research.....	264
 APPENDIX I -- Performance Transcripts.....	267
 APPENDIX II -- Sample Feedback Interview.....	307
 APPENDIX III -- Analysis of Gospel Music Questionnaire' Results.....	312
 BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	319

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Problem Statement

It is the purpose of this study to examine the history, responsibilities, and performances of gospel music disc jockeys or announcers in order to determine the extent of their contributions to the Black gospel music tradition.

Gospel announcers cannot be understood apart from the historic development of the indigenous, African American musical genre with which they are associated. Gospel music's first form, often called "transitional" gospel, emerged at the turn of the twentieth century. It included the rhythmic congregational songs emanating from the Pentecostal (sometimes called Holiness or Sanctified) and primitive Baptist churches and the evocative hymns being composed in Philadelphia by a Methodist pastor named Charles Albert Tindley. After more than two decades in this initial phase, gospel acquired the attributes that helped to make it one of America's truly distinctive musical forms (Maultsby n.d. 12 - 14; Reagon 13-15).

In the 1920's, blues pianist, composer, arranger, and Baptist minister's son Thomas A. Dorsey began to synthesize the blues, Tindley's hymn stylings, and the percussive, new music of the Black church. The resulting form is what is now recognized the world over as traditional gospel music. By the 1940's and 1950's, he was so widely associated with

this emerging musical style that new gospel songs were referred to as "Dorseys." Today, he is generally heralded as the "father" of gospel music because of his vast contributions to the genre (Boyer 1992b: 142). Dorsey, as well as such contemporaries as Sallie Martin and Roberta Martin, composed gospel songs, published sheet music, established choirs and identified conducive performance venues across the country, thus amplifying gospel's profile within the African American community and facilitating its eventual acceptance within "mainline" denominations (Maultsby n.d. 12-14; Heilbut xxix). Gospel, however, achieved its widest exposure outside the church sanctuary and the greatest media boost to its popularity when it became an important aspect of Black radio (Maultsby 1992: 26, Lornell 23).

Soon after the debut of radio itself, audiences encountered gospel music as an exciting component of many local and regional church broadcasts that began in the 1920's. Though a number of ministers seized the airwaves, those who gained the greatest popularity among multi-racial audiences were those whose broadcasts featured gospel music sung by choirs, quartets, and in many instances, by the ministers themselves (Spaulding 102-104). Gospel music was incorporated into the musical potpourri offered by African American disc jockeys who officially entered the medium when the legendary Jack L. Cooper became the first Black

announcer on commercial radio in 1926 (Passman 56). Gospel also attracted larger audiences as sacred quartets were featured on their own radio broadcasts beginning in the 1920's (Lornell 22-33). By the 1930's, these factors -- gospel's presence on church broadcasts, its inclusion on programs hosted by secular disc jockeys, and its prominent place in the repertoires of sacred quartets -- assisted in creating an even greater demand for gospel music in live settings as well as on radio.

The requests for more gospel music programming paved the way for the emergence of the gospel announcer: the disc jockey who would serve as the host of a unique type of broadcast that could be simultaneously spiritual and entertaining. The earliest programs presided over by gospel announcers featured "live" presentations by local and regional quartets who sang spirituals; as gospel increased in popularity, it became part of the quartet repertoire as well. By the late 1940's, gospel had entered its "Golden Age" during which publishing, recording, and travelling were at peak levels for gospel artists. The all-Black radio format made its debut during this decade, and Black DJ's proliferated around the country, including those devoted to playing gospel music.

By the end of the 1940's through much of the 1950's, gospel and its sister, the blues, became the "backbone" of Black radio, according to the August 24, 1953 Sponsor

magazine (69). Forty years later, after weathering a severe decline in its popularity with radio programmers during the 1960's and 1970's, gospel music is once again a strong part of the industry with approximately five hundred stations featuring gospel during some part of the broadcast week.

Although gospel announcers have played a pivotal role in the growth and dissemination of gospel music, the scholarship on the tradition has not centered on these important contributors. This has been the case, despite two important facts:

- 1) Speech, the central mode of communication utilized by gospel announcers, is integral to the presentation of gospel music and

- 2) Gospel announcers and their programs remain the primary media conduits for the dissemination of gospel music within the African American community.

The Hypothesis

Gospel announcers, whether they perform on radio or in "live" concert settings, display competence, that is, their knowledge and ability to speak, move, and dress themselves in a socially-sanctioned manner, by adhering to and being guided by several pervasive, culturally-derived Black aesthetic principles. Many of these principles--the manipulation of the physical realm, text, sound quality, and

time--undergird the performances of preachers and gospel singers and, in fact, reverberate throughout African American culture. Gospel announcers are vital members of the gospel music tradition because of the responsibilities, behaviors and rituals which, since the 1930's, have become identified with them and have helped to expand the audience for gospel music. Those functions and actions can include:

1. Introducing gospel music performances on radio, the primary medium through which African American audiences hear gospel on a regular basis outside of the church.

2. Inspiring, encouraging, and exhorting their audiences using a combination of words and gospel music.

3. Recreating the Black church experience by utilizing performance techniques that are a reflection of their understanding of African American sacred and secular traditions.

4. Performing in a manner that can mirror the performances of gospel singers, traditional Black preachers, and other artists in both the mechanics and aesthetics of their delivery -- from their choices of performance attire to their handling of a variety of rhetorical devices.

5. Bringing a commercial viability to gospel programming through their credibility and salesmanship.

Though announcers vary in their styles of delivery and

in the degree to which they incorporate the aforementioned responsibilities, behaviors and rituals, every gospel announcer's performance contains at least some of these aspects. Because of the announcers' connection to the Black gospel music tradition, their performances can generally be seen as reflective of a distinctly African American world view, spirituality, and aesthetic, including musical forms and preaching styles, that are characteristic of the Black church (Wiggins 145-148). Black audiences, the final judges of competence in African American performance arenas, decide whether an announcer's performance meets cultural standards.¹ It is critical to underscore one fact, however. Just as there are various performance styles and techniques utilized by gospel announcers, the opinions within the community vary regarding which announcers are effective, merely adequate, or even irritating in their manner of presentation. Nevertheless, when audience members determine that they are witnessing a display of competence, the rewards which they heap upon the announcer can include rapt attention, thunderous applause, and other physical and verbal responses during a "live" event. For those announcers who demonstrate competence on radio, their compensation can include loyal listenership and invitations to perform in other settings.

In their history, responsibilities, and various performance modes, gospel announcers have shown themselves

to be vital to the growth and dissemination of gospel music. They also stand as further evidence that even within this music-centered genre, there is a place of importance and respect reserved for those who utilize words competently and who serve as the link between audience and artist.

The Rationale

The purpose of this dissertation is to begin to fill the informational void regarding the gospel announcer, this heretofore under-investigated, yet significant player within the gospel music arena.

Ethnomusicologists Pearl Williams-Jones and Mellonee Burnim have both characterized the Black gospel music tradition as a melding of African and African American modes of speech, music, and dance linked together within a religious framework (Williams-Jones 376; Burnim 135). The fact that speech is afforded equal status with music and dance within the tradition is sufficient reason to expect that a systematic analysis of the functions and responsibilities of gospel announcers--among the key wordsmiths within the Black gospel music arena--would be conducted. For whether it is a gospel radio broadcast or a political rally, a church service or a rhythm-and-blues concert, whatever the performance context, the African American community requires oral literature and exalts those who create it competently according to culturally-defined

principles (Smitherman 76).

The key functions of gospel announcers include the dissemination of gospel music on radio, its presentation in live concert settings, and inspiring audiences with words in music in ways that are often reminiscent of the worship practices found within what is called the Black church. However, it is the speech component of their performance which helps to set them apart from most of their colleagues within the gospel music community. Because the music itself has been extensively analyzed, it is the speech aspect, particularly as it relates to gospel announcers, which remains virtually untapped as an area of serious analysis.

Anthropologist and ethnomusicologist Charles Keil has declared that the spoken word is one of the "defining features" of Black culture, one which easily separates it from mainstream culture. In his seminal work, Urban Blues, he explains this essential difference:

In White America, the printed-literacy tradition -- and its attendant values -- are revered. In the Negro community, more power resides in the spoken word and oral tradition -- good talkers abound and the best gain prestige (Keil 16-17).

African American history provides copious support for Keil's contention. Many individuals celebrated by African Americans have achieved prominence, at least in part, because of their facility with language, including the Reverend Jesse Jackson, the Reverend Martin Luther King,

Jr., gospel singer and evangelist Shirley Caesar, poet Maya Angelou, talk show host Oprah Winfrey, legislator-turned educator Barbara Jordan, activist Malcolm X, and boxer Muhammad Ali. Smitherman calls this veneration of "those who can perform stunning feats of oral gymnastics" a "residue of the African world view" which has survived both the Middle Passage and four centuries of contact with European-Americans. Because this "residue" runs throughout African American history and culture, individuals who are as seemingly disparate as those listed above--"preachers and poets, bluesmen and Gospel-ettes, testifiers and toast-tellers, reverends and revolutionaries"--are unified in their ability to "rap" and by the community's appreciation of their gift (Smitherman 76).

Certainly, even a superficial glance at the history of the traditional Black church reveals a deep reverence for the speaker and the spoken word. The apex of the worship event is, of course, the preaching of the sermon or the delivery of "the message," usually by the pastor or spiritual leader of the congregation. Everything that comes before it--the devotional service, with its uttered prayers and testimonies, as well as the music from the congregation and choirs--paves the way for this pivotal juncture of the worship (Paris 54). As a Baptist pastor's daughter, I have attended countless church services and made note of the fact that there is often a special stance taken by the members of

the usher board as the sermonic Bible scripture is read and the pastor "takes his text," that is, announces the title and direction of his message. The ushers prevent departures and entrances of any kind during that period, and they often stand in a linear formation, cross right hand over left, and then place both over their hearts in indication of the sacredness of the moment.

As for the preachers themselves, special designations are given to those who are particularly adept at delivering the sermon according to cultural guidelines. A particularly competent preacher may be described as "a whooper" (a term that refers to a particular style of preaching and a unique sound made during the process) a "bench walker," or "somebody's preacher" (that is, a competent minister whom people gladly claim as their own). Grace Sims Holt, in the article "Stylin' Outta the Black Pulpit," offers the terms "Soul Jerkers" and "Spellbinders" as descriptive titles given to Black preachers who use a range of rhetorical devices in order to captivate their audiences (Holt 196, 200). These labels, applied to preachers whose presentations coincide with cultural guidelines, are dramatically different from the words "dry," "cold," "tired," or even "White" which are often applied to a minister whose delivery is deemed to be lacking in the rhetorical devices and vocal shadings which members of the Black church tend to find appealing.

The reverence for competent speakers within the Black church tradition connects the contemporary African American with his forerunners who worshipped in the praise houses and "invisible churches" of two centuries ago. Within the slave community, there was an ample supply of impressive speech, much of it generated by the Black preacher who was held in high esteem because of his rhetorical prowess (Raboteau 237). In God's Trombones, poet James Weldon Johnson pays tribute to these traditional Black "sons of thunder," as they were often called:

The old-time preacher of parts was
above all an orator, and in good
measure an actor. He knew the secret
of oratory, that at bottom it is a
progression of rhythmic words more
than it is anything else. Indeed, I
have witnessed congregations moved to
ecstasy by the rhythmic intoning of sheer
incoherencies. He was a master of all
the modes of eloquence. He often possessed
a voice that was a marvelous instrument, a
voice he could modulate from a sepulchral
whisper to a crashing thunder clap (Johnson 5).

The appreciation for good talk which runs throughout African American history has its roots on the African continent where respect for the well-turned phrase and the phrase-turner is pervasive:

The oral tradition, then, is part of
the "cultural baggage" the African
brought to America. The preslavery
background was one in which the concept
of Nommo, the magic power of the Word,
was believed necessary to actualize life
and give man mastery over things....In

traditional African culture, a newborn child is a mere thing until his father gives and speaks his name. No medicine, potion, or magic of any sort is considered effective without accompanying words (Smitherman 77-78).

Because speech is such a vital aspect of the genre, it was virtually inevitable that the gospel music community would give rise to its own speech traditions. They include but are not confined to introducing songs, program segments, and/or artists; involving and reinvolving the audience in the program by utilizing several conventional communication means; and transforming otherwise secular space into "church" by the repeated use of prayers and other ritualistic behaviors that index the Black church experience. Any of these speech traditions can be inserted before, during or after a gospel song and may consist in part of words and phrases from Black sacred repertoire as well as idiomatic expressions from Black secular culture which Smitherman refers to as "Black Semantics" (42-43).

These individual words or bundles of words can assist in the spirited movement of the "service," even when it is being held outside the sanctuary of the church. A wide range of persons can speak these words during a gospel event: a minister or a member of one of the church's official boards (deacon or ecclesiastical trustee), a designated choir member, a choir director, and/or an emcee who may be a loquacious community member or someone from

any of the aforementioned categories. Frequently, however, gospel announcers, those who have come to some level of notoriety within the gospel music community because of their presence on radio, can be found handling a number of these duties within the live concert setting, particularly when the concert features nationally-acclaimed artists.

Whether the announcer is performing in an amphitheater, a store-front church, or on a radio broadcast, there are parameters and expectations which surround the performance. This dissertation will focus heavily on performance analysis as a means of determining the performance techniques employed by gospel announcers, the spiritual and entertainment goals toward which these devices and skills are aimed, and the extent to which their performances can be viewed as a reflection of their immersion in African American culture and their understanding of the Black church and its traditions.

There are several reasons for this emphasis within this study. First, gospel announcers can be viewed as important members of the gospel music community since the spoken word has been cited as one of the defining characteristics of African American culture (Smitherman 72, Keil 16). It is, therefore, appropriate to compare and contrast the oral literature of gospel announcers with that produced elsewhere in the culture. Inasmuch as the performed sermon is considered "pivotal" to the understanding of performance

oratory within the African American community and because many announcers endeavor to replicate the rituals and spirituality of the Black church, it is especially germane to compare the oral literature gospel announcers perform with that produced by African American preachers (Davis xiv).

It is also critical to evaluate the performances of gospel announcers within the context of the Black gospel music tradition. Within her unpublished dissertation, "The Black Gospel Music Tradition: Symbol of Ethnicity," which was completed at Indiana University in 1980, Burnim revealed that gospel's musical performances are marked by distinctive manipulations of such elements as time, text, pitch and timbre. In light of that research, a complete analysis of the work of gospel announcers would have to test their performances against Burnim's existing paradigm.

With this performance-centered analysis of gospel announcers as its goal, this dissertation unfolds in the following manner. Chapter II surveys the research design, including the methodological strategies utilized and a review of the key works influencing this study. Chapter III establishes gospel announcers within an historical context, commencing with the appearance of gospel music on church broadcasts in the 1920's, its later expansion to music programs hosted by Black disc jockeys, the advent of gospel announcers in the 1930's, and its establishment as a key

element of Black radio. Chapter IV examines the six responsibilities the gospel announcer carries out on radio and within the concert setting. Chapter V offers an analysis of the performances of three prominent gospel announcers, including the rhetorical devices they employ, the rituals they endeavor to recreate, the cultural and spiritual purposes toward which these devices and rituals are employed, and the significance of these elements in terms of understanding African American culture. Chapter VI summarizes the findings and offers conclusions regarding the contributions this study makes to the existing research on the Black gospel tradition.

DEFINITIONS AND NOMENCLATURE PERTINENT TO THIS STUDY

Throughout this study, certain terms are used and, therefore, should be clearly defined.

"The Black Church" and Related References

The phrases "the Black Church" and "the traditional Black worship experience" will be used to refer to the seven major historic, independent, and totally Black-controlled Christian denominations which were founded after the formation of the Free African Society of 1787 and to which eighty percent of Black Christians belong. According to C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, the Black Church is comprised of three Methodist denominations (African

Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion, and Christian Methodist Episcopal; three Baptist groups (the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc.; the National Baptist Convention of America, Unincorporated; the Progressive National Baptist Convention); and the Church of God in Christ. The "traditional worship experience" is used here to refer to the distinct, yet varied worship practices the Black church embraces across its denominations.²

Gospel Music Terminology

Three forms of gospel music are discussed as being integral to the gospel announcers' programming. Lisa Collins, editor of The Gospel Music Industry Roundup 1994,³ has succinctly described how these terms are used within the gospel music industry:

Traditional Gospel -- Participatory music designed specifically for the worship experience, spreading the good news of Jesus Christ.

Contemporary Gospel -- "Good news" music utilizing secular influences, but designed for worship both within and beyond the walls of the traditional church.

Urban Contemporary Gospel -- Music that may have a place in Christians' spiritual lives, but not in the traditional worship experience. It is Also designed for urban radio airplay (9).

Nomenclature and Categories Relating to Gospel Announcers

The terms "gospel" or "gospel music" will refer only to the Black gospel music tradition and not to its counterpart found within European American churches though it, too, has a rich and distinctive history.⁴ "Gospel announcer," "gospel disc jockey," "gospel personality," "host," and "religious announcer" are all terms various gospel radio hosts used in discussing their media role with me. The more prevalent use of "gospel announcer" in this study is due to the fact that the largest organization of gospel radio hosts, the Gospel Announcers Guild (GAG), an auxiliary to the Gospel Music Workshop of America (GMWA), uses the title "gospel announcers." Its membership is four hundred and fifty which, according to Al "The Bishop" Hobbs, chair of the GAG, is approximately twenty-five percent of the announcers working in gospel radio at this time.⁵ Many of the members, myself included, are unenthusiastic about the term "disc jockey"; the consensus is that gospel announcers (or religious announcers) encourage, exhort and inspire by using a combination of gospel music and appropriate words while disc jockeys simply play music.⁶

Though a number of those who play religious music on radio apparently feel comfortable with the title "gospel announcer" and with the attendant description of their duties and purpose, others within the gospel music community disagree over other aspects of nomenclature and definition.

One such person is Dan Underwood, president of the independent Glory-Bound Disks Promotions, who challenges the unrestricted use of the term "gospel announcer" as well as what he considers Hobbs' overly-generous estimate that there are sixteen hundred announcers working across the country. On one hand, Underwood states that no organization has generated a definitive list of announcers -- a formidable task considering the short tenure some announcers have on radio and the unlikely outlets through which some of them broadcast. He also objects to this figure because his concept of a gospel announcer excludes those who have brokerage agreements with radio stations. In this type of arrangement, the announcers pay the stations for airtime and then sell commercial time within their programs to sponsors. Underwood also bans from this category those with less than two hours a week on commercial stations. Individuals who have brokerage agreements and/or less than two hours a week are among the many names included on the roster for GAG.⁷

Underwood's work as a promoter involves placing recordings into the hands of those announcers who can give them sufficient air time each week. It is part of the promotional process for Underwood and the record companies for whom he works to set criteria to assist them in determining which announcers should be "serviced," that is, given copies of new recordings. However, the average gospel music fan would not be able to discern, just by listening to

a program, which announcers are brokers; which are paid, on-staff disc jockeys; and which ones do their programs "gratis."

In fact, it is only after years of working in gospel radio that I finally got a sense of who the brokers are and who the staff announcers are -- a differentiation that on the surface seems to relate strictly to their arrangements with the stations. However, it often has to do with the style and mix of music, the types of commercials and promotional announcements on their programs, and whether those announcements are pre-produced or read "live" by the announcers. Generally, announcers who are station employees play a wider variety of music. This is due, in part, to the fact that as gospel radio becomes more competitive, many stations are incorporating playlists which help them to standardize their musical output and broaden their general appeal. (See Chapter IV for a further discussion of music and playlists.) The individual programs hosted by "staff" gospel announcers usually feature commercials that have been pre-recorded, either by national advertising agencies or by the station's production staff. As a rule, the announcer reads little more than a "tag line" at the end of the commercial, such as "This fine product is available at Perry Drug Stores."

For those who prefer the more "personal approach" to commercials, there are "broker" announcers who often present

in their announcers by reading each ad "live" and by emphasizing what they feel is important about their client's product. And, because these announcers pay for their airtime, they have no need to answer to anyone about their musical selections. If they choose to play one song for an hour, no one can reprimand them though the listeners may tune out--which is a problem that DJ's who play any kind of music must combat. But most gospel radio listeners (many of whom, like their friends who listen to secular radio, hate the commercials no matter how they are delivered) live with the ads so that they can get to the heart of the program. For them, a gospel announcer is anyone who plays the music they want to hear and, in many instances, the person who encourages them with a combination of words and music. During the course of conducting this study, I found that none of the announcers, performers, industry professionals, or any of the seventy-five gospel music adherents who took part in my survey in Indianapolis spoke of differentiating announcers according to whether they are or are not brokers (See Chapter II for details of the survey).⁸

Descriptive Statement Regarding the Announcers Surveyed for This Research

The thirty gospel announcers interviewed for this study range from young adults in their twenties to seniors in their late seventies. Using them as my research base, I

have written this dissertation having made several generalizations regarding gospel announcers, their training, and non-announcing ties to the Black church community.

While many announcers have had some college education and have even studied broadcasting in university settings or in schools of broadcasting, more than three-fourths have gotten all of their radio training on the job. Each announcer had to learn how to function as a gospel announcer by following "tradition," observing how colleagues and predecessors function in the live setting and on their broadcasts, since "gospel announcing" is not taught in any accredited school.

A large number of gospel announcers were or continue to be musicians or singers, and it is common to find preachers, deacons, missionaries and evangelists among them. Some came into gospel radio with preaching ministries while others moved into such ministries after they had begun their radio work.

While the majority of announcers within the Black gospel tradition are African American, the announcers I interviewed and/or discuss in this dissertation also included Hispanic American Joseph Ramirez of Stockton, California; European Americans like Ramirez's wife, Janet, who co-hosts a weekend program with him; Joe Sorenson of Minneapolis, who began his career in radio as a classical music disc jockey; and Hoss Allen the popular blues DJ-

turned-gospel announcer, who reaches hundreds of thousands of listeners because of his place on the fifty thousand-watt WLAC, Nashville.

Though these gospel announcers come to their radio programs with diverse backgrounds and concerns, as well as a variety of performance styles, they are unified in that almost every one of them interviewed for this study referred to their work as a "ministry," that is, their way of reaching out to those who need encouragement and hope with the message of Jesus Christ.

Two hundred stations have a gospel music format of twenty or more hours per week, and more than one hundred stations are known as "all gospel" stations, according to Broadcasting Yearbook 1990 (p. F72, p. 92) and Broadcast and Cable Marketplace 1992 (p. A474, pp. A525-26).

END NOTES

1. See Richard Bauman, Verbal Art as Performance (Prospect Heights: Waveland Press, 1985), for a further explanation of competence in the performance of verbal art. Also, see Dell Hymes, "Competence and Performance in Linguistic Theory," in Language and Acquisition: Models and Methods, eds. Renira Huxley and Elisabeth Ingram (London: Academic Press, 1971).

2. C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence Mamiya, The Black Church in the African American Experience (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), p. 1. See also E. Franklin Frazier, The Negro Church in America (New York: Schocken Books, 1964).

3. Lisa Collins, The Gospel Music Industry Roundup 1994 (Culver City: Eye on Gospel Publications, 1993), p. 9.

4. Bill C. Malone, Southern Music, American Music, (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1979); Frank Smith, "Andrew Jenkins and Early Commercial Gospel Music," American Music 1 (1983) 49-59.

5. Al Hobbs, personal interview, 11 April 1991.

6. During one Gospel Announcers Guild Luncheon in the early 1990's, a performer named Dottie Jones referred to her audience as "gospel DJ's." After the members scolded her loudly and virtually unanimously for using the term, she offered to give each announcer her personal apology upon their departure from the affair. Murmurs and nods of consent followed this offer, and she was able to continue her performance.

7. Dan Underwood, telephone interview, 7 October, 1993.

8. Joyce Cooper Craig, general manager of WWON-AM, a gospel station in Fenton, Michigan, listened to and agreed with my description of the differences that tend to exist between brokers and staff gospel announcers. We also discussed the fact that future study could include collecting data on announcers who are station employees and those who have brokerage agreements: Does one group tend to be older? Less formally educated? More inclined to play traditional gospel? More involved with church-based concerts? More attractive to an older audience? This study could help to answer certain questions regarding the direction gospel stations are taking in programming and hiring personnel as compared to how independent brokers seem to be leaning in their programming choices.

CHAPTER II: RESEARCH DESIGN

Methodological Description

This study of the history, responsibilities and performances of gospel announcers within the Black gospel music tradition relies heavily on several sources and methods of research, including fieldwork, commercial sound recordings, and archival retrieval.

Fieldwork

I conducted my fieldwork with four goals in mind:

- 1) collecting oral histories from gospel announcers
- 2) interviewing gospel artists and promoters about the role announcers serve within the industry
- 3) capturing announcers in performance on radio and in concert settings
- 4) obtaining feedback from other gospel music tradition-bearers regarding competence in gospel announcing

Oral Histories/Interviews

I conducted thirty interviews with gospel announcers (and one surviving spouse). They represent a range of ages, performance styles, and geographic area (Arizona, California, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Texas, and Wisconsin). The District of Columbia is also represented.

Most of the interviews were conducted in person. Many

of these announcers are my fellow members in the Gospel Announcers' Guild (GAG), an auxiliary of the Gospel Music Workshop of America, Inc., the largest convention of gospel music professionals and adherents in the world. Those interviews took place when the convention was held in Salt Lake City, Utah, (1991) and in Chicago, Illinois (1992). Several of the Michigan announcers were interviewed as part of the research I was assigned to do as a graduate assistant and cultural extension specialist for the Michigan State University Museum's Traditional Arts Program. In preparation for the Festival of Michigan Folklife, which the Museum produces annually, I completed oral histories from a number of Michigan announcers, four of whom were invited to participate in the 1993 Festival where one stage was dedicated to community radio and announcers. Though the majority of these interviews were conducted in person, I spoke with two announcers by telephone and recorded them by using a telephone pickup.

Since, understandably, the majority of gospel announcers are Black men and women, they constitute the plurality of those interviewed for this study. All of the announcers were asked a number of questions: where and when were they born and raised; their parents' names, involvement in the church and gospel music, and occupations; the denomination they were raised in and the denomination to which they now belong; where and how they were introduced to

gospel music; how they moved into gospel announcing; what training they received (formal and informal); how they structure their program; how they characterize the music they play (traditional, contemporary, urban contemporary, or a mix); and what role gospel announcing plays in their lives.

Interviews were also conducted with several other professionals with whom gospel announcers work, including gospel artists, promoters, business owners, sales representatives, and one record label owner. They were asked to discuss their work in or related to gospel music, the nature of their working relationships with gospel announcers, and their assessment of the quality and significance of the work done by gospel announcers.

Performances

Audio and video tapes which capture gospel announcers in performance are an important part of this study. For Al "The Bishop" Hobbs, Delores "Sugar" Poindexter, and Edna Tatum, the three announcers who serve as the focus of the performance analysis, I have audio tapes of their performances on their radio broadcasts and video of them performing in concert settings. Besides these, I have almost a dozen other performance tapes from announcers who serve in various cities around the country. I have reviewed these in order to place the Hobbs, Poindexter, and Tatum

performances within a larger tradition. The broadcast tapes represent a range of announcers and performance styles, including the work of a rap gospel disc jockey, an urban contemporary gospel enthusiast, and several whose programs incorporate both traditional and contemporary gospel.

I have made transcriptions of the taped performances of the three central announcers (Appendix I, pp. 267-306). Their performances have been rendered as oral literature and analyzed for rhetorical devices, content, behavioral (stylistic) characteristics, and adherence to or deviation from performance practices that have already been noted by previous scholars as vital to the Black gospel music and preaching traditions. One of the critical aspects of the performance tapes made in concert settings is the announcers' interaction with the audience as well as the reactions from the audience, which are an important gauge of competency during performances.

Feedback Interviews

In order to better assess the performances of gospel announcers and gain insights from other "insiders" and tradition bearers in gospel music, I have also incorporated the use of feedback interviews. This strategy was defined and applied by ethnomusicologists Ruth M. Stone and Verlon L. Stone although many of their predecessors in the field were utilizing aspects of the technique as early as the

1950's. The feedback interview, detailed in "Event, Feedback, and Analysis" can include a variety of media and is used to determine the meanings constructed by those who perform and the meanings received by those in the audience (Stone and Stone 215).

The Stones' work rests on several assumptions regarding music, communication, and semiotics. Chief among these suppositions is the idea that music is a symbolic, communication process in which the meaning is interpreted by the audience and participants. Past and present cultural and personal history always have an influence on how individuals interpret music events, so that even those from the same cultural background can interpret a music event differently. Perhaps their most important assumption is that since researchers cannot extricate themselves from their own cultures, experiences, and biases, research tools, such as the feedback interviews and their associated media, are no more accurate than the individuals who implement them. They can, however, be useful as an analytical tool if utilized carefully and expeditiously (Stone and Stone 215-18).

The feedback interviews were conducted with eight individuals whom I asked to participate based on several factors: their long history of personal, non-professional involvement in gospel music as choir members, soloists, directors, etc., within their local churches and

communities; their professional association with gospel in any number of industry-level positions; and their ability to articulate their opinions clearly and without reservation. These eight individuals were divided into three groups. The first two groups were comprised of gospel announcers who also wear several other hats within the gospel music community: Joyce Cooper Craig, who is a singer, former member of the gospel choir called the Thomas Whitfield Company, a concert promoter, and general manager of WWON, a gospel radio station in Fenton, Michigan; Darryl Ford, who is also a Grammy-nominated composer, keyboardist, singer, and minister; Bertha Harris, a former community choir member who has also worked in Christian television in sales and public relations; Tim Smith, who is a singer, former member of a recording group called The Followers of Christ, and a gospel music journalist who is a regular contributor to several national publications, including CCM (**Contemporary Christian Music**) and Score; and E'lon Eloni Wilks, Ph.D., a lifelong member of the National Convention of Gospel Choirs and Choruses, and former director of the Detroit Public Schools' television and radio station, WDTR-FM. During her long tenure there, she produced and hosted a gospel music program and made airtime available for at least one other gospel program each week.

The third group included musician, singer, arranger Allen Duane Grant, the director of the fast-rising Celestial

Christian Chorale; gospel singer Larry McMurtry, who has sung both lead and background on some of the best-loved gospel recordings in the country; and gospel concert producer and consultant Tim Wynn, whose work is done for both local and national clients, including Quaker Oats and The Gospel Music Workshop of America.

During each feedback interview session, which lasted between ninety and one hundred and twenty minutes, I played broadcast and concert performances by each of the three announcers. My instructions to the respondents were to comment on anything about the performances that struck them. When they began speaking, I stopped the performance tape and asked them to clarify their reactions. Often, I stopped the tape in response to their facial expressions or body language as they listened to or watched the performance tapes. The respondents were quite candid, sometimes scathingly so; consequently, the discussions were energetic, and the comments illuminating. Their explanations and critiques were recorded, transcribed, and are used within this study to explain what criteria members of the community apply when determining competency among gospel announcers.

Although I felt that the excerpted performances could stand on their own, I gave the respondents a minimal description of the setting in which each was delivered. This was done because the taped performances were, by definition, being played out of context. No matter how high

the quality of the tape used for recording, the entire ambient setting of the event, the range of responses from the audience that was present, etc., can never be completely transferred and captured. Therefore, I felt some brief explanation was warranted. The use of excerpts was also advantageous because of the time constraints involved. I knew that each of my respondents had worked these sessions into an already busy schedule, so a segment that lasted more than two hours would have been prohibitive. With that in mind, I prepared segments that would allow them to see or hear the announcers performing a range of activities within a given context.

From the announcers' radio broadcasts, I extracted all segments in which the announcers spoke and placed those segments on a playback tape. (I transferred enough music from each segment so that the respondents could get a feel for the range of selections each announcer used. Entire songs were not necessary, however; since all of the respondents work in the industry, they are already quite familiar with the music.) The sources of the videotaped concert performances are explained in detail in Chapter V.

Commercial Sound Recordings

A few gospel announcers have had their work captured on commercial recordings. There are two categories under this heading. In one grouping are those albums made for sale in

retail stores on which the announcer introduces the artist or song. Edna Tatum is by far the "queen" of this category, and I reviewed several of her commercially-recorded introductions for this study. On every other commercial recording I could find on which gospel announcers serve as emcees, only a sentence (or less) of their introductions is included. Darryl Ford and Juandolyn Stokes are two whose excerpted introductions I located on such recordings and then evaluated.

A second category consists of syndicated gospel music radio programs, such as "Inspirations Across America," which are often recorded on a master tape reel, copied onto vinyl, and then shipped to the host stations in this "LP" form. These recordings are "commercial" in that they are played on commercial stations and come with the national sponsors' ads already included. The local station can still "drop in" their spots during the designated breaks. The one program from which I was able to receive such a recording was "Inspirations"; it is a "LP" copy of the program that aired during the week of March 8, 1993. Host Burke Johnson's performance was analyzed and considered along with other taped programs for this study.

Archival Retrieval

Several materials were retrieved from personal collections and public archives. I secured copies of

important documents from the personal papers of the late Jack L. Cooper, the first Black announcer to work for a commercial station in the U.S.; these papers were obtained from the Chicago Historical Society which is the repository of many of his significant documents. Veteran "soul" disc jockey, Richard Stamz of Chicago, who is also a Black radio and music historian, shared with me copies of articles he has collected on Black announcers. Marguerite McIntosh graciously allowed me to have duplications made of photographs of her late husband, Willie, taken while he was broadcasting in the studios of WJLB-FM, Detroit, around the 1950's. Howard Morison also located and gave me permission to duplicate vintage photos, one, a "publicity" postcard of himself in the 1930's, the other, a look at him and his son, Douglas, working on air together when Douglas was not yet a teenager. Both father and son serve as gospel announcers today in Detroit.

Questionnaire

The lack of research on gospel radio and its announcers prompted me to design a questionnaire to collect information about gospel music followers. I developed the questionnaire under the direction of Portia Maultsby, who was the chair of the Department of Afro-American Studies at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana, when I was there as a CIC Travelling Scholar, during the 1990-1991 academic

year. While launching a literature search that would eventually provide the foundation for this dissertation, I *devised a questionnaire so that I could more closely examine the intersection of radio and gospel music. My objective was to determine who constitutes the gospel music audience by investigating their age range, educational level, their preferences in gospel music performance styles, and their feelings regarding gospel music announcers.

The questionnaire was administered in November, 1990, to the audience gathered for the Twentieth Anniversary Salute to Al "The Bishop" Hobbs, who was then both gospel announcer and General Manager of WTLC-FM, Indianapolis. (The tribute and the performances of Hobbs and Poindexter are discussed in detail in Chapter V.) Eighty-two surveys were distributed, sixty-nine were returned, and sixty-five respondents actually completed at least seventy-five percent of the questionnaire which is Appendix III. The surveys were subjected to a computer analysis in order that I might determine what percentage of the respondents answered a question and what percentage of them chose a particular option. I have included this data on the appended survey. For example, for Question 1, of the sixty-five who answered, three percent gave answer A. Following these percentages are analyses and some questions which could be explored during interviews to be conducted with gospel music fans, promoters, artists and announcers in the future.

I found much of the data very enlightening and, in some cases, surprising, such as the relatively high percentage of respondents who had completed some college (fifty-three percent) and the even higher percentage (seventy-six percent) who listen to gospel on radio at least three hours every week. Though I did not administer the survey in any other settings, choosing instead to focus more closely on a performance-centered analysis, I look forward to working with a revised version of this tool in the future.

Key Paradigms and Works Influencing This Study

Performance-Centered Theory

The over-arching influence for this dissertation is the work of Richard Bauman and others who, in their performance-centered analyses of speech within specific ethnic and cultural groups, integrate research techniques from such fields as anthropology, linguistics, ethnomusicology, folklore, and semiotics. In "Verbal Art as Performance," Bauman discusses performance as both artistic event and artistic action and further defines it as "a unifying thread tying together the marked, segregated esthetic genres and other spheres of verbal behavior into a general unified conception of verbal art as a way of speaking" (5). Included in his definition of verbal art is the speech expected of certain individuals within given communities. One of his central contentions is that because each ethnic

community has its own value system and traditions, competency in performance is culturally-specific; therefore, analyses of said performances are in fact ethnographic studies.

Because gospel announcers are among those within the African American community from whom certain speech is expected, Bauman's essay is of particular importance for this study. In it, he examines the framing, keying, patterning, and emergent quality of performance, all of which is germane to the study of the performances of gospel announcers. Underlying this theory is the understanding that by performing for an audience, an artist assumes the responsibility of displaying competence, of speaking in "socially appropriate ways" as judged by his listeners (11). In this study, "performance" refers to specific communication acts by the announcers, as well as to their events or broadcasts themselves, inclusive of the audience, locale, etc.

Bauman credits Gregory Bateson (Steps to an Ecology of Mind) and Erving Goffman (Frame Analysis) with developing the concept of "frame," which is the "interpretive context" for a given communication act (9-10). This communication act can include several frames, for example, insinuation, joking, or imitation (10). In fact, performance itself is a framing device for communication; attendant to this concept is that of "keys," the indicators of performance which are

unique to specific ethnic cultures and their events. Various cultures, for example, use figurative language, parallelism, and special paralinguistic features, among other elements, to signal or "key" performance (15-16).

The keys to performance used by gospel announcers coincide very closely with this list. In addition, they also use "metacommunication," that is, they make specific comments on what is taking place during the performance. Whether the announcers are working on radio or in concert, they constantly make such "metacommunicative" references as "We're praising the Lord," "Come on; let's lift up His name," "Turn me up; I'm having church," and "We're not going into a whole lot of show business." Perhaps the latter and similar phrases are the most telling, for while gospel announcers are certainly aware of being performers in the broadest sense of the word, most join with their colleagues who are preachers and gospel singers in refusing any overt label of "entertainment" on their work. Their metanarrative comments, along with the kind of music that is played (gospel), the prayers that are prayed, etc., help alert the audience to the nature of what is unfolding.

Bauman also investigates the "patterning" of performance. Each cultural community determines which of its events require performance; the setting, sequence, and ground rules for performance; and which communication modes are required (25-27). Because gospel music was spawned

within the setting of the Black church and because the performed sermon is at the center of that matrix, I have examined the "live" and concert performances of gospel announcers in order to determine whether they are indeed modelled after those found within the Black church.

Finally, Bauman characterizes performance as having an "emergent" quality, that is, the ground rules are negotiated and renegotiated so that each performance is unique. The variances are determined by factors ranging from the audience to the locale. This aspect is especially important to this investigation of gospel announcers since often they are called upon to work within settings that must be "transformed" from secular venues, such as radio broadcasts and amphitheaters, into the more conducive sacred ground of "church." Often, this constitutes the most creative part of their work and is generally required by audience members who respond to gospel as part of the worship experience more than as a cultural artform. (See Chapter IV for a detailed discussion of the transformation process.)

This study will begin to identify the framing mechanisms, rituals, and rhetorical devices which mark the performances of gospel announcers as significant and appropriate by gospel audiences. It also seeks to determine which aspects of their performances are unique to them and which elements resonate throughout Black culture.

Although (or maybe because) the oral literature of

gospel announcers is most dynamic when experienced in the live concert setting or through the radio as it is being broadcast, it was important that I discover a way to translate on paper the paralinguistic aspects that mark their performances. For assistance in that area, I turned to the work Dennis Tedlock and Peter Gold have done in the translation of oral narrative. Tedlock's article, entitled "On the Translation of Style in Oral Narrative," is frequently cited because of the logical, easily comprehensible system of translation it presents. Tedlock devised the method in order to address apparent inadequacies in the "translations" and transcriptions some scholars have made of the oral literature of non-Western peoples (115). Tedlock, using Zuni narratives as his text, demonstrates how a variety of pauses, volume levels, repetition and parallel constructions can be indicated on paper. For example, narrative phrases that are to be spoken softly are placed in parentheses ("There he died"), syllables that are elongated are indicated by a long dash ("too-----"), longer pauses are indicated by a slash ("His uncle / went out hunting"), and parenthetical explanations are provided when Tedlock feels that method best indicates the intense emotional delivery of the speaker at that point ("softly, voice breaking") (115, 121-127).

After observing an Easter Sunday service in a Black United Methodist Church on St. John's Island, South

Carolina, Peter Gold decided to investigate the social and psychological ramifications of the performed sermon. In order to demonstrate the variety of rhetorical and paralinguistic devices that marked the text, Gold created his own system of transcription in order to reproduce the vocal and musical interaction between the preacher and the congregants. In his notation system, large type indicates stressed syllables and lower case indicates the unstressed (as in "MORning"), an intonation change of a major third is indicated by a diagonally placed syllable, shouted words are punctuated by exclamation points (!), and words or vocables followed by a number represent the congregational responses and their melodic contours.

The method I finally used in Chapter V is an adaptation of the two with which I received great assistance from art director Larry McMurtry.

Performance-Centered Theory and the Black Aesthetic

The performance-centered research of Pearl Williams-Jones, Mellonee Burnim, and Gerald L. Davis, Jr., on various aspects of African American expressive culture has been of specific assistance to my analysis of the presentations of gospel announcers. Using their work as a foundation, I have determined that gospel announcers do indeed operate from an aesthetic base shared by African American singers and preachers, a value system which, in fact, pervades the

culture. The specific attributes that I have identified within the performances of gospel announcers are the manipulation of the physical realm (attire and kinesics), text, sound quality, and time. Both preachers and gospel artists, according to the aforementioned scholars, incorporate these elements in a culturally-prescribed manner when performing before African American audiences.

In her seminal article, "Afro-American Gospel Music: A Crystallization of the Black Aesthetic," Williams-Jones argues that despite the acculturation and syncretism that have been integral to the shaping of African American culture, Black gospel music is further proof of the "indomitability of the African ethos." Gospel music, she continues, can only be fully understood and appreciated when this pervasive African-derived aesthetic is acknowledged as its foundation. At the center of her article is a list of fifteen African performance traits which she identified within gospel music performances, including several used by gospel announcers--use of antiphonal response and varying vocal tone (373, 378).

Within her dissertation, "The Black Gospel Music Tradition: Symbol of Ethnicity," Burnim argues that "gospel music symbolizes ethnicity among Black Americans through its incorporation of overt signs and its communication of values." Specifically, she delineates the culturally-derived Black aesthetic principles which govern the

performance of gospel music, namely, the manipulation of sound quality, delivery style, and the mechanics of delivery (194). She also provides evidence that this same value system serves as the foundation of other arenas of performance within the African American community. Burnim's important work on the Black gospel music tradition has served as an excellent paradigm for analyzing the performances of gospel announcers.

Burnim's fieldwork was conducted within two church populations in Indianapolis, Indiana. These conclusions were later corroborated by numerous other short-term excursions in other parts of the country as well as with several feedback interviews she conducted with members of Indiana's gospel music community (25-52; 154). This methodology was utilized in order to substantiate the thesis that these behavioral and conceptual patterns are found wherever Black gospel music is performed and that the mastery of these components is judged by the audience which is linked with the artist in this cultural environment. The audience constantly critiques the performance to determine adherence to the culturally-derived criteria and then signifies its approval through numerous means, including applause, call and response, and spontaneous comments (142).

Gerald L. Davis Jr.'s analysis of the performed African American sermon was most important to this study. In I Got the Word in Me and I Can Sing It, You Know: A Study of the

Performed African-American Sermon, Davis attempts "to approximate, in scholarly language, the same process Black folk employ in evaluating a 'successful' sermon" (xv). He delineates the oral formulae, characteristics and functions of the structural units embodied in an African American sermon. Davis has concluded that because the successful performance of the African American sermon is so highly regarded within the Black community, one must grasp its underpinnings and contextual ambience "if one is to understand the structural complexities of language invention and expressive language forms in African America" (xiv). Consequently, I used his work on the performed sermon as a basis of comparison for the verbal art of gospel announcers. There are enough other similarities (both have "ministries" and preside over "services," for example) that it was both logical and beneficial to investigate the rhetorical devices, etc., utilized by gospel announcers in light of the standards set by preachers.

Other Works Influencing This Study

African American Gospel Music Performance

The first book to take an in-depth look at the Black sacred quartet, Happy in the Service of the Lord by Kip Lornell, proved to be a compendium of information on the changes in the performance styles of quartets beginning in the nineteenth century. His work was particularly helpful

in providing a chronology and analysis of the symbiotic relationship that existed between sacred quartets and the growing medium of radio beginning in the 1920's.

In Singing in the Spirit, Ray Allen examines the sacred quartets in New York and places the tradition within both a historical and cultural context. This thick-descriptive, performance-centered analysis was germane to my research in that Allen offers a succinct examination of the performance of the gospel emcee within the setting of a quartet program. Because the emcee of the larger programs is often a gospel announcer and because of the specific duties Allen describes, that section of Singing in the Spirit proved to be an excellent corroboration of my own observations and analyses of the work of gospel announcers within the live context.

Anthony Heilbut's The Gospel Sound, published initially in 1971, was the first to attempt to categorize the various aspects of gospel music, including quartets, choirs, groups, and composers, by evaluating the work of its major contributors in all of these areas. Much can be said about Heilbut's lack of documentation and his disquieting evaluations and interpretations which often reveal an aesthetic system at odds with that of the community he is researching. For example, he characterizes "speaking in tongues" (glossolalia) as a "fluent kind of gibberish filled with Hebraic sounding syllables" (174) and opines that

"gospel usually implies matriarchy," without offering community or scholarly support for this controversial assessment (174, xxv).

Nevertheless, I found Heilbut's chapter entitled "Turn Your Radio On" beneficial to my research project. The four pages he devotes to gospel announcers make The Gospel Sound the first text of its kind to place gospel announcers in the spotlight for more than a paragraph. He includes historical and biographical information, anecdotes and personal assessments of the work and performance style(s) of several gospel announcers. His chapter also provides names, dates, station call-letters, and information on some of the broadcast-related practices of announcers.

There is, however, an area of his look at gospel announcers with which I take issue. Heilbut states: "The gospel d.j.'s approach is always folksy and familiar....Most older d.j.'s, especially in the South, sound less professional and consequently more real. The younger the d.j., the whiter the sound" (268-69). Having worked as a gospel announcer myself for more than a decade and having interviewed and listened to scores of announcers, I have been able to utilize my field tapes, historical documents, personal experiences, and analytical tools, including the feedback interviews, to devise what I feel is a strong counter argument.

The community of gospel announcers, even before 1971

when the first edition of his book appeared, has always embraced several performance styles reflective of the diversity and individuality of the announcers, a range found in every other area of African American life and not based on age, region, or even gender but on individual preference and personality. I believe this is clearly demonstrated in Chapter V in which I analyze the similarities and distinctions in the performances of three prominent announcers.

African American Oral Performances

A number of scholars have documented the importance of oral literature and its creators within African American culture and the African Diaspora. The tradition of saluting good talkers within the culture is not relegated to the church; in fact, some researchers have declared speech to be one of the defining characteristics of African American culture. For this reason, and because speech is the primary element that separates gospel announcers from their colleagues within the gospel music milieu, I consulted several works which emphasize this aspect of Black life.

Brooksie Harrington's dissertation, "Shirley Caesar: A Woman of Words," was useful to my analysis in that its subject is both an evangelist and a gospel singer known for her storytelling ability. Using Bauman's "Verbal Art as Performance" as his analytical model, Harrington identifies the aspects of Caesar's verbal techniques which have helped

to make her "The First Lady of Gospel." None of the three key announcers in this study uses stories as a rule. However, their performances are similar to Evangelist Caesar's in several ways: they frame their presentations as "ministry" rather than as entertainment; they refer to the programs in which they perform, particularly the "live" events as "services"; and they, like Caesar, constantly "monitor and adjust" their output based on audience response.

Talkin' and Testifyin' by Geneva Smitherman was both worthwhile and a pleasure to read because of Smitherman's ability to identify and explain aspects of Black speech and her inimitable way of actually incorporating a particular rhetorical device (such as code switching) when clarifying its characteristics and usage within the text. Several of her explanations and many of the phrases she has coined to describe Black speech, such as "Black Semantics" (the range of idioms and phrases, both sacred and secular, used by African Americans) and "Tonal Semantics" (the manipulation of sound quality), assisted me in analyzing the important characteristics I have identified within the performances of gospel announcers.

God's Trombones, James Weldon Johnson's classic collection of poems written in tribute to the powerful oratorical skills of the Black preacher, was not utilized extensively here. But because it contains one of the best

descriptions of the hypnotic effect the old-time preachers had on congregations (6-7) and because it holds two of the first poems I ever memorized ("The Creation" and "Go Down Death"), God's Trombones has served as a constant reminder to me of the rhetorical standard set by these ministers and their sermons.

Black Radio--History and Announcers

Norman W. Spaulding's dissertation, "The History of Black Oriented Radio in Chicago 1929 - 1963," is exemplary in its readability and comprehensive look at blues, jazz, "soul," and R & B announcers as well as those early announcers who included gospel in the "mix." His section on the early church broadcasts was particularly useful since these broadcasts were the point of entry for gospel music on radio. Spaulding also presents a typology of the on-air styles utilized by the Black DJ's in Chicago from 1929 - 1963. Although I have not attempted to devise a typology of gospel announcers in this dissertation, Spaulding's work, demonstrating a range of styles among the DJ's of various other forms of Black music, helps solidify my argument that gospel announcers are also a diverse group.

"The Black Disc Jockey as Cultural Hero," an article by Gilbert A. Williams published in 1986, examines the various elements that contributed to the vaunted status Black DJ's enjoyed within the African American community,

particularly during the 1940's - 1960's when the medium was at the peak of its popularity. These announcers helped the Black community, especially those who were migrating from the South to the North, to become acclimated and feel at home in what were often hostile environs. Not only did they "talk the talk" and play the hottest new music, these DJ's were often involved in the community, which made them significant to their listeners in a number of ways. Because this period also coincided with gospel's "Golden Age" and because many of these early announcers hosted several kinds of music programs, this article was serviceable in outlining those characteristics that made these DJ's revered.

Portia Maultsby, in her article entitled "The Impact of Gospel Music on the Secular Music Industry," supports my belief that the success of Black radio and of gospel music are intertwined, and she devotes one segment of that article to "Gospel on Radio." Because it is the most recent scholarly piece I have located devoted to this topic and because Maultsby and I discovered three years ago that we had arrived at the same conclusion, "Impact" certainly helps solidify my position that gospel announcers have made important contributions to Black culture and to the gospel music tradition.

Popular and Industry Magazines

From several popular and "trade" magazines have come articles on Black radio, church broadcasts, and gospel announcers, which indicate that the successes of these entities have often intersected. Sponsor, a magazine aimed at advertisers, produced a yearly issue dedicated to "Negro Radio." Those issues provided a wealth of information on gospel music and the announcers who played it from the mid-1940's to the early 1960's. Billboard has produced an annual look at gospel music for more than a decade. The comments from industry professionals on the state of Christian radio in general and Black gospel in particular were useful for this study. Our World and Ebony, two magazines that have helped to document African American culture, provided articles and even a few photos of announcers who were involved in Black radio's pioneering era. Though there are several gospel magazines and newsletters available for popular consumption, two of them, Score and Gospel International, have been particularly beneficial in my research. In Score, I was able to glean information on current issues regarding gospel announcers and about several twenty-four-hour gospel stations. And from Gospel International's column, "WATTS Happening," devoted to helping gospel announcers better serve their constituents, I learned of yet another way that industry professionals are reaching out to announcers to help them

strengthen their programs.

Perusing all of this literature revealed a great interest in gospel music but little scholarly research focussing on the announcers despite the pivotal role they play within the gospel music tradition. My hope is that this dissertation will begin to uncover the history, responsibilities and performance practices of gospel announcers.

The Gospel Announcers

The gospel announcers whose performances are analyzed in this section, Al "The Bishop" Hobbs, Delores "Sugar" Poindexter, and Edna Tatum, are currently the three most visible announcers in the country because of their association with projects and media vehicles that extend beyond the cities in which they are based and, in fact, bring them before national audiences.

Al "The Bishop" Hobbs is president of the twenty-thousand-member Gospel Music Workshop of America, Inc., as well as chairman of one of the Gospel Announcers Guild (GAG). Hobbs has been a gospel announcer for almost a quarter century. He spent most of that time at WTLC-FM, Indianapolis, first as an announcer and account executive, and later as the general manager of the station. He resigned from WTLC-FM in March of 1993, but by May of that same year, he had become the host of two gospel programs on

WHHH-FM, Indianapolis. Hobbs is also involved in gospel music as a recording artist, record producer for several national performers, and concert promoter.

Delores "Sugar" Poindexter began her radio career as an on-air assistant to Hobbs. For more than twenty years, she has been the host of her own program, "The Way Out," which is heard Monday through Friday, 5:00 AM until 6:00 AM; her Sunday broadcast, which encompasses several segments with various names, is on from 5:00 AM until 11:00 AM.

Poindexter was Hobbs' Vice Chair in GAG until stepping down in 1993. Poindexter sang and travelled with such gospel music luminaries as The Davis Sisters, The Sallie Martin Singers, and The (James) Cleveland Singers. Poindexter is also a minister who was ordained through the denomination called The Metropolitan Spiritual Church.

The third announcer, Edna Tatum, was selected because she has had more of her work included on nationally-distributed audio and video recordings than any other gospel announcer. Although her name is not a household word, even among gospel music fans, her work is immediately recognized across the country because of its distinctive nature and her long-time designation as announcer/narrator for the late King of Gospel, the Reverend James Cleveland. Tatum began as an announcer on her church's broadcast and then became a part of Rev. Cleveland's broadcasts and recordings after he heard her creative approach to introducing artists and

recordings. Their association continued until his death in 1991. Tatum is on leave from the radio show, "Moments of Meditation" for which she has a brokerage agreement. She also provides her unique introductions for a number of other nationally-recognized artists. Because of Tatum's high visibility within the gospel music community, her work certainly deserves to be analyzed.

Researcher's Background

I approached this research on gospel announcers with a familiarity that stems from my life within the Black church community, my abiding love of gospel music, and more than a dozen years as a gospel music industry professional. My interest in music is probably genetic. I am the daughter of two classically-trained African American musicians who were themselves born into musical families. My late father, Elmer, was a baritone soloist and choral director who was raised by a Baptist mother and Church of God in Christ father. He met my mother, Rosa Lee, a professional piano accompanist and Methodist, when they were in high school.

After earning a music degree from Wayne State, my father changed career paths and became the pastor of a Baptist Church. He and my mother combined their love for classical music with their appreciation for spirituals, embellished hymns, and gospel music and built a music department over which my mother has served as minister of

music for almost forty years. All of this, plus tenure in numerous church, school, and honors choirs and membership in several community gospel choirs, including the nationally-known Donald Vails Choraleers and the King James Version helped form my musical background.

My love for the spoken word comes from these same roots; my family included a preacher, a number of teachers, several poetry reciters, debaters, and just good talkers. Though I never entertained the idea of being a minister (I have, however, spoken for more than my share of "youth days," "women's days," and even one "men's day"), I have always enjoyed public speaking. So understandably, meeting gospel announcer Bertha Harris before I was a teenager had a profound effect on me since she was living my dream by combining gospel music, public speaking, and radio. My undergraduate degree in Television and Radio at MSU as well as a couple of semesters on the campus station gave me training in the technical aspects of broadcasting. However, it wasn't until I got my first job doing a gospel radio show on WJLB-FM, Detroit's top-rated urban contemporary station, that I was given an opportunity to become a gospel announcer.

Since my commercial radio debut on WJLB-FM, I have presented gospel music on two other stations full time, WQBH-AM and WCHB-AM. On these three stations, I was both producer and host of a program called "On the Gospel Side."

The format included music, interviews, and "Looking Back," a historical segment saluting great gospel artists and composers. I left that work voluntarily in order to pursue my doctorate. Since 1991, I have served as the substitute host for Darryl Ford on WMUZ-FM.

There were other elements besides my on-air work which gave me fairly easy access to many of my interview subjects. I have been a member of the Gospel Announcers' Guild (GAG) since the mid-1980's. Al Hobbs, the Guild chairman, already knew me from the GAG and from other projects that had brought him to Detroit, so I was able to interview with him and his colleague, Delores Poindexter, before I was completely certain that gospel announcers would be my dissertation topic. Hobbs was kind enough to mention my project to the other GAG members during the annual meeting in 1991, thus making it easier for me to arrange interviews with my colleagues that were present. Even with industry professionals who were not fellow GAG members, I usually needed only to introduce myself as a gospel announcer studying gospel announcers so that our work could be documented and analyzed from a scholarly perspective. Most of them were kind enough to grant me an interview. Some of the artists knew me as the producer of the television show "GodSounds," which had aired on the NBC affiliate in Detroit for eight years, while others knew me because of my role as producer of the McDonald's/MSU Museum GospelFest since 1983.

In the cases where the GAG, TV, or concert connections were non-existent, a more highly connected "insider" came to my assistance. Brother Ed Smith, the Executive Director of the Gospel Music Workshop of America, has been a colleague, business partner, and friend for a number of years. He allowed me to tap into his enormous index of names, and he even placed phone calls for me so that I could gain immediate access to some of the gospel announcers and industry professionals with whom I needed to speak. Any reluctance an interviewee may have had about the interview was usually alleviated because of my first-hand connection to the work, my specific knowledge of how the individual had fit into the gospel music community, or, in a few key instances, my recommendation from Brother Smith.

Since the purpose of this dissertation does not directly relate to proving whether an "insider" can reliably research her own community (several learned predecessors have more than demonstrated that already including William Wiggins, Jr., 1983; Burnim 1980; Maultsby 1992; and Williams-Jones 1975), I will only state that I have endeavored to use the approved research methodologies and analytical paradigms along with my own observations and experiences in order to present what I hope will be viewed as a conscientious, though not necessarily unbiased, look at the significance of the gospel announcer and the Black gospel music tradition.

CHAPTER III: THE CONVERGENCE OF RADIO AND GOSPEL MUSIC

Gospel music's humble beginnings as a folk musical form during the nineteenth century, its next phase as the driving force behind the early Black church broadcasts of the 1920's and 1930's, and its pivotal role as one of the popular attractions on Black radio in the 1940's and 1950's have prepared the way for its place in broadcasting in the latter part of the twentieth century. Solidifying its position as an important aspect of Black radio is a roster of men and women who, over the past sixty years, in major urban areas and small towns, broadcasting via 50,000-watt super-stations and 100-watt mom-and-pop operations, have presented gospel music and an encouraging word to anyone who cared to listen, enjoy, and be inspired.

The historical context for the emergence of Black gospel music includes the end of slavery and the initial stages of the Great Migration, the large-scale movement of African Americans from the rural South to the urban centers of the North and West which began during the late 1800's and peaked during the two World Wars. Gospel music rests on a musical base that includes the hymn style of The Reverend Charles Albert Tindley, a renowned Philadelphia Methodist pastor who, from 1901 - 1926, published the gospel songs he had written to accompany his sermons; the moans, wails, and hollers that formed the blues; and the percussive, dynamic sounds that emerged from the turn-of-the-century Black folk

church, which included Pentecostal, Holiness; and "primitive" Baptist congregations (Maultsby n.d. 12-14; Boyer 1992: 58).

The 1920'S: Black Performers Debut On Records and Radio

One of the most pivotal decades of this century for the Black community was the 1920's. The decade began on the heels of World War I, a war in which Black soldiers served valiantly, only to return home to face continuing disenfranchisement, lynchings, and other abuses at the hand of a rejuvenated KKK. The confrontations between Blacks and whites culminated in what writer James Weldon Johnson called "The Red Summer," the summer of 1919, during which no less than two dozen race riots broke out across the country, the bloodiest occurring in Chicago. Marcus Garvey and his United Negro Improvement Association experienced unprecedented growth as they advocated race pride. Garvey's message of Black beauty, esteem, and repatriation in Africa struck a chord with thousands of disillusioned lower class Blacks and peaked in 1920 with a rally at Madison Square Garden, attended by more than 25,000 (Franklin and Moss 310-338).

Five years later, in 1925, A. Philip Randolph founded the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, yet another move toward unity and solidarity for the Black community during what were perilous times. In the arts, Langston Hughes,

Countee Cullen, Zora Neale Hurston and others were defining the Harlem Renaissance, just as their white colleagues, such as T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, and Edith Wharton, were setting the parameters for the new Modern American literature. The decade ended in 1929 with the January birth of Martin Luther King, Jr., and the October stock market crash which kicked off the Depression (Franklin and Moss 310 - 338).

The 1920's also proved to be a significant decade for gospel music. During this period, the late musician and composer Thomas A. Dorsey, generally recognized as "The Father of Gospel Music," synthesized the hymn stylings of Tindley, the driving sounds of the folk church, and the blues elements with which he was so familiar and laid the foundation for modern-day gospel music. A former pianist for blues singer Ma Rainey and collaborator of Tampa Red, Dorsey is also called gospel's patriarch because of his ground-breaking efforts in publishing and promoting the music as well as for providing gospel with the sound that was to catapult it to popularity, initially with the Black working class.¹

The "Roaring Twenties" was the period when recording companies began to earnestly tap into the wealth of gospel talent that was available. The first known forays into the recording of gospel music were made prior to this time and consisted of a limited number of cylinders and discs featuring quartets. These initial releases were part of a

general popular music series documenting American and ethnic traditional forms. Among the first labels to enter this arena were Columbia, which recorded the Standard Quartette in 1895, and Victor, which recorded the Dinwiddie Colored Quartet in 1902 (Lornell 22). The year 1924 was the first in which total record sales hit the 100 million mark in the U.S. Within a few years of this important achievement, the "race recordings," which placed Black musical forms on separate labels, were officially launched by such labels as Columbia, Okeh, and Paramount (Godrich and Dixon 5-10; Lornell 21). A few sacred quartets also experienced recording success during this time, including the Norfolk Jubilee Singers. After beginning their recording career on Okeh in 1921, the group moved to the Paramount label in 1923 where one of their titles remained in the company's catalog for nine years. Other labels, noting Paramount's relative fortune in this area of recording, followed its lead and recorded numerous other community-based quartets during field sessions in such cities as Atlanta, Memphis, New Orleans, and San Antonio (Lornell 22).

Songsters, skilled singers whose repertoires embraced a wide range of music, also began recording religious titles during this time. Paul Oliver reports that as early as 1924, songster Sam Jones recorded "Lord, Don't You Know I Have No Friend Like You?" Though more than a dozen blues singers and songsters, including Bessie Smith, Sara Martin,

Clara Smith, Barbecue Bob, and Sam Butler, recorded songs with religious titles, usually only a few of these were actually issued. Some were "secularized gospel songs," such as "When the Saints Go Marching In" and "Get on Board." Such recordings served an important function by not only providing inspiration and entertainment, but by helping to draw attention to the music and growing number of sermons being recorded by singing preachers and evangelists. The songsters also helped to create a receptive audience for the gospel entertainment that was soon to emerge (Oliver 145, 203-5).

The 1920's also introduced radio as a vehicle for the mass consumption of news and entertainment. African Americans were involved in the medium almost from the start, but their involvement was accompanied by a measure of ambivalence and controversy. Certainly, the Jim Crow atmosphere which permeated the country had suffused the radio industry. As a result, vehicles that portrayed African Americans as comedic, stereotypically buffoonish maids, butlers, and ne'er-do-wells flourished. Black actors who wished to avoid such roles and to create fully-developed characters found themselves frustrated since those parts were as rare as the opportunities for African Americans to work in creative or administrative jobs within the industry. However, those performers who wished to enter radio as musicians and singers were able to do so with relatively

little resistance (MacDonald 327-329). According to Black radio historian Norman W. Spaulding, musician Earl "Fatha" Hines and vocalist Lois Deppe were showcased on a program broadcast from the country's first commercial radio station, KDKA, Pittsburgh, in 1921 and claimed to be the first "colored guys" on radio (Spaulding 22-23). A new medium of communication was officially open for Blacks -- whether they had sacred or secular inclinations.

The Emergence of the Black Church Radio Broadcast

As early as 1924, the marriage between radio and Black religion occurred with the genesis of Black church broadcasts. The majority of these first religious programs appear to have originated in big cities such as Chicago where Blacks were settling in burgeoning numbers. These pioneering broadcasts were underwritten by the stations, not necessarily for a specific Black audience, but as religious programming for their general listenership. The major stations continued to sustain these broadcasts until the 1930's; at that time, they joined many small independent stations who had been selling air time to Black churches since the beginning of the decade (Spaulding 71-73).

Many of these premier church broadcasts relied heavily on the drawing power of congregational singing and gospel choruses, and the results were often resoundingly positive. Listenership and regular attendance almost always mushroomed

for those churches that included this new, exciting gospel music. By the end of the 1940's, these gospel music-driven radio ministries were attracting millions of listeners of all races, many of whom also joined the churches that inspired them on radio (Spaulding 101-104).

As early as 1924, the Reverend Samuel Crouch was broadcasting services from his Wayside Church of God in Christ in Fort Worth, Texas.² Hundreds of other radio ministries soon followed, and though the denominations of these churches were diverse, they generally shared an emphasis on gospel music. Among the broadcasts known for their music was that of The Reverend Clarence Cobb and the First Church of Deliverance of Chicago, who first presented services on WIND in 1930, later moving to WCFL. In 1949, radio audience for "First Deliverance," as it is affectionately called, was estimated at one million and the sanctuary congregation at 20,000. Though the Reverend Cobb has been deceased for a number of years, the church's current pastor, Eugene Gray, has continued the broadcasts on the same station (its current call letters are WLUP). The choir, which has also recorded successfully, remains one of the most respected in the country (Spaulding 101; Hill 44).

Similarly, another pioneering pastor, Elder Solomon Lightfoot Michaux of Washington's WJSV, reportedly owned by the KKK, began several decades of popularity in the 1930's because of his upbeat style and dynamic radio choir.

Michaux, who chose not to erect an elaborate church building, once stated that his church was "in the radios in every home." The recipient of one thousand letters each week during his heyday, Michaux was also remarkable as a recording pastor, selling hundreds of thousands of copies of his sermons and of his memorable radio theme song, "Happy Am I."³

In 1933, R.E. Granger of Fort Worth, Texas, reportedly became the first Black pastor to broadcast coast to coast, and Bishop R. R. Roberts surfaced as one of the forerunners in radio within the rapidly growing, music-centered Church of God in Christ. He began his broadcasts from Roberts' Church of God in Christ Temple on WSBC in Chicago around 1935 and remained on the air until his death in 1957 (Spaulding 102-104). Elder C.L. Morton was also on the air in the 1930's, broadcasting in Windsor, Ontario, on CKLW. His theme song was "I'm on My Way to Heaven And I'm So Glad," and one of Detroit's leading quartets, The Flying Clouds, were among the featured singers.⁴

Jubilee and Gospel Quartets Debut on Radio

While millions were listening to the church broadcasts on local and regional radio, others were tuning in to hear the sounds of jubilee and gospel quartets. The debut of quartets in "live" performance on radio was concurrent with their pursuit by commercial recording companies. As

quartets performed on radio, they were often heard by label officials who, in turn, recorded the groups, thus paving the way for their increased popularity as evidenced through greater concert bookings, radio exposure, and record sales. Though most record companies had to curtail or severely limit their production of gospel recordings during the Depression, both Columbia and Okeh distributed a select number during this time. However the communication medium that kept gospel music in general and quartets in particular in front of the public during the lean recording years of the Depression was radio which was able to reach hundreds of thousands of Black listeners and a significant number of Whites (Lornell 22; Allen 29-30).

As a rule, quartets, whose performance styles predate gospel music, began on radio with a repertoire of hymns and spirituals. As gospel's appeal increased, so did the amount of gospel music sung by most quartets. The existing scholarly literature on gospel music reveals the important role quartets played in popularizing gospel music, in essence helping to create the need for the gospel disc jockey (Lornell 16, 22-33; Heilbut 37-56; Allen 6-7).

Kip Lornell reports, for example, that in Roanoke, Virginia, the N & W Imperial Quartet was heard on WDBJ beginning in 1928, and in the tidewater region, the groups on radio included the Silver Leaf Quartet of Norfolk and the Golden Crown Quartet. In the late 1920's and early 1930's,

the Radio Feature section of the Amsterdam News listed programs by a number of local and national groups, including the Fisk Jubilee Singers and the Southernaires and the lesser-known Metropolitan Four and Eveready Jubilee Singers. Quartets were also heard on regional and nationally syndicated radio programs by the 1930's. In 1927, the Utica Jubilee Quartet was featured on the National Broadcasting Network, and the Southernaires were featured on their own program, "The Little Weather-Beaten Whitewashed Church of the Air" from 1933 to 1944 (Allen 26- 27; Lornell 22).

The Southernaires were just one of several other choral groups who performed background vocals on radio minstrel programs, such as "Plantation Nights" which aired on KFI, Los Angeles, in 1932. On page 9 of Variety, dated August 9, 1932, the "imaginary" setting for the show was described as "an old Southern plantation where darkies come to serenade the owner" (MacDonald 330). As early as 1936, The Golden Gate Quartet, perhaps the most influential group of the era, was being heard regularly on WIS, in Columbia, South Carolina; in the 1940's, they were fixtures on the CBS radio network (Lornell 22-25; Allen 28-29).

Among those with the greatest amount of exposure were the Fairfield Four who, in 1942, were carried on the 50,000-watt WLAC. Though WLAC's coverage area was already as much as one-third of the United States, the Fairfield Four were heard by an even greater audience because of a process

called electrical transcription. A single master recording of their program was made through a procedure similar to that of making a vinyl record. Duplications could then be made of the program and sent to other stations that later broadcast the show at a convenient time.⁵ The Fairfield Four were carried by powerful stations from Philadelphia to Salt Lake City, virtually placing them in living rooms around the nation.

The Four Harmony Kings, formed in West Virginia in 1938, were another of the many groups who created a thriving career through radio and personal appearances. After three months of appearing on a weekly Sunday morning show, they found themselves at the center of a daily fifteen-minute program on WNOX, Knoxville, which reached most of the southeastern United States. When they picked up a new sponsor, Swan Bread, their name was changed to the Swan Silvertone Singers, and they eventually became one of the great quartets in gospel music history. Simultaneously, the Selah Jubilee Singers were broadcasting daily on 50,000-watt WPTF in Raleigh, North Carolina (Lornell 25-26).

The Dixie Hummingbirds, whom younger generations met through their Grammy-winning collaboration with Paul Simon on "Loves Me Like a Rock," began building their national following through radio broadcasts on WPTF with a daily program (7:45 - 8:00 a.m.) that lasted for six months around 1947. They also spent another six months on WCAU,

Philadelphia, under the name "The Swanee Quintet" -- because the owner did not like the word "Dixie."⁶ All of these and scores of other groups found radio to be an advantage to their careers. Because of their popularity, they, in turn, helped to expand the audience for gospel. No longer was quartet singing simply a religious, regional phenomenon. Because of its wider exposure and the many outstanding innovations that were being added to the performances, quartet music became a popular entertainment form for mass consumption. Its new features included "switch" leading, in which one lead vocalist begins the song and then hands the microphone to a second person who takes over the lead; choreography; a shifting focus from spirituals and folk gospel performances to "hard" gospel singing; and "song battles" which placed two or more top groups on one program (Lornell 22-26; Maulsby 20-21).

Local Businesses and the Sponsorship of Gospel Programming

Some of the most important forces behind the alliance forged by radio and gospel music performers were community-based businesses. In the 1930's, many local entrepreneurs either underwrote programs or hired area quartets to represent them on radio during fifteen- and thirty-minute programs (Lornell 22). In Spartanburg, South Carolina, for example, both the Ernest Collins Funeral Home, which broadcast on WSPA as early as 1938, and the Callahan Funeral

Home had such arrangements with local gospel and jubilee quartets.⁷ In Detroit, another mortuary, the Diggs Funeral Home, presented a gospel music-centered broadcast on WJLB (then an AM station) beginning in the late 1940's. Charles Diggs, Jr., who eventually became a U.S. Congressman, served as the host and offered poetry and positive words to his audience. Eventually, there was a Diggs Gospel Choir that also performed on the broadcast.⁸

But the longest-running support of gospel music broadcasts in the Detroit area has come from two Jewish pharmacists whose connection with gospel music on radio spans sixty years. Paul's Cut Rate Drugs, a center for conventional and traditional medicines, was established by the late Paul "Mr. Paul" Deutch on Hastings Street in 1924; his brother, Joseph, who also became a registered pharmacist, was just seventeen at the time. In the early 1930's, the Reverend James L. Murray, a neighborhood barbershop owner, asked the brothers to assist him as sponsors of a quartet-centered radio program he was launching on WMBC-AM. Rev. Murray, the earliest Black gospel announcer uncovered in this research project, dropped the program around 1943. Paul and Joseph took over what was then a fifteen-minute show and began "Paul's Ship of Joy" on WJLB, the station that had inherited WMBC's dial position. Now that Paul is deceased, Joseph, who is now fondly called "Mr. Paul" throughout the African American community,

continues serve as a self-described "amateur radio announcer" on WQBH-AM on the program that has had the same name for fifty-one years.

Though he misses the days when the groups performed live, "Mr. Paul," who is eighty, presides over a weekly, hour-long program consisting of a short message from a local minister, inspirational poetry, which he presents himself, and several recorded gospel selections he has come to embrace over the years. The various announcers who have worked on the program have included Captain Dick Pavey, a professional white announcer whom the brothers befriended at WMBC and brought with them to WJLB; and several African American gospel announcers, such as Van Douglas, state senator Bristoe Bryant, and Willie B. McIntosh (Deutch 1993).

Besides local funeral homes, stores, and pharmacies, a handful of national advertisers cautiously supported Black radio in the 1930's and 1940's. However, most national sponsors, particularly in the South, had a "kind of racist tunnel vision," according to radio historian Louis Cantor, that prevented them from reaching out to Black consumers. The thought Blacks had very little money and/or no radios, that they would not specifically purchase those products that were aimed at them, and that Whites would boycott products they identified with Black audiences (Cantor 22-23; Spaulding 47). Nevertheless, the local businesses that

sponsored these early programs enjoyed an increased profile and enhanced image among their targeted listeners.⁹

Conversely, their dollars, coupled with gospel's growing popularity, encouraged programmers to find more room for the musical form on radio.

National Broadcasts Expand the Audience for Gospel Music

Closely related to the local gospel programming was the "live" presentation of Negro spirituals on network radio which, by definition, was able to reach hundreds of thousands with a single broadcast. Those artists frequently featured included Eva Jessye and her various chorales, the Hall Johnson Choir, and the choirs from several historically Black colleges. Certainly noteworthy during this period was the nationally-broadcast "Wings Over Jordan" program (Spaulding 23-26). Associated with the latter was the memorable Reverend Glenn T. Settle, who was remarkable for his ability to create a distinctive spiritual ambience for the audience with his voice and text. In describing the narration created by Settle, Ira Tucker of the Dixie Hummingbirds said: "When you hear him, you'll sit down, Deb, and almost have tears in your eyes. He was legendary...."¹⁰ Although the majority of songs he introduced were spirituals, Settle's on-air work could easily make him a progenitor of the gospel announcer. He introduced Black sacred music on broadcasts and in live

concert settings, he used a combination of words and vocal techniques to engage his audience, and he was afforded a measure of status within the African American community because of his abilities, his association with the medium of radio and with the highly-regarded music.

One of the most celebrated radio programs of the time was "The Mahalia Jackson Show" which made its debut on CBS, Chicago, September 26, 1954, and was electrically transcribed for later airings in other parts of the country. The twenty-five-minute show, featuring the high-profile Jackson as host and star, was reviewed in Variety three days after the initial broadcast. The reviewer commented that she had "the equipment to provide Sabbath eve listening with some much needed new excitements." Studs Terkel scripted the "between-tunes palaver" which involved Jackson and musical director Jack Halloran -- conversation which the reviewer thought "neatly captured the gal's infectious personality."

Though gospel music historian Horace Boyer acknowledges Jackson for being "the first to broadcast the pure 'sanctified' style of gospel" on her program, he also points out that the show "signaled a change in the Mahalia Jackson style, and not one for the better." During half of the show, she sang gospel music freely with her trademark fervor supported by her long-time accompanist, Mildred Falls. The second half, however, he deems as having been less

satisfying for true gospel lovers. Jackson's vocal style was "superimposed on a semi-classical instrumental background" as she performed such popular songs as "Trees" and "You'll Never Walk Alone." Despite, or perhaps because of this alteration in her performance style, Jackson became a highly successful crossover artist, gospel's first bona fide superstar as well as a highly visible radio "host" (Boyer 1990: 8-9).

Gospel Records Debut on Radio Via Secular Broadcasts

All of the preceding -- the gospel music-church broadcasts, local and national programs featuring live gospel performances -- paved the way for the explosion of gospel announcers in the 1940's and 1950's. However, the first disc jockeys to play gospel music recordings on the radio came decades earlier and they were, in fact, secular announcers whose goal seemed to be to play the best and most popular music recorded by Black performers. It appears that the first Black personality to have spun a gospel record on radio was the very first Black announcer to have worked on a commercial radio show of any kind in this country. In 1924, the legendary Jack L. Cooper began his career in Washington D.C., and then moved to Chicago around 1926 where he spent the balance of his broadcast life (Spaulding 71).

Throughout the existence of the "Jack L. Cooper Presentations," there was always a place for gospel music.

An undated promotional piece for Cooper's productions includes the following words: "Jack L. Cooper Presentations since 1923 Extend[s] to You, Your "Invitation to Listen" Daily -- Gospel - Sweet - Popular Music * Nightly Music That Is Polite and Pleasing * Sundays The Church of Your Choice." On a separate schedule of radio programs produced by Cooper for stations, again on an undated piece, a show of "gospel and folklore" is listed as airing Sundays at 7:00 a.m. and Thursdays at 11:30 a.m. on WSBC, Chicago. One veteran quartet singer, R.H. Harris, shared these memories of how Cooper mixed gospel and blues: "The phone would ring and he'd mix hymns and blues. I'm talking about 1937 when I first met him. He served the public...."¹¹

One of Cooper's oldest living colleagues, veteran radio personality Richard Stamz, once called "The Crown Prince" of Black Radio in Chicago, has also confirmed that Cooper included gospel in his programming from the very beginning.¹² In 1932, Cooper teamed with Rosalie Latimer Wood and co-hosted a Sunday afternoon broadcast featuring religious music and poetry, making Wood, a CPA with the Metropolitan Funeral System, among the first Black women to present Black religious music in this type of format (Spaulding 93).

Other radio personalities also mixed religious and non-religious Black music on their programs. One noteworthy example is the legendary Al Benson, perhaps the most

successful and powerful DJ of any color in the history of radio. His radio career began in 1945 at WEGS-AM, Chicago, where, as the Reverend Arthur B. Leaner, he presented a fifteen-minute broadcast from his storefront church. When station management objected to commercials on his religious broadcast, this consummate businessman changed his name to Al Benson, became a disc jockey, and earned an estimated five million dollars during the next twenty years. At his peak, he was broadcasting for three different stations, ten hours a day, six days a week. Benson, voted the most popular disc jockey in a Chicago Tribune poll in 1948, filled his programs with the new Black urban sounds, including gospel music, that were being recorded by independent record companies. According to Spaulding, Benson moved to and remained on top in the competitive world of Black radio because he "sensed that the dominant musical taste in Black Chicago was changing, and it was not to jazz" (82-83).

Another who melded sacred and secular music was Eugene "Flip" Forrest, who began his forty-four-year career in radio in 1948. Forrest entered radio at KWED, Seguin, Texas, playing a heavy dose of blues intermingled with other Black music:

The B.B. Kings, the Little Walters, and
you know, back in the early days, I

played the Dixie Hummingbirds...It was mixed up with the rhythm and the blues or the race music as we called it in those days. Rosetta Tharpe was there and a few old-timers from way back.¹³

Despite gospel's increasing popularity with religious and non-religious audiences, thanks in part to DJ's like Cooper, Benson, and Forrest, there were other DJ's, such as noted jazz announcer Daddio Daylie in Chicago, who apparently spoke out against the mixing of sacred and secular forms of music (Spaulding 82-83, 96).

Gospel Announcers and the "Golden Age of Gospel"

This period during which gospel music was routinely being played on non-religious radio programs has been called gospel's "golden age"--1940 to 1960. Several elements within the recording industry, gospel music, and radio came together to propel gospel to the next level of popularity. After World War II, a number of small, independent record companies emerged, many of which were willing to work with new, untried talent. Though the majority of these companies were ephemeral, they were nonetheless instrumental in placing more gospel music before the public. A few labels, such as Peacock Records, headed by Don Robey in Houston, and King Records in Cincinnati, actually became major players in

the field (Lornell 24-26). By 1945, there was a network of churches and auditoriums around the country that were amenable to gospel music concerts, and artists were performing in venues that had previously been closed to them. The loosely-formed system was created, to a large extent, through the efforts of three leading performers and composers: Thomas Dorsey, Sallie Martin, and Roberta Martin who identified and activated conducive venues along the "gospel highway" (Heilbut xxix).

Though quartets were still powerful during this time, gospel singers, both male and female, were finding great favor with audiences as well. In fact, gospel's first "million-sellers" -- "Move on Up a Little Higher" and "Surely, God Is Able" -- which were released in 1947, were performed by gospel singers Mahalia Jackson and Clara Ward and the Ward Singers.¹⁴ These unprecedented sales figures also reflected the fact that the "golden age" was characterized by the compositions and arrangements of such inimitable talent as W.H. Brewster, Sr., Roberta Martin, Kenneth Morris, Lucie Campbell, and, of course, Thomas A. Dorsey (Heilbut xxvii-xxix). In addition, there were more than a dozen gospel music publishing houses to help put the music in the hands of clamoring aficionados (Jackson 1979:74).

All-Black radio emerged during this period: WDIA-AM, Memphis, summer, 1949; WEDR-AM, Birmingham, Alabama,

September, 1949; and WERD-AM, Atlanta, the first Black owned-and-operated station, October, 1949. Their emergence provided myriad commercial opportunities for sponsors and performers attempting to reach Black audiences (Cantor 86; Allen 35). Black DJ's also peaked in popularity during this time. While Black newspapers and magazines reported the successes of the African American middle class, Spaulding asserts that the disc jockey of that period was a "'man of the street' who in the content and style of his programs gave legitimacy to the Black lower-class experience" (Spaulding 116-117). Though their "street" expressions and language were not always appreciated by the Black middle class, the early Black disc jockeys were considered role models and heroes, especially among lower class southern migrants, because many of these DJ's spoke "their language" and reminded them of "down home." They expressed the joy and pain of the Black experience through the music they played, the words they spoke, the way they spoke, and the actions they took (Williams 79-81).

As Black-oriented programming and entire formats developed and flourished across the country, gospel music, with its plentiful singers and swelling catalog of recordings, became a staple. In the early days, those DJ's who hosted radio programs centered around gospel fell into two categories. On one hand, there were those who handled a number of duties; hosting a gospel program was just one of

them. On the other hand were those whose sole on-air work was presiding over a gospel program. When Black announcers were just emerging in radio, it was a fairly standard practice for them to serve in several capacities, including newscaster, sportscaster, and DJ for various music programs.

For example, "Bubber Lutchner" of KAOK-AM, Lake Charles, Louisiana, was known in his community as a "blues, jive, and spiritual DJ" [emphasis mine], and Rev. Tillman (the first name is not listed in the September 20, 1954 ad in Sponsor) served as both spiritual DJ and public relations representative for KYOK-AM, Houston (55). Jay Butler, the current music director at WQBH-AM, Detroit, began his broadcasting career in 1957 at WJAK-AM, Jackson, Tennessee, when he was just fifteen. During his six-year stint at the station, his seven-day-a-week responsibilities included hosting a gospel show on Sundays and a jazz show Monday through Saturdays on which he was known as "Jazzbo" Jay Butler.¹⁵

Maurice Hulbert of WDIA-AM, Memphis, was assigned to three programs -- and had a different name on each. He was "Hot Rod" Hulbert on the "Sepia Swing Club," the "Sweet Talking Man" when he presented "Moods by Maurice," and just Maurice Hulbert when serving as the gospel announcer on "Delta Melodies." Even Louis Cantor, one of the few European-Americans who worked at WDIA when it began targeting African American audiences, complied with this

custom. Cantor, who has penned a definitive history of WDIA entitled Wheelin' on Beale, writes that he was "Deacon" Cantor on gospel programs and "Cannonball" Cantor on the rhythm-and-blues shows (viii, 65-66).

By the mid-1930's, there were announcers around the country who were known solely for their association with gospel music. In Detroit, for example, there was Howard D. Morison, utilizing the on-air name Van Douglas, who began his career in gospel radio on WMBC-AM in 1935. After meeting the popular Detroit-based "harmony" quartet called The Flying Clouds, he served as the announcer for them on two separate broadcasts, both of which opened with the group's theme song, "Swanee River." One show was on CKLW-AM in Windsor, Ontario, which reached as far as the Southern United States and featured guest performances by another Detroit quartet, The Evangelist Singers. Their other collaboration was on WJLB-AM, the station that replaced WMBC-AM in 1939 on the 1400 frequency. On each, Douglas introduced the program, the three to four songs that were performed on the fifteen-minute program, and read the announcements regarding the group's upcoming appearances. Douglas, a retired assistant principal, now in his fifty-ninth year of broadcasting, is probably one of the few from gospel's first decades on radio who are still regularly involved in radio programming. He can be heard Sundays on WEXL-AM, Detroit, while son Douglas Morison, who uses the

name Douglas Henry, broadcasts on WQBH-AM, Detroit.¹⁶

Besides Van Douglas and "The Flying Clouds" program, WJLB-AM had an entire block of gospel music from the time it began broadcasting, according to the station's current general manager, Verna Green.¹⁷ Willie B. McIntosh and Brother Charles Pennington were among WJLB's earliest gospel announcers, hosting live, in-studio performances by local and national quartets and later adding recordings as they became more abundant and popular. Both McIntosh and Pennington served for more than forty years on Detroit radio but were also actively involved in the community.

McIntosh, who hosted "Paul's Ship of Joy," named for its sponsor, Paul's Cut Rate Drug Store, was also a deacon, Sunday School worker, and announcement clerk in his church. When McIntosh began in 1941, he shared his on-air duties with "Captain" Dick Pavey, a professional White announcer whom the program's sponsors had met at another station. After Pavey's death, McIntosh successfully hosted alone until 1982.¹⁸ Pennington, whose programs included the "Charles Pennington Spiritual Hour" and "The Hour of Decision," served as the sales representative for his program, administrator with the national and local quartet unions, and lead singer with his namesake singing group, the Pennington Specials, who performed throughout the area as well as on his program.¹⁹ Programs and announcers such as McIntosh and Pennington represent the first generation of

announcers who were dedicated to presenting gospel on radio.

The Proliferation of Gospel Announcers

As the 1940's began, announcers who played only gospel were a small but growing circle. By the end of the decade, the roster of gospel announcers seemed to increase almost daily. In 1942, Brother Isaah [sic] Roberts, son of Bishop R. R. Roberts, hosted a "semi-religious program of music and spiritual advice" in Chicago. He was heard over WSBC-AM and WEDC-AM until 1957 when he became the pastor of Roberts' Church of God in Christ Temple and presided over the church's broadcast started by his father more than twenty years earlier (Spaulding 104).

In New York, Joe Bostic, Sr., hosted "The Gospel Train" on WLIB-AM and WEVD-AM. Bostic, who also served as a sportswriter for the Amsterdam News, became one of gospel's all-time great promoters. Among his triumphs were presenting Mahalia Jackson in concert at Carnegie Hall in 1951 and at the Newport Jazz Festival in 1958 as well as taking other gospel artists to the Coliseum and Madison Square Garden. Bostic is also credited with helping to promote gospel choirs with his own Holy Hour record label (Allen 35; Boyer 1991: 20; Heilbut 269).

Ira Tucker cites Norfley Whitted of WDNC-AM, Durham, North Carolina; Ira McCall of WMBM-AM, Miami Beach; and Kaie

Williams of WDAS-AM, Philadelphia, as gospel announcers whom he would consider memorable during the late 1940's and early 1950's, partially because they played recordings by the Dixie Hummingbirds in the pivotal early years of the group's national career.²⁰ Another quartet leader, who asked to remain anonymous, fondly recalls that both Bud Riley and Rudy Roach who were on WTAQ-AM during the early 1940's were "exceptionally good," "forceful," and "excellent with ad libs."

In 1948, Bert Ferguson and John Pepper "created the sound that changed America" when they put the first all-Black radio staff on WDIA-AM, Memphis. Pepper had experimented with Black music earlier; in 1939 on his first station, WJPR-AM, Greenville, Mississippi, he included Black popular and gospel music on weekends. Local church and club performers were featured, and sponsors with Black-oriented products underwrote the cost of these programs. When Pepper and Ferguson formatted WDIA-AM for Black audiences, gospel music was, of course, among their diverse offerings.²¹

The October 24, 1949, issue of Sponsor indicates that during that time, more than a half million Black listeners in the Memphis area enjoyed regularly-scheduled live performances by such groups as the Royal Harmony Boys and the Songbirds of the South, perhaps the most popular female "quartet" in the South at that time, as well as music from nationally-known groups such as the Pilgrim Travelers (24).

But almost from the beginning of WDIA's historic Black-oriented format, DJ's who only played gospel music were on the 50,000-watt station's schedule. Bill Anderson, who was only on the station for one year, believes he was the first to present a "DJ"-type gospel program on WDIA, a fifteen-minute afternoon show with the recorded music of Rosetta Tharpe at its core. Anderson, who was a teenager at the time, recalls that when he was at WDIA, the station's gospel library was no more than one-inch wide. For that reason, he also had performers come into the studio and pre-record music which he replayed during his 5:00 - 5:15 afternoon broadcast.²² In fact, when both popular and gospel artists came to the station, the WDIA-AM DJ's and engineers often recorded the most popular songs on ten-inch vinyl, some of which became more popular in Memphis than the artists' commercial recordings.²³

Another personality, A.C. "Moohah" Williams, hosted a 30-minute daily show for the station with high schoolers who performed popular and spiritual selections. Elder Dwight "Gatemouth" Moore, a successful blues performer, was "converted" to Jesus Christ -- in front of a live blues audience -- and went on to become a gospel announcer at WDIA-AM in 1949. His trademark phrase, "I'm grateful, children, I'm grateful," was recognized and utilized by religious and non-religious Memphis citizens alike (Cantor 71-75).

Perhaps the strongest gospel personality at WDIA-AM in the late forties, Moore was also infamous for his promotional stunts, some of which were reported in Jet and Ebony magazines. He left to take a position at the nation's second all-Black station, WEDR-AM, Birmingham. Upon his departure from WDIA-AM, a search was begun to find new gospel announcers for the station. Cantor recounts that the need was critical; the station was continuously adding to its gospel programming, and potential gospel announcers were more difficult to identify than were the pop stars, including B.B. King, who served as secular DJ's for WDIA-AM. Eventually, however, two new men were hired to handle gospel duties: Ford Nelson and Theo "Bless My Bones" Wade, who became the station's first major gospel announcers during the 1950's (Cantor 97-98).

Ford, who made his debut on WDIA-AM in 1950, began his musical career as a piano player for blues and pop artists, and his first radio program on the station was a fifteen-minute rhythm-and-blues show. Eventually, it became apparent that his personality was "more suited for gospel"; Ford applied his smooth, authoritative style to hosting gospel programs and to perfecting his salesmanship for the show's sponsor, Pet Evaporated Milk. Theo Wade, on the other hand, was already involved in gospel music as manager, booking agent, and member of The Spirit of Memphis quartet. Once he was hired as a gospel announcer on the station's

4:00 - 6:30 a.m. "Delta Melodies," he became known throughout the Black community. (His nickname was derived from an exclamation he made after spilling coffee one morning: "Doggone, Bless My Bones, I knocked over my coffee!") In 1967, his reputation as the most popular and influential announcer in Memphis was certified when he was named the top DJ in Memphis in a city-wide poll conducted by the Memphis World newspaper (Cantor 98-103; Seroff).

Pioneering Women in Gospel Announcing

From the existing literature as well as from conducting interviews and taking oral histories, I have learned that while women were not as numerous as men in the early days of gospel radio, they were still an important part of that period. Rosalie Latimer Wood, mentioned earlier as Jack L. Cooper's co-host on his Sunday afternoon broadcasts in the 1930's, was certainly a forerunner (Spaulding 93). In 1947, Mother Mattie Davis, began the first of the two broadcasts she still hosts today. "The Heavenly Echoes," heard on WMUS-AM, Muskegon, Michigan, features today the same elements it did almost fifty years ago -- live music provided by local groups. Mother Davis, who was born in 1910, offers a list of the sick and shut-in members from the various churches that support her program. In addition, she presents announcements about future events and services at area churches. Her second program, underwritten by local

businesses, is "Quartets on Parade" which went on the air in 1955. On this program, she began by playing the recordings of both African- and European-American quartets; she also read Bible scriptures and poems and shared words that she hoped would encourage and inspire. Today, all of those elements remain along with live and recorded choirs and soloists who help to round out the program.²⁴

The August, 1951, issue of Our World, featuring the headline, "Negro Women Become Disc Jockeys," explored the range of formats handled by Black women. Next to the photos of the women DJ's who presented entertainment, fashion, and entertainment, there is a photo and caption referring to Frances White of WOOK-AM, Washington, D.C., whom the magazine called "a different disc jockey using only religious records." According to the article, White quit her job with the station when she was asked to MC a dance program. Later, however, she was asked by the station to return (11).

Another woman who began in the 1950's is Pauline Wells Lewis, the dean of the Gospel Announcers' Guild of the Gospel Music Workshop of America. Aunt Pauline, as she is known throughout Baltimore, was actually introduced to radio in the 1940's when she and her sister, Sylvia, sang duets on a local weekly church broadcast on WITH-AM. As an adult, Pauline became a noted MC, travelling around the country to introduce such luminaries as Mahalia Jackson. Her work as a

gospel announcer began at WSID-AM where she remained for twenty-three years; her next stop was WAYE-AM, which later became WBGR-AM, now a 24-hour gospel station; and she retired in 1992 from WEBB-AM after ten years of service. She is still, however, a sought-after MC and has worked as a choir director at the same church for more than fifty years. Her public service activities, such as the pantry she maintains for the needy, account for her being known as "The People's Friend."²⁵

Veteran radio personality Irene Johnson Ware of Mobile, Alabama's WTOK-AM, began her career as a receptionist and announcer. Today, she is the station manager, the first Black female in the South to attain that position. Her background includes having served as the gospel editor for Black Radio Exclusive and as national director of the gospel division of several companies. She is part owner of Po-Rene Products, Ltd., a gospel concert promotions firm and, according to her friend and colleague Martha Jean Steinberg, one of the few gospel announcers who actually knows how to "sell" gospel radio.²⁶

Martha Jean "The Queen" Steinberg began her career in the early 1950's at WDIA, Memphis, and was called by the program director, David James, a "natural for radio." Steinberg was first given a weekend assignment and then placed on the 9:00 p.m. "Nite Spot" show. As "The Queen" became one of the most popular stars on the station, James

created a program around her "sultry voice," aimed it at a male audience, and called it "Premium Stuff" (Cantor 91-92).

When word of her popularity reached Detroit, Steinberg was recruited by the Black owned-and-operated WCHB-AM in 1963, where she worked for three years, followed by more than a decade at WJLB-AM. Steinberg did not accept her call to the ministry until the mid 1970's; however the spiritual and motivational segment she calls "Inspiration Time" has been a touchstone for Detroiters for almost two decades. Today, she is the pastor of "The Home of Love," as well as the vice president, general manager, and star attraction on WQBH. "The Queen," who was recently inducted into the Black Radio Hall of Fame, is indeed one of the premiere personalities in radio.²⁷

Though existing documents seem to suggest that men were far more numerous than women in the early days of gospel radio, these five -- Rosalie Latimer Wood, Mother Mattie Davis, and Aunt Pauline Wells, Irene Johnson Ware, and Martha Jean Steinberg -- are representative of those whose pioneering efforts made it possible for women to play gospel music in numbers equal to that of men on today's gospel radio.

Gospel Announcers Emerge in California

The East, Midwest, and South were already very much involved with gospel programming by the time Western cities,

such as Los Angeles, had gospel played on radio by announcers. Although the Sallie Martin Singers are known to have performed in live concerts in California during the 1930's, the distance and costs involved in travelling from the East to the West made the trip prohibitive for most gospel artists. As was often true in the Northern cities where gospel had been introduced earlier, many self-appointed arbiters of good taste in L.A. found the more rhythmic style of gospel music outside the boundaries they had set for acceptable sacred music. Consequently, in most churches in the area, worshippers were hearing hymns, anthems, and gospel hymns while the more contemporary, rhythmic form of gospel was excluded. A lack of gospel programming on radio also meant that most of Los Angeles' Black community could not hear gospel on a regular basis through that medium. However, beginning in the late 1930's and early 1940's, Black church broadcasts became important in Los Angeles. Later, as new African American migrants brought their traditions to the West, gospel began its slow but steady ascent in that part of the country (DjeDje 42-62).

An important case in point is the St. Paul Baptist Church which achieved national attention in 1947 when its newly-installed, Chicago-raised pastor, John L. Branham, decided to bring the music style he had been raised with into his Los Angeles church. He hired James Earle Hines,

trained in both classical and gospel music, to develop the church's music ministry along with the equally-competent pianist Gwendolyn Cooper [Lightner]. Under the guidance of producer/director Joe Adams, the musicians created St. Paul's "Echoes of Eden" radio broadcast which was introduced Sunday, February 2, on KFWB-AM, the Warner Brothers station. Hines and Cooper successfully led the 137-voice choir in performing both the older and newer styles of black sacred music. As a result, St. Paul became a major gospel music hub, and local pastors hurried to create several other similar broadcasts (DjeDje 43-49).

In Los Angeles, the Reverend Clayton D. Russell was the Black pioneer in religious broadcasting, according to historian George H. Hill. His program, which was first broadcast on KFOX-AM in 1936, was indeed one of the first veteran gospel announcer John Phillips remembers listening to in the area.²⁸ In 1950, the great Sallie Martin, who had moved from Chicago, became one of the first female announcers in L.A. when she went on the air in March and was called "California's First Religious Disc Jockey" by the California Eagle. Later, Martin's daughter, Cora Martin Moore, a choral director and composer in her own right, also spent two years as a gospel announcer in Los Angeles (DjeDje 52).

Apparently, there were enough programs on KGFJ-AM featuring gospel music and announcers in the 1950's (when

gospel announcers were more frequently known as "disc jockeys"), that the station was "almost a gospel station," according to Phillips' wife and co-gospel announcer, Vermya. Even when KGFJ-AM was sold and the format changed to rhythm-and-blues, churches were able to buy time on Sundays for their broadcasts. John and Vermya, who married June 18, 1955, began their careers as gospel announcers March 2, 1957 on KTYM, Inglewood. Subsequently, they broadcast on KFOX, Long Beach; they spent fourteen years on KKGQ-AM, Los Angeles, which was a jazz station; they returned to KTYM where they recently marked thirty-five years as co-gospel announcers.²⁹

Joe Ligon, one of gospel's most acclaimed lead singers, listened to Brother Joe Matthews on KGFJ-AM as early as 1951. But the quartet with whom Ligon performs, "The Mighty Clouds of Joy," owes much of its success to another L.A. announcer who was known simply as Brother Henderson. A legendary entrepreneur and owner of Proverb records, Henderson heard The Mighty Clouds sing and sent a demo on to Peacock Records, which immediately recorded them. After thirty years, the group remains one of the most popular groups in gospel.³⁰

Gospel Music: Backbone of Early Black Radio Programming

The rise in the number of Black disc jockeys in the U.S. who played any kind of music was significant during the

1940's and 1950's, and the total of those playing gospel music escalated as well. Quite clearly, gospel's popularity led more programmers to allocate increasing amounts of time for it on their stations and to reap the ratings and profits attendant to their savvy decisions. In the October 24, 1949, Sponsor magazine, one expert warned all concerned that the use of gospel and blues as vehicles through which advertisers could reach the Black community was "rapidly reaching a saturation point" (55). Four years later, the August 24, 1953 Sponsor declared: "Negro appeal d.j.'s and gospel music are the backbone of Negro programming on some 200-odd United States stations" (69, 80). In that same issue of Sponsor, one media specialist offered his rationale for the proliferation of gospel and blues programming on Black radio:

These two program elements are generally the path of least resistance for a station that is setting out deliberately to woo Negro ears...it is just as easy to build programs out of the libraries of recorded gospel singers and spiritual artists, and the like that are readily available. Also, local Negro churches and Negro ministers are usually only too glad to have the opportunity of going on the air live (78).

Each analyst was probably correct: both popularity and the availability of recordings helped in the proliferation of gospel music programs. There is clear evidence that an ample number of gospel announcers and programs were indeed on the air. Chris Banks, the current gospel program director for WTLZ-AM, Flint, Michigan, recalls listening in the late 1950's and early 1960's to two gospel announcers who became permanent radio personalities in Birmingham, Alabama. There was the laid-back, articulate Reverend Erskin Fausch on WAGG-AM (he is now the owner of WATV-AM in that city as well as a bishop in the AME Church), and on WJLD-AM, he could hear the late preacher-like Deacon Willie McKinstry of WJLD who became the first president of the Gospel Announcers Guild of the Gospel Music Workshop of America. Banks, who serves as a gospel announcer and gospel programming director for WTLZ-FM, Saginaw, acknowledges Fausch as the announcer after whom he patterned his own delivery and has been nicknamed "professor" because of his own stately but personable performance style.³¹

Sponsor again provides names and stations for several other gospel announcers of that period. In the August 24, 1953 issue of Sponsor, Brother Clarence Welch of KALI-AM, Pasadena, California, was cited as the host of a "Negro Spiritual Program beloved by 350,000 ardent listeners." In that same issue, "Morning Spirituals" with 'Doc' Wheeler of WWRL-AM, New York, was reported to have had a "higher black

[sic] listening audience than a number of top network shows of the day" (69-72). A year later, in the September 20, 1954, issue of Sponsor, Ellis Ford is described in an ad for WRMA, Montgomery, Alabama, as "a leader among the local gospel groups in town" because of his "Morning Reveries" broadcast (149).

In the same September, 1954 issue, an ad for the "Negro RadiOK Group" (all of its stations' call letters ended with "OK") boasted of reaching 1,250,000 Negroes with its four stations, and featured photos and captions describing their on-air staff. Included were Honeyboy Hardy, WBOK-AM, New Orleans, Louisiana -- spiritual and gospel DJ; Golden Boy Griffith, WXOK-AM, Baton Rouge, Louisiana -- spiritual and gospel DJ; and Rev. Tillman, KYOK-AM, Houston, Texas, spiritual DJ (55). The latter station, KYOK-AM, Houston, and WEDR, Birmingham, were both programming two gospel shows daily for two and three hours each as well as presenting a Sunday format that included church services and live performances of gospel music. Even general market stations, such as WJJD-AM, Chicago, found a mid-morning place for gospel (Maultsby 1992: 25).

While many of the stations catering to Black audiences were low-powered, sunrise-to-sunset operations, one of the biggest of them all was and is WLAC-FM, Nashville, a 50,000-watt powerhouse reaching several regions of the United States, including Chicago, Texas, and the Bahamas when

conditions are favorable. Although it was the broadcast base for the Fairfield Four for more than twelve years (1939 - 1951), it was not until 1946 that it became a station that targeted Black listeners. At that time, WLAC-AM devoted its evenings to blues, R & B, and soul, the first mega-watt station to focus on Black music. Gospel was represented by two - three songs each night, or it was part of the commercials for the mail-order houses, such as Randy's Record Mart, that were doing a brisk business through WLAC-AM (Landes 68-75).

In the 1950's and 1960's, the station was the only source for Black music for those in what John Landes called "the hinterlands" -- small towns that were not served by stations in their immediate area. Consequently, both WLAC and its advertisers prospered. And though gospel music was only being heard in small doses, its presence on programs featuring predominately secular music on WLAC allowed it to be sampled by audiences that were not necessarily religious (Landes 68-75).

Among the night crew at WLAC were Gene Nobles, Hugh Jarrett, Hoss Allen (now the host of one of the country's most widely-heard gospel programs) and John Richbourg, all of whom had gospel segments on their programs. The latter, Richbourg, was a gravelly-voiced white North Carolinian, who remained at WLAC for 32 years, lasting from 1942 until his retirement in August of 1973.. At his peak in the 1960's and

70's, "John R." received 250,000 pieces of mail a year and drew a listening audience of six - eight million. In a March, 1978, Take One article entitled "John R. The Hit Maker," Lanny U. Franklin opined that because the man with the distinctive voice (many thought he was Black) had such a large following, he was largely responsible for making R & B "both available and acceptable to a white audience that had never heard 'race' music before" (Franklin 15). A critic of today's specialized niche radio formats, John R. is credited with bringing to the fore such names as Jimmy Reed, James Brown, The Dixie Hummingbirds, and the Swan Silvertones (Chaffin n.p.). Because gospel was included in his nightly mix, he, along with his colleagues, is an important part of the story of gospel on radio.

The Fall and Resurgence of Gospel Radio -- 1960'S - 1990'S

In the late 1960's and early 1970's, gospel music lost its place as the "backbone" of Black-oriented radio. As these stations began to compete seriously with mainstream broadcast outlets for ratings and advertisers, gospel was largely relegated to early morning hours or taken off many schedules altogether. The sounds of R & B, including Detroit's Motown and Philadelphia's "Philly International," were the dominant forces competing for airtime against the music of Beatles and the Rolling Stones.

Ironically, it was not until that period that WLAC

chan

sche

DJ a

bee.

hos

one

the

(Ca

cus

art

the

wh.

be

ma

Ha

an

mo

to

ve

th

su

va

ur

gc

changed its twenty-year pattern and placed gospel on the schedule once again -- and then with a white, former blues DJ at the helm. In June of 1971, Hoss Allen, who had just been released from an alcoholism treatment center, began hosting "Early Morning Gospel Time," a program which remains one of the most influential shows in the country because of the station's reach -- this, despite its 2:30 - 5:00 a.m. (Central Time) time slot. Major labels, the makers of custom recordings, professional and semi-professional artists alike all find it so critical to be heard on WLAC, they gladly pay for time slots on "The Hossman's" show on which he has a brokerage agreement (Landes 68-75).

The debut of Allen's program was concurrent with the beginning of the contemporary era in gospel music, usually marked as the release of Edwin Hawkins' crossover hit, "Oh, Happy Day" (Allen 7). And though a number of other gospel announcers entered radio at that time, in general, it took more than a decade for most other stations and programmers to again perceive gospel music as a viable commercial vehicle (Maultsby 1992: 26).

When gospel did rebound on radio during the 1980's, there were several factors contributing to its latter-day success. First, gospel artists were offering audiences more variety than ever before -- traditional, contemporary, and urban contemporary interpretations, the latter often making gospel music compatible with a variety of non-traditional

radio formats. A growing list of gospel performers, including the Winans Family and its various components, the New Jersey Mass Choir, Take 6, Tramaine Hawkins, and Shirley Caesar, were enjoying mainstream exposure on major television programs -- everything from "The Today Show" and "Arsenio Hall" to "The Grammy Awards," "Oprah Winfrey Show," and myriad prime time specials -- which brought welcome attention to the whole genre.

Closely related to the appearance of these artists on national programs was the fact that many gospel stars also appeared on recordings and in concert alongside such pop music icons as Quincy Jones, Whitney Houston, Hammer, and Patti LaBelle which also brought them in contact with more new audiences. Last but most importantly, the gospel music industry was more prepared than ever for this scrutiny because of qualitative and quantitative improvements in such key areas as recording technology, marketing, packaging, and the promotion of gospel's enormous stable of talent.³²

Further attesting to gospel radio's rising status in the commercial realm is the number of all-gospel stations that have been created during the last twenty years. With increasing numbers of AM stations becoming available as mainstream formats move to FM, gospel, as well as talk radio, has been able to maneuver beyond what had been its early-morning time slots in the 1960's and 1970's. Today, more than one hundred twenty-four hour or sunrise-to-sunset

stations are "all-gospel," the majority of them located east of the Mississippi. North Carolina alone has twelve such stations.³³ Some industry professionals, such as Steinberg, take issue with the "all-gospel" label on many of these stations since many rely heavily on "preaching ministries." However, these outlets still offer a steady diet of gospel music to an apparently hungry audience.³⁴

Among the all-gospel stations around the country are WWRL-AM, New York, "The Nation's Number One Gospel Station," which has been 24-hour gospel since 1983 with a staff of four full-time gospel announcers; WDAS, "The Spirit of Philadelphia," where State Representative Louise Williams is a popular and long-standing gospel announcer; WNAP-AM, in the New Jersey/Delaware region, called "Gospel Highway Radio 11," with a gospel air-staff of at least seven; and WWON, Fenton, Michigan, "Power Gospel" which went on the air in September, 1993, with six gospel announcers on its roster.³⁵

Still other proof of gospel's place in today's radio can be found in the four nationally-syndicated programs which gospel industry analyst Lisa Collins lists in the Gospel Music Round-Up 1994.³⁶ These programs are alike in that they feature celebrity interviews, news, and recorded gospel music. "Inspirations Across America," a production of Anderson Communications, made its syndication debut in 1984, which, according to its producer, Vanessa Vaughn-Thomas,

makes it the oldest syndicated African American program on the air. The host of the two-hour show is Burke Johnson, whose career in media includes on-air work at WERD-AM, Atlanta, 20 years as program director/operations manager for WAOK-AM, a stint as Southeastern promotions manager at Motown Records, and induction into the Black Broadcasters Hall of Fame. The program, which features traditional and contemporary gospel music, is currently carried by 104 stations.

"It's a Celebration with Clifton Davis" entered the marketplace in 1991 with a focus on urban contemporary gospel, making it compatible with the sixty urban contemporary stations that carry the program. The host, Clifton Davis, is best known for starring roles on television ("Amen") and stage, including the gospel musical "The First Lady." An ordained minister, Davis is also a Christian recording artist and co-host of gospel's nationally-televised "Stellar Awards."

A third syndicated radio program, "Inside Gospel," is a fast-paced, five-minute gospel news and interviews show carried by one hundred stations. "Inside Gospel," which is produced by Lee Bailey Communications, has had several hosts since its inception in the late 1987. Currently, its host is Linda Woods. The fourth is "America's Gospel Spotlight," which is sponsored by Atlanta International Records, a leading gospel record label. This hour-long weekly program

is carried by ninety-five stations.

It is important to note that alongside these highly-produced programs, there are still stations on which live gospel performances can be found. Normally, these programs are brokeraged and exist in the South and in Northern cities, such as Detroit, Chicago, and New York, where the quartet tradition is still vital, despite the prevailing strength of the choir and contemporary sounds. Detroit is a perfect example of a city in which these different traditions exist in parallel worlds on radio. While many fans can satisfy their daily requirements for gospel choirs, soloists, and contemporary sounds by listening to Darryl Ford on WMUZ-FM (7 - 9 p.m.) and Martha Jean "The Queen" on WQBH-AM (11 - 2 p.m. with a 4 - 7 a.m. rebroadcast), those who prefer a heavy dose of quartet music have to wait until the weekend to hear something other than an occasional quartet recording.

On Saturdays and Sundays, there are several programs that cater to their tastes. "The Hour of Decision," for example, has been on the air for more than eighteen years, fourteen at WMUZ-AM and four at WMKM-AM. It features a regular roster of quartets and traditional groups: the Southern Four, the Silver Harps, the Gospel Interns, and the Gospel Warriors among others. For twelve years, Mae Alexander, who performs in a group herself, served as the show's gospel announcer, introducing the show, the

performers, and reading the announcements. For the last six years, the announcer has been Kemela Penney, a member of the a cappella group, the Silver Harps.

Saturdays from 6 - 7 a.m. on WQBH-AM, Bertha Harris hosts a program sponsored by the City Singing Association (CSA), a "union" of quartets and traditional groups around Detroit. Their various members are featured "live" from the CSA headquarters. The station GM and co-owner, Martha Jean "The Queen," whose program features more traditional soloists, asked Harris to host the program in order to fill that quartet "gap" at the station. ("The Queen" does offer a five-minute special segment called "Quartet Time," but the music is recorded.) Another program, hosted by Willie Aires, AKA "Slim," the lead singer of the quartet known as The Morning Echoes, features "classic" recordings by such artists as the original Soul Stirrers and the Dixie Hummingbirds. The presence of both types of programs -- those featuring "live" quartets and those featuring gospel announcers playing recordings -- helps keep one of gospel's original points of entry, the quartet, a part of gospel radio.

Conclusion

In myriad ways and for a variety of reasons, gospel music has moved light years from what and where it was in the late 1800's: a little-known musical form created by and

for the members of the Black folk church. Its role on radio in the latter part of the twentieth century rests on decades of important changes. It was the dynamic sound of gospel that helped to attract huge audiences to the church broadcasts of the 1920's and 1930's. It was gospel music again in the 1940's which served as the foundation for the new Black radio. Today, gospel music is not only a defining musical form for the traditional African American church, it is a vital aspect of the radio industry, just as it has been for more than seventy years.

In an October 8, 1988, article in Billboard entitled "Gospel Radio," Gary Crossland, president of SOMA Communications, which publishes Tri-S Spot/Light, a Christian radio magazine, discusses the popularity of Black gospel music programming within the context of Christian radio:

The Christian radio format at large is the fastest growing format there is... Black gospel probably comprises 20% of all Christian radio. [The 80% consists largely of "spoken word" plus several white gospel musical sounds: Southern gospel, contemporary Christian, inspirational music, etc.] Like urban contemporary, gospel is dominant in many

major markets, but does not do as well in the midwest and part of the north. In the south, we've had black gospel stations with market shares as high as 12, which is exceptional (G-10).

Insuring that gospel music will remain a vital part of U.S. radio are the gospel announcers who, regardless of their locale, training, denomination, gender, or style of delivery, will continue to present gospel music and an encouraging word to anyone who cares to listen, enjoy, and be inspired.

END NOTES

1. See Michael W. Harris, The Rise of Gospel Blues. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992, for a full discussion of Dorsey's attempts at balancing the sacred and secular influences in his life and their manifestations in his gospel music.

2. Bishop Crouch is the uncle of Grammy Award-winning gospel singer, composer, and producer Andrae Crouch.

3. Elder Michaux, qtd. in "Biggest Baptism," Ebony February 1948: 35-39. Also see Anthony Heilbut, The Gospel Sound (New York: Limelight Editions, 1985) 26.

4. John T. Evans, telephone interview, 6 October 1993.

5. This "layperson's" definition of electrical transcription was provided by George McGown, director of tape and film services at WDIV-TV, Detroit.

6. Ira Tucker, personal interview, 14 July 1993. It is both amusing and ironic that, according to Tucker, the quartet known as "The Swanee Quintet" was using the name "The Hallelujah Boys" at the time.

7. Tucker, 1993.

8. Edward M. Smith, telephone interview, 3 September 1993.

9. "Negro Radio Results," Sponsor, August 24, 1953, pp. 74-75.

10. Ira Tucker, personal interview, 14 July 1993.

11. Promotional materials from the estate of the late Jack L. Cooper (Box 1, folder 12) held by the Chicago Historical Society. R.H. Harris quoted in Arnie Passman, "Did the First Black Disc Jockey Play the Blues?" Living Blues 65 (1985): 56.

12. Richard Stamz, telephone interviews, July 1992.

13. Flip Forrest, personal interview, 14 August 1993.

14. Horace Clarence Boyer, compact disc booklet notes, **"Mahalia Jackson: Gospels, Spirituals, & Hymns,"** C2K 47083 Columbia/Legacy, 1991, p. 21. According to Boyer, the "million-seller" label is not quite accurate for Jackson's **"Move On Up a Little Higher"** and for **"Surely, God Is Able"** by

Clara Ward and the Ward Singers. Each recording sold closer to 500,000 copies, but the recording industry chose to recognize Jackson and Ward for succeeding in what was then a relatively small market.

15. Jay Butler, personal interview, 13 October 1993.
16. Howard Morison, personal interview, 5 June 1993; Douglas Morison, personal interview, 5 June 1993; John T. Evans, telephone interview, 6 October 1993.
17. Verna Green, telephone interview, 1 September, 1993.
18. Marguerite McIntosh, personal interview, March 9, 1993.
19. This information comes from many conversations I had with Charles Pennington during the years he and I both worked at WJLB in the mid-1970's and from an interview conducted with him on the television show I produced on WDIV-TV, Detroit, in the 1980's.
20. Tucker, 1993.
21. Louis Cantor, pp. 13-15; 98 - 103.
22. William Anderson's pre-taped guests included one Riley King who made his first-ever radio appearance playing gospel on Anderson's program. King soon went on to great local fame as a blues announcer at WDIA, but he achieved even greater international fame as bluesman B.B. King.
23. Doug Seroff. Album notes, "Bless My Bones: Memphis Gospel Radio -- the 50's." Booklet accompanying Rounder Records 2063. And William Anderson, personal interview, 1993.
24. Mother Mattie Davis, telephone interview, 18 August 1993.
25. Pauline Wells Lewis, personal interview, August 14, 1991.
26. Martha Jean Steinberg, personal interview, 13 October 1993. George H.K. Hill, Airwaves to the Soul: The Influences and Growth of Religious Broadcasting in America (Saratoga: R & E, 1983) 41.
27. Steinberg, 1993. Cantor 91.

28. John and Vermya Phillips, personal interview, 13 August 1991. Hill, 39.

29. John and Vermya Phillips, 1991.

30. Joe Ligon, personal interview, 25 January 1994.

31. Chris Banks, personal interview, 13 August 1991.

32. "Black Gospel: Rocketing to Higher Prominence," Billboard 10 October 1987: G6, G22. "Black Gospel Bursting at the Seams form Rapid Pace of Growth to Greater Heights." Billboard 7 October 1989: G4.

33. Dan Underwood, telephone interview, 7 October 1993.

34. Steinberg, 1993.

35. This information was obtained from display ads in Score, September/October 1993, and from telephone conversations with the receptionists at the respective stations on October 7, 1993.

36. Lisa Collins, editor, The Gospel Music Industry Round-Up, Culver City: Eye on Gospel Publications, 1994, 56.

CHAPTER IV: RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GOSPEL ANNOUNCER

Because African Americans, like other members of the African Diaspora, venerate the spoken word and those who speak it competently according to cultural guidelines, it was inevitable that the Black gospel music tradition would give birth to its own oral literature and tradition bearers. Gospel announcers are unusual within the gospel arena, for while much of their performance involves speech, those whom they present on radio and within live concert settings are primarily singers or instrumentalists. Yet as critical as speech is to the presentations of gospel announcers, an examination of their work reveals that it is, in fact, multi-faceted, requiring competence in areas other than speech. According to the gospel announcers I interviewed for this study, their importance within the Black gospel music tradition can be attributed to five specific services they render:

-- Their radio broadcasts are still the primary vehicle through which most African Americans hear gospel music outside of the church which is of significance to a broad spectrum of listeners and to various members of the recording industry.

-- Their programs frequently provide inspiration and encouragement for listeners because of the lyrical content of the music and the messages the gospel announcers

themselves deliver.

-- They are capable of speaking and conducting themselves in such a manner that even the most unlikely venues, including concert halls, outside amphitheaters, and broadcast studios, can be transformed into "churches."

--They function as concert hosts and facilitators which requires a sense of humor, timing, decorum, and intuition as well as a range of performance skills if it is to be handled successfully.

-- They can and often do serve as credible links between the African American community and the advertisers who are the welcome and necessary underwriters for gospel music programming.

In summary, gospel announcers, because of the verbal ability and creativity which they apply to the transmission of the gospel message, the status and believability which they bring to the communication of the sponsors' messages, and their knowledgeable presentation of gospel music in the broadcast studio and in "live" settings, are vital components of the African American gospel music tradition.

The Gospel Announcer: Main Media Source of Gospel Music

The one function performed by gospel announcers which has the widest impact on the African American community is that of simply playing gospel music on radio for

appreciative audiences. Though the purely spiritual aspect of their work and of the music is paramount for many listeners, gospel music remains an African American cultural form with aspects and characteristics that can be appreciated strictly on that level. As Burnim concluded:

The Black gospel music tradition operates according to a cultural frame of reference which encompasses both sacred and secular music forms... Proponents of gospel music uniformly articulate the same aesthetic values whether judging performances of gospel or soul music, preaching, or 'speaking' (talking), dancing, walking or even simple every day 'dressing' (choice of clothing) (195-197).

Gospel music has become one of the fastest-growing music forms in the recording arena, according to industry insider Lisa Collins, who cites a two hundred-percent growth rate and the unprecedented success of the platinum-selling BeBe and CeCe Winans as evidence of gospel's reach "beyond the walls of the traditional church..."(4). Judging from gospel music's continued presence on both religious and popular radio stations and its expanding profile in the mainstream marketplace, Burnim's underlying assertion is apparently correct. One need not be a Christian or even Black to enjoy gospel music. Rather, one can simply be appreciative of the cultural aesthetic embodied in it. That is apparently what occurred when hundreds of thousands of fans from all sectors of society made Mahalia Jackson's

"Move On Up A Little Higher" gospel's first major hit. Its syncopations and rhythms attracted those who wanted spiritual encouragement as well as those who just wanted to enjoy a great African American singer performing dynamic music.

Since gospel's emergence on radio in the 1920's, audiences have turned to it for a number of reasons, and most gospel announcers seem to understand this. Al "The Bishop" Hobbs, chairman of the Gospel Announcers Guild for seventeen years and a gospel announcer for more than two decades, conveyed this awareness as he described his programming style:

...it is this grand variety for the churchd and the unchurchd, for those who seek entertainment and those who seek the ministry of music...dealing with the whole man as opposed to just the 'spiritual man,' hopefully delivered in a style that is palatable, in a voice that is receivable....¹

Besides accommodating the various reasons for which people tune in, gospel announcers also have to consider the multi-generational audiences they serve. Unlike most segments of radio which apparently attract certain demographic groups, according to Al Hobbs, the Arbitron ratings for his audience consistently showed he was reaching both males and females "from fifteen [years of age] to death."² Ruby "Soul" Stuart of Phoenix's KXEG-FM also knows that her "White, Black, and Mexican" listeners are

from various age groups, and she programs her music accordingly.

I try to play it all. A little bit of quartet, a little bit of contemporary, a little bit of all of it, you know, so that everybody will be benefitted by it, you know. I don't let the old folks try to persuade me to the point [where] I'm gonna play all back-dated music, and I don't let the young folks persuade me to think I'm gonna play all new music and not reach the old folks that are sitting at home....³

Though most Black churches feature gospel music every Sunday with even the most conservative churches offering it at least occasionally, radio is still the primary medium through which most African Americans can be exposed to gospel music regularly during the week. Despite gospel's admitted role as the training ground for countless rhythm-and-blues and pop artists, this seminal music rarely finds a place on Top 40 radio although one prevailing perception is that gospel is getting more secular airplay than it ever has. That privileged "crossover" exposure, however, is offered to a precious few artists whose place on non-religious playlists can generally be attributed to their urban contemporary sound and pronoun-centered lyrics ("I love You"; "You are my everything") which make their recordings compatible with (secular) urban contemporary radio formats. In Detroit, for example, BeBe and CeCe Winans are regularly featured on the playlist for the city's

top music station, WJLB-FM. It is not unusual to find the brother and sister duo easily sandwiched between Luther Vandross, Anita Baker, and other best-selling love balladeers.

But for the gospel music adherents who do not want their favorite songs about God's love juxtaposed with lyrics extolling the joys of erotic love; for those who, for religious reasons, choose not to listen to Top 40 radio; or for those who simply want a continuous dose of gospel music, the gospel announcer is a welcome friend with the music they want to hear. A recently released song entitled "Radio Angels" pays homage to gospel announcers for just that reason:

Thank God for the radio angels.
They play gospel music all over the world.
Thank God for the radio angels.
They bring joy to so many
Men, women, boys, and girls.⁴

Those gospel music fans who are not within the coverage area of any of the country's 100 all-gospel stations have to become familiar with the limited and irregular times during which the music is offered on the non-gospel outlets. Despite these obstacles, thirty-three percent of the gospel aficionados involved in my 1990 survey reported that they spend five or more hours tuned to gospel music programs. Thirty-six percent said they listen to gospel music on radio from three to five hours per week

(Appendix III, Question 6).

Since gospel music does not saturate the airwaves, it is clear that its fans are willing to make adjustments to their schedules if necessary in order to hear the programming they want. Several examples of this are readily available. Fans who like the "alternative forms of gospel music" played by Tim Smith, "the doctor of gospel," have exactly two hours to catch him on WDTR-FM, the station run by the Detroit Public Schools. His "Musical Expressions" can be heard Sundays from 1 - 3 p.m. where it is ensconced between a program called "Heart Beat of the Drum," which focusses on Native American issues, and "Word Up," an African-centered history and current events program.

The faithful who wish to hear WLAC-FM's influential Hoss Allen have to adjust to his 2:30 - 5:00 a.m. (Central Time) time slot; listeners in half the United States have done just that. Certainly, many who listen to his appropriately-titled "Early Morning Gospel Time" are those already awake, including truck drivers, the sick and shut-in, and insomniacs. But Allen also hears from the "dyed-in-the-wool gospel fans" who set their alarms and get up in order to catch "The Hossman" (Landes 74-75).

I can also personally attest to the tenacity of the "dyed-in-the-wool" gospel mavens, for when I was given the opportunity to serve on my first radio program on WJLB, Detroit, the time slot was 5 - 6 a.m. Many of my listeners

we

de

th

we

th

af

De

th

st

no

p

i

b

P

n

were also "people in various states of distress" as Landes describes those mentioned as Allen's radio audience. But there were also those who just simply liked the music and were willing to get up a little earlier in order to catch the mix of gospel music I offered. Ironically, ten years after leaving that station and serving on two subsequent Detroit outlets, I still have people telling me how much they miss me and my music at that hour, and some who say I still wake them up every morning, a statement I politely do not challenge.

As for the specifics of the forms of gospel music played on the air, twenty-seven of the thirty announcers I interviewed characterized themselves as providing a mix of both traditional and contemporary gospel music; those who perceived themselves as presenting only one type of gospel music are hosts of "specialty" programs (all rap, all quartets, all "alternative forms," for instance). According to promoter Dan Underwood, this was not always the case. In fact, he remembers that getting some announcers to simply add choirs to their rotation of quartets, for example, was difficult in some regions, particularly the South, where quartets are still very strong. And now it is equally difficult to convince other announcers to sample the urban contemporary groups, some of whom perform rap gospel. His assessment, however, is that today's crop of announcers is far more accepting of a diverse range of sounds and that,

for the most part, gospel audiences can look to them to provide a balanced program -- even if some of the recordings are from the "archives" and are not the new releases his company and similar organizations are trying to get on the air.⁵

In question 8 on the survey (Appendix III), the participants had a choice of four stated reasons for listening to their favorite announcer. The answers were equally divided among personality, voice/style of speaking, inspirational words, and style of music with each option receiving just under twenty-five percent of the votes. Apparently, among this group at least, the music alone can be a major draw. And it is obviously an opinion held by numerous others around the country who search around the dial for the music they love or who stumble across it by chance. During my interview with Martha Jean "The Queen" Steinberg, of WQBH-AM, Detroit, she discussed her initial amazement at the success a program called "The Cosmic Angels" has enjoyed on that station. This gospel music show has no host and features continuous recorded music. The response from the audience has been very strong with listeners expressing their thanks for the "uninterrupted" recordings.⁶

As obvious as it may appear to some that audiences listen to gospel announcers for the sheer enjoyment of the music they present, there is at least one other

responsibility that gospel announcers themselves see as their most important function within the culture.

The Gospel Announcer: Source of Inspiration

Through the music they introduce as well as through the words they speak, gospel announcers frequently encourage and inspire their listenership. Virtually every announcer I interviewed believes that their "ministry" or "service" requires them to do two things: present music with a message of God's love for mankind and then underline that message with appropriate Scriptures or other words that mirror the "good news." Any apparent similarities between traditional Black preachers and gospel announcers often extend beyond performance context (the church and other religious services) to the very nature of the work both execute, preachers being known as ministers of the gospel and many gospel music announcers characterizing their work as "a ministry." The straight-talking Ruby "Soul" Stuart, who broadcasts Sundays at 8:30 a.m. and again at 11:00 p.m., says that the main role of the gospel announcer is to "get a message to the people that Jesus Christ is the savior of the world." This important mission has a critical bearing on her willingness to endure a range of difficulties, including finding her own sponsors and broadcasting during a split radio shift:

I certainly wouldn't be getting up,
going out there that late [11:00 p.m.]
if I didn't feel like I was doing something
for Christ, and I wouldn't get up out of
my bed to go nowhere at 8:30 in the
morning if I didn't feel like I was
reaching somebody or helping somebody.
So I truly feel like it's a ministry to
the glory of God. I really do.⁷

As a growing number of today's gospel programmers attempt to create crisp, tight formats which mirror the pace found on Top 40 stations, many gospel announcers find themselves faced with having to select their songs from a playlist, which is a pre-determined index of gospel hits, "hit-bound" recordings, and perennial favorites. Some announcers, particularly those who have been trained in university media departments and broadcasting schools, have few problems with this system and find that they can be both inspirational and contemporary-sounding while using the playlist. Certainly, this approach meets the approval of most gospel promoters, artists, and record companies who need to have newer songs played on a regular basis so that they can reach "hit" status.

Playlists, which originated in secular stations, were designed to provide greater exposure for new artists and for new music by established artists. The playlist is often coupled with "the clock," a system which calls for certain types of songs to be played at a particular time during the course of a given broadcast hour (a fast top ten song at the top of the hour followed by a slower hit, etc.). The

playlist and clock reportedly allow stations to gain an edge with those listeners who give their allegiance to stations that play "all the hits all the time." Many gospel announcers, like their secular counterparts, enjoy having an "edge" over the competition, and so a playlist that allows a station to demonstrate its collection of "hot hits" can be effective in attracting the gospel fans who like to hear the latest songs first.

However, because the Christian message is paramount in gospel music, and most announcers view the music as an effective vehicle for communicating that message, the playlist can sometimes get in the way of their efforts to minister. If, for example, a recording is needed to reinforce a Scripture an announcer wants to read but none of the songs on the list have the appropriate lyric, the announcer can either abandon the Scripture in question or abandon the playlist. When I have myself been in that situation, I have found it quite easy to rely on my knowledge of gospel recordings -- which extends beyond a twenty-five song playlist -- and I have played a song that more readily fit the need.

Numerous other announcers confided that they also depart from the list at times they deem appropriate. Their actions coincide with advice dispensed from the late "King of Gospel," the Reverend James Cleveland, who suggested that the announcers need to be concerned with something more

imp

a c

add

who

an

th

re

ce

o

a

i

h

.

important than the latest and hottest recordings. He issued a charge to the Gospel Announcers' Guild members, whom he addressed during their annual luncheon in 1987. The gist of what I recall him saying to us was this: "Lift up Christ and raise spirits by saying what thus saith the Lord, and then put something appropriate on the turntable. Hit records will take care of themselves."

The impetus for saying and playing what is appropriate can come from several sources. Delores "Sugar" Poindexter of WTLC-FM, Indianapolis, attests to speaking to her audience with the help of God.⁸ Many announcers, myself included, pray and have their own time of spiritual devotion before going on the air. During that period and throughout the program, the announcers may ask God to direct them and speak through them so that audience members can find spiritual encouragement. Because the radio program evolves in a broadcast studio where the announcers almost always work alone, the confirmation that they have been a source of inspiration often comes from listeners during non-broadcast hours outside of the work environment -- while the announcers are at gospel concerts, for example, or running everyday errands within the community.

However, a critical tool for staying in tune with the audience during the broadcast is the telephone. Through it, the announcers can receive immediate verification of having met or at least assuaged a spiritual or emotional need. "The

message in that song was what I needed to hear" or "That Scripture you recited spoke right to me" are statements announcers frequently hear. Other phone calls and occasional letters tell of broken hearts, illnesses, and deaths, as well as births, marriages and reunions. These highs and lows can turn the announcer to the Bible's concordance for a pertinent Scriptural tie-in and to their memory banks for a song that will encourage, soothe, or exhort.

Juandolyn Stokes, who broadcasts on WCLK-FM, which is part of Clark Atlanta University, remembers that after she prayed to be given a Monday through Friday slot, she complained about the hours she was assigned: weekdays from 5 until 8 a.m., and Sundays, 8 a.m. until noon. Her complaints ceased after she began to analyze what her listeners were saying during her telephone conversations with them:

People were beginning to call with different problems.. People that couldn't sleep. Students who were up studying for tests that were stressed out. Preachers who were developing messages, and just all types of people would begin to call. And I found myself praying on the phone for people and encouraging this one, and encouraging that one, [praying for] that student to make it through financial aid the next day. And I began to see the purpose and the reason for it. You know, it's not for popularity or to have your ego, you know. It's just to really spread the goodness of Jesus Christ.⁹

Aunt Pauline Wells of WEBB-FM, who counsels on the phone and provides a number of services for the community, is known as "the people's friend" throughout Baltimore. Apparently, she and other announcers like her are who the Christianaires had in mind when they recorded this verse of "Radio Angels":

They listen to your problems;
 They share in your grief.
 Sometimes when you call them up,
 They shed tears that you can't see.
 And for you, they're on the radio,
 Through the thick and thin.
 And in them, you'll always have
 A real, true friend.¹⁰

The majority of announcers I have analyzed on radio speak words of a spiritual nature as they introduce songs, segue from one song to another, or come to the end of a recording. These words can run the gamut from Scriptural references to exempla, from homilies to the lyrics of songs. While this practice of using inspirational words is fairly widespread, particularly among the majority who view their work as a "ministry," there are those announcers who cannot or do not use inspirational phrases. There are, for example, those who work on public radio stations and are constrained to maintain the "separation of church and state."

One particularly noteworthy case is that of WDTR-FM, Detroit. During the 1980's, two persons who presented gospel on that station incurred the wrath of "media watchers" who protested their "churchy" references -- "Pull

over to the side of the road and put your shouting shoes on" and "Come on, children, and praise the Lord!" -- on this public schools' station. Even though I was never a member of their staff, I myself was cited in a larger lawsuit against WDTR for having said during the course of an interview that "gospel is the good news of Jesus Christ." When the suit was eventually dropped, the Board of Education decided that gospel could still be presented on the station, but only as an "artform," not as religious music.

The replacement for these "churchy" programs previously on WDTR has been Tim Smith's "Musical Reflections" during which he presents gospel music as a cultural form with a range of textures and sounds. No references are made to salvation, sin, or related matters unless they occur in the titles of songs or the artists sing those words on the recordings. Missionary Maggie Whaley of WDCU-FM, Washington, DC, operates under similar constraints on her public station as do many others in analogous situations.

Record promoter Dan Underwood happily services announcers such as Smith, Whaley, and WQBH's "Cosmic Angels" because, in his estimation, their programs, with straight musical segments, present more music in two hours than many standard gospel programs offer in several days. The promoters' euphoria over such interrupted blocks is tempered, however, by the fact that the majority of announcers still feel comfortable with and compelled to

enhance the message of the music with their own words. For this larger group, their aspiration is to be viewed as having served their listeners. As Al "The Bishop" Hobbs explained during his twentieth anniversary celebration: "I can only hope and pray that through the Lord's will, He has given us an opportunity to serve, put something on the turntable or maybe say something that comforted your heart." That, in essence, is one of the key roles of the gospel announcer.

The Gospel Announcer: Recreating the Church Experience

Without question, gospel announcers often offer their audiences inspirational words in homilies, poems, and other pithy sayings which are in no way "churchy." However, because of the music they introduce, some of the idiomatic and ritualistic words they speak, and the behaviors they display, gospel announcers can help to replicate the essence of the Black church experience on their broadcasts as well as in the live concert setting. The efforts to transform secular venues into sacred spaces can be made by gospel announcers whenever they are outside of the sanctuary proper and can occur on both the physical and metaphysical levels.

This concept of transformation is by no means limited to the work done by gospel announcers or other African American religious performers. Transformation can, in fact, occur whenever and wherever any group of people are gathered

and incongruities arise between a ritual and its meaning. Underlying any successful transformation is a belief system shared by the participants. By taking part in the ritual, the individuals affirm together: "Let us believe" that this combination of action and words means a certain thing and can bring about particular desired results (Kapferer 5,9).

A transformation can occur outside the "traditional setting" for a given ritual because words are spoken and actions are taken that are deemed meaningful and critical to the ritual in question. Those seeking to bring about a transformation must be knowledgeable regarding the manner in which certain words, songs and movements can be organized in order to achieve a desired end. These arranged elements, then, become special, venerated, even holy, not because of what they denote by themselves, but because of what they symbolize. At the center of transformation is the concept of cultural immersion; anyone who would be an agent of transformation must know which symbols the community (religious, ethnic, etc.) values and utilize those symbols during the ritual no matter where it is enacted (Santino 121).

The transformation of physical space, items, and even personae within sacred contexts is as old as religion itself. In the Old Testament under Mosaic law, the Hebrews sacrificed rams, sheep, vegetables, etc., believing that they could secure God's peace, blessings, or forgiveness as

well as express their gratitude through these practices (Unger 945). During Roman Catholic communion services, the faithful believe that "transubstantiation" occurs; that is, after prayer, "the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, are contained `truly, really, and substantially in the sacrament of the most holy eucharist'" (Unger 667).

There is compelling evidence that the Christianized African slaves were involved in several different transformations as they tried to establish harmony between their world view and the European American world into which they were thrust. These practices included the ring shout, during which the dancers often "became" triumphant Biblical characters; and meeting in "hush harbors" where the slaves could do the shouting and moaning they viewed as essential to receiving their spiritual salvation. Critical to these transformations was their shared belief that those grounds could be hallowed and used for praising God. The second underlying belief was that the songs, prayers, sermons and ring shouts could in fact aid them in creating a worship experience that was passionate, evocative and meaningful (Levine 3-5, 38-41).

Though hush harbors and ring shouts have disappeared, transformation of personae remains a part of today's Black church. The individual who works as a factory worker or maid during the week can also be a revered preacher,

evangelist or singer with far more status on Sunday than he or she could dream of in daily life. The potential for social structures to be altered exists if the performers (preacher, singer, etc.) have the ability to satisfy audiences. Proficiency in the performance arena transforms the performers by bestowing upon them both prestige and control -- prestige because of the demonstration of competence, and control because the course of the communication interaction is in their hands (Bauman 44).

Because all of gospel music's roots include "the tendency to ritualize," to borrow a phrase from Jack Santino, it is logical that the concept of transformation is a significant aspect of the gospel music tradition, beginning with the spatial dimension. No matter where gospel performances are held, gospel music is treated as an aspect of worship with such words as "service" taking precedence over labels like "concert." The former is where one goes to worship God while the latter is geared toward entertainment (Burnim 127-128). Evidence to support this assertion can be found throughout the gospel music community. Each year, for example, Chene Park, the site at which the McDonald's/MSU Museum GospelFest is held, becomes transformed, in the minds of many attendees and participants, from an amphitheater to a sanctuary in which singing, clapping, and even shouting are expected and welcomed. During a service in that site, Evangelist Shirley

Caesar saw a man smoking a cigarette. She went to the "transgressor," took the offending object from his mouth, and explained that we were in church (despite her salary of \$6500 for that evening.)

More often than not, on any given radio broadcast or within any given concert setting, those announcers who have been "schooled" in the gospel music tradition are, in fact, capable of transforming and are often expected to transform these unlikely venues into "church" by utilizing the rhetoric and rituals that are intrinsic to the traditional African American worship. In effect, gospel announcers can figuratively "transport" audiences from an outdoor amphitheater, their living rooms, or institutions of confinement into the spiritual-emotional-cultural place where gospel music was born: the Black church. This transformational ability is important to a wide range of individuals, including those preparing to attend church (or those just leaving), the sick and shut-in who are unable to attend religious services, and those whose enjoyment of gospel music is heightened by a "church" environment, albeit a "simulated" one.

The transformation is possible, not only because of the manner in which the announcers organize their words and music, but also because of their status within the gospel music community which is the result of the competence they display in performance. Charles Keil fosters our

understanding of the place gospel announcers hold within the African American community, and hence their ability to function as "spatial transformers," through his explanation of the "special domain" in which Black culture has most clearly demonstrated its strength, independence, and viability.

This domain or sphere of interest may be broadly defined as entertainment from the White or public point of view and as ritual, drama, or dialectical catharsis from the Negro or theoretical standpoint. By this I mean that certain Negro performances, called "entertaining" by Negroes and Whites alike, have an added but usually unconscious ritual significance to Negroes. The ritualists I have in mind are singers, musicians, preachers, comedians, disc jockeys, some athletes, and perhaps a few Negro novelists as well (Keil 15).

Many of the competent, highly-regarded Black gospel announcers are, in fact, creative ritualists in that they convert what is primarily considered an entertainment vehicle, i.e., a music program hosted by a DJ, into a channel for spiritual exchange and uplift -- all while developing a compelling persona that constantly draws the listener back. Critical to this process is the "communication of sincerity" which gospel announcers, like their singing counterparts, must do in order for knowledgeable Black listeners to find their presentations "convincing."¹¹

When gospel announcers work on radio, this "communication of sincerity" can mean synchronizing a number

of elements in order to impart their involvement in the music, in Christ, and in the radio ministry. Often what gospel announcers do in this regard is borrow from and adapt many of the basic elements of the "archetypal service" found within the Black church. Those elements include:

Devotional Service -- an opening song, Scripture reading, requests for prayer, prayer, song service, and testimony;

The Service of the Word -- offering, choir selection(s), sermon, and altar call; and the Closing -- announcements and recognition of visitors, benediction and dismissal.

Paris calls the song and testimony services, the sermon, and the altar call the "major subsegments" of the service (Paris 54).

The subsegments or any part of the larger service can be recreated in any number of ways and for various reasons. Some announcers, for example, deliberately construct their programs so that a "transitional" worship experience is formulated. For instance, Hobbs, who created the gospel programming over which Poindexter serves as host on WTLC, Indianapolis, said he "targeted the morning show to predominately set the stage for the worship experience, so that show tends to be more traditional...more churchy" than the more "experimental" and eclectic show he hosted called "Love Express."¹² Poindexter's Sunday morning program, like Mother Mattie Davis' in Muskegon, Michigan, and many others around the country, features various segments that

replicate various aspects of the traditional worship service -- prayer, meditation, announcements, messages of encouragement -- all wrapped around the music. This helps to reinforce her program as one grounded in the principles of Black worship. (See Chapter 5 for a detailed discussion of Poindexter's program.)

Any number of announcers have "prayer warriors" or prayer counselors who work with them on their broadcasts. Their charge is to record the names of those who call in and request prayer and to pray with and for them, often on the air. This aspect is crucial on some programs, and phone calls can number higher than 1000 during a typical Sunday for popular announcers like Poindexter. The role of prayer counselor/warrior has also been a stepping stone to a spot as a gospel announcer for any number of individuals, including Poindexter and the late Jean Reed in Detroit.

Spencer J., "The Gospel DJ," on WCHB, Detroit, plays pre-recorded prayers by renowned ministers at the beginning of his program called "The Gospel Jubilee," while several announcers play excerpts from long sermons or complete short sermons during their broadcasts. The announcers usually help to further contextualize these recordings by supplying the appropriate rhetoric ("We're about to hear a word from heaven" or "Children, it's time to approach the throne of grace") before and after these prayers are played.

On the other hand, other announcers, such as Missionary

Maggie Whaley, are restricted from using expressly spiritual language on public broadcast outlets and circumvent this edict by constructing their shows according to "the order of service" found in many churches. In these instances, the lyrics of the songs do the speaking while the sequential order underlines the "churchiness" of the content. Whaley expressed great pleasure during our interview in having found a way to work within the system and yet communicate the "good news." She is one who deliberately selects songs which embody the words associated with the order of worship and plays them in succession: an opening or theme song first, an invitational-type song next, a praise and testimonial segment after that, several records that convey the "message" for the day followed by an "invitational" song, and finally a musical piece which serves as her benediction or "sign-off" piece.

Though Whaley follows this format most Sundays, at least once a month, she uses a thematic approach, centering all of the music for the day around one particular topic. In that way, her listeners get a full "sermon" while enjoying the music.¹³ Still other announcers have been known to "get happy" during the course of the program; some have even been known to become so overcome by the Spirit that they are unable to speak or move on to the next portion of the program.¹⁴

Juandolyn Stokes in Atlanta, who often programs her

music thematically, adds the element of religious ecstasy to her program through utilizing another method. That is, Juandolyn often plays what she calls the "shout mix," during which she combines the "shouting part" of recordings by anywhere from five to ten different artists, such as Twinkie Clark ("Can I preach?"), Karen Clark, and Ricky Dillard. Her audience is then allowed to experience one of the highly spiritual and emotionally dynamic moments of worship which, depending upon how "tuned in" the listeners are, can be a most evocative episode, even if they are at home. The last hour of Juandolyn's show is dedicated to worship and praise music, which she describes as "music that ministers to the heart."¹⁵

One of the ways in which gospel announcers demonstrate their ability to perform as "creative ritualists" comes through having to work around the constraints of the medium of radio. There is no live audience to "respond" to their "call." Because they have no control over the listener's physical setting, they cannot diminish those elements which distract the listeners and diminish their concentration. Most importantly, there is usually no getting around commercial announcements on commercial stations unless the announcers are like Martha Jean "The Queen" and can literally ban them during certain time periods. Within the live concert setting, "time" is often more flexible. While no artist can sing indefinitely, a twenty-minute performance

which runs longer can usually be acceptable if the spirit is "high" and the audience and performer are involved in a mutually satisfying exchange. However on radio, "church," or whatever other kind of ambience the announcer tries to create, must be wrapped around considerations for the total length of the program, the programming that follows, and the number of other basic responsibilities which must be executed. These duties include but are not limited to taking various meter readings, getting weather information and passing it on to listeners, selecting and presenting appropriate public service and/or church announcements.

Many effective gospel announcers display their understanding of Black culture by incorporating their knowledge of music, musicians, and community events into the program as would any effective secular announcer. But, their incorporation of the rituals found within the traditional Black worship, especially the Black preaching tradition, usually includes interspersing Biblical references while introducing or making a segue between records. Other devices assist the gospel announcer in bridging the gap between radio entertainment and religious worship.

Many of the announcers often borrow from the pulpit or from other parts of the church's extended membership family in choosing their radio names. "Brother," "Sister," "Deacon," "Reverend," "Bishop," "Evangelist" and "Mother"

are among the appellations heard in gospel radio. These, too, can contribute to the "transformational process." If, for example, "Brother" Coachman is on WDET-FM, the National Public Radio affiliate in Detroit, it must be time for the listeners to have "church," especially since his audience knows that when he uses his given name, Famous Coachman, his musical repertoire consists of the blues. Certainly, in this case, the name helps signal the change from secular to sacred announcer. When Spencer J. says, "Turn me up; I'm having church," his seasoned Black audience knows that he is referring not only to the music mix, which certainly must be satisfying to his listeners, but to what Burnim calls the spiritual "aliveness" he feels he is generating through incorporating the right words, Scripture, pacing, and worship elements -- the same fundamentals which concern the Black preacher (Burnim 1985: 159).

Apparently, Spencer J. and other gospel announcers have been very successful in "transforming" the airwaves. Gary Crossland, president of SOMA Communications, which publishes Tri-S Spot/Light a Christian radio magazine, has researched the role religious radio plays in the lives of some of its many listeners. In an article published in Billboard October 8, 1988, he concludes that: "About half of the people listening do not belong to a congregation, so religious radio has become, in effect, their own private church" (G-13). It could not be so unless "church" was

being recreated in a manner that meets the needs of the listener. For the sick and shut-in, the recreation of church allows them to take part in the service they cannot attend because of their confinement. For those who are preparing to go to a worship service or want to relive the church ambience they recently enjoyed, the framing of a gospel radio program or live event as a church event means they can move easily from one such experience to another. And for those who are uncomfortable with the concept of gospel music as "cultural artform" or "marketable commodity," the spatial transformation allows them to encounter the music in a simulation of its original creative context for gospel music.

Within the live concert setting as well as on radio programs, one of the most frequently-heard metanarrative remarks made by gospel announcers and other speakers refers to "having church." This can be interjected at the point where the culturally-appropriate text, coupled with the correct music, generates the spiritual intensity that indexes the traditional Black church experience. Or, as we would say in church, it happens "when everyone gets on one accord." On radio, the announcers have to judge for themselves when that point has been reached. Once they feel that moment has arrived, many announcers have been known to utilize solicitational frames that encourage their listeners to perform in a manner that suggests "church."

But not every gospel announcer desires to replicate church on radio. Just as gospel music incorporates a range of styles, gospel announcers seek to give their audiences a variety of presentations. Darryl Ford, whom all of my Detroit feedback respondents named the best they have ever heard, presents a program that has the energy of urban contemporary radio, the smoothness of jazz radio, with the best in gospel music at its center. He has been known to pray for listeners, he always injects Bible-related principles during his introductions and exits from songs, and he insists on playing music that is both Scripturally and technically sound. And yet his mastery of the mechanical demands of announcing are such that he has even come to the attention of the city's top secular station. With all of these elements and a baritone voice that was destined for broadcasting, Ford has amassed a large, loyal following that expects, not so much to have church, but to be spiritually encouraged and energized. Every evening, he delivers just that.

In New Jersey, Darren Greggs, known as "D-Rock," uses a fast-paced delivery compatible with the music he plays as host of "The Power Plant," which centers on gospel rap music. Greggs often selects songs with texts taken straight from the Bible, but on first listen, his show is far from reminiscent of Sunday morning church. In Lansing, Michigan, Duvalé Murchison's style reflects his previous work as an

urban contemporary DJ, and though his program is filled with references to Jesus Christ, Scripture, and other spiritually-relevant topics, it is not "church" as found on Poindexter or Spencer J.'s programs. He has recently launched a program called "Def Praise Urban Gospel Showcase" which is currently airing in Chicago, IL; Rochester, NY; and Meridian, MS. All of the music is gospel rap, but, as the title suggests, it is still centered on praise.

Even Martha Jean "The Queen," who advocates more music-centered programming, has inadvertently set up her "Inspiration Time" in a way that reflects worship segments. The term "inadvertent" is appropriate here since during our interview, she explained that she had never consciously set her program up in such a manner that, as in church, the sermon is the high point of the event. It was simply what God led her to do, and she followed the directive. Interestingly, Steinberg, who pastors the Home of Love in Detroit, made this programming adjustment years before she accepted her call to the ministry.¹⁶ More than a third of her three-hour program (11 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.) is devoted to uninterrupted music. From 11 a.m. until noon, the only "speeches" are those that are heard on her pre-recorded commercials and "drop-in's" which are short messages with the station's call letters, the name of the program, and/or the name of the program segment ("Salute to All Men," "Quartet Time," for example). However, when the time comes

for her widely-revered inspirational message, the reverse occurs, and the music ceases until she is finished speaking.

At noon, most of Detroit knows they can tune in and hear one of the hallmarks of her show: The Reverend James Cleveland's version of "Without A Song," interspersed with The Queen's verbal "responses" to his lyrical "calls." (For example, Cleveland, along with the Cleveland Singers, introduces the first line, "Without a song, the day would never end." The Queen responds during the instrumental passage, "For the troubled today...reach up and touch your song.") The interchange, which she has featured for more than two decades, is so well known in the Motor City that citizens use it as a "time" marker, cartoonists have incorporated it in their locally-based strips, and Stevie Wonder, during memorial services for Rev. Cleveland, cited it as having helped him to weather a variety of storms during his youth.

The "Without A Song" theme actually introduces more uninterrupted music, but this time all of the songs revolve around praising God for His goodness and mercy. Together, they serve the same function as the "pre-sermon hymn" in Sunday morning worship, although in this case, as many as five songs pave the way for the "spoken word." The Queen's message for the day runs without musical interruption for approximately twenty to thirty minutes. During it, "The Queen" applies Biblical principles to any number of ills and

concerns affecting Detroit in general and the African American community in particular, from drugs and male/female relationships to impending elections and legislation.

Even the "jingle" that is sandwiched between the message and the commercial that follows on its heels is different in tone and tenor from the other jingles played on her program. A male announcer's voice quietly intones: "And now, a special touch from the Queen." What makes it "special" is that the Queen presents the commercial "live" and often speaks with the sponsor for several minutes by telephone. It is "special" because it is positioned next to "the message," the most distinguishable feature of her show.

Once the commercials and public service announcements are over (including "goodwill announcements" regarding funeral arrangements for members of the community who have recently died, someone's search for a lost relative, etc.), the balance of the program is given over to telephone calls from listeners, some of whom call seeking advice, others of whom call to give "praise and progress reports" (testify) about some area of their lives in which they have applied the Queen's teachings and been successful. Though the church-like design of "Inspiration Time" may have been created unconsciously, the result is that the Queen's program, like that of almost every other gospel radio program that has been analyzed for this study, mirrors aspects of the Black worship experience.

It is critical to underline several key points. First, for many announcers, their replication of the worship environment is due to the evocative nature of the gospel music the announcers play, the rhetoric surrounding it, and gospel's connection to Black worship. Second, the "experience" that many announcers seek to create is a spiritual one, but it is not, however, always the highly emotional "church" that some believe is universally and continuously the African American worship experience. Rather, it can reflect the "peaks" and "valleys" that mark the services as well as the range of spiritual approaches found within the Black religious community that includes Black Catholics, Baptists, Pentecostals, Spiritualists, Lutherans, and a host of others. Because an extensive analysis of several announcers within live settings is given in the next chapter, complete with an examination of attire, kinetics, and vocal techniques, it is sufficient to conclude here that through a variety of words and behaviors, the gospel announcer, both on radio and in the interactive setting, can and often does replicate elements of the Black church experience.

The Gospel Announcer: Concert Host and Facilitator

Gospel announcers often achieve status and name recognition within the Black church community because of the skills they have demonstrated and their connection to the

medium of radio. Consequently, they are frequently invited to emcee in contexts that can range from church musicals to concerts held in civic arenas, from banquets to various annual church events (anniversaries, "Men's Days," "Women's Days") and even roller skating parties during which patrons skate to gospel music during designated hours. If the announcer has been invited to serve as the emcee, particularly in the relaxed setting of an "A & B program" (several groups are invited to sing two selections, hence the term "A & B"), he or she finds that the job usually requires handling several duties as described by folklorist and ethnomusicologist Ray Allen:

The emcee's role is not only to announce each group, but also to help the sponsor in ordering the program, to see that each group is present and ready to go on at the appropriate time, to acknowledge distinguished guests, and to keep the audience's attention between groups with stories, jokes, and announcements. Like the devotional leader, the emcee reminds the audience of the spiritual nature of the event and praises and chastises them depending on the extent to which they are participating in the service (87).

Embodied in this description is perhaps the single most difficult and thankless task announcers can undertake: serving as facilitator, raconteur, and energizing catalyst during a live event. Certain social skills and personal characteristics are a definite asset for this aspect of being a gospel announcer. A sense of humor, or at least a pleasant and easy-going manner, is essential in order to

deftly handle the various surprises, delays, and miscues that inevitably arise. It is important for the announcer to have a sense of decorum, so that he or she can prioritize the various notes that are often passed to the front to have dignitaries acknowledged, announcements made, etc. The skill rests in being able to read these announcements without disturbing the general "feel" of the event, without "killing the Spirit" (if it is a highly-Spirited program) and without offending the sensibilities of the audience members.

Bertha Harris and Tim Smith, two of the gospel announcers who served as feedback respondents for this study, agreed that a key ingredient for success in the live arena is a developed instinct for knowing which performance style is appropriate for the audience, occasion, the particular point in the concert, etc. Smith summarized it this way:

Go with the flow. If you're really in tune to what you're doing, you can feed off of the flow of the audience. You know when to come in with a "HUMMM" [he simulates a vocable used by traditional preachers] and when to go to the next song or the next artist.¹⁷

Harris continued with this thought:

And a lot of times, they [announcers] waste time trying to project something onto the audience that's not there. You know you aren't going to a Catholic Church stomping, hollering and going on. If they invite you to a Catholic Church, you go on in and act Catholic. You don't have to be phony, but

you go with the flow...They go in for a quick service. They aren't used to staying there all day. Now, you go to a Pentecostal, then you, there ain't no use in you trying to rush them....¹⁸

A central point in each of their statements is that not every audience or every occasion requires a high-ecstasy performance from the announcer. Different performances are perceived as spiritual and enjoyable by various audiences on distinct occasions. The astute gospel announcer (just like the perceptive gospel singer) must learn to "monitor and adjust." This phrase is used by Brooksie Harrington to describe the way in which Evangelist Shirley Caesar has been known to completely revamp her presentation of gospel songs according to what she perceives to be the involvement, temperament and need of a particular audience (Harrington 86).

If the announcer is the emcee of a service where "church" is warranted and desired, it is part of the job requirement to facilitate that atmosphere whether the event is transpiring in an outdoor amphitheater or an indoor civic arena. Unlike the radio broadcast, here, the announcer is placed within an interactive setting and can, therefore, know that "church" has been satisfactorily recreated by the behavior of the audience, by the extent to which they respond to the performers and to solicitational frames, that is, to the exhortations to clap, answer back, dance, etc. While some announcers are like Caesar in that they can

monitor, adjust, and deliver according to the dictates of the service, there are others who may be incapable or unwilling to make such adjustments. I, for example, am incapable of producing traditional preacher-like tones, and though I am comfortable taking part in a service where members of the audience have begun to shout (to achieve altered states of consciousness), I sometimes turn the service over to one of my preacher/colleagues at that point so that his or her delivery can help enhance the environment that has been created. At other times, I make comments that I feel are pertinent and meaningful in my own delivery style. Normally, I am asked to host concerts where my "personal best" can be utilized. I have been told that my forte is in being "smooth," being able to introduce groups succinctly, interject appropriate quotations, Scriptures, history, and humor, and to do so in a timely yet seemingly unhurried manner.

What is important to note is that just as there are different styles of gospel music, there are various gospel announcers whose performance styles can make (or break) the occasion. Savvy promoters select emcees based on their performance styles as well as for whatever ability they may have to draw audiences. Even with the best possible planning and the best intentions of the announcer and the program coordinator, it is just a rule that not everybody will be pleased with the emcee who has been chosen. During

the Hobbs' anniversary, for example, which is extensively analyzed in Chapter 5, many members of the audience found Delores "Sugar" Poindexter to be most capable as she hosted the non-musical tributes and then endeavored to re-energize the audience for the musical performances. Several of the feedback respondents commented on the empathy she showed for the audience which had been sitting for five hours by the time the last artist was introduced.

Performing within the live concert setting is a difficult task; therefore, some of my colleagues do not accept invitations to serve as emcees in such arenas. However, an announcer who deftly uses the various skills required is generally rewarded with spontaneous audience approval, compliments following the service, and, of course, invitations to function in that role again.

The Gospel Announcer: Link Between Advertisers and African American Consumers

Though the previous roles assumed by gospel announcers center on cultural and spiritual concerns, this fifth area of responsibility is connected to fiscal matters. Namely, gospel announcers often serve as credible links between the African American community and the advertisers who are the welcome and necessary underwriters for gospel music programming. A review of the existing literature reveals that gospel announcers and their programs have historically

served as a bridge between consumers and advertisers in their broadcast area.

From the earliest days of Black religious music on radio, have been local business owners who recognize that one path to reaching loyal segments of the African American community was through sponsoring sacred music programs. Because of the funding from mortuaries and other community-based advertisers, local and regional jubilee quartets were presented on radio which, in turn, led to a wider audience for gospel music (Lornell 22). Later as gospel became the "backbone" of Black radio in the 1940's and 1950's, radio stations generally found there was more than an adequate number of advertisers, generally locally-based merchants, willing to align themselves with the programs. In the August 24, 1953 Sponsor article entitled "Negro Radio: Keystone of Community Life," one Black radio consultant warned that there was a glut of gospel-and-blues programming "in terms of attracting new listeners to Negro-appeal stations and to advertiser's commercials" (80).

The advertisers supported gospel because it was one of the two musical forms Black audiences most wanted to hear. Ratings reflected that, at the time, "The Bible and the Blues" was the programming many listeners preferred. Several surveys conducted within the Black community also confirmed spiritual music and blues as the overwhelmingly popular choices. For example, in that same August 24, 1953

issue of Sponsor, it was reported that 736 of the two thousand Black families surveyed in the Winston-Salem area for WAAA-AM mentioned spiritual music as their first preference. In 1951, the year the survey was conducted, gospel was favored almost two to one over blues which was the second choice, and more than three to one over soap operas which came in third with 212 responses. In New York, a Pulse survey showed "that programs like "Morning Spirituals" with 'Doc' Wheeler had a higher Negro listening audience than such top network shows as "Don McNeil's Breakfast Club," "My True Story," "Martha Deane," and "When a Girl Marries" (72, 78-79).

Today, gospel, like its secular counterpart, urban contemporary, is a serious and often dominant force in many major markets, particularly in the South where some gospel stations have a market share of 12 (out of a possible 100), which is exceptional when one considers that there can be from several to more than several dozen stations in a given broadcast area. Though gospel does well in other regions, it generally does not usually rank as highly in most parts of the Midwest and North, according to Gary Crossland, president of SOMA Communications, which publishes Tri-S Spot/Light, a Christian radio magazine.¹⁹

Those who listen to gospel radio today, however, appear to be as loyal as audiences were forty years ago. The August 24, 1953 Sponsor revealed in a published survey

called "Negro Radio Results" that local advertisers were more than happy with the results they got from their association with various Black programs, and the magazine cited several gospel and "spiritual" shows among the ones that had been most profitable for them (74-5).

The Paradise Park Development Company in the Decatur-Atlanta area, for example, described the response to the advertising they had done on WEAS-AM's "Echoes of Zion" show, as "astounding." The spokesman continued: "In the past we have used every medium known in advertising, including direct mail...We have obtained as good if not better results at a far less cost in outlay...." And that was achieved through the use of a fifteen-minute (12:15 - 12:30 p.m.) Sunday program. Quaker Oats' Aunt Jemima Self-Rising Flour, which was advertised exclusively in New York on WWRL-FM's "Dr. Jive" and "Doc Wheeler" shows, moved from third to first place among Black consumers in that city (75).

According to Sponsor in that same August, 1953 issue, the key in these and many other cases seemed to be that the disc jockeys produced commercials in their own words based on fact sheets furnished by the client (77). It was very likely that Black audiences of this period, the late 1940's - 1960's, would follow the urging of Black disc jockeys to buy certain products since these announcers were, in Gilbert Williams' words, "cultural heroes," esteemed by the

community for playing the music people wanted to hear, using the idiomatic expressions of the community, and being on the "hot" medium of radio (82-85).

Many of them were able to apply their verbal skills, powers of persuasion, and popularity into sales for their advertisers. Sponsor's August, 1953 research results, which were groundbreaking at the time, also produced several axioms for those choosing to advertise with Black audiences: stereotyped or second-rate products do not sell, commercials receive the strongest responses when performed by Black artists while attempts by others to produce "authentic" Black speech generally fall flat. Number six on the list of eight items was the fact that gospel and homemaker programs reached more Black women than "jive" and other music shows (75-78).

Based on the observations I have made and the interviews I have done with gospel announcers, I can attest that the endorsements of these announcers still bring African American consumers and sponsors together. In Detroit, for instance, many gospel fans remember fondly the late Charles Pennington and the commercial he wrote for the Lewis Exterminating Company with the infamous line: "Roaches here, roaches there, nasty roaches running everywhere." More recently, gospel announcer Reverend Wilmore Allen, who died in 1993, became a hit with Detroit children because of the witty verse he wrote in order to

advertise for the same exterminating company: "Roaches in your bed, roaches on your head...." The children were so amused by the images that he was invited to several elementary schools to recite his poem/commercial. More important, however, at least as far as the company was concerned, was the success the commercial had with adults. A self-described "country preacher," Allen reported being paid extra by the advertiser because of the impact of the spot and being told by company officials, "Man, listen. We haven't killed so many roaches ever in our life."²⁰

In Arizona, Ruby "Soul" Stuart, like both Pennington and Allen, has a brokerage agreement with the station and has to solicit her own sponsors, so her feedback from advertisers is probably more immediate than that received by announcers who are station employees. The Arkansas-born social worker, who returned to school when she was in her late thirties to earn a college degree, is often criticized by some in her community because of her grammar and way of speaking:

You have some people that are very critical of me because I talks kind of flat and country because I am country. I came from the country. I was born in it, and reared in it, and went to high school and went to college in Arkansas...²¹

But apparently her "country" manner works for her, the majority of her audience, and her sponsors. The advertisers assure her that her sincerity and candor shine through the

commercials, all of which she writes herself. Stuart quotes them as saying: "When you tell 'em in your country drawl, they hear you, you know what I mean?" As for the criticisms, she responds: "I don't worry about it because I pay the bill."²²

The forty gospel announcers I have interviewed have performance styles that run the gamut from the self-described "country" manner of some to the urbane, sophisticated personas of others. The fact that almost all of them can attract some advertising dollars is evidence that sponsors buy gospel programs with various formats and presentational styles in order to attract different segments of the population. As Detroit announcer Bertha Harris has succinctly put it: "Every announcer has an audience. I believe that's just the way God arranged it." So, even if a given announcer's style annoys some listeners, there are always others who listen, enjoy the program and generally find that announcer credible. Those fans, in turn, are more likely to pay attention to a product which that announcer endorses and to consider buying it, just as was the case in the Sponsor survey of 1953.

The testimonials I solicited from two entrepreneurs in Detroit suggest that strong advertising sales and tie-in's with gospel programming can still go hand in hand, even in 1994. Both George Cosby of Cosby Insurance and Larry Robinson of God's World Records are "advertising partners"

on "The Gospel Connection," the daily, 7 - 9 p.m. program hosted by Darryl Ford on Detroit's WMUZ-FM. The policy on Crawford Broadcast Stations, including WMUZ, provides for a live endorsement to be given by the announcer following virtually every produced, pre-recorded commercial. Though a fact sheet is provided, the understanding is that Darryl, like the other Crawford announcers, has met with the sponsors and used their products or services, and can, therefore, enhance the written text with his own heartfelt words of support. WMUZ is unique in the Detroit market with their "rolling" endorsements. Some of Darryl's listeners recently complained to one of our colleagues that the endorsements "got on their nerves" since they feel the produced spots on his show are sufficient without his commentary. But Darryl says:

I feel as if I work for the station and for the sponsor. Knowing that the station has qualified its advertisers [checked their veracity and quality] and hearing positive reports from listeners who have tried the products makes me feel good about making further recommendations to my listeners!²³

Cosby says that the "integrity, credibility, and trust" which Darryl brings to the program has led to a "greater response" than he has gotten from any other medium he's tried. In fact, he believes that TV and print have only given him one percent of the response he has gotten from

"Gospel Connection" listeners under Darryl and under its initial host, Marvin Winans of the famed gospel singing group, The Winans. "Many times, callers seem proud to say that they heard about me on Darryl's program," said Cosby. "As the program's audience has grown, my sales have also increased."²⁴

Larry Robinson, who characterizes Detroit as being very limited in its selection of gospel programming, says that his record sales have been positively affected by the advertising he has placed on "The Gospel Connection." "Those who listen to a gospel program are, of course, my potential customers for buying the records." However, his efforts to sell concert tickets through the same program have had mixed results.

If I am promoting an artist that Darryl's audience wants to see, and if the timing is good, I can do well because his audience is large and pays attention to concert advertising. However, if I bring in someone his audience doesn't like, or if the timing is off, I won't be able to move tickets, even if Darryl is the host.²⁵

Certain announcers, he opined, have audiences who are almost "cult-like" in their devotion. Whatever that announcer endorses or sponsors, their loyal crowd will purchase or attend, even if they have to clear their calendars to do so. Darryl's audience, which he described as a "thinking audience," listens to his endorsements, and then responds according to the other demands in their lives. "Darryl's

audience admires Darryl and likes his program, but he is not the only factor affecting their decisions."

What Robinson's and Crosby's statements suggest is that the announcer's ability and credibility can positively affect sales, but there are, as in other areas of media, other elements that can have a bearing on the customer's resolution to make a purchase. Interestingly enough, Robinson also buys secular radio as well as some print when he promotes a concert in a venue with more than two thousand seats. Unlike gospel recordings, he says, "Gospel concerts are viewed [by those outside the church community] as entertainment, and it takes more than gospel radio in this market to sell out a major concert site."²⁶

Certainly, one story that illustrates the long-lasting connection that can exist between a merchant and gospel radio is that of Joseph "Mr. Paul" Deutch of Detroit's Paul's Cutrate Drugs. Deutch, who has sponsored gospel radio for sixty years, attributes his longevity to several factors. Gospel programming brings him in contact with the African American community that appreciates the time-honored remedies and herbs he carries. It is the format through which he and his late brother, the original "Mr. Paul," entered Black radio. Additionally, it allows him to dispense the Scriptures, homilies, and a little of the gospel music he himself has come to embrace over the years. His business has flourished, and he, in turn, supports the

programming (specifically Martha Jean "The Queen's" show these days) which has brought him success and legendary status within the Black community.

And that, in fact, seems to be what brings advertisers and gospel announcers together: the ability of the announcers and their programs to successfully deliver African American consumers for the sponsors, a fact that has apparently been made clear to a growing number of national companies who had historically been conspicuous by their absence on "religious" radio. Outright advertising from such companies is still a rarity. However, during the last fifteen years, several national sponsors, including McDonald's, KFC (formerly known as Kentucky Fried Chicken), and Quaker Oats, have realized the viability of creating and underwriting gospel music concerts and competitions in order to increase their visibility among African American audiences. In classic "domino" fashion, the gospel music industry is slowly benefitting from the largesse of these companies and local gospel announcers often find themselves at the center of the activities.

Because of my association with McDonald's as producer of the country's oldest McDonald's GospelFest (now the McDonald's/MSU Museum GospelFest), I was able to successfully land the local McDonald's owners and operators as a sponsor for my radio program during the 1980's even though their general policy is to "pass" on religious radio.

According to William D. "Danny" Howell, a regional marketing director for McDonald's, that corporation's national policy is to avoid any programming that advocates a particular theology or philosophy in order to maintain a mainstream focus and audience. Regional and local policies, however, reflect the company's awareness that large, diverse populations can often be reached through specially designed advertising, public relations, and marketing programs. Cities, such as Los Angeles, with its Hispanic community, and Detroit, with its majority Black base, profit from efforts targeted at special audiences. GospelFest, for example, affords a special opportunity to area McDonald's owners/operators across the country. According to Howell:

[We] offer a venue for expressing what is positive...GospelFest is music. True, it's also 'The Word.' But it's a [gospel] group, a choir, a song...entertainment. And we have the chance to give back to a specific community.²⁷

Other gospel announcers have also been able to capitalize on McDonald's interest in the Black community, and McDonald's has been able to utilize the popularity of local announcers. Al "The Bishop" Hobbs, a popular gospel announcer in Indianapolis, is the producer of the GospelFest in that city. Darryl Ford, by serving as the co-host of Detroit's GospelFest, as well as of the KFC and Quaker Oats' competitions, has enhanced the credibility of all of these events. Also in the Motor City, Martha Jean "The Queen" is

a phenomenally popular announcer whom any number of advertisers have gladly paid as much as \$1000 to make appearances at their stores. The pay-off for the merchants is the fact that hundreds of fans show up early and many of them purchase goods and services while they are in the establishment.

Getting national companies to actually advertise on gospel radio takes more than tightly formatted shows and popular announcers. According to Howell, the research data are often missing. "You [programmers] can't just call up and say you have 100,000 listeners. We need to see the ratings and the demographic breakdown. If it's our audience, we'll consider buying the show."²⁸ Currently, however, few gospel programs and formats have this information. This is due in part to the cost of generating such studies and to the fact that a large number of gospel programs are "owned" by individual announcers, brokers who are used to selling themselves to local merchants based on their role in the community and perceived popularity rather than on research data.

However, those gospel programmers who do have such research information can and often do attract national clients. Burger King approached WTLZ-FM, an urban contemporary station in Saginaw, and specifically asked to be placed in rotation on the 6 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Sunday gospel schedule after seeing the impressive audience the

programming attracts. McDonald's and Saginaw's GM and Ford dealerships also targeted WTLZ's gospel audience. And when US Air bought a commercial schedule on the station, its run included gospel, a major coup considering how the gospel format is still too frequently ignored by such companies.²⁹

Whether the revenues come from local or national advertisers, everyone associated with or interested in gospel radio agrees that their dollars help to keep the programming on the air. Some listeners, however, find great irritation (as listeners of other formats do) in what they feel are the overwhelming numbers of ads. "It's not uncommon for a gospel program to be 60 percent commercials," wrote Heilbut in his controversial book, The Gospel Sound. "But gospel fans are so hungry for their music that they withstand every abuse" (267). Because Heilbut's study has no footnotes or other documentation, it is difficult to systematically challenge his figures. Perhaps, the differences between his and my observations may center on what kinds of gospel programs he analyzed as well as the geographic areas he examined.

Nevertheless, a random survey I made of gospel industry professionals in Detroit revealed that, at least here, the commercial gospel stations run far below the sixty percent figure Heilbut suggested. At WWON-AM, Fenton, Michigan, general manager Joyce Cooper Craig programs seven and one-half minutes of commercials per hour.³⁰ According to

Fatima Boggan, an account executive for WMUZ, a "full" show for Darryl Ford is twenty-six minutes for his two-hour shift, roughly thirteen minutes per hour. (What may make Darryl's show seem more crowded are the aforementioned live endorsements that he must provide with each commercial along with the station's promotional announcements which are also included in the commercial breaks.)³¹ It is possible that Heilbut may have based his perceptions on the brokeraged programs. According to Craig, who used to be the music director at WMKM-AM, Detroit, where brokeraged shows abound, the commercials within and adjacent to such programs were enough to provide "clutter on top of clutter." Because a brokered show belongs to the person buying the time, the station has no control over the number of ads, the quality of the content, or the integrity of the sponsors. Consequently, if a broker virtually sells half or more of his or her time to sponsors, there is very little the station can do (or, at least, has historically done) to control the problem.

"If listeners would educate themselves, they would find that they don't have to put up with an overabundance of commercials or with ads which are offensive and insulting in nature," said Craig. They could get the "clutter" cleared away from these programs, she insists, if they would write a letter, file a grievance, sign a petition, or even make a phone call to complain to station management.³²

The extent to which the presence of advertisers has affected the content and style of gospel programming or even the music itself is not an integral part of this study. However, it is certainly an area that could be considered as further study of gospel music and radio airplay is contemplated. As a fan, I find that the ads sometimes get in the way of my enjoyment of the music. However, when I am behind the broadcast controls, I am constantly aware of being pulled in two directions: I want to play as much music as I can and be as spiritually uplifting as possible without treating the advertisers as if they are intruders. Whether audiences find the "words from our sponsors" irritating or view them as a necessary part of gospel radio, one fact is indisputable: for almost seventy years, local merchants and a growing number of national advertisers have found that one clear road to African American audiences has been through its gospel announcers.

Gospel Announcer: Esteemed Member of the Community

Regardless of whether gospel radio hosts call themselves announcers or disc jockeys, how or whether they are compensated for their on-air work, they are the products of a variety of changes over a number of years. As the main media sources of gospel music, as a source of information about its artists and concerts, and because of their connection to the important mass medium of radio, the

announcers are valued by the community and the recording industry.

Over the years, certain announcers have been viewed as being so pivotal to the success of local gospel music events that promoters have purchased significant commercial time on their radio programs and/or they have contracted those announcers to emcee their events. Frequently, these announcers' names have been featured on the flyers and handbills as prominently as that of the performers. Brother Ed Smith, Executive Director of the Gospel Music Workshop of America, Inc., and a gospel announcer himself on WGPR-FM, Detroit, believes that this "power" peaked in the 1970's, but insists that a number of gospel announcers still have significant influence over their loyal listeners. "There are powerful announcers whom you'd dare not pass by if you are a concert promoter and intend on having a fighting chance at success, people like Esmond Patterson in Atlanta, Georgia; Clarence Kilcrease in Nashville, Martha Jean 'The Queen,' in Detroit."³³

Though not every gospel announcer wields this kind of influence, the announcers are almost always afforded a degree of status and privilege, based on their affiliation with the medium of radio, with gospel music and its "stars." Complimentary tickets to concerts, front-row seats, invitations to catered receptions and "showcases" for gospel recording artists are just a few of the "perks" that are

frequently enjoyed by these individuals who are so important to the process of disseminating gospel music.

During our 1991 interview, Poindexter summarized her perception of the place the gospel announcer holds within the Black religious world:

We are the number one people in the gospel community after the preacher. The preacher is always gonna be head because God called the preacher to preach, but he also called us to minister. And our ministering to this community can assist the pastor in such a great way.³⁴

Though Poindexter's statement might be subject to debate, it is clear that the work of gospel announcers -- playing gospel music on radio, hosting concerts, linking consumers and advertisers, bringing "church" to unlikely settings, and encouraging audiences -- is deemed vital by many. Because of their impact on the African American community, particularly on those who are gospel music adherents, gospel announcers are afforded a much-deserved place of respect and prestige.

END NOTES

1. Al Hobbs, personal interview, 11 April 1991.
2. Hobbs, 1991.
3. Ruby "Soul" Stuart, personal interview, 14 August 1991.
4. The Christianaires, "Radio Angels" from The Vision Becomes Clearer..., CGI 51416 10002.
5. Underwood, 1993.
6. Steinberg, 1993.
7. Stuart, 1991.
8. Delores "Sugar" Poindexter, personal interview, 1 April 1991.
9. Juandolyn Stokes, personal interview, 14 August 1991.
10. The Christianaires from "Radio Angels."
11. Mellonee Burnim, "Traditional Gospel Music," Class Lecture, October, 1990, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.
12. Hobbs, personal interview, 11 April 1991.
13. Missionary Maggie Whaley, personal interview, 5 February 1993.
14. For a number of reasons -- the inability of the audience to see the announcer and read his or her body language, cynicism regarding religious broadcasters in the wake of the televangelism scandals of the 1980's, and the desire of some listeners for the music without the religious underpinnings -- it remains difficult for some announcers to sound "convincing" as they shout during their broadcasts. Apparently more prevalent in the earlier days of gospel programming, it is less frequently heard today -- to the relief of some and the consternation of others who, for a variety of reasons, want the whole Black church drama played out all of the time.
15. Stokes, 1991.
16. Martha Jean Steinberg, personal interview, 13 October 1993.

17. Tim Smith, feedback interview, 15 February 1994.
18. Bertha Harris, feedback interview, 15 February 1994.
19. Billboard, 8 October 1988,G-10.
20. Rev. Wilmore Allen, personal interview, 19 Sept. 1991.
21. Stuart, 1991.
22. Stuart, August 1991.
23. Darryl Ford, telephone interview, 21 February 1994.
24. George Cosby, telephone interview, 21 February 1994.
25. Larry Robinson, telephone interview, 21 February 1994.
26. Robinson, 1994.
27. William Howell, telephone interview, 22 February 1994.
28. Howell, 1994.
29. Chris Banks, telephone interview, 21 February, 1994.
30. Joyce Cooper Craig, telephone interview, 21 February 1994.
31. Fatima Boggan, telephone interview, 21 February 1994.
32. Craig, 1994.
33. Smith, 1993.
34. Poindexter, 1991.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIV. LIBRARIES



31293010275984

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES
 3 1293 01027 6008

LIBRARY
Michigan State
University

PLACE IN RETURN BOX to remove this checkout from your record.
 TO AVOID FINES return on or before date due.

DATE DUE	DATE DUE	DATE DUE
APR 30 1996 6223767	_____	_____
APR 27 1997 78	_____	_____
DEC 30 1997 11-7840869	_____	_____
FEB 26 2001 6223767	_____	_____
MAR 19 2001 6223767	_____	_____
APR 06 2001 APR 27 2001	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

MSU Is An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Institution

c:\crl\data\due.us.prm3-p.1

CHAPTER V: THE GOSPEL ANNOUNCER IN PERFORMANCE

In 1968, Hoyt W. Fuller, a leading figure in the decade's didactic but influential Black Arts Movement, wrote that Black art worthy of the name should embody a "Black Aesthetic," reflecting the special character and imperatives of black experience" (Fuller 8). Despite the allegations of researchers such as Gunnar Myrdal who insisted that African American culture is "a distorted development or a pathological condition of the general American culture" (Myrdal 928), any number of other scholars have documented the manifestation of a distinct Black aesthetic in African American culture, with particular attention paid to the areas of religion, speech arts, and music (Davis 1985; Burnim 1980; Smitherman 1977; et al). This chapter examines the work of gospel announcers in light of this scholarship.

The analyses I have made of the work of gospel announcers has revealed that they demonstrate their compliance with a pervasive Black aesthetic value system through a range of rituals, behaviors, and speech acts, many of which are similar to, "borrowed" or adapted from the performances of traditional Black preachers and singers. Whether their presentations take place during a broadcast or on a concert stage, gospel announcers manipulate a variety of elements which can be examined under four headings:

- 1) The Physical Realm, including attire and kinesics

- 2) Text, covering a variety of rhetorical devices -- repetition, parallelism, figurative language -- as well as the use of solicitational devices and metanarration
- 3) Sound quality, encompassing timbre, volume, and pitch; and
- 4) Time, both perceived and actual, as they relate to the physical realm, text, and programming.

These qualities will be described and analyzed as they appear within the performances of three announcers, Al Hobbs, Delores Poindexter, and Edna Tatum. Any and all of these elements can assist them in entertaining, inspiring, communicating, and creating the spiritual ambience much of their audience expects and demands. The performance can also signal the announcer's immersion in African American culture--a comprehension of Black struggle and achievement, the goals that have been reached through individual effort as well as through community strength, and religion's role in providing spiritual sustenance.

Among the growing cadre of researchers who have examined aspects of African American culture through the lens of a culturally-based aesthetic are Charles Keil, Williams Wiggins, Jr., Gerald L. Davis, and Mellonee Burnim. In his illuminating study Urban Blues, Keil declared: "The prominence of aural perception, oral expression, and kinesic codes or body movement in Negro life...sharply demarcate[s]

the culture from the irrational white world outside the ghetto" (17). Wiggins, a Methodist preacher-turned-folklorist, explains that the "Black folk church" differs from its White counterpart because of two key factors: its cultural roots, which are both West African and American Protestant, and the legacy of slavery and continuing racial injustice which have affected the Black community in countless ways. In response to these catalysts, Wiggins continues, the Black church has developed its own interpretations of Scripture as well as its own rituals, plastic arts, and music (Wiggins 145-147).

Because gospel music is a key aspect of the twentieth-century Black church, it was only logical that researchers would eventually examine the performances of gospel singers for evidence of their adherence to a Black aesthetic. Burnim's 1980 dissertation, "The Black Gospel Music Tradition: Symbol of Ethnicity," does just that, and in many ways, parallels research published five years earlier by Pearl Williams-Jones.¹ In her study, Burnim identifies the important guidelines which govern gospel music performances--the culturally-sanctioned manipulation of sound quality, including the management of timbre and the use of vocables; delivery style, which includes attire, facial expressions, and body movement; and technique, which encompasses the studied use of time, text, and pitch. Through fieldwork and the use of feedback interviews, Burnim

was able to determine that these behavioral and conceptual patterns are found wherever Black gospel music is performed. Furthermore, the mastery of these components is judged by the audience, which signifies its approval through means that are also culturally-specific (Burnim 25-42; 138-167).

Because gospel singers and gospel announcers perform for the same audiences, it is reasonable to expect that the same value system undergirds each. But in view of the fact that announcers use the spoken word as their primary means of communication, it is imperative that the traditional Black preacher and sermon also be considered as major influences on the announcers' performances. Some analysts, including Bruce Rosenberg, Don Yoder, and John Blassingame, have argued that the African American preaching style had its origins in the "mimicry" of White itinerant preachers, a theory in keeping with E. Franklin Frazier's philosophy that the experience of slavery robbed the Africans of virtually every vestige of their culture (Davis 10; Frazier 11). However, Davis demonstrates in "I've Got the Word in Me And I Can Sing It, You Know" that the traditional Black sermon is rooted in "an identifiable African American aesthetic system, or systems," one which supports the production and perpetuation of both folk and popular performances (Davis 26-38).

Davis sees any African American narrative performance as an exchange between audience and performer who co-exist

in an "aesthetic environment." Within a given performance setting, the audience compels the artist to reach the height of the "ideal" that has been set for the genre, and yet encourages the demonstration of individual creativity. The artist's performance is either accepted or rejected by the audience. The absence of their approval necessitates "adjustment or modification" by the performer--as any preacher or gospel singer has learned (Davis 28-31).

After evaluating sermons by a number of Black preachers, Davis reported that there are indeed specific characteristics for the performed traditional Black sermon. These sermonic elements (with some latitude allowed for individual innovation) include a primary focus on language and meter, as exemplified by syntactic harmony, repetition, parallelism, and rhyme (51-53); elaboration and illustration achieved through the use of independent narrative blocks that are linked by thematic "bridges" (56, 101); the utilization of vernacular and contemporaneity, otherwise known as "the weighted secular factor" (61, 105); the employment of sermonphones, including the single word, the phrase, the nonarticulated sermonphone (grunts, groans, and hums), and the sound-absent sermonphone--all of which serve a variety of semantic purposes (98-100).

In addition to these varied textual imperatives, an accurate analysis of the performed sermon would also have to encompass the visual, including gestures, foot patterns,

etc. (Gold 199). Because the sermon has influenced every other narrative genre within African American culture, in form if not in structure, its performance guidelines are important to consider when evaluating the work of gospel announcers (Davis 11, 46).

This thick-descriptive examination explores the complexity and artistry involved in functioning as a competent gospel announcer. In this section of the study, each announcer is evaluated in two performance contexts--live and broadcast. The most prevalent rhetorical devices and modes of discourse employed by these announcers are defined and examples from their work are presented.

These aspects as well as the similarities and differences between the radio performances and the live performances of these announcers are presented under the appropriate headings.

The Gospel Announcers

The gospel announcers whose performances are analyzed in this section, Al "The Bishop" Hobbs, Delores "Sugar" Poindexter, and Edna Tatum, are currently the three most visible announcers in the country because of their association with projects and media vehicles that extend beyond the cities in which they are based.

Al "The Bishop" Hobbs, chairman of the board of the Gospel Music Workshop of America, Inc. since 1993, and

chairman of the four hundred-member Gospel Announcers Guild (GAG) since 1977, has been a gospel announcer for almost a quarter of a century. Hobbs, who was born in Decatur, Alabama, lived in Louisville from the time he was five until he graduated from high school. He moved to Indianapolis in order to attend Butler University, only to find college costs greater than he could afford. Hobbs did, however, discover great fulfillment in a number of pursuits, including retail sales, promotions, and various aspects of the gospel music industry.

Hobb's shift into radio occurred as a result of his work as a concert promoter in the early 1970's. The general manager of WTLC-FM, Indianapolis, heard Hobbs "voicing" (serving as the announcer on) one of his own concert commercials and invited him to become an announcer. Two weeks later, Hobbs also took a position as an account executive (sales representative) at the station. During the course of his twenty-two-year tenure at WTLC, Hobbs became vice president and general manager and saw WTLC become the top-rated urban contemporary station in its market. Despite his administrative responsibilities, he never relinquished his gospel program called "Love Express." Hobbs resigned from WTLC March 1, 1993, and subsequently transferred his broadcasting talents to WHHH-FM 96 May 16 of that same year. From that time until March, 1994, he hosted a two-hour (8 - 10 a.m.) Sunday morning program called "Jubilation" on that

station as well as the "GT-Ten" (Gospel Top Ten), an hour-long gospel music countdown program.

Hobbs' endeavors in gospel music also include serving as artist, executive producer, composer, and/or arranger on a variety of nationally-distributed gospel recordings, including projects by Laura Lee, The Women's Choir of GMWA, and the Indianapolis chapter of GMWA which has recorded on Hobbs' own label, Aleho, acronym for Al E. Hobbs. "The Bishop," who is married and the father of two, serves as the coordinator of the McDonald's GospelFest in Indianapolis. He was raised in and continues to be a member of the Christ Baptist Church.²

Delores "Sugar" Poindexter (the nickname, "Sugar," was given to her by her mother when Poindexter was born) has been in gospel radio for almost twenty-five years. She began her radio career as an assistant to Hobbs at WTLC-FM; during his broadcasts, she answered the telephone and offered the prayer during a special five-minute segment. Soon, she became the host of her own Sunday broadcast which runs from 5-10 a.m. with a one-hour interruption for a live church broadcast. Around 1988, she became the host of "The Way Out," which is heard weekdays from 5-6 a.m. on WTLC-FM. In 1993, when WTLC's parent company purchased an AM station, she also became the announcer for "Higher Ground in Gospeldom," which airs Monday-Friday from 6-10 a.m.

Poindexter, who was born in Nashville, Tennessee,

attended Fisk University when she was 16 on a vocal music scholarship. Her college career was interrupted when the family migrated to Indianapolis. After getting married and between the births of her eight children, Poindexter performed and travelled with such gospel music luminaries as The Davis Sisters, The Sallie Martin Singers, and The (James) Cleveland Singers. Poindexter was raised in the "sanctified church, the original church of God," and she was ordained as a minister through the denomination known as the Metropolitan Spiritual Church. She is a member of Christ Missionary Baptist Church where she often sings on communion Sunday (the first Sunday of the month).

Poindexter served as Hobbs' vice chair in the Gospel Announcers' Guild until she stepped down from that position in 1993. She and Hobbs have served numerous times as guest hosts on the show that bears her cousin's name, "Bobby Jones Gospel." The program, which is the top-rated show on Black Entertainment Television (BET), is seen by millions of gospel music fans on that outlet and on the armed forces network.

Hobbs and Poindexter were ideal for this study because of their proximity to me when it was initiated. I left MSU's campus and attended classes from fall, 1990 through spring, 1991, under the CIC Travelling Scholars' Program, in order to study at Indiana University, which is located in Bloomington, Indiana. Bloomington is less than sixty miles

away from Indianapolis, where Hobbs and Poindexter work. I had also observed Hobbs and Poindexter in performance during various GAG luncheons and during the Gospel Music Workshop of America's nightly musicals.³

I selected the third announcer, Edna Tatum, because unlike most gospel announcers, much of her distinctive work has been included on commercial audio and video recordings and consequently, she has been heard by thousands of gospel music adherents. Although her name is not a household word, even among gospel music fans, her work is immediately recognized across the country because of its distinctive nature and her long-time designation as announcer/narrator for the late King of Gospel, the Reverend James Cleveland, perhaps gospel's most influential figure during the last quarter century.

Tatum, who declined to give her birth date, was born in Nacogdoches, Texas, into a family that migrated to Los Angeles in 1957. She earned a degree in business education from the University of Southern California and works for that state in disability division management. Tatum was raised in the Zion Hill Baptist Church where Dr. T. M. Chambers, Sr. was the pastor. Both he and his son, T.M. Chambers, Jr., who served as the pastor of a nearby church, had broadcasts on which Tatum occasionally welcomed guests and read announcements. Eventually, she filled in on a broadcast from the sanctuary of Cornerstone Institutional

Church, where the Rev. James Cleveland was the minister. Once he heard Tatum's creative introductions, the pair formed an association that remained constant until his death. She eventually became the narrator/host for both of his broadcasts, and she performed with him in concert around the country.

Many of Tatum's performances, primarily her introductions of various Cleveland songs, have been captured on commercial audio and video recordings and are often played on radio stations across the country by other announcers who play them as introductions to current gospel songs. Tatum is currently in the midst of a self-imposed leave from "Moments of Meditation," the gospel program she hosted for approximately two years. Unlike Hobbs and Poindexter, Tatum paid for her own radio time under a brokerage agreement with KMAX-AM in Los Angeles; she, in turn, sold time to various advertisers, including a leading mortuary. She looks forward to signing up enough sponsors to go back on the air again before the end of 1994. Tatum, who is single, remains a member of Cornerstone Institutional Baptist Church where she attends the 8:00 a.m. service. She continues to provide her unique oral literature for such well-known artists as Rev. Daryl Coley, The Fourth of May, and the Southern California Community Choir, with whom Rev. Cleveland recorded frequently and successfully. She is also featured each year during the

GMWA convention and board meeting. Because of Tatum's high visibility within the gospel music community, her work certainly deserves to be analyzed.⁴

The Broadcasts

Hobbs is analyzed on "Jubilation," the program which he presented on WHHH-FM from May 1993 until March, 1994. The tape that was used was from his first few weeks on that station. During this two-hour program, Hobbs plays gospel music which in lyrical content and energy support the theme of the show--"joy." From the theme song, "Unspeakable Joy" by Douglas Miller, to the last song of the first hour, all of the music is driving and fast-paced. Even with a slight reduction of the tempo at the top of the second hour, the vitality is never diminished in Hobbs' delivery or in the general pace of the program. A consummate professional, Hobbs allowed no "dead air" and kept up an almost dizzying tempo even though he was new to the station in which he was broadcasting.

Along with the music, of course, is Hobbs' distinctive voice which is first heard reciting a quatrain about joy. Throughout the program, he used solicitational frames, inviting the audience to call and witness, clap their hands, pat their feet, and otherwise celebrate God's goodness. He recites Bible verses ("The joy of the Lord is my strength") and uses other words of encouragement ("Encourage you to

know that though the dark clouds may rise, Jesus! Just the power in the name"). It is the combination of music and uplifting words that moved one of the feedback respondents to say, "He's churchin' pretty good, now." The presentational style Hobbs uses on the air is the same energetic delivery he utilizes in the live setting. Because of the "one-on-one" feel of radio, however, everything about his presentation seems more exaggerated on radio. (One respondent called it "aggressive.") It is perfectly clear to me why he remained one of Indianapolis' top announcers of any form of music for so many years.

Poindexter's work is from a broadcast which aired March, 1991, on WTLC-FM. Her four Sunday hours were deliberately designed by Poindexter and Hobbs to recreate so much of the worship experience, that listeners would feel compelled to get up and actually go to church. Each of the four hours has its own name and its own theme song. "Spirit at Sunrise" (5-6 a.m.) is what Poindexter describes as a "pumping" hour, led off by "This Little Light of Mine" recorded by the Corinthian Church of God in Christ Choir. "Blessings Boulevard," performed by The O'Neal Twins, opens the door for the segment called "Strolling Down Blessings Boulevard" (6-7 a.m.). "The Beautiful Garden of Prayer" has the theme song of the same name as performed by the Reverend James Cleveland (7-8 a.m.); it is during this hour that Poindexter herself prays for the 800 or more callers who

request prayer during her broadcast. Her Sunday hours conclude with "The Gospel Showcase" (9-10 a.m.) during which she presents the latest releases, makes announcements about upcoming gospel events, and interviews top artists who are in Indianapolis for the weekend.

Listening to just one of the segments would not give you a feel for the versatility "Sugar" Poindexter brings to her work. She has the ability to interview artists with warmth and humor, pray with fervor and intensity, and virtually preach the message that "God will take care of you" before she's finished. Though outsiders often believe that the traditional Black church is one protracted shouting experience, in fact, the meditation, prayer, and "quiet" time presented on Poindexter's show are an integral part of the worship as well. Always one to speak positively to listeners, Poindexter ends her broadcasts with her trademark homily: "Remember talent is God-given. Be thankful. Fame is man-given. Be humble. And conceit is self-given. Be real careful." This is always followed by an appropriate one-line tie-in to the concluding song ("Remember whatever you do, God will take care of you," for example). One feedback respondent said, "I would be ready to walk right into church after that." The versatility Poindexter demonstrated during her broadcast is also evident in her performances in the live context.

The broadcast analyzed for Tatum is an hour she

prepared for "Sugar" Poindexter's "Higher Ground" program which was used while Poindexter was recuperating from a heart attack which she experienced in January of 1994. Unlike her vibrant, dynamic performances in the live setting, this particular broadcast can be described as having a much quieter, meditative quality. In fact, after having all of the feedback respondents comment on its marked difference from other work of Tatum, I discovered that the conditions surrounding the taping had determined her presentational style.

First, the broadcast was indeed directed personally to Poindexter--and to any and all of her listeners who were sick or otherwise going through a challenging time. Then, it was recorded in a home studio, in "close quarters," Tatum said, so there was no bustling station activity or audience feedback to charge the atmosphere. Focussing on the persons to whom it was addressed rather than the circumstances under which it was taped, the broadcast can be seen as a ministerial tool that was appreciated for achieving an intimate, meditative "feel." The songs were selected with special attention to Poindexter's illness ("He'll Never Let You Down," "I Won't Complain," "Blessed Assurance"), and Tatum's succinct lead-in's were further evidence that this was a broadcast with the specific aim of providing spiritual encouragement ("Then we can testify: Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine").

Since Tatum says all of her performances are "conditioned"--shaped by the circumstances under which they are delivered--she, like Hobbs, who programmed and conveyed "joy," and Poindexter, who varied her style as her segments changed, demonstrates an adaptability in performance that defies easy categorization.

Hobbs and Poindexter in Concert Performance

The main live event during which I observed Hobbs and Poindexter was the Twentieth Broadcasting Anniversary held in honor of Hobbs' tenure as general manager and gospel music announcer for WTLC FM 105 in Indianapolis, Indiana. (The sequence of events is outlined on page 183.) The tribute was held at Clowes Hall on the campus of Butler University on October 21, 1990. Anniversaries and appreciations for gospel announcers are common throughout the United States just as they are for gospel groups (Allen 81-82). They can be presented by a committee of supportive fans and friends, by the announcers themselves, or by announcers and committees together.

The appreciations may be given annually or more infrequently; the hope underlying the event is that the announcer's radio tenure will be marked by a spirited and well-attended service. Usually, the presenters also anticipate that the monies raised, either through a free will offering or from ticket sales, will cover expenses and

OUTLINE OF HOBBS' TRIBUTE

Devotion

Videotaped tribute to Hobbs

Hobbs' Introduction: "An Announcer for All Seasons"

Hobbs' Entrance on Elevated Orchestra Pit

Hobbs' Performance with Indianapolis Mass Choir

Hobbs' Testimonial Remarks and Intro of Christianaires

Performance -- The Christianaires

Poindexter's Hosting of Tributes and Intro of Ricky Dillard

Performance -- Ricky Dillard and the New Generation

Performance -- Myrna Summers

Performance -- The Williams Brothers

Poindexter's Announcements, Acknowledgments and Intro of

The Richard Smallwood Singers

Performance -- The Richard Smallwood Singers

A full transcription of the event appears in Appendix I

allow for a monetary gift to be presented to the announcer in question. The anniversary for Hobbs and was the first for him in ten years. It was a ticketed event, handled by a committee consisting of a number of Hobbs' close colleagues, friends and family members. Although he was not listed as being on the committee, Hobbs' influence was manifested throughout the event.

The event started promptly at 5:00 p.m. with a five-minute devotional segment led by two men and a woman; the men were in dark suits and the woman was in a muted "special occasion" dress. The five-minute devotion consisted of a soulful rendition of the hymn "There's Not a Friend Like the Lowly Jesus"; a prayer for God's blessings on the service, the participants and the honoree; and an up-tempo gospel song, "Cain't Nobody Do Me Like Jesus." The devotion, which gospel concert goers generally expect will begin the proceedings no matter where the event is held, was part of the necessary and important work of transforming Clowes Hall from concert site to sanctuary. Most of the audience that I could observe sang and prayed along with the devotional team. Some even stood and clapped along with the spirited second song which helped to make the elegant site feel even more like "church."

The first tribute of the evening was a presentation of slides from various stages of Hobbs' life narrated by the station manager of WTLC. The audience chuckled in good-

natured fashion as they watched the honoree develop from childhood to manhood and his hair expand and contract, lengthen and shorten, according to the trends of the time. Following this eight-minute piece, the Indianapolis Mass Choir, which Hobbs founded and with whom he records, performed two songs under the leadership of an energetic female director. Thirty members strong, the women wore either black, cream or white dresses, or coordinating skirts and blouses, while the men were dressed in pants and shirts in this same color pattern.

At the end of their second number, the choir members, like the audience, appeared to be prepared to see "The Bishop" enter from the wings. Instead, most of us were surprised to see the Hobbs, bathed in the spotlight, ascending into view on the slowly elevated orchestra pit as the musicians played the introduction for the song he was to perform with the choir. He was elegantly dressed in a custom-made tuxedo with exaggerated shoulders and triple satin stripes on the sleeves; the pleated, baggy pants were accented with a single satin stripe on each side. A white formal shirt with high collar and black cross tie completed his ensemble. Many members of the audience and choir seemed most appreciative of and/or intrigued by the production, as evidenced by their verbal and non-verbal communication -- everything from "Go 'head, Al!" to waving their hands and clapping along to the song that accompanied his ascent.

Once his dramatic entrance had been made, Hobbs moved from one side of the platform to the other, bowing slightly and almost sheepishly to acknowledge the applause and to indicate his recognition of certain supporters in the audience. He continued to smile, walk, and nod until he began to lead the Indianapolis Mass Choir in singing the upbeat gospel song, "To the Lord," which he himself composed. At this point, and throughout the song, he became quite animated. While singing on the elevated orchestra pit, Hobbs moved from one side of the stage to the other, stepping in time with the music, bobbing his head and gesturing with his hands. In particular, he pointed frequently toward the sky with his index finger whenever he sang the phrase "to the Lord," and he pointed toward the audience to emphasize other phrases.

Hobbs' movements became more exaggerated as the intensity of the song grew. By the time the song had ended, he was perspiring quite visibly which he continued to do well into his subsequent speech. Frequently during his musical presentation, he turned his back to the audience and sang to the choir; then he whipped back around, readdressing his song to the audience. Hobbs' pattern of pacing from one side of the stage to the other persisted throughout his speech and his introduction of the Christianaires.

When Hobbs began to give his remarks, which followed the song, he sounded out of breath. After repeating

"Hallelujah!" twice--another verbal signifier of our reason for gathering in the Hall--he launched into his remarks:

"Oh, I feel so good. And I am so tired. Amen. Preparing for you to come and share this anniversary with me."

During his narrative, the honoree touched on many issues; however, at the center of those remarks was his testimony to God. Just as the initial devotional segment helped to frame the event as a "service," another piece of the church pattern was laid in place by Hobbs' "testimonial" segment which, in fact, was ushered in by the song.

Testimonies from the members of the church are an important part of the worship service in the traditional church, and Hobbs designated time to share his with the audience (Paris 59). Among other things, he expressed his gratitude to God for placing him in a position to help others: "God has blessed me on many fronts. But more than anything else I can tell you today, the Lord has blessed me by giving me a rare opportunity to serve Him by serving my fellow man." Perhaps the spiritual and technical apex of Hobbs' speech was his reflection on what he hoped had been the results of his twenty years in religious broadcasting: "I can only hope and pray that through the Lord's will, He has given us an opportunity to serve--put something on the turntable or maybe say something that comforted your heart."

Hobbs' final duty was to introduce a contemporary quartet called The Christianaires to the audience, which he

did by incorporating a personal anecdote, one which subtly yet skillfully requests that the audience give the group a chance to prove itself. Hobbs tells the audience of his initial, lukewarm response to the group during a Thanksgiving night program and how they subsequently won him over. "By the time they had been fifteen minutes into the service, my heart was bursting with the joy of Jesus Christ." After completing the introduction of the group, Hobbs had nothing else to do for that evening except receive the tributes and enjoy the service.

The balance of the six-hour tribute consisted of music provided by Ricky Dillard and the New Generation, a contemporary choir; Myrna Summers, a seasoned female vocalist; The Williams Brothers, one of the country's most popular contemporary groups; and The Richard Smallwood Singers, a highly-acclaimed six-member contemporary gospel ensemble. Besides the need for introductions for each of these artists, there were dignitaries, station personnel, and special tributes to be presented--as well as an audience to keep involved and energized, even during the non-musical segments. Much of this responsibility fell to Delores "Sugar" Poindexter.

Poindexter was introduced at the end of the Christianaires' performance. She walked unceremoniously from the curtain nearest to the podium, but she caught the crowd's attention nevertheless because of her ensemble: a

black, street-length satin dress with rhinestones dotting the epaulets, and a mini-pleated hat which had a rhinestone-encrusted orb on the very top. As she moved, the jewels on her dress and hat caught the light and garnered a strong response of approval from the audience, including applause, whispers, and head nods.

Using a quiet, reserved, yet warm tone of voice, Poindexter greeted the audience and expressed her gratitude for being able to share in the tribute. Then, she presided over a twenty-minute segment of presentations from local and state officials, Hobbs' WTLC staff, and Hobbs' wife. Twice during the segment, Poindexter spoke directly to the audience in order to maintain their interest and involvement in the service using sollicitational frames as her key device.

Poindexter's second appearance for the evening occurred at the end of the Williams Brothers' high-energy performance and during the set-up time for the Richard Smallwood Singers. For a number of reasons, this fifteen-minute period required her to handle a variety of tasks well. First, Poindexter took the Williams Brothers off the stage by "back announcing" appropriately; she not only repeated their name, but she reiterated the last lines of their "encore" song--"Lord, You brought me out. Oh, Oh, yes You did"--which the audience was still chanting. As that died down, she made a segue into her introduction of the Richard

Smallwood Singers, only to discover they were not ready. She returned immediately to the platform, reminded the audience of what they would miss if they left, and complimented them on their patience and cooperative demeanor during what had already been a five-hour evening.

She displayed her competence as an emcee by how she filled the waiting period. Poindexter again engaged the audience in call and response, acknowledged other gospel announcers who were at the tribute, and read announcements of future gospel music events in the area. As soon as she got the word that the Richard Smallwood Singers were ready, Poindexter quickly and powerfully recited the name of the group, brought them on, and moved off the stage herself.

For a second look at how Poindexter performs before live audiences, I have included her brief but well-received introduction of Willie Neal Johnson and the Gospel Keynotes during the Sunday, November 4, 1990, edition of "Bobby Jones Gospel." A full audience of gospel music adherents had gathered in the auditorium of the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, Tennessee, for a special taping of "Bobby Jones Gospel" which allowed for a very spirited interaction between announcer and audience.⁵

Edna Tatum in Concert Performance

Edna Tatum is frequently asked to serve as the announcer for gospel events, such as the anniversary just

described for Al Hobbs, as well as for fashion shows and other public events. However, because she is known for her powerful introductions and because it is that part of her work that has been preserved on audio and video tape, those narrations will provide the balance of her work that is analyzed under this heading. Tatum has delivered her narrations in some of the country's most prestigious concert sites, during some of gospel's most memorable occasions. Certainly near the top of that list is the Reverend James Cleveland's first concert at Carnegie Hall in 1977. Only a handful of gospel artists have appeared as headliners at Carnegie Hall. Consequently, Cleveland's concert--occurring seventeen years after gospel announcer Joe Bostic, Sr., first rocked the great hall by presenting Mahalia Jackson--is an historic one. The recording remains a "must have" item for many gospel music aficionados today.⁶

Though most performers are awed by Carnegie Hall itself, Tatum remembers that she was "shocked and moved" that gospel's Crown Prince had asked her to introduce his songs. This honor was magnified by her realization that during his extensive travels, Cleveland had certainly encountered many announcers capable of making appropriate introductions. The only specific direction he gave Tatum was to attend the choir rehearsals and listen to some of the songs. This, she says, demonstrated a great deal of trust, especially since Tatum had only performed around the gospel

giant a few times at that point. She recalls that when she finally delivered one of her narrations during a pre-concert rehearsal, the choir members were so moved by her words and delivery that they began crying and shouting--a definite indication that she was on the right track. Those Carnegie Hall narrations continue to be used by other announcers who locate them on the recording and "drop them in" as introductions for current gospel selections during their broadcasts.⁷

Seventeen years later, Tatum was able to tell me without hesitation what she wore for that memorable evening. The choir with whom Rev. Cleveland was performing, the Southern California Community Choir, was going to wear black, and he had asked her to do the same. Tatum chose a floor-length, long-sleeved, high-neck dress with ribbing on the neck and sleeves. The material was interwoven with multi-colored metallic thread.⁸ She began her work for that evening with a very basic introduction: "Ladies and gentlemen, the King of Gospel Music, Reverend James Cleveland." "The King" opened by lining out an "old one hundred" hymn by Dr. Isaac Watts, "Father, I Stretch My Hands to Thee," on which Cleveland's "call" was answered by the choir's "response." Following that, Tatum delivered five of her unique "recitations," as they are called on the album label; each one is either a poetic image of the artist or a language-dense historical or Scripturally-based lead-in

for a particular song.

Also analyzed is her special introduction of Rev. Cleveland during his Fiftieth Anniversary Salute concert, which was held in October, 1990, at the famed Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in Los Angeles. The celebration of Cleveland's golden anniversary in gospel music brought top gospel and secular artists together, such as Shirley Caesar, the Hawkins Family, and Stevie Wonder, to honor gospel's reigning monarch (in the place where, just three months later, Cleveland would be eulogized).⁹ The 1990 gala began with a period of prayer during which the entire assembly prayed aloud--an unusual occurrence for that edifice, according to the remarks made by the prayer leader, the Reverend Kenneth Ulmer. As he quietly suggested topics for praise, the sound of the voices of the audience and choir members began to swell from whispers to high-volume praise which was eventually accompanied by their hand claps. When the volume diminished, the audience was asked to resume their seats. The Pavilion was set for the beginning of service. Without any stated introduction, Edna Tatum came out and stood before the podium attired in a white, tea-length, bugle-beaded dress.¹⁰

In this instance, she did not provide several narrations; rather, she delivered the pivotal words that set both the historical and spiritual focus for the evening:

Your majesty, King James,
 Members of the household of Heaven,
 Agents of redemption,
 And to all of you who are in
 The army of Captain Jesus:
 Welcome to the Fiftieth Anniversary Salute
 Of one man, singing one gospel
 About One Lord, One Faith, and One Baptism.

Tatum also presented Rev. Cleveland during his last "live" recording with the Southern and Northern California chapters of GMWA. This event, which took place at Cornerstone Institutional Baptist in Los Angeles, was captured on commercial audio and videotape.¹¹ Dressed in a long-sleeved raspberry dress highlighted by an appliqued front, her task, as it was countless times over a fifteen-year period, was to introduce Rev. Cleveland and to remind the audience of the spiritual, non-entertainment-related nature of the gathering.

Appropriateness of the Performance Sites

All of these live events, including Hobbs' anniversary at Clowes Hall, and Cleveland's events held at Carnegie Hall, the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, and Cleveland's Cornerstone Institutional Baptist Church, provide fine opportunities to observe three announcers handling several critical duties, including introducing the artists, interacting with and keeping the audience involved with the proceedings. Because the elegance of the halls--carpeted floors, chandeliers, heavily draped proscenia, balconies

complete with box seats--index grand theater more than they do church, these events also provided an occasion to observe the critical and continuous efforts involved in transforming a non-church setting into a proper "sanctuary." Gospel music concerts have been performed in non-traditional settings, including civic auditoriums, theaters, concert halls, and music festivals, for more than half a century, beginning with the loosely established "Gospel Highway" created by Roberta Martin, Sallie Martin and Thomas A. Dorsey (Heilbut 1985: xxix). Today, such sites are populated frequently by gospel music aficionados. For the purposes of this study, such settings proved to be excellent contexts for studying how announcers function within the live arena.

The Physical Realm

Both gospel artists and traditional Black preachers must demonstrate their understanding of African American culture, which they do first displaying their mastery of the physical realm (Burnim 146, Davis 28). This includes body movements; such synchronized acts as clapping, marching, dancing and shouting; facial expressions; and appropriate attire. It is no less the case with gospel announcers.

Attire

It is clear from what each of these announcers has demonstrated and said that they are aware of two important concepts connected with the performance of gospel music: one's mode of dress can simultaneously signal cultural awareness and individual creativity. Soloists and choir members alike choose robes or other uniforms which, by their color, cut, or fabrication, can elicit a response from the audience (Burnim 154-57). Changes in the culture are also reflected in the attire of the performers. For example, as African fabrics have swept through the African American community, local and national choirs have begun to adorn their robes with these bold materials. Black ministers, who have traditionally worn black or dark robes in keeping with the perceived "sanctity" of their position (Gold 199-200), have also begun to wear stoles and robes accented by adinkra, kente, and any number of other African fabrics.

Vibrant colors are frequently used within the gospel tradition, and Hobbs, who has called himself "the original dandelion in the field of green grass," is known for performing, whether as a singer or announcer, in garments representative of the full color spectrum. He and his organization "Aleho" are also recognized for creating an "aesthetic unity" through color and fabrication in all of their projects. For example, during the summer of 1988, I worked as the publicist for a GMWA outdoor concert called

"GUTSAY"--"Gospel United to Save America's Youth"--for which Hobbs served as producer, coordinator and co-host. Although my work was executed behind the scenes, the day before the event, I along with every other member of the staff was given a GUTSAY red and white tee shirt; I was told to wear it with a white skirt, shoulder pads, and coordinating jewelry, as were the rest of the women, while the men were instructed to wear their shirts with white trousers, white socks and shoes. The staff was easy to identify, and it was clear that the event had been thoroughly planned.

That same "aesthetic unity" was evident during his anniversary celebration. The devotion leaders and choir members were primarily dressed in black and cream as were Hobbs' staff and family. His own custom wear--a black tuxedo with satin stripes on the sleeves and trousers--mirrored perfectly the cover of the souvenir book which featured a lacquered silhouette of the honoree on a matte-finished black background.

Hobbs stepped away from his trademark bold colors for several reasons. The elegance of Clowes Hall, the "after-five" scheduling, and the anniversary of his twenty years in gospel radio warranted stylish, sophisticated clothing and coloring, which the color black universally represents. The custom-made tuxedo not only coincided with the elegant setting, but it also assisted Hobbs in reflecting his testimonial statement: "God has blessed me on many fronts."

With one garment, Hobbs was able to demonstrate God's benevolence as well as assert his knowledge of the cultural guidelines which allows for the kind of individual creativity represented by the satin-striped formal wear with the exaggerated shoulders and pleated pants. The immediate comments from the audience indicated that he had selected his garments and their colors well. All of the feedback respondents, even those who found fault with the mode of entrance, agreed that Hobbs' ensemble was most appropriate for the event.

Poindexter, who has worked with Hobbs since the first day of his broadcast career, dressed in the designated color for the tribute as well. The audience indicated its approval with ooo's and aah's as the light was reflected by the strategically-placed rhinestones on the shoulders and hat. Most of the feedback respondents liked the tasteful yet eye-catching dress she had chosen ("She knew she had to hold her own against Al"). But the hat is what created some discussion. While some of the respondents saw the hat (called the "lampshade hat" by one member of the group) as blocking her face from the audience, at least two called it a reflection of her church background. Tim Wynn, a Baptist himself, identified it as "the Baptist in her" while Darryl Ford remarked that he regularly sees similar styles worn by women in several denominations.

Hats are, in fact, a Poindexter trademark. At Rev.

Cleveland's funeral, where she helped with the coordination of the performers and dignitaries who were to take part in the service, she was elegantly dressed in an off-white knit dress with a matching full cape, all of which was topped, of course, by a dramatic off-white hat. Only a few times have I seen her host a musical without an attention-getting head covering. Even during the late January, 1994 rehearsals for a gospel video project, I made note of the fact that she was resplendent in olive green from head-to-toe which, of course, included a coordinated chapeau.

Upon her retirement from the position of vice chair of the Gospel Announcers' Guild, Poindexter was presented with a designer's original from the members of the Guild. In accepting the gift, she remarked that she wears hats, not to show off, but as one way of demonstrating how good God has been to her. The hats also, of course, aid her in creating and leaving a strong visual image with her audiences. They have a specific aspect of her attire to critique after a performance and to anticipate as they arrive for a new program.

Poindexter confesses to having "a lot of clothes," with conservative suits in blacks and dark colors among her first choices for church affairs. During our interview in 1991, she had this to say about how she decides what to wear for performances:

Deborah, I've learned that the Christian woman should always know how to dress and that means being moderate, conservative, flashy, daytime-ish, playish, whatever the program calls for....The Lord wants us to look our best.¹²

Edna Tatum takes great pride in selecting her garments as carefully as she does her words so as to complement the occasion, time, and setting of her performance. Unlike many of our colleagues who seem to view rhinestones and other glittery accents as *de rigueur* no matter what the time of day, Tatum, like Poindexter, espouses a more "traditional" philosophy which relegates such adornments to after-five wear--and then only if the site and her role within the performance warrant it. At the top of Tatum's list of concerns, however, is "whether my outfit will take away from what I am representing--Jesus." Her hope is that her dress is never so overwhelming that it drowns out her gospel message.

Despite this self-effacing ideology, Tatum is usually complimented for her performance attire. "I wear black a lot. It's comfortable for emceeing, it's tasteful, and it doesn't take away from Jesus." During the live recording session for Southern Cal's twentieth anniversary album entitled "Having Church," Tatum changed from her usual color choice and selected white, which allowed her to dress in contrast to the choir. She remembers being received with resounding applause and having several photographers ask to

take her photograph that evening.¹³

Quite clearly, these three very visible announcers see their attire as an important aspect of their performances before African American audiences.

Kinesics

Appropriate movements, gestures, and facial expressions are also required of both the gospel singer and the preacher (Burnim and Maultsby 130-31). Choirs march, dance, clap, and many today use full choreography in their performances - to the delight of some and the dismay of others who prefer that they stand "flat-footed and sing." In the pulpit, preachers have been known to use a wide range of movements and facial expressions as they change personae and do what is necessary to hold the attention of their congregations (Gold 199). With the preacher's performance as a cultural model, it is to be expected that gospel announcers often manipulate these aspects of performance in order to be effective.

The physical movements involved with Edna Tatum's delivery are generally subtle, so they are not what observers immediately note about her performance. Such was the case with the feedback respondents who called Tatum "good," "excellent," and "wonderful," but who never mentioned kinesics as a noteworthy aspect of her performance. Often working from a prepared text and

situated behind a podium, Tatum usually restricts her movements to the upper body area--her face, hands and arms. A review of her videotaped performance on the "Breathe on Me" tape, for example, reveals that though her hands are usually holding the podium or moving down the page of her prepared text, she also uses them to emphasize certain phrases. After imploring the audience to "Give everybody a great big hand," she used both hands and arms to make a big expansive gesture. At the end of the introduction, she brought Rev. Cleveland to the audience by saying "Come on! Give it to him," utilizing the easily-recognizable "come on" signal with her hand. This was quickly followed by a sweeping arm motion that ended in her pointing in his direction.

Other than the aforementioned, the physical dimensions of Tatum's performance included a slight nod of the head each time she got to the beginning of one of her trademark recurring phrase ("**We've come** to confront you with the word of God...**We've come** here to share in this collision with reality"). Her ability to consistently move audiences rests in how she combines text with vocal timbre and intonation. In the many times I have witnessed her in performance, I have never seen her do anything more dramatic with her body than wave her hand or incorporate some of the other "small" gestures already mentioned. Nevertheless, those movements subtly buttress the incredible "flow" of words which Tatum

produces, and they point to a woman who is, in fact, sincere about the words she delivers and the God she lifts up through them.

Sugar Poindexter made slightly greater use of her body and of facial expression during the Hobbs anniversary despite the fact that she did all of her speaking from behind a podium. When talking with the dignitaries, she nodded as they made statements with which she agreed. When she stood at the podium alone, her body language mirrored the volume and intensity of her voice. As she moved toward the most intense level ("Say Amen! Say Amen! Say, Yes, Lord! Yes, Lord!"), she appeared to hold on tightly to the sides of the podium, and she leaned slightly closer to the audience with each phrase she spoke as if she were trying to reach each individual and give him or her a shake.

When she felt it necessary to reinvolve the audience during the course of the tribute, she did so primarily through text, but she also incorporated her body. For example, she made the comment, "Now, we're getting the dignitaries and all the other fine things out of the way cause we're going to praise the Lord." This statement was punctuated by her partially raising her arms up and down as if to free herself from a shackle-like encumbrance. Many of the feedback respondents felt she was effective in this rather challenging role of facilitating the presentations, and gestures were part of her performance.

Poindexter's colleague, "The Bishop," was described by some of the gospel music fans who participated in my survey as "laid back" and "sophisticated." However, the kinesics of his performance reveals that he was far from laid back as he delivered his song. He was energetic in his movements, and seemed most intent on "testifying" of God's goodness through kinesics as well as through lyrical and narrative text. Audience members clapped along, some stood and sang, apparently enjoying and/or feeling compelled by what Hobbs and the choir were doing. During the feedback interviews, three of the respondents thought that his gestures, coupled with his accessible language and vocal timbre, worked to make his presentation even more compelling--although one did cite an incongruity between his formal attire and his "getting down." Overall, however, this group felt that his movements reinforced the words of commitment he sang and spoke and helped convey sincerity. Bertha Harris said, "I don't know whether he is sincere or not, but he certainly seems for real." When asked why he chuckled when he viewed the ascent, Tim Smith said, "That's the kind of thing I would expect from Al."

Several of the other respondents, however, thought that the entrance brought too much attention to the announcer, and that neither the song, the energetic delivery, nor the speech restored a more spiritual focus. Though I understand their critique, I witnessed a great number of people

applauding, nodding and giving rapt attention--all signs of being a part of Hobbs' performance. When I asked Hobbs to explain his rationale for the entrance, his first answer was: "I know Black folks like some kind of drama." A few minutes later during the same interview, he said he utilized the orchestra pit for several reasons: it was there to be used, he knew he would not be bringing massive sets to the Hall, and he thought if he made his entrance from the pit dressed in something "sharp" and "custom made," it could help, along with the great artists who were scheduled, to make the evening a "special event" without being "overly done."¹⁴

Just as preachers and gospel singers have choices within the African American performance arena regarding how to utilize attire and kinesics, Tatum, Poindexter, and Hobbs have demonstrated that gospel announcers can manipulate the physical realm in ways that satisfy their personal tastes and yet coincide with the expectations of many within their audience.

Text

Charles Keil has stated that "African American preachers and bluesmen occupy roles in their communities where they are expected to give public expression to deeply felt private emotions" (164). Davis corroborates part of Keil's statement as he offers further insight into the scope

and function of the performed sermons. He characterizes them as "incorporat[ing] rationalized sets of conventions and principles designed to support the articulation of existence, belief, and cosmologic considerations in the experiencing lives of African-American people" (67). Ray Allen, whose study of African American sacred quartets resulted in Singing in the Spirit, believes the "gospel singer should be added to this list" of performers who articulate a range of concerns and emotions for Black audiences (156-7).

Gospel announcers also belong on this "honor" roll. Through what they say before, after, and sometimes during the presentation of a recording or of a live performance, they often verbalize the joys and pains of being human, African American, and Christian. Just as the preacher communicates through a sermon and the gospel singer through a song, the gospel announcer is capable of creating text that can be singularly or simultaneously pertinent to the historical, spiritual, social, or cultural concerns of the audience. Their text can spring from their own creativity and/or it can be culled from the community's bank of sacred and secular phrases and words, a reservoir which Smitherman refers to as "Black Semantics" (42-43). Regardless of the source, the right text, produced in the proper setting, combined with the appropriate timbre and kinesics, can transcend the restrictive status of being "mere words."

Rather, a gospel announcer's speech acts can reflect an understanding of African American struggle, affirm the strength and transcendency of the people, and acknowledge religion's role in their survival--much like gospel music itself (Burnim 1988: 112).

One of the most important steps Black preachers take before delivering their sermons is called "lining up" a congregation. During this process, the ministers evaluate how much attention and involvement audience is prepared to give to the sermon. If the devotional service has been successful and the sermonic atmosphere is highly-charged, the preacher can move into the delivery of the sermon, confident that the church is with him or her and will "talk back." However, if the church is "dead," the minister must utilize various means in order to "raise the spirit" of the group (Davis 17).

In similar fashion, gospel announcers must monitor and adjust their performances based on the receptivity of the audience, and in order to be effective, they, too, must employ a range of narrative devices and paralinguistic techniques. The performances of Hobbs, Poindexter, and Tatum provide an excellent opportunity to study the utilization of several communication means, including sollicitational frames, metanarration, and such rhetorical devices as parallelism, repetition, and metaphor. These means can be used individually or in "stacks" to achieve a

variety of effects for a plethora of reasons--from keying (signaling) and patterning (structuring) performance to affirming Black culture and inspiring greater reliance on God.

Metacommunication

Wherever a speech community exists, culturally-prescribed metacommunication points to the speech event as "performance" and defines the interpretive context ("frame") by which the performance is to be judged. Once the audience knows the boundaries of the performance, they know how to participate. Any number of communicative means can be used by the performer to key (signal) the performance frame (Bauman 15-16). Black preachers and gospel singers alike frequently use a range of metacommunicative strategies to tell audiences that their musical or sermonic performances are about to commence.

This patterned use of metacommunication has already been documented within the performance of Evangelist Shirley Caesar, who is not only a pastor in Durham, North Carolina, but the "First Lady" of gospel music with numerous awards and top-selling recordings to her credit. The master storyteller and singer frames her performance from the moment she reaches the stage by opening with a song that will "grasp the hearts and minds of the people." She also uses the initial moments to declare that her ministry

involves "spreading the gospel through song and sermon." Caesar explained the evolutionary nature of her concerts to Brooksie Harrington who chose her as the focus of his doctoral research:

I'm constantly building, building my concert and carrying the audience right with me. When I say, "How many of you believe everything's gonna be alright," I know somebody's gonna go with Sister Shirley. Somebody believes as I do. I don't slip in anything on my audience. I tell them what I'm doing; they know what to expect, and they can get ready (Harrington 82).

Gospel announcers utilize similar strategies to communicate their intentions to their audiences. During her short but powerful presentation on "Bobby Jones Gospel," Poindexter began with a conventional phrase often used to evoke a response in the traditional Black church: "I don't know what you've come to do, but I've come to praise the Lord!" The use of this phrase almost always results in various forms of affirmation from the congregants. First, it is a disclaimer of entertainment used almost universally by performers within the church. Its words are also found in a number of gospel songs. Its wide-spread use probably rests in the fact that it does indeed embody one of the main reasons for such gatherings, i.e., praising the Lord. When Poindexter used the phrase during the taping, the phrase assisted her in achieving several goals simultaneously. This known phrase immediately told the audience that she was

there to have a "church" experience, and that they were welcome to participate as they would in their churches where that phrase is commonly spoken and sung. Evoking the church image helped her to "grasp their hearts and minds" and momentarily block out the distractions within the Grand Ole Opry--including the hall itself and the camera crew that was set up to tape the proceedings. The familiar phrase set up an instant rapport between performer and audience. She was recognized as "one of the group" because she knew would be acceptable when addressing the group. As soon as they heard the text, the audience applauded, some waved their hands, while others responded verbally.

Tatum uses metacommunication in a similar manner as she explains the purpose for the musical service that will follow her introduction. At the taping for the "Breathe on Me" album, she began:

We did not come here to entertain.
We didn't come here for show time.
You can find that anywhere.
We have come here to have
An encounter with the Eternal.

In essence, she, like Poindexter, offers a disclaimer of entertainment. She simply rephrases it in her "Edna Tatum" fashion.

The broadcast studio provides a challenge for some announcers in that the inspirational frame has to be created within the confines of the medium which include the dictates

of the station and/or the FCC. I initially found the task of giving a spiritual dimension to my radio broadcasts while reciting the station's call letters quite challenging, particularly when I was told that "the last thing you should say before you cut off your mic is 'WJLB-FM.'" By necessity, because I loved my work, I quickly learned to combine both the spiritual and technical requirements of the job. Al "The Bishop" Hobbs presents the "church" frame and the station identification as smoothly as anyone I have heard. At the beginning of his "Jubilation" show, he plays the theme, "Unspeakable Joy," by Douglas Miller, "pots down" the volume and begins to speak:

We're glad to have you share
 The joy with us again on another Sunday morning
 That we've not seen before.
 The goodness of the Lord,
 Abounding here in the WHHH studios....
 Right here on the mighty, mighty WHHH,
 Hoosier Hot 96 in Indianapolis.
 We've got music for you this morning,
 But more than music...
 The anointing of the Holy Ghost.
 We certainly hope that you'll let the music
 Speak to your heart.
 Whatever your needs are,
 God wants to meet you
 At the point of those needs this morning.
 If you just let Him in....

Not only does Hobbs include several "church-related" words in his text ("joy," "Holy Ghost," "anointing"), but he also suggests that he is having "church" right where he is ("The goodness of the Lord abounding here in the WHHH studios"). Consequently, despite the two references to the station and

its less-than-holy-sounding tag line, "Hoosier Hot 96," Hobbs has given the signal: "I'm set to share a Holy Ghost experience with you if you'll stay tuned." This, along with his infectious theme song, keys a gospel-centered broadcast performance.

Tatum, too, uses metacommunication to underscore her spiritual purpose and identify the station on which she is broadcasting. She began her program which I reviewed with the classic "Peace Be Still" by Rev. James Cleveland, and after just two lines of the song, she reduced its volume and began to speak:

Good morning, and welcome to another portion of
 "Standing on Higher Ground."
 My name is Edna Tatum, and how happy I am
 To join you from Los Angeles, California,
 On radio station WTLC
 As we lift up Jesus and give Him the glory
 And thank Him for all that He's done for us.

Almost all of the respondents agree that the combined use of "Peace Be Still" and of Tatum's opening lines were excellent signals for the main focus of the traditional broadcast.

Sollicitational Frames

Besides metacommunication, which specifically comments on the performance, a variety of other communication means utilized by gospel announcers also serve as keys to performance. However, they usually facilitate the achievement of other performance goals as well. Call and

response, for instance, is a critical mode of discourse used by gospel announcers. Kochman has identified call and response as "basic to black expressive behavior because it integrates all three elements of stimulus, structure, and manner of participation (response) into a working relationship with one another" (109). Smitherman also sees it as an organizing principle employed by speakers "to achieve the unified state of balance or harmony which is fundamental to the traditional world view" (104). The harmony is reached as the artist and audience work together to create an optimum performance. Because audience and artist are bound by an aesthetic system which requires audience participation, neither entity is solely responsible for the success or failure of the performance (Davis 16). Call and response places the audience "on stage," and provides a mechanism through which they can be pulled into the action--or pulled back into the event should their energies sag or minds wander.

Hobbs and Poindexter each used this communication mode during the anniversary, sometimes with text, and in other instances with vocables. The first words from Al Hobbs during his anniversary were "Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Somebody give God some praise." "Hallelujah," "Praise the Lord," "Let the Church Say Amen," are a few of the more frequently used sollicitational frames that can also be used simultaneously as opening formulae. The audience at the

tribute, obviously accustomed to such exhortations, responded readily with "Hallelujah's" of their own as well as applause. Clowes Hall had already been transformed into church because of the devotional service and Hobbs' performance with the choir, and the attendees obviously felt comfortable responding to Hobbs in that manner.

During the anniversary, Poindexter had the task of introducing a number of dignitaries who had presentations to make to Hobbs. Twice during the first segment, which lasted twenty minutes, Poindexter employed call and response. Her first use of the sollicitational frame occurred fifteen minutes into the proceedings:

Everybody say Amen. (R)¹⁵
 Amen. (RR)
 Now, we're getting the dignitaries
 And all the other fine things out of the way
 'Cause we're going to praise the Lord.
 HOW ABOUT THAT!!! (RR)

The second time Poindexter used call and response occurred five minutes later. She asked:

Are you happy? (r)
 Let me hear you say "Amen." (r)
 Say "Amen!" (R)
 Let me hear you say, "Yes, Lord!" (RR)
 "Yes, Lord!" (RR)
 Let me hear you say
 YES, LORD! (RRR)
 YES, LORD! (RRR)
 YES, LORD!!! (RRR)
 FOR THE FIRST TIME IN OUR CITY,
 AN UPCOMING GREAT GOSPEL CHOIR ALL THE WAY
 FROM CHICAGO, ILLINOIS: RICKY DILLARD AND NEW
 GENERATION!! HEAR YE THEM!!! (RRR)

The audience answered each "call" and afterward demonstrated their involvement as participants in the service; many of them sang and clapped along with the next performers, Ricky Dillard and New Generation, while others stood and waved their hands at various points. Call and response helps to insure that the announcer does not become involved in a monologue--one sign of having "lost" the audience in Black culture. And, in this case, it allowed the announcer to secure a warm reception for the artists that were about to perform.

Vocables can also serve as the centerpiece of such a sollicitational frame. During the anniversary, Poindexter used "Huh?" as a way of asking the audience to give their verbal agreement to what had just been uttered as well as to continue their participation in the service.

I thank God for this
Great, rich, spiritual service.
We're not through yet. (r)
Huh? (R)
I SAID WE'RE NOT THROUGH YET!! (RR)

The second time Poindexter uttered the phrase, "We're not through yet," in part because of the changing timbre and increased volume of her voice, the audience responded with more applause and with several different verbal replies of their own, "Alright" and "Amen" included. Her "Huh?", in this instance, was a "call" to the audience to indicate their continued involvement. Likewise, during Hobbs' talk,

the following interaction occurred between him and his audience:

But I tell you something (r)
 If God never does anything else for me (r)
 I can stand here before you today and say that
 He's already done enough (r).
 Huh? (R)
 Hallelujah! Hallelujah! (RR)

Hobbs, like Poindexter, uses "Huh?" in this instance to further involve the audience in the service. The applause grew significantly after the "Huh?" was spoken; through it, Hobbs had invited the audience to take a quick inventory of what God had done in their individual lives and in their community and to affirm verbally and through applause their recognition of God's blessings. The call and response motif points to another reality: the gospel music event as ritual. "Because gospel music was spawned and nurtured in the context of ritual, performers are virtually impelled, in all performance settings, to recreate the climate of the black worship service" (Burnim 126). Both Hobbs and Poindexter were involved in "transforming" Clowes Hall through the use of the phrases and performance frames which are associated with the church setting. This was done in part through the number of times call and response was effectively incorporated into the service.

Sollicitational frames can also be used on radio, not in the actual call and response form since there is no one in the studio who can physically answer the "call." But

announcers can incorporate it in several ways, including interacting with the lyrics of a song and inviting the listeners to contact them by telephone.

To explain the first instance, it is important to look briefly at another larger issue. One of the first rules professional broadcasting students are taught is: "Thou Shalt Not Step on the Lyrics." The phrase refers to the forbidden habit of talking while the lyrics of a song are actually being sung. The announcer is told to know the music well enough to avoid this faux pas or, at state-of-the-art stations, to look at the computerized playlist which will indicate the song's total length as well as the length of the introduction. A song that is listed as having a "0:15" introduction, for instance, allows the announcer fifteen seconds to make a statement before the singer begins.

Because gospel radio has often operated in contrast to some "broadcast rules," stepping on lyrics has not always been eschewed. In fact, all three of the announcers analyzed in this study technically "stepped on lyrics" during their broadcasts. The reasons for this practice are varied. Though some formally-trained gospel announcers explain it as the inferior (or lack of) training some of their colleagues have received, the reasons are much more numerous. Sometimes, it is done because the announcer in question has heard others he or she esteems do the same

thing (this is "traditional transmission"--which is how many announcers learn their craft).

Others talk at different points during the songs in sympathy with gospel record label heads who ask announcers to keep talking in order to discourage listeners from taping and to encourage them to buy the recordings instead. Another group does it because they simply get carried away - which is absolutely not a problem peculiar to gospel radio. There are others who remember the practice from early Black secular radio where it was called "talking through a record." Norman Spaulding, who has chronicled the emergence of Black disc jockeys in Chicago, traces this procedure to those who broadcast during the 1940's. This technique was later incorporated by White announcers who assumed credit for its creation (Spaulding 81). When used on radio, "talking through" results in two distinct sources, the speaker's voice and the music, working on the listeners' senses at once. Rather than the music lessening the impact of the speaker's words, the effect--when the music is not allowed to overpower the speaker--is that of the music enhancing and making the speaker's voice seem even more dramatic, full and/or intense. If there are lyrics in the song, and if the volume of the music and the speaker's voice are balanced, a kind of call and response motif can be created. For anyone who values both aural and oral stimuli, as many African Americans do, this can be an exciting

combination.

Long before there were Black radio DJ's, the minister "talked through" music at several points of the service, including the sermon's end (as the keyboardist supports his conclusion), the invitation to join the church fellowship, and the benediction (in both of these latter cases, the choir and/or congregation sings, usually with accompaniment, as the minister talks). Gospel announcers who utilize this device--keeping their mic and music levels modulated--can masterfully created a compelling segment. They borrow simultaneously from the preacher and the disc jockey, layer two different timbres, and produce a combination of sounds that command--and receive--the attention of many audience members.

When Poindexter came to the conclusion of her broadcast, for example, she used the song "God Will Take Care of You" by James Moore. A quarter of the way through the song, she began to talk, quite obviously in response to what Moore was singing:

On a Lord's Day morning, do you believe that?
Do you, do you, really, really, really believe
that?
God will take care, brother.
I know it for myself this morning.
For you see, you see, you see, you see,
I've tried Him for myself.
And I know He will take care of you
In every situation....
And remember whatever you do,
God will--um, um, um--take care of you.

Almost all of the respondents called this an effective ending to Poindexter's program.

Another figurative form of call and response can take place as listeners interact with the announcer via telephone. Hobbs makes such appeals during "Jubilation":

Marie, God bless your heart.
 Glad to have you on board.
 Somebody else needs and wants to witness.
 I've got open line this morning --
 239 - 6969, the number to call.
 Get the joy. Express.
 'Cause when He's done something good for you,
 What He wants you to do is TELL IT!!!
 Encourage somebody else.

Hobbs' very high energy on-air delivery with his music volume and mic volume high (one respondent called it "aggressive") generates numerous calls from listeners and apparently keeps him energized as well. Bertha Harris, one of the gospel announcers who served as a feedback respondent, expressed the sentiments of many announcers when she said:

If I'm gonna do a broadcast, I like to do it live, but I like to do it with call in's.
 So it must be the people, you know, 'cause the phone excites me when it lights up. You know, that contact. It must be the people.

Hobbs, like other announcers, often encourages the audience to follow other kinds of directions:

Get those toes a-tapping wherever you are!
 If you're laying in the bed...
 Just brush 'em up against the cover.

If you've got your feet on the floor,
 Stand where you are right now,
 And just pat 'em a little bit.

For announcers who are used to exhorting the live audience to respond to their call in the live context, the invitation to listeners to clap their hands, tap their toes, and even "turn me up," as Spencer J says in Detroit, is a logical broadcast adaptation of the sollicitational frame.

Rhetorical Devices

The rhetorical devices available to gospel announcers are many and varied; however several that are used most frequently by Hobbs, Poindexter, and Tatum are lexical cohesion, including repetition, parallelism, and the use of synonyms; and figurative language.

When gospel singers incorporate repetition in the performance of a song, they must be fully aware of both the musical and textual phrases as they manipulate text in this manner. One observer in Burnim's study, who referred to repetition as "hypnotic" in its effect, explained further: "As you repeat, you get off into it more and more" (Burnim 167). Repetition is also a favorite communication tool of traditional preachers (Raboteau 236). J.L. Austin's assessment of repetition is that when spoken aloud, those phrases allow the speaker to present a particular "figure of sound" repeatedly and to create the patterning which he finds critical to sustaining audience involvement (Austin

118).

One of the defining characteristics of Tatum's narrations is repetition. An admirer of the enunciation and the "color" former Congresswoman Barbara Jordan brings to her speeches, Tatum also enjoys listening to speakers who know how to "toy" effectively with a word. She apparently appreciates those who can set a pattern with repetition until audiences figuratively follow them anywhere--as audiences usually follow Tatum. Of the many narrations Tatum has recorded, one of her favorites is "It Was Love." Delivered at Carnegie Hall, it includes such patterning:

It was **love** that held Jesus --
 Took His robe off
 And hung it in the wardrobe of eternity.
 It was **love** (r) that made Him go down
 To the depot of time,
 And got Him a ticket,
 Put Him on the train of nature,
 And made Him ride through forty-two generations.
 It was **love** (R) that made Him
 Get off in Bethlehem of Judea
 One cold December night,
 Wrapped in swaddling clothes
 And laying in a manger.
 It was **love** (R) that made him cry like a baby....
 Play like a child, work like a man,
 Baptize like a candidate.
 He preached like a preacher,
 He healed like a doctor,
 He fed like a grocerman, he walked like a hobo,
 And it was **love** (RRR) that made Him
 Speak like a mighty God. (RR)
 As Christians today, we must
 Spread the **love** of God.
 Tell me...Do you **love** everybody? (r)

As the response marks indicate, the audience found the pattern that Tatum set up through the repetition of the word

"love." Soon, they were using it as a "call" to which they could voice their "response." She recounts the life of Jesus, emphasizing the simple ways He demonstrated love, and clinching the passage by challenging the audience to love in that same expansive manner. Every one of the feedback respondents, after hearing Tatum's "live" narrations, asked whether she is a preacher. Though she does not "whoop," holler, or squall in the old, traditional way, Tatum's employment of "emphatic repetition," in which a base phrase is repeated in a variety of tones and with increased intensity--makes her delivery very much like that of traditional preachers (Davis 80). Although she also uses repetition on her radio program, the respondents did not find it as effective as when she used it in front of audiences. Her phrasing, they felt, is built, wittingly or unwittingly, with the anticipation of audience response.

One of the most easily identifiable characteristics of Hobbs' testimonial remarks during his anniversary was lexical cohesion, including repetition and the use of synonyms. What might sound like mere redundancy or lack of vocabulary can be seen as the competent use of reiteration by those familiar with the aesthetic values of the community he serves:

Today, I come with a prayer in my heart
That **something** we've done or said
Over these twenty years
Has been a blessing to your life.
Maybe it hasn't been at the core of your life,

But there might have been **some** Sunday morning
 Or **some** Sunday afternoon
 When your burdens might have been heavy.
Sometimes when you're troubled,
 Burdens heavy, weighed down.
 There've been times
 when **some** of you have been lonely.
 There've been times
 when **some** of you have been sad.
 Death visited your address.
Some of you have been bereaved.
 I can only hope and pray
 That through the Lord's will,
 He has given us an opportunity to serve --
 Put **something** on the turntable
 Or maybe say **something** that comforted your heart.

The text is unified, that is, has lexical cohesion, in part because of the recurrence of "some" which is spoken nine times. The repeated "figure of sound" sets up a pattern which helps hold the attention of the congregants. Though "some" appears to lack specificity, a closer look reveals that its effectiveness in this passage comes from allowing the audience to "fill in the blanks" without any prompting from Hobbs. It also helps him to underscore one of his points: I may or may not have been at the center of your life, but I have endeavored to be there for you. They alone know when and how often Hobbs has helped them to celebrate a triumph or continue on their journey.

Inside this same text, Hobbs also made use of parallelism:

There've been times when some of you have been lonely.
There've been times when some of you have been sad....
...Some of you have been bereaved.

Parallelism locks these three sentences together in two ways, syntagmatically (word choices) and paradigmatically (word patterns). The first two sentences are almost identical with the exception of the last word of each. In the third sentence, a pattern has been set up so successfully with the first two, that there is no longer any need for Hobbs to repeat the whole introductory phrase; the audience already sees where he is going and can fill in the blanks for themselves ("Some of you have been...") And then, because the last words--lonely, sad, bereaved--are virtually synonymous, the sentences are further entwined. The audience has, then, three opportunities to think over the twenty years of Hobbs' service on the station and to remember those challenging times when his program offered spiritual renewal and uplift.

These sentences encompass the purpose of his work as a gospel announcer and, hence, the reason for the celebration: it has been his desire to serve God by serving them through inspirational words and music. Hobbs and his work have been a part of the community for two decades. In fact, the word "turntable" reminds the audience that their experiences together extend back to a time before there were CD players and cassette machines.

Like Al "The Bishop" Hobbs, Poindexter, too, is adept at manipulating text to maximum effectiveness by incorporating repetition when necessary as she did during

her introduction of the Gospel Keynotes at the Grand Old Opry:

When I look back and I wonder
 How good The Man's been to me,
 I say, "I'm Yours, Lord. Huh!
 Everything I've got. Huh! (r)
 Everything I own. Huh! (R)
 All that I have. Huh! (R)
 The shoes on my feet." Huh! (RR)
 FROM TYLER, TEXAS, WILLIE NEAL JOHNSON AND
 THE GOSPEL KEYNOTES!!!! (RRRR)

Poindexter, an ordained minister, borrowed directly from that part of her oral repertoire as she punctuated her introduction with the vocable "Huh!" which, in his discussions of Black preachers and audiences, Davis refers to as a "sermonphone." The term refers to the vocables and certain easily recognizable phrases that are inserted during the performance of sermons by either the preacher or the audience (Davis 95). "Huh!", decontextualized from a sermon and encontextualized in this concert setting, served several purposes for Poindexter.

It performed the same duty that "some" and "something" did for Hobbs, that of creating a pattern which involved the audience. The "Huh's" helped Poindexter to establish a rhythm, much the way preachers do when chanting and establishing a definite meter during the main part of the sermon. The meter was also strengthened by the fact that the words being spoken were the lyrics to a popular gospel song (placed in quotation marks), thus pointing to gospel

music as an important source of text for gospel announcers. The sermonphone, which Davis says "carries semantic affect in the context of African-American narrative performance" performs double duty (7). While helping Poindexter to establish a rhythm, it concurrently indexed the Black church experience, specifically, the sermon. In that way, it helped the announcer to further "transform" the space, in this case The Grand Old Opry, into sacred ground.

Just as she had opened the presentation with the metanarrational entertainment disclaimer ("I don't know what you've come to do..."), Poindexter closed with another set of familiar words, which allowed the audience to anticipate what she was going to say next and to participate in the patterning by applauding and even standing to their feet before she got to the end.

More than the other two announcers, at least in the samples that were analyzed, Tatum incorporates metaphorical language. It is, in fact, this device which assists her in speaking standard truths in fresh, unique ways. Here, she conveys the hope of the faithful that the "unsaved" or backsliders will submit their lives to God as a result of being in the evening's service:

We have come here to have
 An encounter with the Eternal --
 A collision so great and so serious
 That it will injure your pride (R)
 And wound your egocentrism, (R)
 Break the bones of your wretchedness,
 And put you in heaven's hospital (R)

Where Dr. Jesus will perform surgery (RR)
 And then send you to the recovery room
 Under the therapeutic presence
 Of the Holy Spirit. (RR)

Larry McMurtry, a feedback respondent who is a commercial art director, said he (and apparently much of the audience) just appreciated the fact that Tatum avoids using hackneyed phrases. On the other hand, Bertha Harris, who agrees that Tatum "just has a way with words," wondered if the audience actually heard her carefully-honed text or were responding to her sound. Though that aspect of her delivery will be examined, here it is likely that the combination--figurative language and an arresting sound--evoked the responses from the audience.

Similarly, during the fiftieth anniversary celebration for Cleveland, Tatum delivered an introduction marked by figurative language:

Fifty years ago, jubilation filled the sky
 And excitement rode
 On the wings of a passing breeze.
 The Spirit descended like a dove
 And a voice spoke
 From the other side of heaven and said:
 "This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased,
 And you can't touch this!"

Unlike Tatum's other introductions, which received unanimous approval when I played them during the interviews, this piece met with disapproval from three of the respondents. Their discomfort centered on the way Tatum takes the story of Jesus' baptism and adapts it to Cleveland's "baptism"

into gospel music fifty years earlier--a "deification" which they felt was unwarranted and placed too much emphasis on the messenger (Cleveland) and not on God. Like the Hobbs' entrance, of which this same group disapproved, Tatum's piece received resounding applause from the audience to whom it was delivered that night. The difference in response between those present and those who heard it later may, in fact, begin with context. Although I was not present for the occasion, I never perceived while listening to the tape that Tatum's intent was "deification"; rather, I suspected that she had endeavored to find a unique way to say that God had blessed James Cleveland for a special work.

Nevertheless, the warning that this particular group of gospel announcers issued was that their colleagues (and all public speakers) should be extremely careful about the implications of their metaphorical language.

Sound

The manipulation of sound encompasses several aspects: the ability of gospel announcers, as well as gospel singers and traditional Black preachers, to transmit a sense of intensity, fullness, and energy while subtly manipulating shading and contrast. These nuances, which often go unnoticed by those unfamiliar with the traditions, may be achieved several ways: a given performer can utilize a range of sounds and timbres; a choir or group can feature

two or more voices of contrasting timbres in one song; or both voice(s) and instrument(s) can be contrasted for effect (Burnim 144). This category also incorporates the manipulation of three other closely-related elements: pitch, intonation, and "songified speech."

Sound quality is critical to the performances of all three of these announcers, both on radio and in the live setting. Sugar Poindexter, for one, was described by one fan who participated in the survey as being "down to earth and on fire for Jesus" (Poindexter 1991). Poindexter, who has a throaty, sometimes raspy timbre, has referred to her own voice as embodying several qualities: "It [her voice] says: `Stop. Listen. Hear.'...It has a certain command...love...sex appeal...." Poindexter manipulates sound quality to her advantage as readily and as capably as does her colleague, Hobbs. For example, on the November 4, 1990, "Bobby Jones Gospel" presentation, Poindexter combined energy and contrasting timbres with appropriate text so effectively that before she had completed her introduction of the performers (Willie Neal Johnson and The Gospel Keynotes), the audience was on its feet. In the introduction, which was less than one minute in length, Poindexter used sounds which ran the gamut from sotto voce, almost guttural whispers to high volume, full-throated exclamations. What made the presentation doubly effective was the reiteration of the vocable "Huh!", which was already

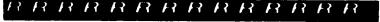
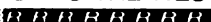
discussed under repetition.

 But TONIGHT!!!(RR)
 We can come in here in our finery (R)
 PRAISING the God of our salvation.(R)
 DON'T HAVE TO HAVE NO SODA POP.(R)
 DON'T HAVE TO HAVE NO BOTTLE TOPS.(RR)

	Raspy quality
	Whisper
	Volume range
	(R) Audience response

What you talkin' 'bout? (RRR)
 WHEN I LOOK BACK AND WONDER
 HOW GOOD THE MAN'S BEEN TO ME(RR)
 I SAY, "I'M YOURS LORD." Huh! (RR)
 "EVERYTHING I AM." Huh! (RR)

Poindexter also uses these contrasting volumes, timbres and pitches during her radio broadcast. During the "Beautiful Garden of Prayer," she begins quietly: "Good morning, God. It's me again." By the time she reaches the next line, her voice is just a breathy whisper: "And I just want to take this time to say, 'Thank You.'" As she moves through the next part of the text, her volume increases, the timbre becomes raspier, and the pitch rises until her voice is full and intense without being shrill or blaringly loud:

 And right now, won't you
 TOUCH, HEAL, AND DELIVER?!
 FROM THE NORTH TO THE SOUTH!
 FROM THE EAST TO THE WEST!
 Send out your HEALING VIRTUE

In the name of Thy Son,
 Jesus Christ, who DIED for us all!

She ends the prayer the same way she began -- quietly:

Go with me, and stand by me
 In the name of Jesus.
 Amen, and thank God.

One respondent, McMurtry, actually closed his eyes, shook his head, and waved his hands during this prayer. When he opened them at the end, "That's alright" [That's an effective prayer].

During the Hobbs' tribute, when her job was to introduce the dignitaries who were there to salute Hobbs, Poindexter used a smooth, clear vocal quality and her most clipped diction. When it was time to revitalize and reinvolve the audience in the service, her timbre changed dramatically; the raspier sound was utilized, her volume and intensity were moved up several notches and eventually became strong enough to move the indicator on my audio cassette recorder from the middle range, where it had been, into the "red." The proof that this change--combined with several other techniques--was effective--was that the audience responded to her "call" and did so with increasing volume in imitation of Poindexter.

Many in the audience seemed to enjoy Poindexter immensely, which they demonstrated by applauding and responding to her sollicitational frames. However, I made note of the fact that at least a few others were not so moved or amused. For example, a woman who sat next to me during the Hobbs' anniversary remarked after one of Poindexter's more spirited segments of narration: "I am too dressed up to have that woman holler at me." Smith and Harris, two of the feedback respondents, also noted that Poindexter's style was one that "you'd either love or hate."

If my other respondents were any indication, Harris and Smith are right. Two in the group found her performance enjoyable. "Her voice reminds me of the sounds I heard when I got saved," said one, while another stated that he appreciated the reassurance her timbre gave him. "She's 'Auntie' Sug [Sugar]." One respondent, however, had a very negative response to Poindexter's style when she was the most intense in her delivery. "Black people will just accept anything," was the vehement statement. Neither of the other announcers, Hobbs or Tatum, evoked such strong, divided opinions among the respondents. However, the mixed reactions to Poindexter did reinforce my observation that a range of styles exists and finds acceptance within the gospel music community. As announcer/respondent Bertha Harris put it, "Every announcer has an audience. I believe that's just the way God arranged it."

Tatum, who frequently receives compliments regarding her vocal timbre, says that she inherited her vocal quality from her mother. A comparison of her recordings from the 1970's and the 1990's reveals that the basic pitch of her voice has dropped, giving her a lower, throatier sound. What has remained constant, however, is its mellow, almost hushed quality which she accentuates through inflection.¹⁶ Tatum also utilizes different timbres during a given performance as she did in the Carnegie Hall introduction "It Was Love." The intensity of her delivery increased as she read the list of nine ways in which Jesus showed love, which concluded with these four:

He preached like a preacher, //

He healed like a doctor, (R)

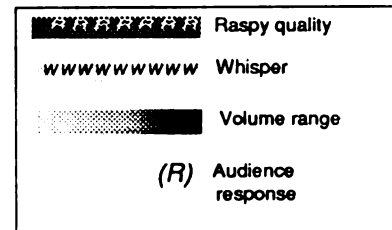
He fed like a grocerman, (R)

He walked like a hobo, (R)

And it was LOVE (RR)

That made Him

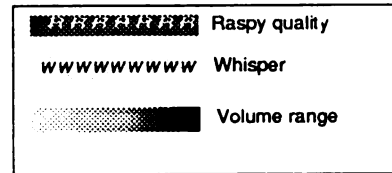
Speak like a mighty God. (RR)



The audience showed its appreciation for the content, the parallelism, and the rhythm by "boosting" her until the pinnacle of the piece is reached: "Speak like a mighty God." The last three lines shift the focus from Jesus to the listener. Tatum decreases her volume, stops the

rhythmic pattern, and by the time she gets to the last line, she whispers:

As Christians today,
We must spread the love of God.
wwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwww
Tell me///do you/// love///everybody????



Generally, however, Tatum's "easy to listen to" voice, as Harris called it, along with her unique text, intonation, and timing, is what grabs her audiences. It is not unusual for her to be greeted at the end of a performance by admirers who say, "The choir didn't have to sing. I could have listened to you all night."¹⁷ Like Hobbs and Poindexter, she clearly knows how to set a mood with her voice.

Hobbs has been blessed with a clear yet mellifluous timbre which he knows how to utilize effectively. His anniversary is a good case in point. He began his performance by singing in a strong manner which continued to build to the climax of the song; by the end, his voice was full and his delivery intense. He also incorporated a James Cleveland-like gravelly timbre at certain points of the song, which offered a contrast to his usually-smooth vocal quality and assisted him in presenting his song in a competent, compelling manner. The evidence that the performance was evocative was that a majority of the

audience clapped and/or sang along, some while standing; others participated while remaining in their seats.

When the song ended, he began to speak in a voice that sounded slightly winded. While this could have been a simple indication of exertion, the breathy presentation also served to underscore the first few words which he spoke: The out-of-breath delivery underlined the obvious: the tribute had not been thrown together. Indeed, a lot of time and effort had gone into its execution. This was corroborated by such elements as the splendid hall in which the event was being held, which certainly could not have been booked at the last minute; the timely start of the event; the coordination of the colors worn by key participants, and the strategic arrangement of the segments within the service.

According to the comments given by the respondents to my questionnaire, one of the reasons Hobbs' fans listen to him is the timbre of his voice which was described as "smooth, relaxed, sophisticated, dramatic" (See Question 9 Appendix II). During a 1991 interview, he talked about his ability to manipulate vocal timbre and volume toward various ends: "to create a calming effect," to create a sense of "authority," "to set moods," "to set the stage for music," "to embellish what the music is going to do."¹⁸ Elder Samuel Williams, a gospel announcer and promoter from New York, praised Hobbs during our interview for possessing "once-in-a-lifetime pipes."¹⁹ The feedback respondents all

concurred that vocally, he is well-equipped for his work on and off the air. Indeed, Hobbs' performance is a combination of cultural awareness and technical skill ensconced in his unique vocal quality.

During the delivery of his remarks at the anniversary Hobbs eventually decreased his volume to the point where the almost hushed tone of his voice was in marked contrast to the big, exuberant sound he had incorporated while singing earlier. The combination of his naturally smooth vocal timbre and the sincerity conveyed through his quiet intensity seemed to fully engage the audience. They, in turn, demonstrated their absorption through responding to Hobbs with words, applause, head nodding and even through rapt attention at various times.

Further enhancing Hobbs' vocal timbre was the fact that he talked while instrumental music played softly under his words. With the utilization of this "radio" technique, Hobbs transported the audience to the place where most of them first met him, i.e, the radio program, where he is at his best combining music and his distinctive voice. The difference here, of course, is that there is a "live" audience to show their appreciation.

What is most evident from these performances from Tatum, Hobbs and Poindexter is that just as gospel singers must "build" the intensity and manipulate timbres in order to elicit responses from the congregation, gospel announcers

must also be aware of how utilizing these aspects can enhance their performance and, hence, the manner and degree to which the audience responds. On his radio program, "Jubilation," Hobbs also layers timbres. He segues quickly from one song to the next, placing the introductory music of one song on top of the ending strains of the preceding one. And, as was previously discussed, because he favors talking through the music, there are sometimes three audio sources affecting the listener at a given time. Because that kind of situation occurs in church, two of the feedback respondents referred to Hobbs as "churchin' real good."

Pitch

Despite the fact that pitch is normally associated with singing, this aspect of sound quality does in fact play an important role in the performances of gospel announcers. On radio even more so than in live performance, announcers who wish to be effective must be careful not to combine high volume and high pitch lest they be accused of "shrieking" over the air--a combination guaranteed to push the volume indicator into the danger (distortion) range. Poindexter's pitch in conjunction with her volume reached the critical level at least twice during the anniversary. Instead of being disruptive in the live setting, however, Poindexter's energy, pitch and volume seemed to enhance the proceedings for many in the audience. In fact, it appeared that for the

majority, at the anniversary and at the "Bobby Jones Gospel" taping, the combination of rising pitch and volume seemed to be just what they wanted, expected or both as evidenced by their response.

During our interview, Poindexter mentioned the fact that Hobbs had worked with her over the years to help her modulate her pitch on radio, that is, utilize the lower register of her vocal range, and that for the most part, she felt she had been successful. Hobbs, while acknowledging that Poindexter almost always controls her pitch while on radio, suggested that she would always have to remain conscious of that aspect of her voice so as not to sound "shrill" on air. (One woman who heard the tape when I played it at a conference said, "It just sounds like Pentecostal preaching to me.") Hobbs, who can also go "all out" as he calls it, chooses to utilize the lower part of his vocal range because he says he can be just as effective with that segment of his voice as some who choose to move into the higher pitches of their ranges. And since Hobbs feels that it does not require as much exertion to speak in lower, well-modulated tones, he is not "worn out" (exhausted) on Monday from his Sunday performance.

My personal experience has been of having to control my pitch so that it is not construed as being "sexy." When I used my lowest pitch on the air, I got such comments as "Whatever you're selling, baby, I want some of that!" By

using a more mid-range pitch, I was able to avert regular comments of that sort and to keep my (male) listeners focussed on the message and not the messenger's voice.

Intonation, the deliberate use of rising and falling vocal pitches, is an essential aspect of Tatum's concert performances and causes her to produce "songified speech" like that of the traditional preacher. Of the three announcers, Hobbs has the biggest voice, and Poindexter utilizes the greatest variation in timbre; yet it is Tatum about whom each group of respondents asked: "Is she a preacher?" When I asked the reason for their question, I was told "Because she performs in that style." It is the combination of intonation and the set rhythmic pattern that gives her performance a cadence associated with preachers.

They **s a i d** ///

He could not sing //

And he could **only** play the piano in one key.

But **you** and **I** know that when **man** puts you **DOWN**//(R)

God is **able** to **lift you up**. (RRR)

Doors were closed in his face.

But when **man** closes **one** door,

God is able to open **TEN** more.

And if you're running a **little** late,

He'll **hold** 'em open 'til you get **there**.

Besides providing an announcer with a chant-like

delivery, intonation can also assist the speaker in sounding inquisitive, playful, challenging, and, of course, spiritually moved. Hobbs used contrastive intonation at least twice during his anniversary:

I wish today that all of Indianapolis
 Would be in these seats.
 But I tell you something.
 If God never does anything else for me,
 I can stand here before you today and say that

He's *already* ///

done enough.

And...

I feel like

It's my party //

And I'll **CRY** if I want to.

It's my party //

And I'll **SHOUT** if I want to.

In the first instance, the contrastive falling-rising tone helps to underscore Hobbs' ability to be content with a less-than-capacity audience at the tribute. Where others might have been tempted to bemoan the attendance, his intonation, coupled with his words ("He's already done enough") sends a different message. In the second passage, there are layers of contrasts. First, Hobbs encontextualizes the lyrics from a pop song, "It's My Party," recorded in the early 60's by the White, female singer Leslie Gore, and places them in the unlikely setting of a Black gospel music concert. Then he makes use of the irony inherent in the original lyrics: "It's my party, and I'll cry if I want to."

Here, the contrasting intonation underlines the renaming of this tribute as a party, and points to the fact that, according to popular culture, parties of any sort are situations that generate happiness. Through word and intonation, Hobbs plays with these contrasting notions of happiness. The "happiness" of the Black gospel music tradition encompasses crying and even "shouting" (entering into an altered state of consciousness) if the individual is so moved, hence the term--"getting happy" in church. The audience's response to Al's creatively selected text and contrastive intonation confirms that he is a skilled speaker, knowledgeable about what can be effective oral literature when delivered before a Black audience.

Pitch, volume, timbre, and intonation, then, can be important aids in the performances of gospel announcers.

Time

Anyone who would perform competently within the Black church should come with the knowledge of how to shape lyrics and Scripture, rhythms and melodies to fit particular situations (Burnim 157-59, 178). The artist should also understand that the total length of a performance as well as the perceived time length of the elements within the performance can have an affect on the audience and how they respond. Perhaps Edna Tatum captured the spirit of the dilemma for gospel announcers when she said, "You've got to

kn

pe

ap

th

fo

th

As

re

in

go

li

Sp

re

ch

is

d

p

m

w

o

s

b

re

ha

know when to get in and when to come out" [of a performance].²⁰

Perhaps what sets the performances of gospel announcers apart from that of the singer or the preacher is the fact that by definition, the announcers are rarely the central focus of a given broadcast or concert. Certainly, they have the spotlight when they introduce the artists or recordings. Audiences often take great delight in and have reported receiving great spiritual comfort (or, in some cases, irritation) from their work. All of this notwithstanding, gospel announcers are primarily spiritual and musical liaisons, bringing together artists and audiences, Holy Spirit and congregants, sponsors and consumers. For this reason, then, time, both real and perceived, is perhaps one of the most important elements they must master whether it is during their broadcasts, which have time boundaries, or during concerts where, no matter how creatively they perform, they are paving the way for the singers and musicians.

Interviewing and presenting commercial announcements with an eye on the clock are what disc jockeys of every type of music have to do. But praying within the allotted segment, sharing a testimony without missing the commercial break, and offering spiritual counsel to someone before the recording ends are just a few of the responsibilities that have to be handled "creatively" by gospel announcers.

Poindexter has utilized creativity in handling one aspect of her program by having ministers from the city pre-record short prayers that she can use each morning. The reason for that she said is that "I only have time to play the music and play more music."²¹ Having the prayers already prepared can free her to handle other aspects of the program in an efficient manner.

In the live setting, Hobbs most memorably displayed his mastery of timing when he made his entrance at Clowes Hall. The gradual elevation of the stage allowed the audience to see Hobbs and his attire a little at a time; this meant he could get the maximum effect of heightening the audience's curiosity by delaying his arrival. It was, in effect, an exemplary manipulation of time plus style of delivery during an evening in which timing was obviously a major consideration.

Poindexter also showed her mastery of time through her effective manner of handling the improvisational aspects of her duties during the tribute. Even when she was exhorting and reinvolving the audience in the service, her remarks were pointed rather than rambling and self-involved. Her introductions were delivered enthusiastically enough to excite the audience without taking an unnecessary amount of time. And when the band for the Smallwood Singers was finally set up, she proved her ability to give a one-sentence introduction if necessary: "Ladies and gentlemen:

Richard Smallwood and the Smallwood Singers!" Despite the number of performers on the program, most of the audience was still present when the Smallwood Singers were introduced at 10:15 PM--five hours after the official start of the program. The smooth manipulation of time--from the punctual start to the almost non-stop flow of music--would appear to have had a major impact on the attendance holding as well as it did throughout the evening.

Hobbs' anniversary was constructed with a number of time considerations in mind, including "taking time" to thank the audience early in the evening. By doing so, Hobbs was able to speak to the audience before individuals had to leave for various reasons and while their collective energy was still high. The program was segmented so that even the presentations and ceremonial aspects would not "belabor" the assembly, that is, make them restless for "church" to begin anew. During those few times when the audience seemed a little restless, Poindexter was there to pull them back into the service. When the total amount of time devoted to the presentations (one half hour) is compared with the actual length of the event (six hours) it is clear that Hobbs' tribute was music-driven and that these professional announcers knew how to keep the "flow."

Since much has already been said about Tatum's preacher-like delivery, suffice it to say that it is her use of time coupled with the text and sound quality that grabs

audiences. Tatum herself believes that this is a definitive quality of her work, an attribute that must be heard to be sufficiently appreciated.

Functional Dimensions

More important than the words gospel announcers speak are the functions the performances serve within the African American community. Burnim has proven that "gospel music reflects and transmits a sense of the historical past for Black Americans" and "is simultaneously an agent for spiritual sustenance and an agent for reinforcement of cultural identity" (Burnim 1988: 112). It is reasonable to assume, then, that the words spoken by gospel announcers perform in the same manner. In fact, the texts rendered by Hobbs, Poindexter, and Tatum operate on several levels -- historical, spiritual and cultural. Frequently, they include the range of expressive terms that constitute "Black Semantics" (Smitherman 42-43).

Undergirding Poindexter's powerful introduction on BET, for instance, is her devotion to God and her desire to belong totally to Him: "I'm yours, Lord. Everything I've got." But that introduction also provided an opportunity for her to reflect upon the racism Black people had experienced and from which they had been delivered:

Here we are in Nashville, Tennessee.
My mind goes back some 58 odd years.
The town where I was born.

The place where I come from.
 In the building where we as black people
 Could not come but once a year.
 Once a year, we came in here
 With Coca Cola and Double Cola tops
 To be able to see and sit in
 On the Grand Ole Opry.
 But tonight, we can come in here in our finery,
 Praising the God of our salvation....

While it is likely that most of the audience was not from Nashville, the applause, head nods and sermonphones from the audience--"Go `head," "Come on, Sugar"--said clearly that they, recognized Poindexter's words as an oral historical document concerning the segregation that the "group" had experienced and the inconveniences (such as collecting bottle tops) they had endured just to be able to enjoy some of the same pleasures whites took for granted (attending a concert at the Grand Old Opry). The text was also a spiritual celebration of God's ability to reverse such situations, giving them further reason to sing with conviction: "I'm yours, Lord!"

Tatum also stacks social and spiritual references together. In this example, she utilizes signification in order to speak, not only about James Cleveland and the rejection he had to endure, but about Black people in general:

They said he could not sing
 And he could only play in one key.
 But you and I know that when man puts you down,
 God is able to lift you up.
 Doors were closed in his face.
 But when man closes one door,

God is able to open up ten more.
 And if you're running a little late,
 He'll hold them open until you get there.

Tatum adds a little twist at the end, a cultural wink at the fact that African Americans and others often say "Black folks are always late." She reminds the audience that God is in control of who gets blessed and can even work around what are perceived as racial or personal shortcomings.

In an effort to deflect the spotlight from himself at Clowes Hall, Hobbs remarked that the evening's opulent surroundings, fine talent, and, indeed, the very fact that audience and announcer were present to witness the event testified to the fact that "we serve a God that's good." Then he talks about how far the Lord has brought them, another call for both personal and cultural inspection:

But I didn't come because I want you to honor me;
 I came because we serve a God that's good. (RR)
 When I look and see how far He's brought me, (R)
 I can't help but believe that
 He's brought many of you from that same distance.
 Do I have any witnesses in here? (RR)

Hundreds of Black sacred songs speak about "how far He's brought us," and asking for a "witness" is part of secular as well as sacred Black culture as proven by Marvin Gaye's Motown hit, "Can I Get a Witness?" Both phrases are encontextualized frequently because of their ability to refer simultaneously to matters spiritual and secular, individual yet communal. The first asserts that God has

delivered the speaker or hearer from "dangers seen and unseen," but it can also remind Black audiences that God has been on their side as well. The second encourages the audience to speak up and testify of God's goodness.

From all three speakers, we can find evidence of an immersion in Black culture based on their use of "Black Semantics." Though they sometimes draw from secular culture, more often it is "divine dialect," those idioms that Black church goers have used for years. For example: Tatum borrows the line "You Can't Touch This" from rap artist Hammer (who adapted the tune from Rick James' R & B song "Super Freak") in order to describe the special status God gave Cleveland within the gospel music milieu; describes Cleveland's traditional way with a gospel song as "heart-fixing, mind-regulating, soul-reviving"; reminds her radio audience to be grateful that they still have "the blood running warm in their veins," that God has been good and "He didn't have to do it...but He did."

Conclusion

Often, Black church goers, gospel music lovers and performers can be heard to say that "The Word" or "The Message" is the crux of gospel music. It follows, then, that because gospel announcers are purveyors of the message in spoken form, they constitute yet another critical sector of the Black gospel music tradition and are held accountable

for measuring up to the cultural/religious expectations associated with the genre. Using performance-centered research by Burnim and Davis, it is apparent that gospel announcers, though varying in their styles of performance, are bound by the same culturally-derived value system. It is also clear that these three highly-visible announcers are deserving of their prominence in large part because of the competence they display when measured against that aesthetic.

A. C.
197

Gene
reco
alre

DEL

tha
Cle
Ann

Cho

the
ind.
crea
Inno
Merr
173-
resp

END NOTES

1. Pearl Williams-Jones, "Afro-American Gospel Music: A Crystallization of the Black Aesthetic," Ethnomusicology 19 (1975): 373-385.
2. Hobbs, 1991.
3. Poindexter, 1991.
4. Edna Tatum, telephone interview, 9 October 1993.
5. In fact, Hobbs and Poindexter hosted the segment of "Bobby Jones Gospel" together, but by the time I was able to set my tape recorder up to catch this unannounced performance, Hobbs had already finished speaking.
6. **"James Cleveland: 'Live' at Carnegie Hall."** Savoy Records DBL 7014, 1977.
7. Tatum, 1993.
8. Tatum, telephone interview, 7 March 1994.
9. Smith, 1993.
10. Tatum, 1994. Information was also taken from an audio tape that was made of the event and given to me by Ed Smith, who was Cleveland's booking manager, and the co-producer of the Fiftieth Anniversary Salute.
11. **"Rev. James Cleveland and the Northern & Southern California Choirs of the G.M.W.A."** Savoy VHS 9506, 1990.
12. Poindexter, 1991.
13. Tatum, 1994.
14. Hobbs, 1991.
15. In this excerpt and throughout the balance of this section, the responses of the audience, verbal and/or kinesic, will be indicated by an (R). This notation is borrowed from a system created by Peter Gold in "The Black Sermon and the Communication of Innovation." Discourse in Ethnomusicology II: Tribute to Alan P. Merriam. Bloomington: Ethnomusicology Publications Group, 1981, 173-201. In my adaptation, (r) indicates a slight or small response, (R) refers to a stronger response, etc.

16. Two of the feedback respondents from two different groups commented that Tatum reminded them of Nikki Giovanni, a Black poet and activist who, in the 1970's, recorded two albums of poetry backed by the New York Community Choir. I agree; the vocal timbres and styles of delivery are in fact very similar.

17. Tatum, 1993.

18. Hobbs, 1991.

19. Samuel Williams, personal interview, 15 August 1991.

20. Tatum, 1993.

21. Poindexter, 1994.

CHAPTER VI: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study of the gospel announcer and the Black gospel music tradition rests on two tenets:

A) Gospel announcers, because of the specific responsibilities, behaviors, and rituals they carry out, not the least of which is the dissemination of gospel music on radio, have been an integral part of the Black gospel music tradition since their emergence in the 1930's.

B) The performances of gospel announcers are undergirded by the same cultural values that permeate performances by other Black artists, particularly those rendered by gospel singers and traditional preachers. Their performances are, therefore, further evidence of the pervasive nature of a Black aesthetic identified in the work of preachers and gospel singers by such scholars as Gerald L. Davis and Mellonee Burnim.

Previous scholarship has demonstrated that the Black gospel music tradition consists of African and African American modes of music, dance, speech, and drama with religion as its contextual arena (Williams-Jones 376; Burnim 135). Though an ever-increasing body of research has been devoted to those who sing and compose the music, only a minute part of these inquiries has concerned gospel announcers who have constituted a segment of the gospel milieu for more than sixty years.

The contribution of this particular body of research to

the scholarship on African American expressive culture is that it offers an examination of gospel announcers whose importance to gospel music and to the larger Black community has gone largely undocumented. I employed a variety of methodological strategies in order to uncover the data that serve as the foundation for this project. My investigation officially began with a literature search through which I garnered a number of articles and short items on gospel announcers and radio. The sources ranged from trade and industry magazines to popular publications. Scholarly articles specifically addressing the role of gospel announcers are relatively few; however, those which were identified, particularly works by Ray Allen and Louis Cantor, proved to be important supports for my search. On the other hand, Anthony Heilbut's material on announcers actually assisted me in another manner. His assertion that gospel announcers are largely a monolithic entity with one basic performance style--"folksy and familiar"--was at least one impetus for me to document the range of skills and performances presented by announcers.

Although the above-mentioned literary sources provided some solid information on pioneering and contemporary announcers, stations, and practices, much of my data were acquired from interviews and oral histories with thirty gospel announcers, and a number of gospel artists, promoters, and advertisers who utilize gospel radio.

Because performance analysis is the primary focus of this study, I reviewed the significant articles that have been produced on this approach. Richard Bauman's research, which delineates the important aspects of performance, including its framing, keying, patterning, and emergent quality, functioned as the over-arching paradigm. However, the significant examinations made by Pearl Williams-Jones, Mellonee Burnim, and Gerald L. Davis on the performances of gospel singers and Black preachers were more directly relevant to my discussion. Two of these scholars produced work that served as excellent touchstones for my research. Burnim, using methodology similar to mine, demonstrated that the Black gospel music tradition is a symbol of ethnicity (as had Williams-Jones in a short, 1975 article). Davis illustrated that a distinct culturally-derived value system provides the foundation for the performance of the Black sermon.

What differentiates my work from that of Burnim is the shift in focus from the singers who perform the music and are, therefore, the more visible members of the industry, to the announcers who serve the tradition by using rhetorical skills and hosting abilities. They are, consequently, the bonding agents and unsung champions within the gospel community. Davis' study highlights the performed sermon, widely acknowledged as the highest form of oratory within the African American community. My analysis reveals that

gospel announcers do indeed mirror the work of Black ministers in innumerable ways; however, the broadcast medium through which they serve and the facilitators' role they fill has necessitated that the "sermon" and other aspects of worship be creatively adapted and reformatted. This adaptation is due, to a great extent, to the more truncated time segments that gospel announcers encounter on radio and in concert settings.

Since performance is at the center of this work, it was imperative that significant time be devoted to the appraisal of announcers in their usual environs. After I had analyzed several performance tapes featuring Al "The Bishop" Hobbs, Delores "Sugar" Poindexter, and Edna Tatum on radio and in the "live" context, I conducted feedback interviews with eight gospel music professionals. The panel, all of whom have multiple responsibilities within the Black gospel and church communities, included five announcers, a minister, a gospel station manager, and seven singers and/or musicians. Their important contribution to this dissertation was to review the videotaped and audio taped performances and to comment candidly and clearly on what they heard and witnessed. Though their educational backgrounds, denominations, and experiences were diverse, the feedback respondents did generally corroborate the several conclusions I had developed regarding the work of gospel announcers, that is, that there is a range of presentational

styles that are utilized and, most significantly, that range is embraced by the community.

With all of these sources informing my work--popular and scholarly literature, oral histories and interviews, performance-centered research models, and feedback interviews--I have arrived at a number of conclusions regarding gospel announcers:

1. Gospel announcers have played an integral role in making gospel music a vital component of Black radio and of community life. From their emergence in the 1930's as the hosts of "live" radio broadcasts on which sacred quartets were featured, to their heyday in the late 1940's and 1950's when gospel music, along with blues, was the "backbone" of Black radio, to their current placement on more than five hundred radio stations nation-wide (one hundred of which are designated as "all gospel"), gospel announcers have presented gospel music and an inspirational message to an ever-growing audience of gospel music aficionados.

2. Since their first appearance sixty years ago, gospel announcers have codified several functions which they carry out whether they live in small rural communities or major metropolitan centers. Primary among their cultural responsibilities is functioning as the main media source for gospel music. Their audiences include those seeking spiritual sustenance as well as those who simply enjoy the

sound of this seminal African American artform.

3. Gospel announcers use the inspirational lyrics of the music they play as well as "Black Semantics," the sacred and secular idioms and phrases that are used throughout the community, in order to encourage and inspire their audiences. This aspect of their radio and concert work, which the majority of them refer to as their "ministry," is what they themselves cite as their most important responsibility.

4. Those gospel announcers who have been immersed in the Black gospel music tradition are capable of transforming, and are often expected to transform, both radio airwaves and secular concert sites into "churches." These transformations are brought about through the utilization of the rhetoric and replication of many of the "subsegments" of the traditional African American worship, including prayer, the reading of scripture, and the presentation of the "message." Because gospel music was created within the Black church, the "tendency to ritualize," as Jack Santino calls it, means that even the most unlikely venues can become sacred ground. Gospel announcers serve as creative ritualists, that is, transformers who can figuratively "transport" their listeners from concert halls, hospital rooms, or prison cells into the "sanctuaries" where gospel was created.

The transformation is possible because of the manner in

which the music and words are combined as well as because of the relatively vaunted status announcers achieve within the gospel community as a result of their involvement with the music and its "stars," the level of competence they display while carrying out their responsibilities, and their place on the hot medium of radio.

5. Gospel announcers serve as bridges between African American consumers and advertisers. Because of their credibility, visibility, and salesmanship, gospel announcers have historically been able to attract the support of local businesses. However, in recent years, major corporate sponsors have also reached Black audiences by supporting gospel music programming and hiring gospel announcers as their liaisons. The results include numerous big-budget gospel events, such as the "McDonald's GospelFest" and Quaker Oats' "Voices of Tomorrow" as well as an enhanced profile for the music and the announcers.

6. Gospel announcers and their programs are often the direct beneficiaries of the financial support provided by advertisers. However, the presence of commercials on their broadcasts can present several challenges for the announcers, including moving creatively from inspiring listeners to selling products, endorsing said products in a manner that is inviting rather than offensive to potential customers, and handling announcements as if they are an important, necessary part of the program rather than a

nuisance and hindrance to the broadcast.

Some gospel radio listeners have reported that the number of advertisements on a given program can seem overwhelming, particularly since they are tuned in to hear the music and/or the inspirational words of the announcer. Consequently, the announcer is also confronted with the task of presenting a program that is so compelling that the audience is willing, at the very least, to tolerate the announcements, and ideally, to listen to the ads and buy the sponsors' products. This aspect of balancing the spiritual and the commercial is not unique to gospel announcers within the Black church and gospel music arenas. But whereas preachers or their surrogates usually have to name sponsors or refer to financial matters infrequently during the course of a broadcast, gospel announcers who work on commercial radio are challenged repeatedly, often every quarter hour, to utilize their skills and charm in order to juxtapose sacred and secular elements. The financial viability of their programs and that of their stations often rest upon attracting advertising dollars as well as on the announcers' ability to keep both consumer and advertiser satisfied.

7. Gospel announcers render performances that are multi-dimensional in function. Their work can be appreciated by Black audiences on spiritual, cultural, commercial, and personal levels--often simultaneously. Songs and verbal messages that encourage listeners to "hold

on," for example, can exhort gospel aficionados to remain faithful to their God, to work tenaciously for the empowerment of the African American community, and to strive for excellence within their careers. The fact that both the "churched and unchurched" tune in to the programs and attend the concerts further attests to the various levels on which their performances, like the music they play, can be enjoyed.

8. Gospel announcers, like Black preachers and gospel singers, perform in a manner that demonstrates their immersion in African American culture. Preachers, singers, and announcers are required to manipulate several performance elements according to cultural standards: the physical realm, including attire and kinesics; text, sound quality, and time. To the extent that they handle these elements according to cultural guidelines and to the satisfaction of their audiences, the community confers the label "competent" on these announcers, a determination that can only be made by their knowledgeable audiences with whom they are locked in a cultural environment.

9. Contrary to the assertions of at least one analyst, there is no singular "gospel announcer's style"; there is, in fact a variety of performance styles, each with its own audience of supporters. As the work of Hobbs, Poindexter, and Tatum has indicated, innovation and convention co-exist easily in the performances of gospel announcers. Hobbs'

acknowledged flamboyance within the physical realm is as culturally-sanctioned as Tatum's more conservative approach and Poindexter's mid-range style. Conversely, Poindexter, who employs a variety of timbres and delivery styles, finds as much audience approval as Hobbs, who admittedly creates moods using a narrower selection of these elements.

Poindexter and Hobbs usually deliver unscripted verbal art while Tatum almost always works from a prepared text, particularly in the concert setting. These and other performance variations as well as the work and testimonies of other gospel industry professionals serve to underscore the fact that gospel announcers defy the "folksy and familiar" stereotyping attempted by researcher Anthony Heilbut.

Within the larger pool of gospel performances which were reviewed for this study, there was an even broader choice of styles, from the self-described "country" announcers to those whose fast-paced, urban contemporary performances dovetail with the rap-infused gospel music they offer their audiences. According to this wide range of announcers, they have all received approval from gospel music adherents, signalled through applause, verbal and kinesic means, rapt attention, invitations to emcee other events, as well as through loyal listenership.

10. The performances of gospel announcers and that of gospel singers and preachers differ most markedly in the use

of actual and perceived time. Unlike their colleagues, who are generally the central performers during an event, gospel announcers are the facilitators, bringing together audiences and artists, Holy Spirit and congregants, consumers and advertisers. One of the most critical requirements of their job is to effectively introduce the music or "live" performers in a timely, yet seemingly unhurried manner and, in essence, get out of the way of the music. Among the time limitations affecting the work of gospel announcers are the scheduling constraints of radio, the curfews within secular halls where "overtime" concert costs can be exorbitant, and the desire of many audience members to hear the singers, despite the high regard they may have for the announcers.

11. Gospel announcers are unique within the gospel music tradition in that their primary medium, radio, severely hampers their ability to receive the spontaneous audience responses through which Black performers learn to monitor and adjust their presentations. In order to compensate for this missing element, most announcers encourage their audience members to contact them by telephone during their broadcasts, thus allowing for listener feedback. Prayer lines, request lines, and even "open lines" provide audiences with an opportunity to talk with the announcer and receive personal words of encouragement and counsel, the kind of audience/announcer interaction other areas of radio have just recently

discovered.

Suggestions for Future Research

There are several topics that could be examined in the future in order to foster a greater appreciation of gospel announcers and their contributions to the African American community and to the dissemination of this vital music. Critical data on the demographics of the Black gospel music audience is sorely lacking. Scientifically-gathered information on the age range, gender breakdown, occupations, economic status, educational background, and religious affiliations of its listeners could assist gospel radio in constructing better marketing efforts and in securing those still relatively-elusive dollars from national corporations. Such research could also take the uncertainty from the efforts to program effectively for its listeners. No longer would announcers and programmers have to give aficionados the "mix" they think is desired; they would have audience input as to what combination of traditional, contemporary, urban contemporary, choirs, quartets, etc., the audience wants to hear.

Future research could also focus on whatever differences if any exist in the performances of male announcers and female announcers and could seek to determine whether audience expectations differ based on the gender of the announcer. Gathering data on the formal education and

religious affiliations of individual announcers could also reap important benefits. I presented that information about Hobbs, Poindexter, and Tatum as part of an overall plan to draw complete pictures of these individuals who have come to prominence in this arena. However, it may be significant to discuss with the announcers to what extent they view these factors as affecting their performance styles. Further illumination regarding performances could come through discovering whether audiences can perceive denominational differences or degrees of education, what effect (if any) that has on their acceptance of the announcer, and whether their perceptions are tied to text, behaviors, changes in timbre and volume, or other elements.

Another investigation that might prove most fascinating would entail examining the performance characteristics that mark the work of non-Black announcers who play Black gospel music. The investigation could include comparing and contrasting their performance techniques with those of their Black counterparts, determining through feedback interviews whether they are held to the same standards, and questioning the non-Black announcers about any efforts they make to incorporate what they perceive to be a "Black" presentational style.

It is my sincere hope that this study will be received as the first of many scholarly investigations I intend to undertake into the work and contributions of gospel

announcers and that it will in some way help to bring much-deserved attention to the pivotal place they hold within the Black gospel music tradition.

APPENDIX I**PERFORMANCE TRANSCRIPTS**

Twentieth Anniversary Tribute to Al "The Bishop" Hobbs
General Manager and Gospel Music Announcer for WTLC,
Indianapolis, Indiana. Held at Clowes Auditorium, Butler
University, Indianapolis, Sunday, October 21, 1990, 5:00 PM.

Parenthetical statements in the transcript include the following: audience remarks which are also bound by quotation marks, non-verbal responses from the audience, and indications of the pacing of certain remarks and of the physical movements made by the two announcers, Hobbs and Poindexter.

The concert began at exactly 5:00 PM sharp with devotional service led by two men and a woman who sang, prayed and encouraged the audience to take part. The devotional service lasted approximately five minutes and was followed by a slide presentation on Hobbs' life. At the end of the presentation, Hobbs was introduced as "an announcer for all seasons." Al Hobbs gives his testimonial remarks after his entrance and performance with the Indianapolis Mass Choir:

Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Somebody give God some praise. ("Hallelujah!")

(Applause; some of the audience is standing)

How about a big hand for the Indianapolis Mass Choir?!

(Applause)

Come on! (Raised volume)

Let them hear you! (Applause increases) God bless you!

God Bless you! (Applause)

(Soft music begins and continues throughout his speech)

(Hobbs speaks; his volume is lower. The pacing is calm and relaxed)

Oh, I feel so good. And I've been so tired.

(Laughter)

Amen...Preparing for you to come

And share this anniversary with me.

It's been twenty big years for me.

And I have come today to celebrate.

And I know you've come to celebrate with me. Right?

("Right." "Amen.") Amen.

I didn't come out here to Clowes Hall

Just because Clowes Hall is a fine place.

I could have gone anywhere. (Spoken rapidly)

But I came (Spoken slowly again)

Because I wanted to again reflect
That any and everything you do for God should be done
The best that you know how. (Applause).
God bless you. (Applause)
I've tried to stand for putting on _____ years
A standard of excellence that glorifies God.
(Spoken rapidly) I wanted that tonight.
And I want my life (Slows again) to be a living example
Of what God can do.
God has blessed me on many fronts.
But more than anything else that I can tell you today,
The Lord has blessed me by giving me a rare opportunity
To serve Him by serving my fellow man.
Today, I come with a prayer in my heart
That something we've done or said
Over these twenty years
Has been a blessing to your life.
("Oh, yes.") (Heads nod.)
Maybe it has not met the core of your life.
But there might have been some Sunday morning
Or some Sunday afternoon
When your burdens might have been heavy
Sometimes, when you're troubled,
Burdens heavy, weighted down (Spoken rapidly)
There've been times (Slows again)
When some of you have been sad. ("Oh, yes!")

Death visited your address. ("Huh!")

(Spoken rapidly) Some of you have been

(Slows again) bereaved. ("C'mon, Al!")

I can only hope and pray that

(Spoken rapidly) through the Lord's will,

(Slows again) He has given us an opportunity to serve

--Put something on the turntable

Or maybe say something that comforted your heart.

(Applause)

(Pause) I wish today that all of Indianapolis
Would be in these seats.

But I tell you something. ("Well.")

If God never does anything else for me,

("All right.")

I can stand here before you today and say that

He's already done enough. (Scattered Applause)

Huh? (Applause Swells)

Hallelujah! Hallelujah! (Thunderous Applause)

As I look back over these years,

I don't feel like this today ought to be

A day of honoring me.

I appreciate whatever love comes. ("Uh Huh.")

(Spoken rapidly) Don't get me wrong.

(Slows again)

But I didn't come because I want you to honor me;

I came because we serve a God that's good. ("Amen.")

When I look and see how far He's brought me, ("Yes!")

I can't help but believe that

He's brought many of you from that same distance.

("Amen.")

(Applause) Do I have any witnesses in here?

(Applause increases)

Hallelujah! So, I come not for honor today.

If some of that comes, that's OK. (Spoken rapidly).

I've learned in God to say, "I accept."

But I come because I celebrate this day,

This milestone in my life with you.

I feel like it's my party,

And I'll cry if I want to. ("All right.")

It's my party, and I'll shout if I want to.

("Come on, now!")

'Cause God has been good to me. ("Yes!" "Yes!")

I want to say thank you.

I'm not going to try to belabor you today

With a lot of talking.

We're not going into a whole lot of show business.

If I'm shouting in the wings.

And I don't get a change to say "thank you"

Before this evening's over.

Thank you so much for coming. (Applause)

Amen. Amen. (Applause)

We've got some of God's great artists with us.

And I just wanted to take time at the beginning...

(Code-switches)

`Cause you know y'all get tired

And then you can't tell you nothing then.

(Laughter) (Switches back to original dialect)

And I just wanted to take time tonight in here

To say thanks so much for all of the love

And all of the support over these years.

And pray much for me that God will give me

Just that much more (Spoken rapidly)

That I might be challenged to touch (Slows again)

Not only through gospel music

But through service in this community.

Touching each an every one of you in any way I can.

("Applause") Amen.

Hobbs: Intro of "The Christianaires"

(Spoken rapidly)

I'm glad tonight for a group of young men

(Slows again) That I met a few weeks ago, days ago,

Months ago, years ago, even now.

I just happened upon them on a Thanksgiving night ____.

These young men were on the card.

I had seen them in the city of St. Louis.

I wasn't...

And you know how you're not so halfway impressed

(Switches code)

Not that they had to impress me.

(Switches back to standard dialect)

All they had to do was lift up Jesus. (R)

Amen. I'll tell you something.

That night when they went to the microphone

Late in the evening

--They started a little bit late.

But I'll tell you something.

By the time they had been

Fifteen minutes into the service,

My heart was bursting with the joy of Jesus Christ.

And I could not feel good in my spirit

About having this day

Without asking them to come and share with us today.

I want you to journey with me now.

I'm going to take you on a trip back to the Motherland.

(Laughter) ("All right.")

I'm going down to Mississippi.

(Applause continues until the end)

So---ntag, Mississippi. (VERY EMPHATIC DELIVERY)

I WANT YOU TO PUT YOUR HANDS TOGETHER

FOR THE CHRISTIANAIRES!!!

**The Christianaires were followed by a segment of tributes to
Hobbs, presided over by DELORES SUGAR POINDEXTER**

Poindexter:

God bless you! (Even, almost clipped delivery)

It's good to be here.

And I know you are happy.

Twenty years we're celebrating together today.

("Alright.")

The anniversary of Al "The Bishop" Hobbs.

And now, ladies and gentlemen,

The Honorable Deputy Mayor.

Paula Parker Sawyer, The Deputy Mayor of our city.

(Applause)

The Deputy Mayor speaks after which Poindexter continues to host.

Poindexter:

And now, ladies and gentlemen,

I'm proud to introduce some of my co-workers.

Mr. Amos Brown who is the station manager for WTLC.

He keeps the wheels rolling. (Applause)

Mr. Jay Johnson, our P.D.,

And he keeps the music flowing.

And, and then we have Vicki Buchanan,

Our music director,

And she keeps the music in tune for you.

(Applause)

And I see some more of our on-air personalities,
I'm going to ask them if they won't come forward now.
And that's Gino Shelton, Jerry Wade, and Tony LaMont.
(Applause) And Al Jacobs has a few words
To tell you how much our air force* appreciates you.
We are (emphatic) A FAMILY, and Indiana,
I'd like to let you know that
We have prayer service in our DISC JOCKEY* meetings
(Light applause)
So we wanted you to know that our air force
(Emphatic)
REALLY AND TRULY LOVES THE LORD FIRST
(Applause)
AND THEN AL HOBBS COMES RIGHT BEHIND
OUR SAVIOUR AND LORD JESUS CHRIST.
So we come to say that, Al, we love you today.
(Applause)
Among the many, many, many gifts
We've received for Al...
I just want him to stand here for a moment.
Don't go yet, Al. You've got some more things.
And I'd just like to take this time
And present this to you.
And you have so many others to be thankful to
And grateful for ---
Your listening people,

Your people who work with you,
Your label staff,
And all of this community says to you,
"We love you today." (Applause)
And now, ladies and gentlemen (Increased volume)
The PRESIDENT of the INDIANA BLACK EXPO,
The Reverend Charles Williams.

(He and several other presenters speak. When they are finished, Poindexter speaks again).

Poindexter:

That's the highest honor of the state.
I know you can put your hands together. (Applause).
Don't go yet. (Spoken to Hobbs).
Stay for a minute.
Everybody say Amen. ("Amen")
Amen ("Amen").
Now, we're getting the dignitaries
And all the other fine things out of the way
'Cause we're going to praise the Lord.
(Applause).
HOW ABOUT THAT!!! (Emphatic with increased volume)
(Applause increases)
I want the backstage crew to drop
The screen wherever you are.

Somebody.

(Audience members point and indicate that the screen is already dropped).

It's already down? (Laughter)

I can't even see. (Laughter)

I'm so thrilled and I'm so happy,

I didn't even see the screen! (Laughter)

I just want you to know that it's down for something beautiful.

Al, we have another beautiful tribute just for you.

And now, ladies and gentlemen, the better half of

Al "The Bishop" Hobbs on tape, Gabrella Hobbs.

This tribute featured a color slide of and pre-recorded narration from Hobbs' wife, Gabrella. All of these proceedings took about fifteen minutes. An audio cassette is played of Hobbs' wife's tribute while a slide of her remains on screen. At the conclusion, Hobbs' wife and one of his children join him and Poindexter on stage.

Poindexter:

Gabrella, Alex. Little master Alex Hobbs. (Applause)

Is he sharp? Give `em a hand. Give `em a big hand.

(Hobbs' wife makes a presentation. Then Poindexter speaks again.)

Poindexter:

Say hi to the people, Alex. (Applause).

Al, I guess I'll let you step off stage

Because you are really perspiring. (Laughter)

You, your wife and child, go off stage.

And God bless you. We love you. (Applause)

("She's a real down to earth sister, isn't she?")

I think we can do better than that.

(Increased applause)

Are you happy? ("Yes!" "Amen!")

(Increased volume) LET ME HEAR YOU SAY AMEN! ("AMEN")

SAY AMEN!!! ("Amen) (Inflection is very high)

SAY AMEN!! ("Amen")

Let me hear you say

(She speaks very percussively, delivering each phrase with more volume and emphasis than the previous one)

YES, LORD. ("Yes, Lord.")

YES, LORD! ("Yes, Lord.")

YES, LORD!!! ("Yes, Lord!")

For the first time in our city,

(Her volume and pitch are very high)

AN UPCOMING GREAT GOSPEL CHOIR ALL THE WAY

FROM CHICAGO, ILLINOIS: RICKY DILLARD AND NEW

GENERATION! HEAR YE THEM! (Applause)

After the choir performed, Myrna Summers, a popular

singer and choir director from Washington D.C., performed and was introduced by another of WTLC's D.J.'s. Summers sang, backed by Ricky Dillard and the choir. After intermission, The Williams Brothers, one of the best selling contemporary quartets in gospel music, were brought on stage by an announcer who used a backstage microphone and, therefore, was not seen on stage.

POINDEXTER was the announcer to take them off the stage. She speaks to the audience.

Poindexter:

You feel alright now? Huh? (Applause)

Lord, you brought me out. Oh, yes you did!

(Heads nod and the applause continues as the audience recognizes the last song the Williams Brothers performed.)

Poindexter:

Oh, yes you did!

How about it? (Applause)

Come on. Put your hands together. (Applause)

We're having a celebration here this evening.

And I don't know about you, but I'm enjoying it all.

(Applause).

I've been feeling good all day long,

And I thank God for it.

I thank God for this GREAT, RICH, SPIRITUAL service.

We're not through yet. Huh? ("Alright!")

I said we're not through yet. ("Amen")

Alright. We have ...

(Audio is lost because she goes off mic).

Thank you very much for coming out.

While they're setting up,

Let me thank you for coming out.

(END OF TRANSCRIPTION FOR THE ANNIVERSARY TRIBUTE)

*(The on-air staff of the station)

**(Hobbs and Poindexter are the only two gospel announcers on the station. The majority of the on-air staff plays urban contemporary music, hence the reference to disc jockeys)

**TRANSCRIPT OF AL "THE BISHOP" HOBBS' BROADCAST ON
MAY, 1993 WHHH, FM 96 INDIANAPOLIS 8 - 10 a.m.**

Music: "The Star Spangled Banner"

Music: "Unspeakable Joy"

Hobbs: (VO) The gospel of Douglas Miller...

On a capital city Sunday morning...

Joy like a river, flowing out to the sea...

Joy of knowing that He died to set me free...

Joy everlasting because He set me free...

My soul is in jubilation for the things

That He's done for me.

Eight ten in the capital city

And welcome to you and yours.

Another portion of jubilation brought to you

By the Lady Lawyers downtown in the Gold Building.

Music: Reprise of "Unspeakable Joy"

Hobbs: (VO) Ferguson, Watkins and Associates.

We're glad to have you share the joy with us again

On another Sunday morning that we've not seen before.

The goodness of the Lord,

Abounding here in the WHHH studios.

Michael Williams and "An Urban Hope"

Got you ready for early morning worship.

I'm telling you.

Man calls it "The Dynamic Duo."

Well, you know, you've got it right.

Right here on the mighty, mighty WHHH,
Hoosier Hot 96 in Indianapolis.
We've got music for you this morning,
But more than music...
The anointing of the Holy Ghost.
We certainly hope that you'll let the music
Speak to your heart.
Whatever your needs are,
God wants to meet you
At the point of those needs this morning.
If you just let Him in.
"Well, how do you get Him in, Bishop?"
Real simple. Just give Him the praise.
For you see the Bible tells us that
He is most pleased with the praise of our lips.
You ought to give Him glory.
You ought to give Him honor this morning.
For we can say unequivocally
Like no other creature on the face of the earth
God has been good to us.
I don't know about you, but He gives me joy.
And the joy of the Lord is my strength.
If I've got joy, I can make it.
Music: "Everybody Praise the Lord"
Hobbs: (VO) Eight sixteen in the capital city.
The gospel of Mark Hubbard...

To the gospel of the Chicago Mass Choir.

Lift the Savior up.

That's what were gonna tell everybody.

"Lift Him up, I'll do the drawing," said He.

Music: "Lift Him Up"

Hobbs: (VO) **Music:** Segue from "Lift Him Up" to "Hold On"

Hobbs: (VO) Eight twenty-one Cap City!

Bishop on the radio! Ha! Ha! Ha!

Dottie Peoples -- "Hold On," y'all!

That's the good thing about God.

If you hold on, He'll make a way.

Somebody said, "How do you know?"

We'll, he made a way for me.

Somebody else can witness, too.

Marie, God bless your heart.

Glad to have you on board.

Somebody else needs and wants to witness.

I've got open line this morning.

Two-three-nine, ninety-six, ninety-six, the number to call.

Get the joy. Express.

'Cause when He's done some thing good for you,

What He wants you to do is TELL IT!!!

Encourage somebody else.

Commercials: Pre-recorded (Ferguson, Watkins; McDonald's,
NBC Sunday night lineup)

Hobbs: (VO) Eight twenty-nine, Capital City...

Gospel sound of Albertina, The Queen!

Music: "Wait on the Lord"

Hobbs: (VO) Linda Golls, God bless you.

Glad to have you witness this morning.

Have a wonderful day in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Clarence Ball, we're praying much with you today...

Especially for Universal Church of Truth family this morning.

Anniversary greetings to pastor Clarence Ball.

Also much prayer in our heart this morning for all of you.

Wait on Him, church. Come on!

Get those toes a-tapping wherever you are!

If you're laying in the bed...

Just brush 'em up against the cover.

If you've got your feet on the floor,

Stand where you are right now,

And just pat 'em a little bit.

Music: "Wait on the Lord" continues

Hobbs: (VO) Whatever you're going through,

If you'll wait on the Lord.

He may not come when you want Him, church...

But he's gonna be on time.

Oh, I know that thing, this morning.

Come on, let's wait on Him!

Music: "Wait on the Lord" continues

Hobbs: (VO) Eight thirty-four, the capital city.

You had those toes tapping.

Now, put those hands together.

Come on...Cathedral of Faith.

Music: "Count It All Joy," "Over There," and "So Good"

Hobbs: (VO) Eight forty-three in the city.

Jubilation. Over there and down here.

He's been good...Witnesses ought to call me right now

At two three nine, ninety-six, ninety-six.

Music: "So Good" (Williams Brothers)

Hobbs: (VO) I don't care what you're going through, y'all.

Don't take away from the fact that He's still been good.

Mother Martin, I know you know it, and Joan Jones.

You, too, Robin. He's been good.

Take a look around you this morning.

You don't have to look back very far.

If you've got an eye open this morning,

He's been good.

Music: "So Good" continues

Hobbs: (VO) All the witnesses know He is. What is he?

Music: "So Good" -- continues to the end

Commercials: (Pre-recorded ads for Ferguson, Watkins; and Dominoes Pizza, Mozelle Sanders Homes)

Music: "Don't Need Nobody Else" (Ted Wright)

Hobbs: (VO) Eight thirty-one.

Eight fifty-one I should say, Capital City.

Hobb Franklin, God bless your heart.

Glad to have you in the city.

I know Universal Church of Truth is going to rock

As they celebrate the anniversary of

Pastor William Paine on this day.

Music: "Don't Need Nobody Else"

Hobbs: (VO) Oh, I know some of you can witness to this...

Music: "Don't Need Nobody Else"

Hobbs: (VO) It's 8:54. Hoosier Hot 96.

Jubilation with Al "The Bishop" Hobbs.

And I know I've got some friends

Who can't pick 'em up as high as they used to. Ha! Ha!

Lord, this is one you just...scoot around on!

Music: "Don't Need Nobody Else"

Hobbs: Eight fifty-six in the capital city.

And once again we're here courtesy of

The Lady Lawyers downtown in Indianapolis.

And they're at...uh...the Gold Building. That's right.

Right there at the corner of Delaware and Ohio Streets.

The Lady Lawyers -- the people who can take care of

All of your needs when it comes to

Legal matters of any nature.

I want you, the very first chance you get,

If you need any kind of legal assistance,

You go and you call 'em

And you tell 'em that

Bishop told you to call.

You were listening to "Jubilation".... (Tape runs out)

SIDE 2

Music: "Sinner's Lullaby," "Touch Me," and "Just Jesus"

Hobbs: (VO) Jesus, the Heavenly Father, satisfies.

That about wraps it up

For this week's edition of "Jubilation."

It's been joy sharing it with you and yours

On this capital city Sunday morning.

This is Hoosier ninety-six dot three.

WHHH Radio in Indianapolis.

Encourage you to know that though the dark clouds may rise,

Jesus! Just the power in the name.

We've been brought to you this morning by W & W Sounds,

Forty twenty-five North Keystone,

And Tyscot Communications, of course.

Save a dollar off between eleven and five p.m. today.

Tell 'em "The Bishop" sent you.

Go on over to 4025 N. Keystone. W & W Sounds.

That's on Tyscot product this afternoon,

Where you can save a big dollar if you tell 'em

That the Bishop sent you.

Tune in again next Sunday morning,

Nine in the a.m. for the Tyscot Communications,

W & W Sounds portion of "Jubilation."

Also tomorrow morning, I should say next Sunday morning,

Eight in the a.m.

"Jubilation" comes your way
From 8 to 10 every Sunday morning.
Five o'clock in the morning,
Our own Mike Williams with "Urban Hope."
Dynamic duo happening right here on
Hoosier ninety-six dot three in Indianapolis.
Stay tuned for the "GT 10." That's it!
(Tape Ends)

INTRODUCTION FOR WILLIE NEAL JOHNSON AND THE GOSPEL KEYNOTES
from "The Bobby Jones Gospel Show,

Black Entertainment Television

Airdate: Sunday, November 4, 1990

ANNOUNCER: DELORES POINDEXTER

I don't know what you've come to do.

But I come to praise the Lord!!! (RR)

I believe in praising the Lord!! (RR)

Here we are in Nashville, Tennessee.

My mind goes back some 58 odd years.

The Town where I was born.

The Place where I come from.

In the Building where we as Black people

Could not come but once a year. (R)

Once a year, we came in here

With Coca Cola and Double Cola tops

To be able to see and sit in on the Grand Old Opry. (R)

But TONIGHT... (RR)

We can come in here in our finery, (R)

Praising the God of our salvation. (R)

DON'T HAVE TO HAVE NO_____!!! (R)

DON'T HAVE TO HAVE NO BOTTLE TOPS!!! (RR)

What you talkin' `bout? (RRR)

WHEN I LOOK BACK AND WONDER

HOW GOOD THE MAN'S BEEN TO ME, (RR)

I SAY, `I'M YOURS, LORD.' Huh! (RR)

EVERYTHING I'VE GOT! Huh! (RR)

EVERYTHING I OWN! Huh! (RR)

ALL THAT I HAVE! Huh! (RR)

THE SHOES ON MY FEET! Huh! (RR)

FROM TYLER, TEXAS, WILLIE NEAL JOHNSON AND THE GOSPEL
KEYNOTES! (RRR)

**PRAYER FROM THE MARCH, 1991 BROADCAST ON WTLC-FM,
INDIANAPOLIS**

Announcer: Delores Poindexter

Good morning, God. It's me again.
And I just want to take this time to say
Thank you for another week, another month.
How you watched over me all thorough the night.
Touched me right early this morning
With your finger of live,
And how I do thank you, for I realize
It was not me but you than woke me up this morning,
Started me on my way, and I just want to tell you
Thank you, God.
For you've been so good to me,
I just can't thank you enough.
You made so many ways, and opened so many doors.
And I just want to take this time right now
And say thank you.
For you keep on doing great things for me.
There are so many in the hospitals,
And the nursing homes,
On the jobs, and behind prison wall, and oh, God,
They've asked, "Pray for me."
I know that you know all about us,
Master, for you made us.
And right now, won't you touch, heal, and deliver.

From the North to the South.

From the East to the West.

Send out your healing virtue in the name of they son,
Jesus Christ, who died for us all.

Cover us in your blood,

And I know that you can, and I know that you will

Go with me and stand by me.

In the name of Jesus. A-men, and thank God.

CONCLUSION OF BROADCAST, MARCH, 1991, WTLC, INDIANAPOLIS**Announcer: Delores Poindexter**

(Poindexter begins "God Will Take Care of You" by the Rev. James Moore before the prayer and continues to let it play throughout this ending. She refers to it as she talks to the audience)

On a Lord's Day morning, do you believe that?

Do you, do you, really, really, really believe that?

God will take care, brother.

I know it for myself this morning.

For you see, you see, you see, you see

I've tried Him for myself.

And I know He will take care of you in every situation.

So as we prepare to leave you,

It's been a joy to serve you this morning.

And from the bottom of my heart,

I thank you for listening.

But as you go into a brand new week,

Don't go by yourself.

Take the Lord along with you.

He's mighty nice to have in your business.

And remember one thing,

That talent is God-given. Be thankful.

Fame is man-given. Be humble.

And conceit is self-given. Be real careful.

And remember whatever you do,

God will -- um, um, um -- take care of you.

**TRANSCRIPT OF EDNA TATUM'S GUEST APPEARANCE ON WTLC-AM,
INDIANAPOLIS IN FEBRUARY, 1994**

Music: "Peace Be Still"

Tatum: (V/O) Good morning, and welcome

To another portion of "Standing on Higher Ground."

My name is Edna Tatum, and how happy I am to join you

From Los Angeles, California, on radio station WTLC

As we lift up Jesus and give Him the glory

And thank Him for all that He's done for us.

I am very grateful to be a part of the Higher Ground family.

And particularly for my friend, Delores "Sugar" Poindexter,

We want you to know here in Los Angeles,

That we are praying for you,

And we know that God is a heart fixer.

And we're gonna continue on...

Holding up His name as we move on up a little higher

On the higher ground area with radio station WTLC,

Featuring the Fourth of May.

"Move On Up a Little Higher."

Music: "Move On Up a Little Higher"

Tatum: As we continue to move on up a little higher,

We thank God for all He's done for us.

Walter Hawkins and the Love Alive Choir.

"Thank You, Lord."

Music: "Thank You, Lord."

Tatum: And we do thank God for His love and His power.

We don't have any complaints today.

There are those who are homeless.

There are those who are very sick.

But then we still have our health and strength.

But then we still have the blood running warm in our veins.

We're still able to see a brand new day.

We're still able to give Him the glory.

We're still able to say "thank you."

And we won't complain.

Music: "I Won't Complain"

Music: "He Made It Possible"

Tatum: (V/O) And we do give Him the praise

We do give Him the honor.

Because you know something?

He didn't have to do it...but He did.

But I don't care what you're going through.

Somehow, God made a way.

He made it possible...

That way out of...no way.

He made it possible

When it looked as though you were not going to make it.

But God made it possible.

And you know something?

I discovered that...

When He took those two fish and five loaves of bread...

And stretched it...

And fed a multitude,

The fish didn't change.

The bread didn't change.

But God made it possible to feed a multitude.

Some of you have been through some things.

Some of you have had some hard times.

Some of you have had to cry in the midnight hour.

But God came along....and...

Stretched it.

He wiped tears from your eyes.

And right now, when you think about it,

Deep down in your hearts, you can say:

He made it possible.

Music: "He Made It Possible"

Music: "God Is"

Music: "Blessed Assurance" (instrumental)

Tatum: (V/O) And as we realize during these times,

Moreso than ever before,

That God is.

Then we can testify:

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine.

Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine.

I'm an heir of salvation.

Purchased of God.

And I'm so happy I was born of His spirit.

And I've been washed in His blood.
Perfect submission, perfect delight.
Visions of rapture now burst on my sight.
Angels descending; they bring from above
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.
And that's why I can finally say,
That this is my story.
This is my song.
And praising my Savior...
All the day long....
I'm glad to report that
This is my story
And this is my song
I can praise my Savior
All the day long.

Music: "Amazing Grace"

Music: "Touch Me"

And as we listen to the late Rev. James Cleveland and
The Charles Fold Singers,
We pray that today
That you've been touched.
We pray that....

Music: "He'll Never Let You Down"

You've been healed.
We pray that
You've been delivered.

We pray that
Now you can see the light.
We pray...that
Now you have been in touch with Almighty God.
But most importantly, we know
And we strong believe...
That's he's been in touch with you.
As we move on up a little higher,
As we stand on higher ground with all of you
And touch hands here in
California with you in Indiana,
Particularly with the WTLC family....
We join hands and hearts in prayer, in love.
And especially for the host of this program,
Delores "Sugar" Poindexter,
We're surrounding you with prayer, with love.
And we know that everything is gonna be alright.
Sometimes, God has to put us down
In order to lift us up....

END OF BROADCAST TAPE

INTRODUCTION FOR THE REVEREND JAMES CLEVELAND ON THE
VIDEOTAPE ENTITLED "SAVOY RECORDS PRESENTS REVEREND JAMES
CLEVELAND AND THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHOIRS OF
THE GMWA" (GOSPEL MUSIC WORKSHOP OF AMERICA) VHS 9506

ANNOUNCER: EDNA TATUM

My brothers and my sisters,
Good evening and welcome to the live recording session of
The Los Angeles Chapter and our sister chapter,
The Northern California Chapter.
Give everybody a great big hand. (Applause)
We did not come here to entertain.
We 'didn't come here for show time.
You can find that anywhere.
We have come here to have an encounter with the Eternal.
A collision so great and so serious
That it will injure your pride and wound your egocentrism,
Break the bones of your wretchedness,
And put you in heaven's hospital
Where Dr. Jesus will perform surgery
And then send you to the recovery room
Under the therapeutic presence of the Holy Spirit.
We've come to share with you the vision splendid,
For we are here in search of answer(s).
And we thank God for the leadership
And for the vision of one man,

The president and founder of
The Gospel Music Workshop of America
As well as the pastor of this church,
Known throughtout this world, internationally renowned,
The King of Gospel -- Rev. James Cleveland.
Come on. Give it to him! (Applause).

INTRODUCTION TO "THE JAMES CLEVELAND MEDLEY"

**Delivered Monday, October 29, 1990, at the Fiftieth
Anniversary**

**Salute to "The King of Gospel Music," held at the Dorothy
Chandler Pavilion in Los Angeles**

ANNOUNCER: EDNA TATUM

Your majesty, King James,
Members of the household of Heaven,
Agents of Redemption,
And to all of you who are in the army of Captain Jesus:
Welcome to the Fiftieth Anniversary Salute of one man
Singing one gospel
About One Lord, One Faith, and One Baptism.

Fifty years ago, jubilation filled the sky
And excitement rode on the wings of a passing breeze.
The Spirit descended like a dove
And a voice spoke from the other side of heaven and said:
"This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased,
and you can't touch this!"

Fifty years ago, God put trumpets in his throat
And violins in his vocal cords.
And when he lifted those trumpets
And sang with those violins,

Heaven and earth had to say,
"Never a man sang like this man."
Fifty years ago, he took
The hues and colors of his own experience
And transcended the furniture of the human predicament
And made a relationship with the eternal God.

They said he could not sing
And he could only play in one key.
But you and I know that when man puts you down,
God is able to lift you up.
Doors were closed in his face.
But when man closes one door,
God is able to open up ten more.
And if you're running a little late,
He'll hold them open until get there.

But he kept on singing the gospel until he became
The King of Gospel.
And tonight, we salute this King,
This living legend.
And we take a retrospective view of the music
Which has blessed the hearts of all of us
Down through the years.
Some of the music you will hear,
He was not the writer or originator.

But his interpretation seasoned them with traditional flavor
And they became a heart-fixing, mind-regulating,
Soul-reviving spiritual experience.

He performed many songs
As if he had fire shut up in his bones,
For he firmly believed
That no one should be without a song,
Especially a James Cleveland song....

(Introduction is immediately followed by a medley of James
Cleveland songs.)

**INTRODUCTION for The Southern California Community Choir on
 "James Cleveland 'Live' at Carnegie Hall" Album (Savoy DBL
 7014) 1977 Narrator: Edna Tatum**

There are no acceptable copies.

Their look, their sound,

Their spellbinding melodies are all their own.

What makes them so arresting is that they sing,

Not by instinct,

But by the direction of the Holy Spirit. (r)

For, you see, Satan must be put out of business! (R)

And we are certain that, after tonight, (r)

We will burst the clouds of opposition,

Sweeten the bitter waters of hellish trials, (RR)

And set fire to somebody's whole heart. (RRR).

We don't have..Daniel in the lion's den. (r)

We don't have...Shadrach, Meshach,

and Abednego in the fiery furnace. (R)

We don't have...John the Baptist who preached in the

wilderness. (r)

We don't have...the Garden of Gethsemane

where Jesus prayed. (r)

We don't have...those angelic voices that sang,

"Glory to God in the highest.

Peace on earth; goodwill to men." (R)

But we DO have...REV. JAMES CLEVELAND AND THE
 SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY CHOIR!!! (RRR)

INTRODUCTION for "In My Heart" on the "James Cleveland
'Live' at Carnegie Hall" Album (Savoy DBL 7014) 1977

ANNOUNCER: EDNA TATUM

It was love that held Jesus
Took His robe off
And hung it in the wardrobe of eternity.
It was love that made Him go down
To the depot of time
And got Him a ticket
Put Him on the train of nature
And made Him ride through forty-two generations.
It was love that made Him get off in Bethlehem of Judea
One cold December night,
Wrapped in swaddling clothes
And laying in a manger.
It was love that made him cry like a baby,
Play like a child,
Work like a man,
Baptize like a candidate.
He preached like a preacher,
He healed like a doctor,
He fed like a grocerman,
He walked like a hobo,
And it was love that made Him speak like a mighty God.
As Christians today, we must spread the love of God.
Tell me...Do you love everybody?

APPENDIX II:**SAMPLE FEEDBACK INTERVIEW**

Date: February 15, 1994

Participants: Bertha Harris and Tim Smith

Subject: Performance tapes featuring Edna Tatum
which are played throughout the interview

BH: I think she's a good speaker.

DSB: She's a good speaker? What makes her a good speaker?

BH: Her voice tone. The emphasis she places on what she says.

TS: She knows how to really place emotion in the right places.

BH: She could be saying something that's not true, but it sounds good.

DSB: Do you think there's anything untrue in what you heard just now? What was that? Or are you saying because she sounds so good, it wouldn't matter?

BH: I wouldn't say that. I wouldn't even touch what she's saying, but she sounds good. She could make Bo Diddley sound good.

TS: She knows how to lead into that song that's gonna come after. Just like with that passage: "Do you love...everybody?" And then Boom! James [Cleveland] comes in with the choir and the song, you know.

Tape

DSB: Why does the audience respond the way it does to her?

TS: I think it's because of...I think Bertha touched on it when she said that it's because of the way that she [Tatum] places emphasis on certain phrases, certain words, using certain tones. And we as African Americans, we feed off of those tones, those highs and those lows.

BH: Whether it's true or not.

TS: Right. You get caught up in the emotion, in the tones, and the tune, and no matter what, you know....You can be saying, "Jack and Jill goes over the hill," you know. But if you have that certain, uh, tone there, we're just going to react.

DSB: What tone is that? Is it a tone you find in a particular place or....

TS: It's just like as she was building, and she started, you know, quiet and tranquil, and then she built it up.

DSB: Does it remind you of something else?

TS: It reminds me of Sunday morning at church.

DSB: OK. I didn't want to say it. I just wanted to see if that was what it reminded you of. Does it remind you [Bertha] of church, or what does it remind you of...if anything?

BH: She reminds me of just an eloquent speaker.

Tape -- Intro of Southern California Choir at Carnegie Hall

BH: See, the audience didn't even hear what she said: It just sounds good.

TS: She reminds me of, uh, Nikki Giovanni. Why I say that is because after seeing Nikki Giovanni many years ago, maybe about 20 years ago on PBS with Isaac Douglas and the New York Community Choir doing passages from, I can't remember....

DSB: Truth Is on Its Way and Like a Ripple on a Pond. Right. Right.

TS: After visualizing that in your mind and listening to her and going back and recapturing that, it reminds me of that. The emotion that she uses, it's the same emotion that Nikki used in reciting her poetry backed by a gospel choir.

DSB: So did Nikki remind you of church or...is Edna reminding you of Nikki reminding you of church?

TS: Edna's reminding me style-wise, ok. In her building up of the song for the audience she's reminding me of how Nikki used to show her emotion in her poetry. The same kind of connotations. But all had a religious setting because Nikki used a choir, you know, the gospel message to...and equated that with her poetry. Edna is doing the same thing in my opinion in, uh, building up an image, giving that image, or

building up an imaginary type of setting for the audience leading up to the next song, so that they can have that in their mind.

DSB: Imaginary setting. What do you mean by that?

TS: Imagery. You know, using words, uh, word messages, you know, just set up the audience. Get them a visual picture, but have it in their minds through words, "This is what's coming up next."

DSB: Ok. Ok. Would you say that was an effective introduction, and if so, what made it so.

BH: Effective for the audience she had. In a different setting, it might not have been. But there again, she is enjoyable. She's enjoyable anywhere, any time, any place. She had the right audience there.

DSB: Is that part of being a good announcer, assessing where you are on a given occasion?

TS: Yes. Yes, in my opinion. Yes, because I've learned in being what you are for a certain, uh, situation, uh, the same thing that may work at my church, may not work at your church.

DSB: I know that's right!

TS: So you have to equate yourself to the situation.

Tape -- "Breathe on Me" videotape

TS: She just has a way with words.

BH: Yeah.

DSB: Yeah.

BH: She just flows with her words

DSB: As the kids say, "She flows."

BH: And she has a good voice to listen to. She gets your attention, and she can hold your attention because she's easy to listen to.

TS: I have a question. Is she an evangelist or something of that nature?

DSB: No, no, uh, uh. She's just got that....

TS: She just has that gift.

BH: That God-given gift. She is good.

TS: Alright.

BH: She can, she can...I don't know how to say this. You can cut the tape off. (Laughter).

DSB: No just say it however you want to say it.

BH: She could be a cult leader.

DSB: OK. Uh hum. Because of the...what?

BH: Because she has the ability to captivate. And you're really not hearing what she's saying. You're listening to her sound, and before you know it, you, you're caught up in it.

DSB: That's very interesting.

TS: That is because, I mean, if you listen to Jim Jones, he had a way of putting words across to get you to follow, get you listen to him. She has that same gift.

DSB: But, let's see. Could we think of a few others in our community who had the ability to sound good and....

BH: Stay on the track.

DSB: Yeah.

BH: Yeah.

DSB: OK.

BH: She's a good example herself. I was just saying she's got such a good voice, such a good delivery, this could happen. Not even thinking this way about her. I think she's using her gift.

DSB: Oh, I'm just saying, can you think of somebody who has that kind of gift and who has used it positively?

BH: Mrs. Mary Watson Stewart [an ordained Methodist minister] right here in Detroit.

DSB: Uh huh. Great voice.

BH: Oh, man.

DSB: Starts out singing low...

BH: Over here at Tabernacle Baptist. What's his name.

TS: Sampson. Dr. [Frederick] Sampson.

BH: He can lay a stroke on you!

DSB: Would that be a positive thing?

BH: Yeah. I mean, you're just caught up in whatever he's saying right now. And then in our church [Church of God in Christ], Bishop Owens. Bishop Owens would come out with some words, you don't even know the meaning of. You need a dictionary....

APPENDIX III

ANALYSIS OF GOSPEL MUSIC QUESTIONNAIRE'

1. Age: 65 out of 65 respondents

A) 16 - 21 yrs. old = 3.08%	B) 22 - 29 yrs. old = 24.62%
C) 30 - 39 yrs. old = 24.62%	D) 40 - 49 yrs. old = 21.54%
E) 50+ yrs. old = 26.15%	

Analysis: Of those attending and responding, more than half were under 40 and the majority, 75%, was under 50 years of age.

To be explored: Is this a fairly typical age spread for gospel concert goers? Does the style of the performer determine the age of the concert goer?

2. Sex: 65 out of 65 Respondents

A) Female 78%	B) Male 21.5%
---------------	---------------

Analysis: This breakdown was exactly what I expected based on the gender division I have seen in churches and concerts over the years. Gospel, a culturally reflective music, is still first and foremost a religious music. And religion in African American communities is still associated with females.

To be explored: Are more men attracted to quartet programs or some other kind of programming in gospel? If so, why?

3. Education: 62 out of 65 Respondents

A) Did not complete high school	17.74%
B) High school diploma or GED	29.03%
C) Completed some college	40.32%
D) Earned bachelor's degree	11.29%
E) Earned a post graduate degree	1.61%

Analysis: Half of those participating have had at least some college and more than half of the remaining group has a high school diploma or its equivalent. Those with graduate degrees were almost completely absent in this study.

To be explored: To what extent does this breakdown mirror the educational level of the black community (urban vs. other) in general? To what extent do blacks with advanced

degrees get involved with gospel music -- or does this sampling reflect the extent?

4. Employment status: 62 out of 65 Respondents

A) Skilled laborer	33.85%	B) Professional	35.38%
C) Self-employed	11.29%	D) Retired	9.68%
E) Unemployed/Student	6.45%		

Analysis: Eighty percent of those who attended and participated are currently working. Ten percent are retired.

To be explored: There are many unemployed people in the Black community. Did the ticket prices, \$18 and \$20, automatically prohibit them from attending?

5. In what city were you raised? 65 out of 65 Respondents

The answers included Indianapolis; Rantoul, Illinois; Clarksville, TN; North Carolina; New York; Lanett; Trenton, N.J.; Marion; Cleveland, OH; Waterloo, IO; Kenner, LA; Dublin, MS; Georgia; Philadelphia, PA; Alabama; Richmond, IN; Westpoint, MS; Somerville, TN; Whiteville, TN; Atlanta, GA.

Analysis: Two-thirds, 43 out of 65, were raised in Indianapolis, IN. More than 80% were raised in Northern cities.

To be explored: Even with two quartets on the bill, was the lineup geared more toward a city-raised gospel music fan? Or is it that the "migrationists," those who moved to the North during the peak of the Great Migration, are too old to be interested in attending concerts at this point in their lives? How would a Southern-raised audience respond to the questions posed in this survey?

6. How many hours a week do you listen to gospel music on radio? 64 out of 65 Respondents

A) Less than 3 hours	29.69%	B) Three to five hours	35.94%
C) Five or more hours	32.81%		

Analysis: Almost 70% of the respondents listen to at least three hours of gospel music on the radio each week.

To be explored: Do they do their weekly listening in one

sitting or is it spread out over several mornings, e.g., one hour each day of Sugar's sunrise program, etc.?

7. Give the name, station and location of your favorite gospel music announcer. 63 Respondents out of 65.

Al Hobbs WTLC	20	Sugar Poindexter WTLC	18
Both Al and Sugar WTLC	3	Tim Thompson WPZZ	5
Robert Turner WPZZ	4	Brother Sammy WPZZ	2
Mike Williamson WPZZ	2	Burnette (?)	1
Perry Broadnax Joy 95	1	"I like them all"	1
"I like the station"	6		

Analysis: Clearly, Al Hobbs' crowd showed up to support him during this tribute...but so did Sugar Poindexter's. Each of them got approximately 1/3 of the votes. This is very interesting since Sugar Poindexter and Al Hobbs' are generally characterized differently by their respective fans (See next question). Obviously, there is room for both, especially with those who said they consider both as favorites.

8. What attracts you **most** to this announcer? 42 respondents circled only one. 21 circled two or more answers. 2 circled nothing.

A) Personality	23.81%
B) Voice/Speaking quality	23.81%
C) The style of music	23.81%
D) His/her inspirational words	21.43%
E) Other (fill in the blank)	7.14%

Analysis: The answers are almost perfectly divided among the four specifically named choices. Among the answers from those who filled in the blank were "I listen for the music" (as opposed to a specific style, I imagine); "I believe she is a true Christian"; "Time element only." But since 1/3 of the respondents gave multiple answers, it would seem that many of them have several reasons for listening to a particular announcer

To be explored: What do the respondents have in mind when they say they like the announcer's personality? When they say they like an announcers voice/speaking quality? If I gave no choices and instead left a blank to be filled in, would I be able to elicit just one response per respondent?

9. How would you describe your favorite announcer's style? 54 Respondents out of 65.

A) Relaxed/laid back/smooth	66.67%
B) Intense/dramatic	20.37%
C) Other (fill in the blank)	11.11 %

Analysis: Choices A and B are descriptions that surfaced on questionnaires that were filled out by graduate students in Eigenmann Hall, Indiana University, Bloomington. They were given no descriptive words at all but were simply asked to describe their favorite announcers using their own words. Choice C on this form was given in order to allow the respondents the opportunity to fill in their own descriptions and perhaps extend the feedback in this area. The responses for Choice C on this set of questionnaires included: "Spiritual and down to earth," "Down to earth/on fire for Jesus," "Touching," "Average - the old fashioned way," "Talks too much sometime," "Emotional/inspirational" (two respondents), "Spirit filled and devoted." With the exception of one, all of those who found the given choices inadequate were Sugar Poindexter's fans. It is interesting to note that many of the words that were offered connote a spiritual and emotional "aliveness" from Sugar which seems to make the listeners feel connected to her.

To be explored: How do Al Hobbs and Sugar Poindexter characterize themselves?

10. How would you describe the kind of gospel music your favorite announcer plays? 64 out of 65 Respondents.

A) Traditional	7.81%	B) Contemporary
4.69%	C) A mix of the two	84.38%

Analysis: Since the big discussion in gospel music is always about how the contemporary artists are "selling out," "watering down," and "taking over," I find it interesting that apparently no one's "favorite" announcer is perceived as playing too much contemporary or traditional gospel.

To be explored: Do the announcers see themselves as presenting a mix of traditional and contemporary music as do their fans? If they had an opportunity, would they change the amount of one or the other which they offer during a particular program? Why? What influences the way they currently program music? What they say? Is it only on urban contemporary stations that the controversial so-called urban contemporary artists (The Winans, Be Be and Ce Ce Winans, Vanessa Bell Armstrong, etc.) are being played? What happens to an announcer's listenership if he is perceived as playing too much traditional, contemporary

or urban contemporary?

11. What kind of gospel music do you prefer to hear at the concerts you attend? 63 Respondents out of 65

A) Traditional	4.76%	B) Contemporary
7.94%	C) A mix of the two	87.30%

Analysis: The respondents clearly like a mix of the two types of gospel music when they go to concerts.

To be explored: The auditorium was only one-third to one-half full. Can any one factor be considered key in this? Does the attendance have anything to do with the lineup? More with ticket price? Do concerts that are either all traditional or all contemporary do better than "mixed" concerts such as this one?

12. Would you attend a gospel concert hosted by a gospel announcer whose style you don't like? 63 Respondents out of 65.

A) Probably would not attend	6.35%
B) Would have no bearing on decision	71.43%
C) Would think twice about attending	15.87%
D) Other	

Analysis: More than 7 out of ten respondents said they would attend a concert even if a less-than-favorite D.J. was hosting. On the other hand, 22% would at least think twice before deciding to attend.

To be explored: Did the practice of inviting several D.J.'s to emcee a given concert arise from the promoter's need to appeal to different audiences? Is it still advantageous to announce who the emcees will be?

13. List your four favorite National gospel recording artists. 62 respondents out of 65.

One respondent said "I like them all." Two listed none.

Among the names given by those who responded were The Winans, Edwin Hawkins Mass Choir, Inez Andrews, Douglas Miller, James Cleveland, Christianaires, Williams Brothers, Bobby Jones, Mississippi Mass Choir, Be Be and Ce Ce Winans, Richard Smallwood Singers, Ruby Terry, Rev. Milton Brunson, Al Hobbs, Shirley Caesar, Myrna Summers, Hawkins, Robert Turner and the Silver Hearts, Mighty Clouds of Joy, Lamar Campbell and Praise, Tramaine Hawkins, Vanessa Bell Armstrong, the late Rev. Charles Nicks and St. James Adult Choir, Sara Jordan Powell,

Carman (white Christian artist), Willie Neal Johnson and The Gospel Keynotes, Aretha Franklin, Charles Fold Singers, Take 6, Rev. James Moore, Min. Thomas Whitfield, Progressive Mass Choir, Richard Hunter, Rev. F.C. Barnes and Rev. Janice Brown, The Indianapolis Mass Choir, L.A. Mass Choir, Clark Sisters, Wintley Phipps, Andrae Crouch, Min. Keith Pringle, Albertina Walker, Denise Williams, "soon to be" Patti LaBelle.

Analysis: These gospel music fans said that they like both traditional and contemporary, and their stated "favorites" reflect this.

14. In what category do these artists belong? 54
Respondents out of 65

A) Traditional	7.41%	B) Contemporary	7.41%
C) Both	85.19%	D) Other	0.00%

Analysis: These responses tie in with the responses for Ques. 10 (Describe the music your favorite announcer plays) and Question 11 (What kind of music do you prefer to hear at the concerts you attend?). The respondents clearly see themselves as liking a mix of traditional and contemporary gospel music on radio, in concerts, and in the artists they call "favorites."

To be explored: How do the fans define "traditional" and "contemporary"? Does the average gospel music fan have a sense of or use for the new "urban contemporary" label? What do they think about all of the labelling anyway? Is it helpful? Limiting? Confusing? Unnecessary?

15. List your least favorite National gospel recording artists. Sixty-one respondents said "None," "I like them all," "no one comes to mind," they changed the "least" to "most" or simply wrote nothing at all. The four who wrote names down, wrote these: Rev. Al Green, Indianapolis Mass Choir, The Winans, All rap artists. Then they added: "But they are OK."

Analysis: This question either has to be reworded ("Are there any gospel artists you would rather not see in concert?") or dropped, because with only 4 respondents, this question is either too loaded, the topic too "touchy," or just irrelevant to the gospel music fan.

To be explored: Would you rather not name any least favorite artists?

16. What is your religious affiliation? 58 respondents out

of 65.

A) Baptist	72.41%	B) Pentecostal	20.69%
C) Catholic	1.72%	D) Methodist	5.17%
E) Church of God in Christ	0.0%		

Analysis: Baptists outnumbered the other respondents three to one.

To be explored: Do some artists have stronger denominational followings than others? Does the denomination of the announcer have any bearing on his listenership or his announcing style? On those who consider him a favorite? Do members of the Pentecostal Church and the Church of God in Christ -- churches which have made major contributions to gospel music -- attend in bigger numbers those concerts which feature artists who have come out of their conventions (Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, UNAC Five)

'This questionnaire was administered in November, 1990, to sixty-five Gospel Music Adherents gathered for the Twentieth Anniversary Salute to Al "The Bishop" Hobbs, who was then both gospel announcer and general manager of WTLC-FM, Indianapolis.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Allen, Ray. Singing in the Spirit. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991.
- Anthony, Jimmy. "WATTS Happening: Audience Tune-out." Gospel International, December 1993: 5-6.
- Austin, J.L. How to Do Things with Words. 1962. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978.
- Bateson, Gregory. Steps to an Ecology of Mind. 1955. New York: Ballantine, 1972.
- Bauman, Richard. Verbal Art as Performance. Prospect Heights, Il: Waveland, 1984.
- "Biggest Baptism: Elder Michaux Keeps Old Time Religion Alive in Ball Park Ceremony." Ebony, February 1948: 35-39.
- Broughton, Viv. Black Gospel: An Illustrated History of the Gospel Sound. Dorset, England: Blanford Press, 1985. 61.
- Boyer, Horace C. "Charles Albert Tindley: Progenitor." We'll Understand It Better By and By. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992. 53-78.
- . Compact disc booklet notes. Mahalia Jackson: Gospels, Spirituals, & Hymns. C2K 47083 Columbia/Legacy, 1991. 20.
- . "The Vocal Style of Mahalia Jackson, Gospel Singer." Rejoice Spring 1990: 3-9.
- Broadcasting & Cable Marketplace 1992. (Formerly Broadcasting Yearbook.) New Providence: R.R. Bowker, 1993. A474, A525-26.
- Broadcasting Yearbook for 1990. New Providence: R.R. Bowker, 1990. F72, 92.
- Burnim, Mellonee. "The Black Gospel Music Tradition: A Complex of Ideology, Aesthetic and Behavior." More Than Dancing, Ed. Irene Jackson Brown. Westport Conn.: Greenwood, 1985.
- . "The Black Gospel Music Tradition: Symbol of Ethnicity." Dissertation, Indiana University, 1980.

- . "Functional Dimensions of Gospel Music Performance." Western Journal of Black Studies 12.2 (1988): 112-121.
- . "The Performance of Black Gospel Music as Transformation." Concilium: International Review of Theology 2 (March-April 1989): 52-61.
- Cantor, Louis. Wheelin' on Beale. New York: Pharos, 1992.
- Chaffin, Tom. "John R. -- Blues and Baby Chicks in the Night." Atlanta Gazette, 4 September 1974: n.p.
- Collins, Lisa, ed. The Gospel Music Industry Roundup 1994. Culver City: Eye on Gospel Publications, 1993.
- Cooper, Jack L. "Jack L. Cooper Presentations." Program schedules: n.p., n.d., n. page. Materials held by the Chicago Historical Society (Box 1, folder 12).
- "A Cross Section of Negro Radio Stations with Their Power, Frequency, Rates and Reps." Sponsor, 20 Sept. 1954: 139+.
- Davis, Gerald L. I Got the Word in Me and I Can Sing It You Know. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987.
- Display ads for gospel radio stations WNAP, WWRL, and WDAS. Score September/October 1993: 38, 42, 45.
- DjeDje, Jacqueline Cogdell. "Gospel Music in the Los Angeles Black Community: A Historical Overview." Black Music Research Journal 9.1 (Spring 1989): 35-79.
- "Disc Jockeys." Ebony, December 1947: 49+.
- Epstein, Dena J. Sinful Tunes and Spirituals. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1977.
- Ferris, William and Mary L. Hart, editors. Folk Music and Modern Sound. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 1982.
- "The Forgotten 15,000,000," Parts I and II. Sponsor, October 24, 1949: 30+.
- Franklin, John Hope and Alfred A. Moss. From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans. Sixth ed. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1988.

- Franklin, Lanny U. "John R. The Hit Maker." Take One, March 1978: 15.
- Frazier, E. Franklin. The Negro Church in America. New York: Schocken, 1964.
- Freeman, Clint. "BeBe and CeCe Winans in Japan." Score March/April 1992: 22.
- Gayle, Addison, Jr., editor. The Black Aesthetic. Garden City: Doubleday, 1971.
- Geertz, Clifford. The Interpretation of Culture. New York: Basic Books, 1973. 3-32.
- Goffman, Erving. Frame Analysis. New York: Harper and Row, 1974.
- Gold, Peter. "The Black Sermon and the Communication of Innovation." Discourse in Ethnomusicology II: A Tribute to Alan P. Merriam. Bloomington: Ethnomusicology Publications Group, 1981. 173-204.
- Halliday, M.A.K. and Ruqaiya Hasan. Cohesion in English. London: Longman Group UK Ltd., 1976.
- Harrington, Brooksie. "Shirley Caesar: A Woman of Words." Diss. Ohio State University, 1992.
- Harris, Michael W. The Rise of Gospel Blues. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Heilbut, Tony. The Gospel Sound. 1971. New York: Limelight Editions, 1985.
- Hill, George H. K. Airwaves to the Soul: The Influence and Growth of Religious Broadcasting in America. Saratoga: R & E, 1983.
- Jackson, Irene V. Afro-American Religious Music: A Bibliography and a Catalogue of Gospel Music. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1979.
- Johnson, James Weldon. God's Trombones. 1927. New York: Viking Press, 1976.
- Kapferer, Bruce. "Ritual Process and the Transformation of Context." Social Analysis 1 (1979): 3-18.
- Krögel, Charles. Urban Blues. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966.

- Kochman, Thomas. Black and White Styles in Conflict. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981.
- Landes, John L. "WLAC, The Hossman, and Their Influence on Black Gospel." Black Research Journal 7 (1987): 67-82.
- Levine, Lawrence W. Black Culture and Black Consciousness. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978..
- Lornell, Kip. Happy in the Service of the Lord: Afro-American Gospel Quartets in Memphis. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988.
- MacDonald, J. Fred. Don't Touch That Dial. Chicago: Nelson Hall, 1979.
- "Mahalia Jackson Show." Variety, September 29, 1954: n.p.
- Malone, Bill C. Southern Music, American Music. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1979.
- Maultsby, Portia K. "Afro-American Religious Music: A Study in Musical Diversity." The Hymn Society of America 35 (n.d.): 2-19.
- . "The Impact of Gospel Music on the Secular Music Industry." In We'll Understand It Better By and By., edited by Bernice Johnson Reagon. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992. 19-33.
- Myrdal, Gunnar. The American Dilemma. Second Ed. New York: Harper and Row, 1962. 928.
- "The Negro Market: \$15 Billion Annually." Sponsor 24 August 1953: 66+.
- "Negro Radio." Newsweek 11 December 1967: 113.
- "Negro Radio Comes of Age." Sponsor 20 September 1954: 48+.
- "Negro Radio: Keystone of Community Life." Sponsor 24 August 1953: 68+.
- "Negro Radio Results." Sponsor 24 August 1953: 74+
- "Negro Radio: A Step by Step Analysis." Sponsor 20 September 1954: 50+.
- "Negro Women Becoming Disc Jockeys." Our World August 1951: 10-11.

- Oliver, Paul. Songsters and Saints: Vocal Traditions on Race Records. New York: Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, 1984.
- Paris, Arthur. "Ritual." Black Pentecostalism: Southern Religion in an Urban World. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1982. 45-79.
- Passman, Arnold. "Jack Cooper: Did the First Black Disc Jockey Play the Blues?" Living Blues 65 (1985): 56.
- "Radio Suddenly Discovers the Negro Listener." Our World October 1951: 12-13.
- "Religious Broadcaster." Sepia Nov. 1980: 56-61.
- Reagon, Berniece Johnson. "Pioneering African American Gospel Composers." In We'll Understand It Better By and By. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Press, 1992.
- Santino, Jack. "The Tendency to Ritualize." The Conservation of Culture. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1988. 118-131.
- Seroff, Doug. Annotation for Bless My Bones: Memphis Gospel Radio -- the 50's. Rounder Records 2063.
- . "On the Battlefield: Gospel Quartets in Jefferson County, Alabama." In Geoffrey Haydon and Dennis Marks, eds., Repercussions: A Celebration of African-American Music. London: Century, 1985. 30-53.
- Smith, Frank. "Andrew Jenkins and Early Commercial Gospel Music." American Music 1.1 (1983): 49-59.
- Southern, Eileen. The Music of Black Americans: A History. Second Edition. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1982.
- Spaulding, Norman W. "History of Black-Oriented Radio in Chicago 1929-1963." Dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1981.
- Stone, Ruth M. and Verlon L. Stone. "Event, Feedback, and Analysis: Research Media in the Study of Music Events." Ethnomusicology May 1981: 215-225.
- Stuckey, Sterling. Slave Culture: Nationalist Theory and the Foundation of Black America. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.

- Tedlock, Dennis. "On the Translation of Style in Oral Narrative." Towards New Perspectives in Folklore. Eds. Richard Bauman and Americo Paredes. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1972. 114-133.
- Unger, Merrill F. Unger's Bible Dictionary. 1957. Chicago: Moody Press, 1960. 667, 945.
- Wiggins, William H., Jr. "The Black Folk Church." Handbook of American Folklore. Bloomington: Indiana University, 1983. 145-154.
- Williams, Gilbert A. "The Black Disc Jockey as a Cultural Hero." Popular Music and Society 10.3 (1986): 79-90.
- Williams-Jones, Pearl. "Afro-American Gospel Music: A Crystallization of the Black Aesthetic." Ethnomusicology 19 (1975): 373-385.
- . "Washington, D.C./Gospel Music City, U.S.A.: State of the Art." Festival of American Folklife program booklet. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, Office of Folklife Programs, 1987. 16-21.

Personal and Feedback Interviews

- Allen, Wilmore. Personal interview. 19 Sept. 1991.
- Anderson, William. Personal interview. 8 Feb. 1993.
- Banks, Chris. Personal interview. 13 August 1991.
- . Telephone interview. 21 February 1994.
- Boladian, Armen. Personal interview. 8 April 1993.
- Cooksey, John. Telephone interview. 6 October 1993.
- Coley, Daryl. Personal interview. 15 Aug. 1991.
- Cosby, George. Telephone interview. 21 February 1994.
- Craig, Joyce Cooper. Feedback interview. 19 Feb. 1994.
- . Telephone interview. 10 March 1994.
- Davis, Mattie. Telephone interview. 18 August 1993.
- Deutch, Joseph. Personal interview. 12 October 1993.
- Dice, Allen. Personal interview. 15 August 1991.

Evans, John T. Telephone interview. 6 October 1993.

Ford, Darryl. Feedback interview. 19 February 1994.

---. Telephone interview. 21 February 1994.

Forrest, Eugene. Personal interview. 14 August 1991.

Giles, Eddie. Personal interview. 15 August 1991.

Grant, Allen Duane. Feedback interview. 24 Feb. 1994.

Green, Verna. Telephone interview. 1 Sept. 1993.

Hardeman, Hillery. Personal interview. 14 August 1991.

Harris, Bertha. Feedback interview. 15 February 1994.

---. Personal interview. 10 May 1991.

Hobbs, Al. Personal interview. 11 April 1991.

Howell, Danny. Telephone interview. 21 Feb. 1994.

Jones, Bobby. Personal interview. 14 August 1991.

Lee, Bill. Personal interview. 12 August 1992.

Lewis, Pauline Wells. Personal interview. 14 August 1991.

Ligon, Joe. Personal interview. 25 January 1994.

McIntosh, Marguerite. Personal interview. 9 March 1993.

McMillon, Charles. Personal interview. 14 August 1991.

McMurtry, Larry. Feedback interview. 24 Feb. 1994.

Malloy, Donald. Personal interview. 14 August 1991.

Maxwell, John. Personal interview. 15 August 1991.

Morison, Douglas. Personal interview. 5 June 1991.

Morison, Howard. Personal interview. 5 June 1993.

Murchison, Duval. Personal interview. 23 September 1991.

Phillips, John. Personal interview. 13 Aug. 1991.

Phillips, Vermya. Personal interview. 13 Aug. 1991.

Poindexter, Delores. Personal interview. 11 April 1991.

Ramirez, Janet. Personal interview. 16 August 1991.

Ramirez, Joseph. Personal interview. 16 August 1991.

Robinson, Larry. Telephone interview. 21 February 1994.

Smith, Ed. Telephone interview. 3 September 1993.

---. Personal interview. 17 February, 1993.

Smith, Tim. Feedback interview. 15 February 1994.

Sorenson, Joe. Personal interview. 16 August 1991.

Steinberg, Martha Jean. Personal interview. 13 Oct. 1993.

Stokes, Juandolyn. Personal interview. 14 August 1991.

Stuart, Ruby. Personal interview. 15 August 1991.

Tatum, Edna. Telephone interview. 9 October 1993.

---. Telephone interview. 7 March 1994.

Tucker, Ira. Personal interview. 14 July 1993.

Underwood, Daniel. Personal interview. 4 May 1993.

Whaley, Maggie. Personal interview. 5 February 1993.

White, Ernest P, Jr. Personal interview. 16 Aug. 1991.

Williams, Samuel. Personal interview. 15 August 1991.

Wilks, E'lon Eloni. Feedback interview. 19 Feb. 1994.

Wynn, Timothy. Feedback interview. 2 Feb. 1994.

Gospel Announcers: Performances

Hobbs, Al, gospel announcer. Twentieth anniversary tribute for Al Hobbs at Clowes Hall. Butler University, Indianapolis, IN. Sunday, October 21, 1990. VHS.

---. Broadcast of his program called Jubilation. WHHH-FM, Indianapolis, IN. Sunday, May ?, 1993. Audio cassette.

Poindexter, Delores, gospel announcer. Appearance on Bobby Jones Gospel. Black Entertainment Television. Sunday, November 4, 1990. Audio cassette.

---. Gospel announcer at twentieth anniversary tribute for Al Hobbs at Clowes Hall, Butler University, Indianapolis, IN. Sunday, October 21, 1990. VHS.

---. Broadcast of her program called The Beautiful Garden of Prayer. WTLC-FM, Indianapolis, IN. Sunday, March 4, 1991. Audio cassette.

Tatum, Edna, gospel announcer. Fiftieth anniversary salute for the Reverend James Cleveland at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. October 29, 1990. Audio cassette.

---. Narrator for James Cleveland "Live" at Carnegie Hall. Savoy DBL 7014, 1977.

---. Guest appearance on Delores Poindexter's The Higher Ground broadcast. WTLC-AM Indianapolis, IN. February 1994. Audio cassette.

---. Gospel announcer on Breathe on Me video featuring The Reverend James Cleveland and the Northern and Southern California Choirs of the Gospel Music Workshop of America. Savoy 9506. VHS.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIV. LIBRARIES



31293010276008