

A Critical Study of the Life and Times of Hallie Quinn Brown

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Article Information

Keywords: Critical history, Hallie Quinn Brown, Speech-Language Pathology, African American Language, clinical practice, professional values, critical analysis

https://doi.org/10.48516/jcsd_2024vol2iss1.34

Submitted: February 13, 2024 EDT

Accepted: May 17, 2024 EDT

Published by Adelphi University Libraries

Abstract

Hallie Quinn Brown, an African American elocutionist of the late 19th and early 20th century, has recently been added to the pantheon of ancestors who deserve inclusion in historical accounts of speech-language pathology in America. This study, a critical analysis of her life and contributions, reveals a “double consciousness” in her cultural identity. While campaigning for full societal inclusion of the culturally marginalized, she also embraced an exclusionary politics of respectability, of “racial uplift.” This double perspective is evident in her treatment of dialect differences. At times she promoted the use of different dialects, especially of African American English, and at other times she expressed linguist attitudes. It is argued that while Hallie Quinn Brown is rightfully included as an important figure in the profession’s past as an African American woman who fought for the rights of the marginalized, she also needs to be viewed through a critical lens that reveals a double consciousness. A full understanding of her life and contributions can better prepare today’s professionals to recognize and confront present-day injustices.

Hallie Quinn Brown, an African American elocutionist who lived during the time speech-language pathology was organized as a profession in the US, has been absent from most historical depictions of the profession’s history (e.g., Malone, 1999; Paden, 1970). Recent historical studies, however, as part of the effort to redress the omission of marginalized groups, have claimed Brown as a role model and pioneer in the field (Duchan & Hyter, 2008; Hewitt & Duchan, 2023; Hyter & Duchan, 2023; Mayo & Mayo, 2013). In this article, we elaborate on the recent studies of Brown by applying a critical lens to her life and her times. We have drawn from three different approaches commonly used in critical research. One approach has been to document the contributions of marginalized individuals and groups, those who have been left out of the mainstream accounts (e.g., Ginsberg, 2018; Law, 2021). Another approach has been to examine the influence of oppressive social practices, such as those involving elitism, racism, and ableism (e.g., Yu, Nair, et al., 2022). A third strand in critical research, one closely associated with the disability rights movement, has been to reveal the direct influences that oppressive clinical practices have had on those with communication disabilities (e.g., Gerlach-Houck & Constantino, 2022). We use these three approaches to examine how the social movements during Hallie Quinn Brown’s lifetime contributed to her sense of identity, her career choices, and her professional activities; and examine her professional impact within a critical research framework.

There have been a number of efforts in recent years for speech-language pathologists to examine their past (e.g., Bowen, 2015; Duchan, 2002, 2023; Eling & Whitaker, 2022; Leonard, 2020; Perkins, 2011). In so doing, these historians have worked to uncover past information that

has relevance to issues today, including the field’s professional values (e.g., Duchan & Hewitt, 2023a), its knowledge base (Eling & Whitaker, 2022; Leonard, 2000), and its clinical practices (Bowen, 2015; Stathopoulos & Duchan, 2006). Many of these efforts have been focused on accomplishments of the field’s European or Anglo-American ancestors—those regarded as the profession’s founders (Duchan & Hewitt, 2023b, 2023a; Malone, 1999; O’Connell, 1990; Paden, 1970). These research studies have typically portrayed the field’s history as being made up of incremental advancements toward today’s so-called “best practices”. This biased rendering of history solely from the present perspective has been called “presentism”. Consistent with presentism’s view of history is for historians to point to “side trips” that got in the way of the field advancing to where it is now. For example, tongue surgery is portrayed as an unfortunate side trip within a larger story of how today’s stuttering treatments were arrived at (Brosch & Pirsig, 2001).

This “presentism” bias is now being challenged (Hunt, 2002). Included in these arguments against presentism are arguments against the claim that today’s practices are, indeed “best practices” (Hyter et al., 2023). For example, studies critical of the field have shown how oppressive practices based on elitism, ableism, and racism have negatively affected those with communication disorders (Hussain et al., 2023). This critical trend is robust enough to support a new journal, the *Journal of Critical Study of Communication and Disability*. Critical studies, such as those in the new journal, have been designed:

...to reveal and eventually eliminate clinical attitudes and practices toward others that are oppressive, iniquitous, and dehumanizing. The overall aim has been to create a profession that is emancipatory,

one that is grounded in practices that foster social justice (Duchan, 2023).

We contextualize the historical analysis in this work as one that explicitly rejects “presentism.” Our aim is to use a critical lens to develop an evolving view of where the field has come from, and where we stand now. The anti-presentism, critical view in this article is based on tenets of critical race theory (CRT), a movement predicated on the idea that race is not a natural, biological feature of physically distinct subgroups of people but a socially constructed (culturally invented) category that is used to oppress and exploit people of color (e.g., Delgado & Stefancic, 2010). The view of racism adopted here from CRT recognizes that racist policies are systemic in that they are built into all major institutions of the society, and not a problem that will be easily eradicated.

Hallie Quinn Brown’s long life spanned the latter years of the 19th century and first half of the 20th. It was a period of great turmoil in the US. The civil war took place when she was a teenager, reconstruction happened during her college years, and she lived much of her subsequent professional life subject to Jim Crow laws and associated customs. These laws led to the establishment of separate African-American educational institutions such as Tuskegee Institute and Allen University, places where Brown worked when she was in her late 30s and early 40s. Also during her lifetime, the suffragist movement was at its most active in the US. In 1920, when Brown was 70, the 19th Amendment to the Constitution was enacted, giving women the right to vote.

Brown was 75 when the profession of “speech correction” established itself in the United States. By 1925, the year that charter members of ASHA declared it to be a separate organization, Hallie Quinn Brown was well along in her career. She had been working for more than 50 years as an elocutionist, the profession out of which the newly formed field of speech correction was to grow and against which it was to define itself (*Minutes of the First Meeting of The American Academy of Speech Correction*, 1925). Brown had also been a classroom teacher, a civil rights activist, a suffragette, a public performer, and a fundraiser. She continued her professional activities until her death in 1949 at age 99.

Brown’s professional focus changed with the times. Early in her professional career, during reconstruction, she taught literacy to African American children and adults living on southern plantations. During the Jim Crow period, when it became dangerous to live as an activist in the south, she moved north to teach literacy to recently freed adults who were part of the African American migration. She was a stage performer giving public speeches, dramatic readings and even singing, joining the lyceum circuit, often as a fundraiser for her alma mater, Wilberforce University. Throughout her life she was a social activist, promoting causes such as anti-lynching and temperance legislation, racial inclusion and uplift, and women’s right to vote.

This article examines the work of Hallie Quinn Brown over her lifetime and in its historical context. The aim

is to describe the social influences on her professional choices and her professional identities. We provide evidence that she exhibited two separable identities, as is indicated by her double stance toward the use of the African American Language, one of criticism and one of celebration.

In her first identity, what we will be calling her “other” identity, she adopted and promoted the norms of the advantaged culture, buying into a prevailing “politics of respectability” for African Americans. This involved adopting the practices and ethos of middle-class whites with the hope of attaining cultural “respectability”. A second identity that Brown also embraced was tied to the cultural practices of her African American culture. We will call this her “home” identity. These two perspectives from her “other” and “home” cultures reflected Brown’s expression of what W. E. B. Du Bois described as double consciousness (Du Bois, 1903; Itzigsohn & Brown, 2015; Meer, 2019). Her assumption of two identities will be discussed in light of a recent trend in the speech-language pathology literature, one that critiques the politics of respectability. This critique rejects the idea that developing a secondary, “other” identity is the only way, or best way, to achieve respectability in society at large (Yu, Nair, et al., 2022).

The Early Life of Hallie Quinn Brown

Both of Hallie Quinn Brown’s parents, Thomas Arthur Brown and Frances Jane Scroggins Brown, had been enslaved as children, then freed as adults. Thomas bought his freedom, along with that of his father and siblings from his own Scottish mother. Frances was freed by her slaveholding white grandmother. Thomas and Frances married in 1840, and in 1841 had the first of six children. Hallie Quinn, the fifth in line, was born circa 1850.

Both Thomas and Frances Brown were ardent abolitionists. They used their family home in Pittsburgh as a haven for enslaved fugitives who were escaping from the south. They also worked closely with the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME) of Pittsburgh to provide other hiding stations along the underground railroad. This was the time of the Fugitive Slave Act, that penalized abolitionists who worked to support African Americans fleeing the south. Anyone aiding an African American fugitive by providing food or shelter was subject to six months imprisonment and a \$1,000 fine (*The Fugitive Slave Law*, 1850).

Hallie Quinn Brown also grew up during the time when there was a strong emphasis in America on oral performance (Clark & Halloran, 1993; Ray, 2005). She saw her father as excelling in this area:

He was often called upon to repeat passages from...historic speeches, which he would give with great forensic power using, in many instances...the gestures and attitudes of the debaters, all of which was a joy and edification to the members of several literary societies (Brown, 1937, p. 62).

When Hallie was fourteen, the family moved to Chatham, Ontario. It was 1864, during the civil war in the US, and Chatham, just across the US-Canadian border on the other side of Lake Erie, was an abolitionist stronghold and a center for African American activism. The family bought a farm on an estate fourteen miles south of Chatham. The estate, called the Elgin Settlement, or Buxton, provided 50-acre plots that were farmed by 250 or so African American families. The Canadian government had designated the Buxton community as a way to foster the "moral improvement of the colored population of Canada" (An Act to Incorporate The Elgin Association, for the Settlement and Moral Improvement of the Coloured Population of Canada, 1850).

It was here, on the farm, that Brown traced her beginning interest in becoming a performer. As she put it in her personal story, cast in third person, about this period in her life:

The milking finished, she now goes through the program that absorbs her whole attention, having risen before any other one of the household so that she could not be seen. She jumps upon a stump or log and delivers an address to the audience of cows, sheep, birds, etc. Neither knowing nor caring what she says; she goes through her harangue, earnestly emphasizing by arm gesture and occasionally by a stamp of the foot. She has a separate speech for the larger animals, and a special address to the lambs, ducklings, and any other juvenile auditors that happen to be near. Having exhausted her vocabulary, she begins a conversation in the language of the horse, cow, sheep, goose, rooster, or bird, until each is imitated; then bidding adieu to her pet auditors, she remounts her prancing steed and canters back to the house. This is her daily morning program (Brown, 1880, p. 8).

The roots of Hallie Quinn Brown's life works were laid down during her formative years. During these early years, she developed an awareness of the terrible impact of racism and slavery on the lives of those she knew, a religious sensibility and affiliation with African American Methodism, and an interest in developing her own abilities as an African American oral performer, like her father. Her experiences during this period gave her a firm grounding in her African American culture, her home culture.

The Education and Professional Training of Hallie Quinn Brown

Brown's undergraduate education at Wilberforce University advanced her interest and skill as a public speaker. The school was among the first of the African American colleges and universities established just after the Civil War. Brown was influenced by the president and founder of Wilberforce, her teacher, Bishop Daniel A. Payne. Payne was affiliated with the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the same church that Hallie had known as a young child in Pittsburgh. Brown, who lived with Payne and his family for two years upon her arrival

in Wilberforce, described Payne's influence on her as a caregiver, teacher, and mentor:

It was the Bishop's custom to have students read aloud to him. Many thought it a bore. The writer (Hallie Quinn Brown) was overjoyed when bidden to his study to perform this pleasant task. The first book read will never be forgotten. It was "Ecce Homo." Many others followed. Seated at the feet of this modern Gamaliel she was carefully trained in articulation, enunciation, and pronunciation and a love for good literature. That instruction has proved to be of lasting benefit throughout a public and private career (Brown, 1937, pp. 62-63).

Over the next 15 years, Brown set out to further her education. She did this by taking summer courses offered by Chautauqua Lecture School, graduating with the class of 1886 (Brown, 1886). She also took a course in elocution from Professor Robertson of the Boston School of Oratory between 1887 and 1891. The Boston School of Oratory at that time was America's epicenter for the study of elocution (Werner, 1894). One of their courses offered during this period promoted the Delsartean approach to speech performance that Francois Delsarte and his followers in America called "Applied Aesthetics". Delsarte was a French actor and theoretician who studied movements and gestures associated with speech. He codified those physical and vocal gestures and used his analysis to teach people how to move when they acted and performed on stage. His system was based in part on the postures assumed in the classic statues in Greek sculpture. Delsarte's methods became widely used by elocutionists in the US during this time (Donawerth, 2002, 2011; Ruyter, 1999; Walsh, 2020). For example, they were incorporated in the elocution courses taught at Chautauqua by Robert McLean Cumnock when Brown was there (*The Chautauquan*, 1886). Cumnock, a popular 19th century orator and teacher, founded the Northwestern University School of Oratory in 1878 (Cumnock, 2023).

Another emphasis among Brown's fellow elocutionists was on learning and exercising the muscles involved in speech production. For example, elocutionists and speech correctionists drew heavily from the work of Oskar Guttman, an actor and scientist living in Germany (Kofler, 1887; Stathopoulos & Duchan, 2006). Guttman's book on "speech gymnastics", *Gymnastics of the Voice: A system for correct breathing in singing and speaking based on physiological laws*, had recently been translated into English (Guttman, 1882). It offered instructions, information, and exercise material for teaching articulatory movements and breathing. Guttman's "speech gymnastics" along with Delsarte's teaching dance-like movements to accompany speech, were part of what Brown and others called training in "physical culture" (Brown, 1908; Kimber, 2017).

Hallie Quinn Brown read widely on her own, drawing from European ancient and contemporary texts to select her performance pieces. She also drew from the current literature in the field of elocution to design her ap-

proaches to instructing her students in the “art of speaking”. Her self-education fed her mainstream “other” cultural perspective—one that embraced the ways of a white United States as expressed in the methods of its elocutionists and had strong ties to European history and European literary classics.

Hallie Quinn Brown as a Performer

During her adolescence and early adult life Brown became dedicated and skilled as a literacy teacher and as an elocutionist. She drew from her disparate life experiences and her European-based education to form a second identity, her “other identity”, one that venerated European history and white cultural “standards” in the United States. In her reciter text, “Bits and Odds” (Brown, 1880) she selected materials as practice pieces for orators or elocutionists. These selections celebrated a white, Eurocentric culture. They were part of an oral performance movement in America to enculturate historically and socially minoritized groups, including those aspiring to the middle class (St. Pierre & St. Pierre, 2018; Walsh, 2020). The movement fostered the use of General American English (GAE) as “better speech” or “artful speech” or “standard speech”. The belief in dialectal superiority was tied to concepts of how changing one’s dialect could assist in social mobility. Founders of the American Society for Speech Correction were also aligned with the elocutionists in their views on the importance of instilling “proper” speech patterns. Founding members advocated for speech correction in order that speakers of devalued dialects, such as African American English or German English, not be socially constrained in their efforts to achieve upward social mobility (Duchan & Hewitt, 2023b).

By primarily selecting texts aligned with contemporary standards of “cultured speech” and Eurocentric literature, Brown elevated the speech of the “other”—a linguistic history divergent from her own roots in African American culture. Yet her performances also contained pieces from these roots. These selections, such as poetry written in African American Language by Paul Laurence Dunbar, conveyed the historical experiences of African Americans. These pieces in her performances and teachings served to legitimize and celebrate her home culture. A newspaper article praising one of her performances in Scotland noted that

Miss Hallie Quinn Brown...lectured on “Negro Folk-Lore and Song,” illustrated by quaint wit and wisdom from cotton field and cabin. The lecture was thoroughly appreciated, and at the close the vote of thanks to Miss Brown was cordially given. (from article in *The Courier and Argus, Dundee, Scotland, November 25th, 1896*)

It is notable that Brown selected pieces in *Bits and Odds* (Brown, 1880) that depicted the evils of being enslaved, such as the poem “The Pilot’s Story,” telling the story of the death by suicide of an enslaved woman promised freedom and marriage by her owner, after he sells her to a cruel man. Others forwarded positive views

of African Americans, such as the poem, “How He Saved St. Michael’s”, which depicted an African American man’s bravery in saving a church from a fire, and his impassioned plea for recognition of his humanity:

“You may keep your gold; I scorn it!—but answer me, ye who can,
If the deed I have done before you be not the deed of a man?”

A third selection titled “The Black Regiment” lauds the sacrifice of the regiment in a Civil War battle. These serious depictions of the African American experience are uniformly written in what would have been regarded as “standard” or indeed literary English of the day.

Brown’s selections in African American Language in *Bits and Odds* do not depict tragedies or bravery, instead they are uniformly humorous in nature. One, by Mark Twain, deals with a man who mistakes an oncoming steamship on the Mississippi, apparently the first he has seen, for a manifestation of God (“Uncle Dan’s Introduction to a Mississippi Steamer”). Another, “An Irish Loveletter” by George Melville Baker, depicts an African American servant trying to cover up the fact that she cannot read. A third, called “Apples—A Negro Lecture” by W. B. Dick, is a Biblical analysis, which clearly shows wit, but also shows lack of education. All three examples portray those using African American Language as unsophisticated and uneducated. Brown selected these for inclusion in *Bits and Odds* and these are referenced in contemporary newspaper articles describing her performances as particularly amusing.

Bits and Odds also contains selections intended to represent other dialects, including Irish, French-influenced English, Pennsylvania Dutch, Southern American Vernacular English, and German-influenced English. The apparent function of dialect in these pieces was amusement. Based on the selections, so-called “dialect” pieces were perhaps enjoyed for their perceived humorous nature by Brown’s audiences. Certainly, white audiences speaking General American English of the day might well have found performances in “dialect” funny precisely because they sounded “funny” to them, feeding into racist stereotypes of African American people as superstitious and unsophisticated, and similar stereotypes of German and Irish immigrants and rural Americans. The elocutionists’ emphasis on artistic expression and “correctness,” discussed above, can be linked to the use of prestige dialects for “higher art” and devalued dialects for “humor”, reflecting beliefs of the day in the supposedly superior (more “artistic”) nature of prestige dialects.

There were other recitation texts written by white elocutionists at that time that included pieces written in African American English and other dialects, so Brown was not alone in her inclusion of these “dialect pieces” (Conquergood, 2000; Werner, 1901, pp. xii-xv). Performances using the African American Language that were intended to demean rather than celebrate appeared along with racist performance pieces such as minstrel

shows and theatrical depictions of life on plantations (Beecher, 1874; Gates, 1988; Kimber, 2017).

Brown's second book, *Elocution and Physical Culture*, published in 1908, described elocutionary practice methods. By drawing on the approaches of Delsarte and Guttmann, she offered her potential readers ways to move their bodies as they performed and with materials that would allow them to learn about, to control, and to strengthen their articulators and muscles of breathing so as to enhance their speaking performance. Conquer-good (2000) and Walsh (2020) describe these approaches as a means to conventionalize and socialize speakers out of their home cultures and into what was seen as a "higher" art form, as a way to express oneself as other than an embodied expression arising from one's history and community. (See Kates, 1997, on the notion of embodied expression.) In this way, even the physical side of speech production was tied to notions of dialect correctness, and this attitude is another link between the elocutionists and the speech correctionists.

Hallie Quinn Brown's Careers as an Educator

Upon graduation from Wilberforce in 1873, Brown continued to draw on her early commitment to social justice by accepting her first job as a teacher on plantations in Mississippi and South Carolina. She was among many associated with the Freedman's Bureau, a government sponsored program to educate African Americans who had recently been emancipated. Her students were newly freed children and adults.

She continued her teaching career working with children in the public-school systems of Mississippi and in Dayton, Ohio, where she organized classes and taught African American adults to read and write. She also served as an administrator in two newly formed African American colleges, Allen University and Tuskegee Institute.

It was Hallie Quinn Brown's affiliation with Wilberforce University that was her longest lasting and most valued institutional relationship. Her parents also had strong ties to Wilberforce, as is described in her 1937 book: *Pen Pictures of Pioneers of Wilberforce*. She obtained her undergraduate degree from the university; later in life, Wilberforce awarded her two graduate honorary degrees (a master's degree, and a Doctor of Law). She travelled with the Wilberforce Lecture Concert Company raising funds for her beloved alma mater. In 1906, Brown was appointed by Wilberforce University to be professor of elocution in the English Department. Besides her focus on elocution during this period, Brown continued to build her credentials in education, earning a diploma from Wilberforce University's normal school in 1908. Brown lived in Wilberforce, Ohio both before and after her parents died, and it was where she located her self-publishing company called Homewood Cottage, the family name for their houses in both Chatham, Ontario and in Wilberforce.

One can speculate that Brown's choices to work in African American contexts as a literacy teacher, as a col-

lege teacher, and a college administrator were expressions of her "home" culture preferences. Judging from where she taught and worked, she was most comfortable in African American social contexts. This can be seen as expression of her "home" identity. But her educational aims, both for herself and her African American students, were to learn how to act and think in terms approved of by those in the white power structure, thereby developing an "other" identity, an identity she judged as more respectable. Some tension in how she saw herself, as well as how the white world perceived her, is detectable in this quote from a *Los Angeles Times* article in 1905 entitled: *Devotes Life to Her Race: What an Able Woman Is Doing for the Negroes*.

Miss Brown is a woman of rare charm, possessing the magnetism of the born leader. She would not readily be taken as being of the negro race, although it is the race which she is proud to own, and in the welfare of which she has spent her useful life. She laughingly acknowledges herself "a problem" with all the others of her kind, but says the problem is fast becoming less troublesome to her own people and to the white race, as well.

Hallie Quinn Brown's Double Consciousness Regarding Racial Uplift and African American English

Later in her career, at around the turn of the 20th century, Brown concentrated more directly on activities that would promote "racial uplift" of African Americans. She described it thus:

If the Negro Race is to come to real freedom and true spiritual power and progress; if he is to enter that larger sphere of life which is not meat and drink—there must be a body of God's elect—men and women trained to large knowledge, broad vision and lofty spiritual purpose, who, as teachers and moral leaders, shall lift the standard and lead our people into a larger life. The upward pull through trained leadership; the character-begetting power of strong personalities, the inspirations to higher ideals, to self master, to efficient service through genuine leadership must be recognized. Where there is no vision, the people perish. Without such teachers, helpers, and leaders, the schools and colleges must fail and the race sink to lower levels. No stream can rise higher than its source (cited in McFarlin, 1975, p. 176).

The sensibility reflected in Brown's comment on racial uplift was part of a "politics of respectability" being expressed in the African American community at that time. It refers to a set of beliefs and behaviors that emphasize presenting oneself in a way that conforms to mainstream, middle-class values of the dominant white, Eurocentric culture, so as to gain social and political acceptance and respect. In her statement, Brown alludes to a version of racial uplift named "the talented tenth," calling for educated and successful African Americans to work

to uplift the rest, with the end of being accepted in “respectable” society.

Brown worked to help African Americans achieve respectability from the point of view of middle class white American/European society. She regarded it as social “uplift.” She lectured across America and Europe, supporting the temperance movement among other causes, and served as a fundraiser for Wilberforce University in support of its mission to educate African American students. She organized clubs and lobbying groups, especially of African American women, so they could achieve recognition and acceptance by society at large. One of several African American clubs that Brown organized, worked in, and led was the National Association of Colored Women, a group that assumed the motto: “Lifting As We Climb”. Its self-stated aim was to show that “our aims and interests are identical with those of all good aspiring women.” Another focus of the African American women’s club movement at this time was forwarding the history of positive contributions of people of African descent, especially of African Americans (White, 2021). Hallie Quinn Brown was active in these efforts, publishing a book detailing the lives and contributions of African American women, from Phyllis Wheatley to Brown’s contemporaries (Brown, 1926).

While advocating for the assimilative (“uplifting”) practices for African Americans in the US that is characteristic of “respectability politics” (Jefferson, 2023), Hallie Quinn Brown also worked tirelessly to eliminate racial stereotypes attributed to African Americans. For example, she lobbied against a public statue that was proposed to memorialize African American women in the demeaning stereotype of the “mammy” (Kimber, 2017). And she lectured widely in both the United States and Europe promoting positive depictions of African Americans and condemning the injustices of racism in the United States. Her lectures contained material celebrating the uniqueness of the African American culture. This is a political stance opposite that of racial uplifting where she embraced assimilation. Her two perspectives are in keeping with other elements of “double consciousness” evidenced in her upbringing, her schooling, her approaches to education, and her performances.

Particularly noteworthy was the double consciousness from which Hallie Quinn Brown regarded African American Language. In her book *Elocution and Physical Culture*, she promoted standard General American English usage, over the language of African Americans, thereby embracing the premises of respectability politics.

Faults in pronunciation early contracted are suffered and gain strength by habit and grow so inveterate by time as to become almost incurable. A mere knowledge of the right way will not correct the fault. There must be a frequent repetition of the right way until the correct form will root out the wrong way (Brown, cited in Kates, 1997, p. 63).

While the above might refer to phonological disorders, it could equally well relate to use of AAL phonology. Nonetheless, throughout her other writings and in her

lectures, Brown used African American Language examples. As discussed previously, she offered samples of African American Language in her reciter text, *Bits and Odds*, and was well known for her “dialect pieces” that celebrated the work of African American writers and poets, such as most prominently Paul Dunbar, a friend and colleague of hers at Wilberforce (Daily Dunbar, 2023). Dunbar describes the experience of African Americans in his poem “We Wear the Mask,” a noted depiction of the “other” consciousness as an uncomfortable mask (Dunbar, 1895):

We wear the mask that grins and lies,
It hides our cheeks and shades our eyes,—
This debt we pay to human guile;
With torn and bleeding hearts we smile,
And mouth with myriad subtleties.

In none of Brown’s writings we have been able to locate similar sentiments. Brown’s orientation to dialect and the African American experience is unclear to us; none of her extant writings discuss AAL explicitly. Did she recognize and celebrate the beauty and wit of the language, and its centrality to the African American experience in the United States? Or did she believe that use of the dialect was a mark of lack of education and that it should be confined to purely humorous contexts? While we would hope for more clarity, perhaps the most that can be concluded is that her performative use of dialect reflects a double consciousness, including both positive and stereotypic views.

Summary of the Life and Times of Hallie Quinn Brown

Hallie Quinn Brown’s expressions of double consciousness were likely exacerbated by the repressive and racist Jim Crow policies in the United States. W.E.B. Du Bois, her friend and contemporary, described this period in U. S. history as one where many African Americans were forced to live as if “behind the veil.” They existed, on the one hand, in the main society, what we have called “other”, and they existed as if in second society, assuming a second consciousness, often separate and invisible to the white, mainstream society.

Meer has described this second society as a “one way mirror, with the minority seeing the majority through the glass, whilst the latter sees only their own reflection (of mastery or dominance) as the former remain behind the mirror” (Meer, 2019, p. 53). This sensibility provides African Americans with a second sight, a view of one’s self through the eyes of others. Du Bois depicts this conflicted existence as follows:

One ever feels his two-ness, — an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder (Du Bois, 1903/1994.).

Du Bois offered a hybrid solution to being torn asunder by the invisibility and oppressive treatment often as-

sociated with expressions of one's identity with historically and socialized minoritized groups. He advocated for an eventual single consciousness, an intersectional one, one that contains components of both "home" and "other" existences, as integrated, equally valued, and visibly expressed (Lewis, 1993, p. 281).

The history of the American Negro is the history of this strife—this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self. In this merging he wishes neither of the older selves to be lost. He would not Africanize America, for America has too much to teach the world and Africa. He would not bleach his Negro soul in a flood of white Americanism, for he knows that Negro blood has a message for the world. He simply wishes to make it possible for a man to be both a Negro and an American, without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without having the doors of Opportunity closed roughly in his face (Du Bois, 1903).

Lewis, a biographer of Du Bois, names this stance of Du Bois "hyphenation":

The genius of *The Souls of Black Folk* was that it transcended this dialectic in the most obvious way – by affirming it in a permanent tension. Henceforth, the destiny of the race could be conceived as leading neither to assimilation nor separatism but to proud, enduring hyphenation (Lewis, 1993, p. 281).

Brown, in contrast, promoted assimilation into the "other consciousness" as a way to escape having to live invisibly behind the veil. She embraced a politics of respectability, of "racial uplift". Toward this end, she often worked to eliminate expressions of her home culture, such as the use of African American English, that were devalued by the dominant and repressive host culture.

Critical Views of Respectability Politics

Respectability politics and the political thinking that was associated with the racial uplift movement are now seen as having failed to challenge the underlying issues of racism and as having failed to achieve its goal of acceptance of the marginalized (Harris, 2014; Jefferson, 2023). The current approach, in direct opposition to the assimilation goals of achieving respectability and racial uplift, is to expand the concept of what it means to be "respectable." Those in the Black Lives Matter movement, for example, have argued that African Americans are deserving of rights regardless of any ostensibly behavior perceived to be non-respectable (Obasogie & Newman, 2016).

One way that the field of speech-language pathology might be seen as promoting its own version of respectability politics is in the realm of "professionalism." The term has been used as a general term that presupposes that certain modes of discourse, manners of dress, and social behaviors characteristic of dominant (Euro-American) social groups are required for professional respectability. Examples of ways in which the concept has been used include labeling hair styles worn by African

Americans, clothing choices reflecting ethnic identity, and modes of communication that differ from Euro-American preferences as unprofessional. Yu et al. (2022), in a critical analysis of the accreditation standards for academic training programs in speech-language pathology and of a document listing the "essential functions" for a speech-language pathologist, note that: "The lack of specification of what it means to be "professional" is highly problematic from the perspective of racial justice" (p. 585).

Another way in which the profession of speech-language pathology is working towards a rejection of respectability politics is an effort to move away from "separate but equal" views of language use. This "separate but equal" approach asks that clinicians distinguish a language difference from a language disorder. For children with linguistic differences attributed to minoritized dialects, the advice is to encourage them to switch to General American English (GAE) in formal situations, such as in school. Children are taught that they should use a home language, typically African American Language (AAL), at home, but should code shift to a school language, almost always GAE, at school. Built into this distinction is the idea that the child's native "home" language is unacceptable in certain situations, and in need of suppression.

The separate but equal model for language use echoes the racial uplift approach of Hallie Quinn Brown, where the devalued speech of the formerly enslaved is used mostly when joking, but not in more "serious" situations. Many speakers of GAE today inflect their speech with elements drawn from AAL, and these usages are typically intended to appear humorous. They follow the historical precedent inherent in minstrel performances by codifying Blackness as caricature. Black "language, movement, deportment, and character—as caricature persists through mass media and in public performances today" (National Museum of African American History and Culture, n.d.). Such use of AAL by white speakers has been called "auditory blackface" (Wiltz, 2022).

In this biased view promoting code-switching, AAL is seen as informal code, unsuited to formal contexts. But AAL, like all languages, offers speakers a full range of formality within the dialect. Attributing the entire language to an informal code is linguisticism (Green, 2011). As a complete language with the full range of pragmatic options, AAL offers varied registers suitable for contexts as diverse as conversations among adolescent peers, or for announcements in a church context.

Presupposed in the notion of code switching is the view that multilingual speakers conceive of their languages as separate codes rather than as integrated ones. Replacing that notion in contemporary thought is the concept of translanguaging, wherein multilingual language users are fluid processors, drawing simultaneously from whatever language knowledge they have (Khamis-Dakwar & Bortz, 2023; Vogel & Garcia, 2017). The true complexity of multilingual language use is in-

adequately reflected in contemporary notions of code switching.

Besides promoting broader renderings of respectability and arguing against the use of separate but equal codes to solve racial bias, the field is moving to adopt more inclusive language, such as “culturally and linguistically responsive practice”. The vocabulary shift is designed to replace terms such as “diversity” that have been used to categorize African American cultural practices. Such culturally responsive practices include dialect-affirming approaches to counter racist and demeaning views and usages of AAL. The website and Facebook group, *Respect the Dialect*, is one such effort (Latimer-Hearn, n.d.). Oetting et al. (2016) have called for a shift in thinking away from “difference or disorder” to “difference within disorder”, acknowledging that language impairment can occur in children learning any language. The complexities of raising awareness of our deeply embedded language-based biases are highlighted by controversies regarding Oetting’s phrasing of “disorder within dialect,” which has been criticized as suggesting that only some dialects, i.e., socially marginalized ones, need to be thus called out (Hearn, 2024). Our understanding of Oetting’s intention is that too many speech-language pathologists assume children speaking anything other than GAE should uniformly be labeled as having differences and not impairments, which prevents English language learners and speakers of minoritized dialects such as AAL from accessing needed services. Perhaps a new slogan is needed, one that more clearly rejects linguicism: “any speaker of any language variety could have a language disorder.”

Considering the legacy of Hallie Quinn Brown within the contemporary critical context leads to a nuanced view of her accomplishments. Recent changes in the field of speech-language pathology promote a more dialect-inclusive and affirming view, thereby eschewing the double-consciousness and respectability politics evident in Brown’s writings, performances, and political activism. Changes arising in the field from a critical perspective lead away from her emphasis on social “uplift” by means “elevated” language.

Brown’s life and work was centered on elocution and education, leading to her being embraced as a role model for contemporary African American speech-language pathologists. The second author attended an ASHA conference held at the time of writing, and she saw an attendee wearing a sweatshirt proclaiming “The Dream of Hallie Quinn Brown,” showing that Brown’s importance as a foremother is very much alive in the minds of contemporary African American speech-language pathologists. That Brown was a tireless activist and visionary for human equality is without dispute. Her courage, her attainments, and her aspirations for a just society remain to inspire us to carry on her legacy, one that challenges injustice. While her own views on language are not ones fostered by contemporary critical researchers and clinicians, her drive for social justice and her lifelong battle against racism are very much aligned

with those who take a critical stance toward our field. Critical analysis has furthered understanding of how the field needs to continue to confront linguicism (Yu, Nair, et al., 2022) and all forms of oppression. The legacy of Hallie Quinn Brown offers us both a model of activism, as well as the opportunity to apply a critical lens when analyzing choices made within our respective historical contexts.

Brown’s writing shows that she believed that the language and diction of the privileged social classes was of a higher order and needed to be emulated in order to establish oneself as an equal member of those classes. In our critique, we contend that her view is at odds with contemporary struggles within our profession to combat linguicism. Is it possible to simultaneously reject the evident linguicism in her views, and at the same time embrace her as a foremother? Certainly Brown’s views regarding correct speech were very much in alignment with the early speech correctionists’ views, views upon which the profession was founded. In that sense, she is positioned well within a direct line back to the ideas prevalent during the earliest days of ASHA, and can indeed be properly seen as an important ancestor (Duchan & Hewitt, 2023a). Learning from the ancestors does not mean accepting all their views. Understanding how and why such views came to be informs our contemporary critiques, providing context and nuance as we grapple with many of the same difficult issues faced by Brown in her time.

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Positionality statements

Judith Felson Duchan, Ph.D., CCC-SLP. I am a retired, privileged, white Jewish female who has taken issue with various aspects of the profession over the course of my career. My past publications have called for acceptance of all dialects as legitimate, and for the full acceptance of those with communication disabilities into the cultural mainstream. Along these lines, I have promoted social model practices over ones driven by the medical model. Most recently, I have worked to bring the study of a critical history into our field in order to foster a fuller sense of where our practices come from. But I have not always taken a critical view of our field. Very early on in my career I argued that minority dialects be changed to conform to mainstream English. Looking at my efforts over my professional life, I can be seen as embracing a double consciousness, like that of Hallie Quinn Brown, at first buying into the values that lie behind respectability politics and, only after that, embracing diversity. The recent emergence of critical science, along with the struggles going on in the US and the world, has led me to radicalize my professional positioning once again. I now view different forms of oppressive practices as closely related by virtue of being embedded in a framework of social power. This more coherent critical position, I feel, will allow me to do a better job when working to bring about change in the profession, change designed to lead to more culturally responsive and inclusive practices.

Lynne Hewitt, PhD, CCC-SLP. I was born and raised in a small town in Western New York state, whose population at the time was almost wholly white, Christian, and from European-American heritage backgrounds. These descriptors applied to my family as well, except for the Christian label. Being raised in a Unitarian Universalist congregation exposed me to ideas of tolerance and liberal ideals. As a late baby boomer growing up in the 60's and 70's, I was exposed to the social foment of the time. Seeing the struggles of minoritized populations and sufferings of colonized people worldwide resonated with my own sense of the injustices of patriarchy, as well as the

injustices of class hierarchies apparent to me as a member of a low-income family in a high-income community. Being married to a man of Indian heritage, and living for some time in India, furthered my journey in understanding the harms of colonialism. Working with children with intellectual disabilities led to my career in speech-language pathology; my commitment to competence-based allyship was fostered by studying under Judith Duchan, a pioneer in critiquing the medical model of disability then almost universally applied in this field.

The authors declare no conflict of interest or funding.



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