



**You Know My Steez: An Ethnographic and Sociolinguistic Study of Styleshifting in a Black American Speech Community (Publication of the American Dialect Society)**

*H. Samy Alim*

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## **You Know My Steez: An Ethnographic and Sociolinguistic Study of Styleshifting in a Black American Speech Community (Publication of the American Dialect Society) H. Samy Alim**

The 2004 Publication of the American Dialect Society, *You Know My Steez* is the culmination of nearly four years of direct study and hands-on experience by a teacher-researcher and active community member in the working-class suburb of Sunnyside, California. Focusing on the language and linguistic practices of students at Haven High School, an ethnically and linguistically diverse school, the author examines both the internal linguistic constraints and the external social constraints (race, gender, and cultural literacy, among others) that shape speech styles, particularly among Black male and female hiphoppers. Contributing to the development of a more refined methodological approach to the study of linguistic styleshifting, the author integrates the study of sociolinguistic variation, interactional analysis (the use of discourse analysis to examine the implicit rules and roles that govern social interaction), and ethnographic fieldwork to develop a deeper understanding of how, when, and why speakers shift their styles.

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