GULLAH NEGATION: A VARIABLE ANALYSIS

TRACEY L. WELDON
University of South Carolina

ABSTRACT: This article provides a variable analysis of negation in Gullah and considers the implications of the observed patterns of variability for the debate over the history and development of African American English (AAE). For many years now, linguists have debated over the possibility of an AAE-creole connection and have hypothesized in particular about the putative role of Gullah (or a Gullah-like creole) on the origins and development of AAE. In recent years, negation has become a central topic in this debate, with examinations of variable negation in both early and contemporary varieties of AAE. However, practically no analysis has been done on the system of variable negation in Gullah. This study aims to fill this gap in the literature by providing a quantitative analysis of variable negation in both copula and noncopula constructions in Gullah. While no definitive claims are made about the AAE-Gullah connection based on this analysis, certain patterns in the data, such as the alternation between *ain't* and *didn't* in past contexts, allow for the possibility of a historical connection between the two varieties.

DEBATE OVER THE ORIGINS and development of African American English (AAE) has been well documented in the linguistic literature, with competing theories dating back to the mid-1900s. Gullah has played at least a nominal role in this debate from very early on, as creolists have hypothesized about a possible AAE-Gullah connection either via decreolization from Gullah (or a Gullah-like creole) to AAE (see, e.g., Bailey 1965; Stewart 1967, 1968; Dillard 1972; Rickford 1974, 1977, 1998; Baugh 1980; Holm 1984; Winford 1992a, 1992b) or through processes of language shift or contact between speakers of these respective varieties (see, e.g., Rickford 1997; Winford 1998). Others have argued against a creole origin for AAE or have emphasized the influence of English or other sources on its origins and development (see, e.g., Krapp 1924; Kurath 1928, 1949; McDavid and McDavid 1951; D'Eloia 1973; Schneider 1982, 1989, 1993; Poplack and Sankoff 1987; Tagliamonte and Poplack 1988, 1993; Poplack and Tagliamonte 1989, 1991, 1994, 2001; Montgomery 1991; Ewers 1996; Howe and Walker 1999; Mufwene 1999; Walker 1999; Kautzsch 2002; Wolfram and Thomas 2002).[1]

In recent years, negation has taken its place as one of the key polarizing topics in this debate. According to Winford (1992b, 350), negation is one of the "chief areas in which BEV [Black English Vernacular] shows traces of

American Speech, Vol. 82, No. 4, Winter 2007 DOI 10.1215/00031283-2007-023

its creole origin" (see also Rickford 1977; Labov 1982; Debose and Faraclas 1993; Debose 1994). By contrast, Walker (2005, 13) contends that "the negation system of Early AAE is basically that of nonstandard English" (see also Howe 1997; Howe and Walker 1999; Kautzsch 2000, 2002). Central to this debate has been the question of whether *ain't* in AAE functions as a tense/aspect neutral monomorphemic negator, similar to those found in creole varieties, as argued by Debose (1994) and Debose and Faraclas (1993), or whether it functions as a negated auxiliary, similar to those found in white nonstandard varieties of English (WNSE). In a comprehensive examination of variable negation patterns in modern-day AAE (Weldon 1994), I argue in favor of the latter but suggest that the alternation between *ain't* and *didn't* in AAE likely represents traces of a creole origin, given that this use of *ain't* is not found productively in modern-day WNSE. However, researchers examining negation patterns in so-called "early" varieties of AAE (see, e.g., Howe 1997; Howe and Walker 1999; Kautzsch 2000, 2002; Walker 2005)[2] report "a virtual lack of alternation between *didn't* and *ain't*," and describe the prominence of this variable in contemporary varieties as "a recent and spectacular development" (Howe 1997, 284).

Missing from this discussion, of course, is the role that Gullah might have played in the development of such negation patterns. If creolists are right in their contention that Gullah or a Gullah-like creole influenced the early development of AAE, then a better understanding of the system of negation in Gullah is likely to provide some insight into this historical debate. However, with the exception of Mufwene (1993b), which examines the scope of negation and focus in Gullah, almost nothing is known about the system of negation in this variety. This study, therefore, provides a variable analysis of negation in Gullah and, where possible, considers the implications of these findings for the debate over the Gullah-AAE relationship.

METHODOLOGY

Data for this study were collected in the early to mid-1990s on Johns Island and St. Helena Island and in McClellanville, South Carolina—all primarily rural, racially segregated, working-class communities. A total of 10 hours of recordings from these communities was selected for examination. These data were then supplemented by an additional 5 hours of recordings donated by the McKissick Museum at the University of South Carolina. These tapes were recorded in the mid- to late 1980s in Mount Pleasant and Awendaw—both mainland communities along the coast of South Carolina.[3] St. Helena Island, located near the town of Beaufort, in Beaufort County, represents the southernmost community among those from which data were collected.

TABLE 1
Number of Hours of Data Collected in Individual Communities by Style and Sex

	Number of Speakers			*Number of Hours*		
	Male	*Female*	*Total*	*Conversation*	*Interview*	*Total*
Charleston County						
McClellanville	3	5	8	2.0	2.5	4.5
Johns Island	2	6	8	3.5	–	3.5
Mt. Pleasant	–	1	1	–	3.0	3.0
Awendaw	–	1	1	–	2.0	2.0
Beaufort County						
St. Helena Island	2	1	3	1.0	1.0	2.0
TOTAL	7	14	21	6.5	8.5	15.0

The other four communities, all located in Charleston County, extend from southernmost Johns Island, located near Charleston, to northernmost McClellanville, located near Georgetown. Table 1 shows the number of hours of data collected in each of these communities.

Of the 15 total hours analyzed, 6.5 hours consist of casual group conversations and 8.5 hours consist of interviews. The speaker group includes 21 speakers—7 male and 14 female, all over 60 years of age.[4] None of the speakers in this group had obtained more than a grade-school education and some had received no formal schooling at all. While several of the speakers had lived or worked in more than one community within the coastal South Carolina region, none had spent any significant time as residents outside the area. Occupations among the female speakers included oyster factory workers, paper mill workers, basket makers, child caretakers, and housekeepers, while occupations among the male speakers included farmers, fishermen, shrimpers, and carpenters.

In the analysis to follow, I consider the effects of gender and style on observed patterns of variation. While it is possible that some amount of regional variation exists among the communities included in this study as well, the amount of data collected in each individual community (as shown in table 1) is not sufficient to justify a regional analysis. Factors such as age, education, occupation, and mobility also will not be considered in this variable analysis, given the relatively homogenous nature of the data, as described above.

ANALYSIS

Following the model I established in Weldon (1994) for analyzing variability in negation in modern-day AAE, the analysis to follow examines variation in both copula and noncopula declarative constructions in Gullah. Unlike Wel-

don (1994), however, the analysis of the Gullah data is based strictly on the straight frequencies of variants, given that the overall number of tokens for most of the observed variables is too low to warrant a VARBRUL analysis.

Where relevant, comparisons are made between patterns found in the Gullah data and those observed in modern-day AAE, as reported in Weldon (1994), with the goal of determining how Gullah might help to inform the debate over the origins and development of AAE. There are, of course, limits to how much can be made of such comparisons given that the AAE data examined in Weldon (1994) come from primarily young to middle-aged, Midwestern speakers in a relatively urban setting, while the Gullah data examined here come from older, Southern, rural speakers, as described above. The primary goal of this article, however, is to provide a comprehensive analysis of the system of variable negation in Gullah, since no such description currently exists. The results of this analysis can perhaps then be used in subsequent studies to conduct more rigorous comparative analyses that might contribute more directly to the creole origins debate.[5]

COPULA CONSTRUCTIONS.[6] *Present Time Reference.* Among negative copula constructions with present time reference (abbreviated NEG Cop Pres), there are seven variants, listed in table 2 in order of decreasing frequency, with sample sentences provided in (1)–(7).

1. I AIN'T so good on them lie [storytelling] now.
2. She's NOT a—he's not a her.
3. You NOT supposed to justify it.
4. I'M NOT a farmer.
5. Those people IS NOT doing nothing.
6. You'RE NOT a Christian yet.
7. You DON'T 'posed to tell him.

The most common variant in these data is *ain't*, which occurs with 75% frequency. All of the remaining variants are marginal, occurring with 9% frequency or less. Note that *don't* occurs only once in these data, in the environment of the predicate *(sup)posed to*, where it varies with *not* (see examples 3 and 7 above). This variation has been observed in AAE as well, where *don't*, *not*, and *ain't* all vary in the environment of *supposed to* (see Weldon 1994). It is not clear at this point, however, whether *don't* extends to other copula environments in Gullah as well or whether it is restricted to *(sup)posed to*. Such a lexical restriction, if it exists, would seem to necessitate separating *don't* from the NEG Cop Pres variable and treating *don't* and *not* as separate variables. However, until this variation can be examined further, I will continue to count *don't* among the NEG Cop Pres variants, as shown in table 2.

Table 2 also lists the distributions of the present copula variants in relation to four linguistic factor groups and two social factor groups tested for their potential influence on the distribution of the variants. The relative frequencies listed in table 2 provide some insight into the system at work. Note, first of all, that English rules of subject-verb concord are less well-established in plural/second-person-singular environments (which allow for variation among *ain't*, *-'re not*, *is not*, *not*, and *don't*) than in first-person-singular and third-person-singular environments. In fact, plural/second-person-singular forms are not well established in the data at all. The *-'re not* variant occurs only once, and there are no tokens of full *are not*. Full forms are, in fact,

TABLE 2
Straight Frequencies of Negative Present Copula Variants

	ain't	*'s not*	*not*	*'m not*	*is not*	*'re not*	*don't*	*Total*
TOTAL	95 (75%)	11 (9%)	11 (9%)	7 (6%)	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	127
Preceding Phon. Env.								
vowel	68 (70%)	11 (11%)	9 (9%)	7 (7%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	97
consonant	23 (88%)	0 (0%)	2 (8%)	0 (0%)	1 (4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	26
pause[a]	4 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4
Subject Type								
personal pron.	69 (77%)	3 (3%)	9 (10%)	7 (8%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	90
it/that/what	7 (47%)	8 (53%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	15
other pronoun	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1
noun phrase	13 (87%)	0 (0%)	1 (7%)	0 (0%)	1 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	15
zero subject[a]	6 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	6
Person-Number[b]								
1st singular	31 (78%)	0 (0%)	2 (5%)	7 (18%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	40
plur./2nd sing.	33 (80%)	0 (0%)	5 (12%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	41
3rd singular	25 (63%)	11 (28%)	4 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	40
Following Gram. Env.								
NP	14 (64%)	3 (14%)	3 (14%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)	22
AdjP	25 (69%)	6 (17%)	3 (8%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	36
Loc	5 (56%)	2 (22%)	2 (22%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	9
V-*ing*	22 (79%)	0 (0%)	3 (11%)	2 (7%)	1 (4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	28
gonna	6 (75%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (25%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	8
gon	23 (96%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	24
Gender								
male	24 (80%)	3 (10%)	0 (0%)	2 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	30
female	71 (73%)	8 (8%)	11 (11%)	5 (5%)	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	97
Style								
conversation	68 (74%)	9 (10%)	9 (10%)	5 (5%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	92
interview	27 (77%)	2 (6%)	2 (6%)	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	1 (3%)	35

a. The total number of tokens for preceding pause and zero subject may not always match since variants occurring without any overt subject are not always sentence-initial (e.g., *But Ø ain't closed for her*).

b. Note that there are a total of 127 tokens in each factor group with the exception of the PERSON-NUMBER group, which includes only 121 tokens. This discrepancy is a result of the fact that 6 tokens occur with zero subjects, which are not marked for PERSON-NUMBER.

quite rare in these data. Note that the single token of *is not* in sentence (5) represents the only full copula form in these data.

The primary variant in these data is, of course, *ain't*, which has the widest distributional range in the data. Note that *ain't* occurs in every environment examined with the exception of OTHER PRONOUN subjects. This exception, however, is likely due to the fact that there is only one OTHER PRONOUN subject in the data. Even in the environment of *it/that/what* subjects, which favor *-'s not* tokens with 53% frequency, *ain't* exhibits a fairly high frequency at 47%.[7] And with all of the remaining factors, *ain't* is the most frequent variant. The lack of full copula forms and the preference for *ain't* in these data serve as indications that present negative forms of the English copula are not well established in the Gullah data. The significance of these findings will be discussed in more detail later in the paper.

Past Copula Constructions. Among past copula constructions (abbreviated NEG Cop Past), there are six variants, listed in table 3, again in order of decreasing frequency. As the figures in table 3 illustrate, the most frequent

TABLE 3
Straight Frequencies of Negative Past Copula Variants

	wasn't	*didn't*	*ain't been*	*ain't*	*didn't been*	*ain't duh*	*Total*
TOTAL	27 (49%)	14 (25%)	7 (13%)	4 (7%)	2 (4%)	1 (2%)	55
Subject Type							
personal pron.	9 (30%)	11 (37%)	4 (13%)	3 (10%)	2 (7%)	1 (3%)	30
other pronoun	10 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	10
noun phrase	2 (50%)	2 (50%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4
zero subject	6 (55%)	1 (9%)	3 (27%)	1 (9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	11
Person-Number[a]							
1st singular	0 (0%)	7 (50%)	3 (21%)	1 (7%)	2 (14%)	1 (7%)	14
plur./2nd sing.	5 (45%)	3 (27%)	1 (9%)	2 (18%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	11
3rd singular	16 (84%)	3 (16%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	19
Following Gram. Env.							
NP	10 (91%)	0 (0%)	1 (9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	11
AdjP	11 (37%)	14 (47%)	2 (7%)	2 (7%)	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	30
Loc	2 (50%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (50%)	0 (0%)	4
V-*ing*	4 (67%)	0 (0%)	2 (33%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	6
a+V_{bse}	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2
gon[b]	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2
Gender							
male	16 (64%)	6 (24%)	2 (8%)	1 (4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	25
female	11 (37%)	8 (27%)	5 (17%)	3 (10%)	2 (7%)	1 (3%)	30
Style							
conversation	12 (39%)	8 (26%)	6 (19%)	4 (13%)	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	31
interview	15 (63%)	6 (25%)	1 (4%)	0 (0%)	2 (8%)	0 (0%)	24

a. Note that the numbers in the PERSON-NUMBER group add up to only 44 tokens because 11 tokens occur with zero subject, which are not coded for PERSON-NUMBER.
b. There are no *gonna* predicates in these data.

variant in these data is *wasn't*, which occurs with 49% frequency. There are no tokens of *weren't*. Examinations of affirmative past copula constructions in creole varieties have identified this lack of person-number inflection as a characteristic feature of intermediate creoles (see, e.g., Bickerton 1973; Rickford 1987; Winford 1992a). The AAE data examined in Weldon (1994) also show little evidence of person-number inflection, with only one token of *weren't* found in the data. However, in the AAE data set, *wasn't* is nearly categorical. Clearly the Gullah data exhibit much more variability.

The second most frequent variant in NEG Cop Past environments is *didn't*, which occurs with 25% frequency and is found exclusively in the environment of "adjectival" predicates, as illustrated by sentences (8)–(13).

8. She DIDN'T able fuh take care the child.
9. I DIDN'T born yet.
10. I DIDN'T married in the church.
11. I DIDN'T brought up through—at that time.
12. It DIDN'T quite this large.
13. DIDN'T quite this big.

As in many intermediate Caribbean English Creole (CEC) systems, the predicates in these sentences function like verbs in combining with a *do*-support auxiliary. However, in the Gullah data, these predicates also combine with non-*do*-support auxiliaries, as illustrated in (14)–(16).[8]

14. We WASN'T married at that time.
15. We AIN'T married at that time.
16. AIN'T BEEN sweet at all.

The variant *ain't* occurs with 7% frequency in these data. Past time reference is specified by the context, as illustrated in (17) and (18).

17. Back then, you AIN'T used to no pretty skirts.
18. We AIN'T married at that time.

Sentences involving the past marker *been* are negated by either *ain't* (as in *ain't been*), which occurs with 13% frequency, or *didn't* (as in *didn't been*), which occurs with 4% frequency. These are illustrated in (19) and (20).

19. In them days, AIN'T BEEN no kind of tractor.
20. I DIDN'T BEEN home, so I happen to miss him.

Finally, there is one token of *ain't* which combines with the form *duh* in an adjectival environment, as shown in (21).

21. He said "jump in." I jump in. I ain't duh scared. I jump in.

Because this construction is so marginal in the data, no attempt is made to interpret its function at this time.[9]

Table 3 also lists the frequencies of these variants in relation to five independent factor groups, tested for their potential influence on the observed variation. While *wasn't* is clearly the preferred variant in NEG Cop Past environments, as noted above, the creole-like variants that appear to be most resistant to incorporation of *wasn't* in these data are *didn't* in adjectival environments and *ain't been*, which is categorical in the environment of base form (i.e., noninflected) verbs preceded by the imperfective marker *a* (abbreviated in table 3 as $a + V_{bse}$). The variant *ain't* seems to serve an intermediate function in these data, negating zero copula constructions, particularly in those environments that would require *weren't* in standard English.

NONCOPULA CONSTRUCTIONS. *Present* do-*Support Constructions.*[10] Present *do*-support constructions (abbreviated NEG Pres) exhibit a fairly complex system of variation that depends significantly on the person-number of the subject and the stativity of the predicate. Given the varying behavior of negative forms in relation to these constraints, three variable environments and two categorical environments are identified in the Gullah data. This pattern, of course, differs significantly from the variation found in AAE (as reported in Weldon 1994), in which *don't* and *doesn't* vary only in the environment of third-person singular subjects.

For easy reference, the three variables identified in the Gullah data are arbitrarily assigned numbers 1–3. They are presented in bold print in table 4, with categorical environments presented in nonbold print. In the environment of nonstative predicates, the variable NEG Pres 1 involves variation between *don't* and *doesn't* with third-person singular subjects. In this environment, there are four tokens of *don't* and one token of *doesn't*, suggesting that English rules of subject-verb concord are not prevalent in this environment. The NEG Pres 1 constructions are listed in numbers (22)–(26).

22. He DON'T make no mistake.
23. She DON'T never tell e age.
24. That DON'T happen, no, no.
25. He DON'T come when we want him.
26. 'Cause we-cause he DOESN'T watch the same thing.

With all other subjects, *don't* is categorical in the environment of nonstative predicates, as illustrated by sentences (27)–(33).

27. When I DON'T read I am worried.
28. You DON'T go into shallow water with that.

TABLE 4
Present Negative *do*-Support Constructions

Environment	*NEG Forms*		
Nonstative Predicates			
with 3rd-person sing. subjects (NEG Pres 1)	*don't*	4	(80%)
	doesn't	1	(20%)
	TOTAL	5	
with non-3rd-person sing. subjects	*don't*	47	(100%)
Stative Predicates			
with plural subjects	*don't*	13	(100%)
with 3rd-person sing. subjects (NEG Pres 2)	*don't*	14	(64%)
	ain't	6	(27%)
	doesn't	2	(9%)
	TOTAL	22	
with non-3rd-person sing./nonplural subjects (NEG Pres 3)	*don't*	125	(87%)
	ain't	19	(13%)
	TOTAL	144	

29. Ø DON'T tell de age.
30. We DON'T plant that.
31. And if y'all DON'T take the privilege of this, it nobody fault but y'all.
32. They DON'T bother 'em when the rice done hard.
33. The 'matoes DON'T hit the ground no more.

It is significant to note that *ain't* never occurs in the environment of nonstative predicates here, since such a combination yields a past time interpretation in Gullah. These constructions will be discussed in more detail later in the paper (see also Mufwene 1993b).

With stative predicates, the form *don't* is categorical with plural subjects, as illustrated in (34)–(36).

34. We DON'T wanna be longer time.
35. Y'all DON'T have to worry 'bout this storm.
36. They DON'T know how to treat children.

It is not clear, at this stage, whether *ain't* is absent from this environment due to some significant constraint or whether it represents a simple coincidence of the data.

With third-person singular subjects, in the environment of stative predicates, there is variation between *don't*, *ain't*, and *doesn't*. Examples of these NEG Pres 2 variants are provided in sentences (37)–(39).

37. Then God DON'T owe you nothing.
38. Yeah, she AIN'T wanna talk this evening. That's what it is.
39. He DOESN'T care about being your foreman neither.

Table 5 shows the distribution of these variants across five factor groups. Perhaps the most interesting pattern in this table involves the form *ain't*, which shows categorical behavior for every factor group examined. Note that *ain't* occurs only in nonmultiple negative constructions, with pronominal subjects, and preceding vowel environments. It is used only by female speakers and in conversational settings. Some, and perhaps all, of these patterns may be a reflection of the fact that there are only 6 tokens of *ain't* in these data. Still, the categorical behavior seems striking and worthy of further investigation at a later time.

The STYLE pattern is relatively unsurprising in the sense that *ain't* (as the least standard variant of the three) is correlated with conversation styles only. This would be predicted by the "attention-to-speech" model, in which speakers produce their most casual (i.e., vernacular) styles of speaking in settings in which they are paying the least amount of attention to their speech (Labov 1972b). However, this observation is complicated by the fact that *doesn't*, as the most standard variant in this context, also occurs exclusively in conversational settings. Still, the relatively low number of tokens for this

TABLE 5
Straight Frequencies of Present Negative *do*-Support Variants with Third-Person Singular Subjects in Stative Predicate Environments

	ain't	*don't*	*doesn't*	*Total*
TOTAL	6 (27%)	14 (64%)	2 (9%)	22
Negation				
multiple	0 (0%)	2 (67%)	1 (33%)	3
nonmultiple	6 (32%)	12 (63%)	1 (5%)	19
Subject Type				
pronoun	6 (35%)	9 (53%)	2 (12%)	17
noun phrase	0 (0%)	5 (100%)	0 (0%)	5
Preceding Phon. Env.				
vowel	6 (50%)	4 (33%)	2 (17%)	12
consonant	0 (0%)	10 (100%)	0 (0%)	10
Gender				
female	6 (38%)	9 (56%)	1 (6%)	16
male	0 (0%)	5 (83%)	1 (17%)	6
Style				
conversation	6 (33%)	10 (56%)	2 (11%)	18
interview	0 (0%)	4 (100%)	0 (0%)	4

variable makes it difficult to draw any definitive conclusions about the effects of style (or any other factors, for that matter) on the observed patterns of distribution.

The NEGATION and GENDER patterns also seem to offer some unpredictable findings. Fasold and Wolfram (1970, 70), for example, suggest that *ain't* often co-occurs with multiple negation in AAE. This pattern is also observed in Weldon (1994), though not at a statistically significant rate. The Gullah data, however, show the opposite effect, with *ain't* occurring only in nonmultiple negative constructions. It is possible, however, that this pattern, too, is affected by the low number of tokens in the data. It will, in fact, be shown in some of the tables to follow that *ain't* does occur in multiple negative constructions and is, in some instances, even favored by multiple negation.

It has also been commonly observed in variation studies that female speakers in modern Western society tend to employ more standard variants than their male counterparts (see, e.g., Labov 1972a, 1972b, 1990; Trudgill 1972, 1974, 1983). Yet, in these data, only female speakers use the nonstandard variant *ain't* in NEG Pres 2 environments. This pattern, however, is not completely inconsistent with previous findings for Gullah. For example, in an examination of complementizer, prepositional, and pronominal constructions in Gullah, Nichols (1976, 1983) finds that older, less mobile women actually show a tendency to use MORE creole variants than their male counterparts. And similar observations are made in Weldon (1996, 2003) for the systems of past marking and affirmative copula usage, respectively, in Gullah.

The PRECEDING PHONOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT results also reveal a somewhat unexpected pattern, with *ain't* occurring only in the environment of preceding vowels and *don't* occurring categorically in the environment of preceding consonants. Typically, the effects of phonological environment have shown a preference for CVCV patterning (see, e.g., Labov 1972a; Baugh 1980). These data, however, show the opposite effect, with VV/CC patterns being most prominent.[11]

Finally, with regard to present negative *do*-support constructions, there is variation between the forms *don't* and *ain't* in the environment of stative predicates with non-third-person singular and nonplural subjects (i.e., with first- and second-person singular subjects and zero subjects). Sentences (40)–(45) illustrate this NEG Pres 3 variation.

40. I DON'T know how Sister work that long.
41. Y'all pick up and I AIN'T care where y'all go.
42. 'Cause you DON'T wanna tape the TV.
43. Some people say "You know I AIN'T know Miss Anna B–." You AIN'T gon never know Miss Anna B–.

44. Ø DON'T know how they get it.
45. DON'T tempt 'em now, 'cause you know AIN'T take much.

As shown in table 6, the distribution of the NEG Pres 3 variants is considered in relation to the same five factor groups examined for NEG Pres 2, with the addition of a PERSON-NUMBER group, which looks at the effects of first-person singular versus second-person singular subjects. Perhaps the most interesting observation in table 6 is that the *ain't* variant in NEG Pres 3 environments, like the *ain't* in NEG Pres 2 environments, is never used by male speakers or in interview settings.

Past do-*Support Constructions.* Among past *do*-support constructions (abbreviated NEG Past), two variables are identified in the Gullah data. One variable, labeled NEG Past 1, involves variation between *ain't* and *didn't* in the environment of inflected verbs. The other, labeled NEG Past 2, involves

TABLE 6
Straight Frequencies of Present Negative *do*-Support Variants with Non-Third-Person Singular and Nonplural Subjects in Stative Predicate Environments

	ain't		*don't*		*Total*
TOTAL	19	(13%)	125	(87%)	144
Person-Number[a]					
1st-person sing.	13	(12%)	97	(88%)	110
2nd-person sing.	3	(12%)	23	(88%)	26
Negation					
multiple	3	(18%)	14	(82%)	17
nonmultiple	16	(13%)	111	(87%)	127
Subject Type					
pronoun	16	(12%)	120	(88%)	136
zero subject	3	(38%)	5	(63%)	8
Preceding Phon. Env.					
vowel	17	(12%)	120	(88%)	137
consonant	1	(50%)	1	(50%)	2
pause	1	(20%)	4	(80%)	5
Gender					
female	19	(20%)	77	(80%)	96
male	0	(0%)	48	(100%)	48
Style					
conversation	19	(25%)	58	(75%)	77
interview	0	(0%)	67	(100%)	67

a. Note that the numbers in the PERSON-NUMBER group add up to only 136 tokens. Eight tokens occur with zero subjects, which are not coded for PERSON-NUMBER.

the variants *ain't*, *didn't*, *don't*, *ain't been*, and *didn't been*, which occur in the environment of base form (i.e., noninflected) verbs. Table 7 summarizes the overall frequencies of these variants. While NEG Past 1 variation is defined as occurring in the environment of inflected predicates in the Gullah data, this variation appears to be restricted to a small number of verbal predicates, at least in the current data set. Specifically, NEG Past 1 variation is found in the environment of *went*, *had*, and *did*, as illustrated by sentences (46)–(50).

46. Well she DIDN'T WENT no further than that.
47. He DIDN'T WENT to school long.
48. I DIDN'T HAD nobody but the old lady.
49. And there, down on that base, I AIN'T DID nothing but talk.
50. Yeah, you AIN'T HAD no asphalt road in them days.

Of the 24 tokens found, 2 involve the predicate *went*, 1 involves the predicate *did*, and the remaining 21 involve the predicate *had*. All three of these predicates also occur in noninflected form, yielding variation among the NEG Past 2 variants, to be discussed shortly.

Table 8 presents the distribution of the NEG Past 1 variants across several factor groups. While the number of tokens is low in each case, it is perhaps significant to note here that *didn't* occurs categorically with noun phrase subjects, while *ain't* occurs categorically with zero subjects and preceding pauses. The variant *ain't* is also favored by multiple negation in NEG Past 1 environments (notably a much more predictable pattern than that observed for the NEG Pres 2 variable discussed earlier).

The NEG Past 2 variable exhibits variation among five forms, illustrated in (51)–(55).

TABLE 7
Past Negative *do*-Support Constructions

Variable	*Predicates*	*NEG Forms*		
NEG Past 1	_V_{infl}	*ain't*	15	(63%)
		didn't	9	(38%)
		TOTAL	24	
NEG Past 2	_V_{bse}	*didn't*	200	(79%)
		ain't	35	(14%)
		don't	15	(6%)
		ain't been	2	(1%)
		didn't been	2	(1%)
		TOTAL	254	

TABLE 8
Straight Frequencies of Past Negative *do*-Support Variants with Inflected Verbs

	ain't		*didn't*		*Total*
TOTAL	15	(63%)	9	(38%)	24
Stativity					
stative	14	(67%)	7	(33%)	21
nonstative	1	(33%)	2	(67%)	3
Negation					
multiple	14	(78%)	4	(22%)	18
nonmultiple	1	(17%)	5	(83%)	6
Subject Type					
pronoun	13	(62%)	8	(38%)	21
noun phrase	0	(0%)	1	(100%)	1
zero subject	2	(100%)	0	(0%)	2
Preceding Phon. Env.					
vowel	13	(62%)	8	(38%)	21
consonant	1	(50%)	1	(50%)	2
pause	1	(100%)	0	(0%)	1
Gender					
female	5	(56%)	4	(44%)	9
male	10	(67%)	5	(33%)	15
Style					
conversation	7	(88%)	1	(13%)	8
interview	8	(50%)	8	(50%)	16

51. And she DIDN'T STOP to say anything.
52. We AIN'T KNOW what shoes. I had one pair of shoes to the year.
53. In them days, the old folks DON'T TELL you too much in them days.
54. That last time you carry me to hospital, you know I AIN'T BEEN NEED to go.
55. I DIDN'T BEEN NEED for go in the hospital when you had carry me.

As illustrated in (52), sentences involving the combination of *ain't* plus stative verbs in NEG Past 2 environments necessitate the use of some sort of contextual time reference to clarify the intended past time interpretation, given that such combinations can also have a present time interpretation, as described earlier. The same is true of the variant *don't*, as illustrated in (53). The variant *ain't been* seems to represent a more basilectal strategy in which the preverbal marker *been* is used to indicate past time reference. *Didn't been* most likely represents either an intermediate stage in the transition from basilectal to more acrolectal variants or a hypercorrection of some sort. The most frequent NEG Past 2 variant, however, is *didn't*, which occurs with 79% frequency in the Gullah data.

Table 9 shows the distribution of the NEG Past 2 variants across several factor groups. Note here that, in contrast to the NEG Past 1 variation, *didn't* is more frequent than *ain't* in the environment of zero subjects and occurs categorically in the environment of preceding pauses. The variant *didn't* is favored by male speakers, again suggesting that the men in this group are slightly more standard in their speech than the women. And *ain't* is favored in conversational settings, as one might predict.

Given the debate over *ain't/didn't* variation in AAE, described earlier, the NEG Past variation described here is perhaps most significant, among the negation patterns, for the creole origins debate. The fact that *ain't* varies with *didn't* in Gullah and in AAE (as described in Weldon 1994), but not in other varieties of English, at least opens up the possibility that Gullah (or a Gullah-like creole) is the source of this alternation in AAE.[12] And the fact that the Gullah data are drawn from an older group of speakers than those in the Weldon (1994) study also calls into question how NEW this phenomenon actually is. Still, there are some notable differences in the way *ain't* varies with *didn't* in the two varieties.

Table 10, drawn from Weldon (1994), shows the distribution of the NEG Past variants in the AAE data. Perhaps the most notable difference between the two data sets here is the fact that there are two NEG Past variables in

TABLE 9
Straight Frequencies of Past Negative *do*-Support Variants with Base Form Verbs

	didn't	*ain't*	*don't*	*ain't been*	*didn't been*	*Total*
TOTAL	200 (79%)	35 (14%)	15 (6%)	2 (1%)	2 (1%)	254
Stativity						
stative	103 (81%)	17 (13%)	4 (3%)	1 (1%)	2 (2%)	127
nonstative	97 (76%)	18 (14%)	11 (9%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	127
Negation						
multiple	46 (78%)	12 (20%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	59
nonmultiple	154 (79%)	23 (12%)	15 (8%)	1 (1%)	2 (1%)	195
Subject Type						
pronoun	164 (78%)	31 (15%)	12 (6%)	2 (1%)	2 (1%)	211
noun phrase	25 (83%)	2 (7%)	3 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	30
zero subject	11 (85%)	2 (15%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	13
Preceding Phon. Env.						
vowel	154 (78%)	29 (15%)	11 (6%)	2 (1%)	2 (1%)	198
consonant	35 (78%)	6 (13%)	4 (9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	45
pause	11 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	11
Gender						
female	107 (73%)	26 (18%)	9 (6%)	2 (1%)	2 (1%)	146
male	93 (86%)	9 (8%)	6 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	108
Style						
conversation	96 (73%)	26 (20%)	5 (4%)	2 (2%)	2 (2%)	131
interview	104 (85%)	9 (7%)	10 (8%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	123

TABLE 10
Overall Distribution of Past Negative *do*-Support Variants in AAE (from Weldon 1994)

didn't	100	(62%)
ain't	62	(38%)
TOTAL	162	

the Gullah data, where the AAE data have only one. The variation shown in table 10 occurs in the environment of noninflected predicates (V_{bse}), as does the NEG Past 2 variable in the Gullah data. In Weldon (1994, 394, n. 28) I report having found seven instances of past time constructions with inflected predicates in the AAE data, but *ain't* is categorical in these constructions.[13] In other words, no tokens of *didn't* occur before inflected predicates yielding a past time interpretation in the AAE data.

Another difference worth noting between the two data sets is that *ain't* actually appears to be better established in the AAE data at 38% frequency than in the Gullah data, where it occurs with just 14% frequency in NEG Past 2 environments. Of course, the lower frequency of *ain't* in NEG Past 2 environments in the Gullah data is at least partly a reflection of the fact that *ain't* competes with *don't*, *ain't been*, *didn't been*, and *didn't* in the Gullah data, whereas the AAE data show only a binary distinction (*didn't* and *ain't*). However, at 79% frequency, *didn't* is actually better established in the Gullah data than it is in the AAE data, where it occurs with only 62% frequency. And given the age differences noted earlier between these two data sets (i.e., a younger AAE speaker group vs. an older Gullah speaker group), this difference might actually support the theory that *ain't* in past contexts is a relatively new phenomenon. It is, therefore, not clear at this stage how the *ain't/didn't* alternation in Gullah informs the AAE origins debate.

Categorical Constructions. In addition to the variables described above, there are three noncopula environments in the Gullah data in which negative auxiliaries behave categorically. In Weldon (1994, 362), I observe that the forms *ain't* and *don't* vary in the environment of the predicates *got* or *gotta* in AAE, as illustrated in (56)–(59).

56. He AIN'T even GOT a crease in his face.
57. He DON'T GOT one crease.
58. You AIN'T GOTTA eat it.
59. You DON'T GOTTA be– um up to the mike [*sic*].

Howe (1997, 283) comments on the "problematic" nature of this phenomenon "from the point of view of linguistic change," noting that *ain't* is categorical in the environment of *got* in all of the "early" data sets that he examines and varies with *have* + *not* in WNSE varieties. He concludes, therefore, that "the use of *don't* before *got* in modern AAVE developed not from the variation between *ain't* and *don't,* but rather from the variation between *have* and *got* already present in earlier African American English." In the Gullah data, *ain't* also occurs categorically in the environment of *got* ($N = 34$), as illustrated in (60)–(62).[14]

60. I AIN'T GOT brother, sister, none.
61. AIN'T GOT chop the cabbage.
62. These children these days AIN'T GOT no manners.

The Gullah data, therefore, offer no alternative source for the *ain't/don't* variation observed in Weldon (1994), but instead seem to be consistent with the patterns found in Howe's "early" AAE data.

Finally, present-perfect and past-perfect constructions also exhibit no variation in the Gullah data. Present-perfect constructions exhibit categorical use of *ain't* before base form and participial predicates. With base form predicates, the perfect interpretation is achieved through the use of adverbs such as *since* and *yet* to disambiguate such constructions from other *ain't* + V_{bse} combinations. In total, six present perfect constructions, listed in (63)–(68), are found in the Gullah data.

_V_{pp}
63. I AIN'T CHANGED. I still love people.
64. I AIN'T BEEN in that boat since my daddy died.
65. I AIN'T BEEN in nobody else boat.

_V_{bse}
66. You still AIN'T BRING that cup to put that thing in.
67. We AIN'T WASH 'em since they gon.
68. One things I AIN'T GET yet, the sweet potato.

There is only one past-perfect construction in the data, which is marked by *hadn't*, as shown in sentence (69).

69. Send me to my door and showed me a tree's cross my step. HADN'T BROKE a brick.

The low overall number of perfect constructions in these data suggests that this aspectual category is not formally marked in Gullah at this stage.

SUMMARY, INTERPRETATION, AND CONCLUSIONS

Table 11 provides a summary of all the variables found in the Gullah data. Overall, these data seem to represent what might be best described as a mesolectal to upper-mesolectal variety. All of the variables exhibit variation between creole-like and English-like forms, although the relative frequencies among these forms tend to vary from one variable to the next. With the exception of the NEG Past 1 variable (where *ain't* is most frequent), the forms *don't* and *didn't* are most prominent among *do*-support constructions. English rules of subject-verb concord do not seem prevalent in these environments, however. Among present copula constructions, *ain't* is most frequent and seems to be quite resistant to incorporation of English copula forms. And in past contexts, *wasn't* is most frequent but varies considerably with the more creole-like variants *didn't* and *ain't been*.

In the analysis of AAE negation (Weldon 1994, 390), I conclude that *ain't* "behaves like three distinct auxiliaries," representing negative forms of present copula *be*, present-perfect *have*, and past *do*. Given its high overall frequency and widespread distribution in the Gullah data, however, *ain't* does not appear to function in this way for Gullah. Instead, it seems to represent a tense-aspect neutral, monomorphemic negator. A number of observations seem to support this conclusion.

Note, for example, in the examination of the PERSON-NUMBER and FOLLOWING GRAMMATICAL ENVIRONMENT constraints on the NEG Cop Pres variation, that *ain't* exhibits its highest frequencies in plural/second-person-singular environments and in progressive and future environments. These same environments have been shown to favor the zero copula (and, thus, disfavor overt copula usage) in affirmative constructions in Gullah (see Weldon 2003), suggesting that they are among the most resistant to incorporation of the copula. If this is the case, then it is unlikely that *ain't* in these environments represents a negative copula form.

Also in support of the argument that *ain't* is a tense-aspect neutral negator in Gullah, note that *ain't* has a much wider distribution in the Gullah data than in the AAE data examined in Weldon (1994), where *ain't* occurs variably in present copula, present-perfect, and past *do*-support constructions, and in the environment of *got(ta)*. In the Gullah data, by contrast, *ain't* occurs variably in both present and past copula constructions and present and past *do*-support constructions, as well as appearing categorically in present-perfect constructions and in the environment of *got*.

Mufwene (1993b, 100) argues in favor of analyzing *ain't* as a monomorphemic negator in Gullah because "it combines with virtually any tense, mood (except for the imperative), or aspect marker." Recall that in these

TABLE 11
Summary of Negative Variants

	Variable	*Predicates*	*NEG Forms*		
Copula					
Present	(NEG Cop Pres)	NP, AdjP, Loc, V-*ing*, *gon(na)*	*ain't*	95	(75%)
			-'s not	11	(9%)
			not	11	(9%)
			-'m not	7	(6%)
			is not	1	(1%)
			-'re not	1	(1%)
			don't	1	(1%)
			TOTAL	127	
Past	(NEG Cop Past)	NP, AdjP, Loc, V-*ing*, *a*+V_{bse}, *gon*	*wasn't*	27	(49%)
			didn't	14	(25%)
			ain't been	7	(13%)
			ain't	4	(7%)
			didn't been	2	(4%)
			ain't duh	1	(2%)
			TOTAL	55	
do-Support					
Present	(NEG Pres 1)[a]	__V_{bse} (nonstative)	*don't*	4	(80%)
			doesn't	1	(20%)
			TOTAL	5	
	(NEG Pres 2)[a]	__V_{bse} (stative)	*don't*	14	(64%)
			ain't	6	(27%)
			doesn't	2	(9%)
			TOTAL	22	
	(NEG Pres 3)[b]	__V_{bse} (stative)	*don't*	125	(87%)
			ain't	19	(13%)
			TOTAL	144	
Past	(NEG Past 1)	__V_{infl}	*ain't*	15	(63%)
			didn't	9	(38%)
			TOTAL	24	
	(NEG Past 2)	__V_{bse}	*didn't*	200	(79%)
			ain't	35	(14%)
			don't	15	(6%)
			ain't been	2	(1%)
			didn't been	2	(1%)
			TOTAL	254	

a. With third-person singular subjects.
b. With non-third-person singular/nonplural subjects.

data, *ain't* variably combines with the past marker *been* (e.g., *In them days, ain't been no kind of tractor*), which would support this hypothesis. In addition, Mufwene (1993b, 101) notes that when *ain't* combines with main verbs, "the STATIVE/NONSTATIVE distinction, which is relevant to the interpretation of morphosyntactically undelimited verbs (Bickerton (1975), slightly modified in Mufwene (1983)), becomes significant." As demonstrated earlier, the combination of *ain't* with nonstative verbs in Gullah yields a past interpretation, while the combination of *ain't* with stative verbs can be interpreted as present or past, depending on the context. The following sentences from the Gullah data illustrate this distinction.

STATIVE

70. You ain't know, 'cause it was so hot.
'You didn't know, because it was so hot.'
71. I ain't got nothing in my house I can't pay for, 'cause I AIN'T OWE nobody.
'I don't have anything in my house . . . 'cause I don't owe anybody.'

NONSTATIVE

72. Y'all ain't work on the same farm though.
'Y'all didn't work on the same farm though.'

It is perhaps also significant to note that there are no occurrences of *ain't* in tag questions in these data that might support its interpretation as a negative form of *be*, *have*, or *do*. Instead, what is found is a frozen form, commonly represented in the literature as *enty*, which combines with most main clausal auxiliaries.

73. Tonya relation, enty?
'Tonya is related [to you], isn't she?'
74. You miscount, enty?
'You miscounted, didn't you?'

Mufwene (1993b, 113, n. 5) makes a similar observation noting that in his data "unlike Bajan, Gullah does not use *ɛ̃* or *no* as tags."[15] Instead, Mufwene observes use of the tags *ɛ̃nɪ/ɪmɪ*, which are used with a variety of main clausal auxiliaries in his Gullah data (97).[16] All of this evidence together supports the argument that *ain't* in Gullah functions as a monomorphemic negator that alternates with marginally incorporated negative forms of *be*, *have*, and *do* in full, contracted, and zero forms.

While the AAE system examined in Weldon (1994) differs in some significant ways from the Gullah system described here, certain parallels—the use of *ain't* in past *do*-support constructions—could very well support the notion of a relationship between the two varieties, though some caveats

(discussed earlier) must be addressed before reaching this conclusion. In fact, the argument might be made that Gullah is currently undergoing a process of incorporation of English forms (i.e., via decreolization) that might have affected AAE at an earlier period in its history. Or it might be the case instead that a system like the one observed here influenced early varieties of AAE through processes of language contact or language shift. It would be unwise to speculate too much about this possibility, however, based strictly on the examination of synchronic data. If Gullah is currently undergoing a process of decreolization, it appears to be at an intermediate (i.e., mesolectal) stage in its incorporation of more English-like forms, as noted earlier. It will, thus, be interesting to examine this variety as it develops in relation to modern-day varieties of AAE. And a better understanding of Gullah's development, in combination with more diachronic evidence from both Gullah and AAE, should help to fill in some of the remaining gaps in the creole origins debate.

NOTES

I would like to thank the Department of Linguistics and the Center for African Studies at Ohio State University for providing funding to cover some of the fieldwork costs for this study. Thanks to the McKissick Museum at the University of South Carolina for donating some of the tapes included in the analysis. And thanks to research assistants Eva Moore for assisting in the organization of the data and Stephen Mann for help with formatting. Finally, I would like to thank two anonymous referees for offering useful suggestions on an earlier draft of this article. I accept full responsibility for any remaining errors in the data or analysis.

1. This summary in many ways oversimplifies the range of positions held by researchers on either side of the creole-origins debate. In reality, some of the studies listed here represent more extreme positions on one side of the debate or the other, while others represent more intermediate (or even consensus-like) views. For a recent and more detailed summary of this debate, see Weldon (2005).
2. These studies are based on data drawn from sources such as the ex-slave narratives, African American Diaspora varieties, and, in the case of Kautzsch's research, nineteenth-century letters, which have been presented as representative of earlier varieties of AAE. Concerns about the reliability, representativeness, and usefulness of such data are well documented in the linguistic literature (see, e.g., Maynor 1988; Schneider 1989; Wolfram 1990; Bailey, Maynor, and Cukor-Avila 1991; Montgomery 1991; Dillard 1993; Hannah 1997; Rickford 1998; Bailey 2001) and thus will not be discussed here.
3. The field-workers who collected these data, Dale Rosengarten and Vennie Deas-Moore, were both working on separate projects, unrelated to my research, for the McKissick Museum at the University of South Carolina.

4. The speakers included in this study were chosen through what Milroy (1987) refers to as JUDGMENT SAMPLING. In other words, the speakers were judged by me and other reliable sources in the community to be Gullah speakers. These determinations were made based on factors such as a person's degree of mobility, highest level of education, and access to other linguistic varieties, as well as the presence of identifiable Gullah features in his/her speech (e.g., past *been*, progressive *(d)a*, etc.). The speaker group was restricted to speakers aged 60 and above because they were deemed to be the most consistent Gullah speakers (i.e., the group least inclined to code-switch in the presence of outsiders).
5. See, however, Weldon (2005) for a discussion of the limitations of using contemporary data for the purpose of historical analysis.
6. Following previous research on copula variability, I use the term COPULA here as a cover term for both copular environments (i.e., nominal, locative, and adjectival) and auxiliary environments (i.e., *-ing* inflected verbs and future predicate *gon(na)*).
7. This pattern contrasts with that found in affirmative contexts, where *-'s* occurs with 89% frequency (N=348) and varies with the zero copula at 10% frequency (N=38) and with *is* at 1% frequency (N=4). See Weldon (2003) for more on these affirmative constructions.
8. See Bailey (1966); Bickerton (1973, 1975); Sebba (1986); and Winford (1993) for fuller discussions on the multifunctionality of these predicates in creole languages.
9. Although the pronunciation of *duh* [də] in sentence (21) resembles that of the imperfective marker *da*, also used in Gullah, the context provided in (21) seems to require a punctual interpretation, which is inconsistent with the functions of imperfective *da*. The form in (21) is, therefore, spelled differently (i.e., as *duh*) to acknowledge this distinction.
10. Note that the use of the term *do*-support here is not intended to imply anything about the status of *ain't* at this stage.
11. According to one of the anonymous reviewers of this article, however, the VV/CC pattern is sometimes favored in other creoles, e.g., with Haitian definite articles.
12. Whether such influence, if it exists, resulted from decreolization or language contact is, of course, not something that can be answered strictly on the basis of a synchronic analysis such as this one. However, data such as these, combined with diachronic evidence (both linguistic and sociodemographic), would certainly help to provide a fuller historical picture.
13. The seven tokens of *ain't* before V_{infl} predicates are not included in the NEG Past count in the Weldon (1994) analysis.
14. Also unlike the AAE data, which show variation between the forms *got* and *gotta*, there are no tokens of *gotta* in the Gullah data, even in constructions in which the meaning 'have to' is intended, as in (61).
15. The term *Bajan* is a local term used to refer to Barbadian speech.
16. Mufwene (1993b, 114, n. 10) cites several possible sources for the *ɛ̃nɪ/ɪmɪ* tags, the most obvious being the nonstandard English tags *ain't it* and *isn't it*,

respectively. Mufwene notes that "variation in the form of the tag, which may be considered purely phonological, seems random and has nothing to do with the form or identity of the verb in the preceding clause" (100). The *enty* tags found in this Gullah data set seem to represent the same constructions transcribed by Mufwene as *ɛ̃nɪ/ɪmɪ*.

REFERENCES

Bailey, Beryl Loftman. 1965. "Toward a New Perspective in Negro English Dialectology." *American Speech* 40: 171–77.

———. 1966. *Jamaican Creole Syntax: A Transformational Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.

Bailey, Guy. 2001. "The Relationship between African American Vernacular English and White Vernaculars in the American South: A Sociocultural History and Some Phonological Evidence." In *Sociocultural and Historical Contexts of African American English*, ed. Sonja L. Lanehart, 53–92. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Bailey, Guy, Natalie Maynor, and Patricia Cukor-Avila, eds. 1991. *The Emergence of Black English: Text and Commentary*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Baugh, John. 1980. "A Re-examination of the Black English Copula." In *Locating Language in Time and Space*, ed. William Labov, 83–106. New York: Academic Press.

Bickerton, Derek. 1973. "The Nature of a Creole Continuum." *Language* 49: 640–69.

———. 1975. *Dynamics of a Creole System*. London: Cambridge Univ. Press.

DeBose, Charles E. 1994. "A Note on *ain't* vs. *didn't* Negation in African American Vernacular." *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages* 9: 127–30.

DeBose, Charles, and Nicholas G. Faraclas. 1993. "An Africanist Approach to the Linguistic Study of Black English: Getting to the Roots of the Tense-Aspect-Modality and Copula Systems in Afro-American." In Mufwene 1993a, 364–87.

D'Eloia, Sarah G. 1973. "Issues in the Analysis of Nonstandard Negro English: A Review of J. L. Dillard's *Black English: Its History and Usage in the United States*." *Journal of English Linguistics* 7: 87–103.

Dillard, J. L. 1972. *Black English: Its History and Usage in the United States*. New York: Random House.

———. 1993. "The Relative Value of the Ex-slave Narratives: A Discussion of Schnieder's Paper." In Mufwene 1993a, 222–31.

Ewers, Traute. 1996. *The Origin of American Black English:* Be-*Forms in the Hoodoo Texts*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Fasold, Ralph W., and Walt Wolfram. 1970. "Some Linguistic Features of Negro Dialect." In *Teaching Standard English in the Inner City*, ed. Ralph W. Fasold and Roger W. Shuy, 41–86. Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Hannah, Dawn. 1997. "Copula Absence in Samaná English: Implications for Research on the Linguistic History of African-American Vernacular English." *American Speech* 72: 339–72.

Holm, John. 1984. "Variability of the Copula in Black English and Its Creole Kin." *American Speech* 59: 291–309.

Howe, Darin M. 1997. "Negation and the History of African American English." *Language Variation and Change* 9: 267–94.

Howe, Darin M., and James A. Walker. 1999. "Negation and the Creole-Origins Hypothesis: Evidence from Early African American English." In Poplack, 109–40.

Kautzsch, Alexander. 2000. "Liberian Letters and Virginian Narratives: Negation Patterns in Two New Sources of Earlier African American English." *American Speech* 75: 34–53.

———. 2002. *The Historical Evolution of Earlier African American English: An Empirical Comparison of Early Sources.* Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Krapp, George Philip. 1924. "The English of the Negro." *American Mercury* 2: 190–95.

Kurath, Hans. 1928. "The Origin of Dialectal Differences in Spoken American English." *Modern Philology* 25: 385–95.

———. 1949. *A Word Geography of the Eastern United States.* Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press.

Labov, William. 1972a. *Language in the Inner City: Studies in the Black English Vernacular.* Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press.

———. 1972b. *Sociolinguistic Patterns.* Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press.

———. 1982. "Objectivity and Commitment in Linguistic Science: The Case of the Black English Trial in Ann Arbor." *Language in Society* 11: 165–201.

———. 1990. "The Intersection of Sex and Social Class in the Course of Linguistic Change." *Language Variation and Change* 2: 205–54.

Maynor, Natalie. 1988. "Written Records of Spoken Language: How Reliable Are They?" In *Methods in Dialectology: Proceedings of the Sixth International Conference Held at the University College of North Wales, 3rd–7th August 1987*, ed. Alan R. Thomas, 109–20. Cleveland, U.K.: Multilingual Matters.

McDavid, Raven I., Jr., and Virginia Glenn McDavid. 1951. "The Relationship of the Speech of American Negroes to the Speech of Whites." *American Speech* 26: 3–17.

Milroy, Lesley. 1987. *Language and Social Networks.* 2nd ed. Oxford: Blackwell.

Montgomery, Michael. 1991. "The Linguistic Value of the Ex-slave Recordings." In Bailey, Maynor, and Cukor-Avila, 173–89.

Mufwene, Salikoko S. 1983. "Observations on Time Reference in Jamaican and Guyanese Creoles." *English World-Wide* 4: 199–229.

———. 1993a. *Africanisms in Afro-American Language Varieties.* Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press.

———. 1993b. "Scope of Negation and Focus in Gullah." In *Focus and Grammatical Relations in Creole Languages*, ed. Francis Byrne and Donald Winford, 95–116. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

———. 1999. "Some Sociohistorical Inferences about the Development of African American English." In Poplack, 109–40.

Nichols, Patricia. 1976. "Linguistic Change in Gullah: Sex, Age, and Mobility." Ph.D. diss., Stanford Univ.

———. 1983. "Linguistic Options and Choices for Black Women in the Rural South." In *Language, Gender, and Society*, ed. Barrie Thorne, Cheris Kramarae, and Nancy Henley, 54–68. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House.

Poplack, Shana, ed. 1999. *The English History of African American English.* Malden, Mass.: Blackwell.

Poplack, Shana, and David Sankoff. 1987. "The Philadelphia Story in the Spanish Caribbean." *American Speech* 62: 291–314.

Poplack, Shana, and Sali Tagliamonte. 1989. "There's No Tense Like the Present: Verbal *-s* Inflection in Early Black English." *Language Variation and Change* 1: 47–84.

———. 1991. "African American English in the Diaspora: The Case of Old-Line Nova Scotians." *Language Variation and Change* 3: 301–39.

———. 1994. "*-S* or Nothing: Marking the Plural in the African-American Diaspora." *American Speech* 69: 227–59.

———. 2001. *African American English in the Diaspora.* Malden, Mass.: Blackwell.

Rickford, John R. 1974. "The Insights of the Mesolect." In *Pidgins and Creoles: Current Trends and Prospects*, ed. David DeCamp and Ian F. Hancock, 92–117. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown Univ. Press.

———. 1977. "The Question of Prior Creolization in Black English." In *Pidgin and Creole Linguistics*, ed. Albert Valdman, 190–221. Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press.

———. 1987. *Dimensions of a Creole Continuum: History, Texts, and Linguistic Analysis of Guyanese Creole.* Stanford, Calif.: Stanford Univ. Press.

———. 1997. "Prior Creolization of African-American Vernacular English? Sociohistorical and Textual Evidence from the 17th and 18th Centuries." *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 1: 315–36.

———. 1998. "The Creole Origins of African-American Vernacular English: Evidence from Copula Absence." In *African-American English: Structure, History, and Use*, ed. Salikoko S. Mufwene, John R. Rickford, Guy Bailey, and John Baugh, 154–200. London: Routledge.

Schneider, Edgar W. 1982. "On the History of Black English in the U.S.A.: Some New Evidence." *English World-Wide* 3: 18–46.

———. 1989. *American Earlier Black English: Morphological and Syntactic Variables.* Tuscaloosa: Univ. of Alabama Press.

———. 1993. "Africanisms in the Grammar of Afro-American English: Weighing the Evidence." In Mufwene 1993a, 192–208.

Sebba, Mark. 1986. "Adjectives and Copula in Sranan Tongo." *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages* 1: 109–21.

Stewart, William. 1967. "Sociolinguistic Factors in the History of American Negro Dialects." *Florida FL Reporter* 5.2: 11, 22, 24, 26, 28.

———. 1968. "Continuity and Change in American Negro Dialects." *Florida FL Reporter* 6.1: 3–4, 14–16, 18.

Tagliamonte, Sali, and Shana Poplack. 1988. "How Black English Past Got to the Present: Evidence from Samaná." *Language in Society* 17: 513–33.

———. 1993. "The Zero-Marked Verb: Testing the Creole Hypothesis." *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages* 8: 171–206.

Trudgill, Peter. 1972. "Sex, Covert Prestige and Linguistic Change in the Urban British English of Norwich." *Language in Society* 1: 179–95.

———. 1974. *The Social Differentiation of English in Norwich*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.

———. 1983. *On Dialect: Social and Geographical Perspectives*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Walker, James A. 1999. "Rephrasing the Copula: Contraction and Zero in Early African American English." In Poplack, 35–72.

———. 2005. "The *ain't* Constraint: *Not*-Contraction in Early African American English." *Language Variation and Change* 17: 1–17.

Weldon, Tracey. 1994. "Variability in Negation in African American Vernacular English." *Language Variation and Change* 6: 359–97.

———. 1996. "Past Marking in Gullah." *University of Pennsylvania Working Papers in Linguistics* 3.1: 63–72.

———. 2003. "Copula Variability in Gullah." *Language Variation and Change* 15: 37–72.

———. 2005. Review article of Wolfram and Thomas (2002) and Kautzsch (2002). *Language* 81: 478–94.

Winford, Donald. 1992a. "Another Look at the Copula in Black English and Caribbean Creoles." *American Speech* 67: 21–60.

———. 1992b. "Back to the Past: The BEV/Creole Connection Revisited." *Language Variation and Change* 4: 311–57.

———. 1993. *Predication in Caribbean English Creoles*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

———. 1998. "On the Origins of African American Vernacular English: A Creolist Perspective. Part II: Linguistic Features." *Diachronica* 15: 99–154.

Wolfram, Walt. 1990. "Re-examining Vernacular Black English." Review article of Schneider (1989) and *The Death of Black English: Divergence and Convergence in Black and White Vernaculars*, by Ronald R. Butters (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1989). *Language* 66: 121–33.

Wolfram, Walt, and Erik R. Thomas. 2002. *The Development of African American English*. Oxford: Blackwell.