

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work would not have been possible without Professor Howard L. Harrod and Professor Victor Anderson who both provided me with the opportunity to deepen my knowledge bases. In Howard's absence, Professor Anderson has encouraged and challenged me, constantly pushing me to think harder, write clearer, and at times just relax. We started on this road and have traversed many terrains. It was a pleasure to walk the paths of rigor and scholarship.

I am grateful to all of those whom I have had the pleasure of working with during this project. I would like to thank my colleagues and Phenomenological conversation partners, Christophe Ringer and Tamura Lomax. Hopefully, StarBucks was enriched by our often long and engaging conversations. A host of other names need to be mentioned at this point. Through lived relation I was able to "transcend" the self, opening up to worlds of difference and "creative exchange." So I would like to say thanks to Tamyron McGirt, Nate Mitchell, Keri Day, Amy Steele, Asante Todd, Dante Bryant, Monique Moultrie, Eugene Se'Bre, Brandon McCormick, Meredith Hammonds, Nicole Renee Phillips, Kimberly Peeler, Joe Fanning, Herbert Marbury, David Cox, Andy Lampkin, Donna Smith, Elieen Crawford, Bill Hook, Margret Ann Trotter, Anne Womack, Jill Brown, Yolanda Campbell, LaRentina Grey, James McCullough, and Minnie Dangerfield. The stories of the Black Church through my colleagues and friends disclosed the deep meanings that that institution has for the lives of many. I would also like to acknowledge The Fund for Theological Education for their interest and financial support for this project.

Finally, I would like to thank my loving mother and brother, whose love and support are with me in whatever I pursue. You have laughed, struggled and rejoiced with me throughout this process. The words of encouragement you provided kept me in this race. This one is really for you both. Love Baby Boy.