



ERS Engine Room Section

A Caribbean-American Cultural Not-For-profit Organization

“Together As One”

www.engineerroomsection.com

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UPCOMING ERS EVENTS

- **Saturday, April 26th, 2003**
Spring Fundraiser @ Unity Sports and Cultural Club – DJ Glen, Digital Seduction & Sound Inc.
- **Sunday, July 13th, 2003**
Band Launching @ 19/21 Atherton St. Roxbury (Egleston Square) – Digital Seduction & Dj Glen alongside Ground Zero Sound System.
- **Friday, August 15th, 2003**
Mudd meet Grog Party @ William E. Reed Auditorium – King Pappa Rocky, Sel Construction, Digital Seduction & DJ Glen.
- **Saturday, August 23rd, 2003**
Play “Out Of Africa” with ERS on the road
- **Saturday, September 6th, 2003**
Bus Ride Long Island Carnival
- Other events may be added. We’ll keep you posted so stay tuned.

TnT Carnival 2K3

The members of Engine Room Section supported and “played mas” in three separate bands. In the large band category ERS had a significant presence in Poison’s “*Fleurs de Passion*” the Aranthera section. In the medium size band category we were with Trini Revellers’

D’Harvard all-inclusive section. And as always Brian “Tico” Skinners band was the band of choice for the veteran mudders. The places to lime and cool down on the days leading up to Carnival, and in between all the big fetes was “Day Break Café” in Diego Martin and the all time Favorite “Smokey & Bunty” St. James.

ERS Band Member Strikes Big in the “Big Yard”

Juan Maximo, a Boston Carnival King favorite and ERS alumni tied for fifth place in the 2003 Trinidad and Tobago Carnival King Competition. Juan’s costume was called Hannibal, Ruler of Carthage from Midas band “Great Kings and Dancers of Africa”. This was Juan’s first trip to the “Big Yard” and we are very excited about his success. Play on Juan.

USE OF ENGLISH

By Robert Saldenah

How many of you ever had the experience upon entering the workplace for the first time, and while speaking to another West Indian was told by some “good” soul, or some petit semi-demigod, that you were not speaking “proper English”, or was told that you could not speak “proper English”? Did you feel like

telling that person to kiss your ‘bleep’. And how many felt so embarrassed that you dare not open your mouth for the next couple of weeks, unless it was absolutely necessary? No doubt the vast number of us, who came to the U.S.A. and did not have time to cultivate an American accent, could relate to this. How many of you feel that you do not speak “proper English”?

That person whether trying to be helpful or down right nasty, did not know what he or she was saying. Firstly the main purpose of any language is communication, and if what is spoken or written can be understood by another, then it is fulfilling the main purpose, and is proper. Secondly the criteria that are used to determine if what is spoken or written can be called a language are among other things, grammar, semantics, vocabulary (words and their meanings), and orthography (spelling). However, we in the Caribbean are yet to produce a uniform orthography.

Then there are two concepts. There is “proper” English, and then there is “formal” or “Standard English”. The obvious question, what is Formal or Standard English? Formal or Standard English is spoken at formal occasions, such as business meetings, Parliamentary debates, or when the news is being reported. At least the person or persons are attempting to speak Formal or Standard. I say this because, it is only the British, or someone who has cultivated a strong British accent, like the former Trinidad newscaster – Sir Trevor McDonald - can speak Formal or Standard English,

because it has to do with the pronunciation and the embellishment of words, phrases and sentences. For instance, do you say pronunciation or pronunciation? The latter is standard or formal English. Is it Epsom Derby, or “Epsom Darby”? Even though the word is spelt “derby”, the Standard English pronunciation is “Darby”. Americans on the other hand pronounces it “derby”. The latter is not formal or standard English. What about “clerk”, is it “clark” or “clerk”? The Standard or Formal English pronunciation is “clark”, even though spelt clerk. Does this remind you of your school days back home? It should, because we were taught to write Standard or Formal English, but we were not taught to speak it. Have you ever heard some people, whom one would consider excellent speakers say, “This is where it is at.”? Again, that is not formal or Standard English, but it is proper if he or she is speaking to his or her peer from that area of the U.S.A. where they speak like that. For instance if I am writing the spoken word of a Trinbagoian asking for direction, and did not get a favorable reply; the same sentence could be written as follows.

“Ah was talking to de gal, and she jus cheeups and walk away.

“Ah was talking to de gyal, and she jus steeups and walked away.

I just wanted to point out the difference in orthography (spelling), which is not standardized. Others may point to the grammar. While it is not Standard or Formal English grammar, it is proper in the context that our language is not

meant to be formal or Standard English. Further it is not meant to replaced Standard or Formal English, because each got its time and place.

I am sure many of you have heard the name Lloyd Best. He is a Trinbagoian Economist who has won world acclaimed for his innovative way of describing Caribbean economies. Very good speaker, at home with Standard English, the only problem is that, he is difficult to understand. Nothing is wrong with his delivery, or his dictum. He is very good at articulating his thoughts, the problem is that he speaks above the level of the average Trinbagoian, and as a result people cannot understand what he is saying. Therefore, while he is speaking Formal or Standard English, good grammar, excellent vocabulary, he is not speaking “proper” English. For many people who have not attended High School, and even many who have attended University Lloyd Best speaks way “above their head”. He is unable to speak in layman’s terms.

Some years ago, some linguists from the University of the West Indies – ah hear all yuh calling it the University of Wasted Intellectuals - started “pushing de head” that we (Trinbagoians), should not be ashamed of our language, but should be encouraged to speak it. It was the same argument for Ebonics, but we in the Caribbean are still caught up in the Colonial mentality that we are yet to recognize that we do have a language. Do you know that people born and bred in England cannot understand the English of

others, who were also born and bred in England? However, they are proud of their form of English, and have no qualms speaking it in informal occasions. If there is such a thing as an American English, then there is such a thing as Trinidadian English, African English and Indian English.

The final point I want to make is that while only the English can speak Formal or Standard English, the English spoken by the rest of us is called Internationally Accepted English – I.A.E.-. This is English spoken by the Africans, Indians, West Indians and even Americans. However, while we cannot speak Formal or Standard English, all of us can write it, but it must be written in the Standard or Formal form.

By this I mean words such as **TYRE** cannot be spelt **Tire**, or **CENTRE** cannot be spelt **CENTER**.

There are two words for practice and license. The nouns **PRACTISE** and **LICENSE** are spelt with an “s”, and the verbs are spelt with a “C”. I read once an American writer claimed that this was the old way of spelling, and the Americans are spelling the modern way. My question to him is who made him the overlord of the English Language, and who is he to say what is old and what is new?

Therefore the next time someone tries to correct you, and you are convinced that, that person is not well intended, you can give him or her this “draft” (lecture).

Troubling Times

These are troubling times so each of you must take the time to let your loved ones know how much you care about them. You must also develop an emergency contact plan for your circle of love. This is the time to make sure that you have all necessary telephone and cell phone numbers for all of the members of your circle of love. Visit the City of Boston website for a copy of the City’s emergency response guide.

<http://www.cityofboston.gov/emergencyguide/> Keep safe.

Display Ads

Half Page (71/2”W x 43/4”H) - \$100
One fourth Page (31/4”W x 43/4”H) - \$50
1/8 Page (31/4”W x 21/4”H) - \$25

If typesetting and layout is desired ads will be billed at an additional \$25.00 per hour.

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