

File 7 p. 76 • Rihanna's "Work" is not gibberish

When Rihanna's single, "Work", came out [...] it was met with some confused listeners. Some have called it "gibberish"¹, "jabber", even "nonsensical." I have to admit when I first heard the song I had a similar reaction. I thought it sounded lazy and couldn't understand half of what Rihanna was saying. But what I and tons of other listeners did not realize is RiRi is not simply muttering incomprehensible lyrics; she is speaking dialect in her song.

The dialect is known as Jamaican Patois, which is English-based but with influences from West Africa. It's common all throughout the Caribbean. Rihanna's use of Patois is most notable in the song's hook² [...]:

When you ah guh

Learn, learn, learn, learn, learn, learn

Meh nuh cyar if him

Hurt, hurt, hurt, hurt, hurting

In the Caribbean dialect, "ah guh" means "going to," and "Meh nuh cyar" means "I don't care." When you take the time to look at the lyrics/listen more closely, the lyrics are actually pretty self-explanatory, considering it is written in an English dialect. [...]

It's no secret that Rihanna is from Barbados and this is not the first time she's shown her Caribbean heritage in her songs.

Katie Kazamierski, *theodysseyonline.com*, 2016

1. *charabia*

2. *phrase d'accroche*

NGC Bocas Lit Fest

Coming soon: One of the world's best literary festivals

Over 50 authors & speakers

The Caribbean's biggest festival of words, stories, and ideas.

People from all over the world are gathering soon in Trinidad and Tobago to celebrate Caribbean creativity. Events will take place in the National Library and Old Fire Station.

Discover the program and join in!

Workshops will start every day at 9 am:

- Get advice on how to preserve treasured documents.
- Learn techniques on the arts of fictional biography.
- Use spoken word to teach English.
- Join a masterclass led by Alex Wheatle, prizewinning YA author.

Specials guests (to be confirmed) are going to lead various conferences:

- Discuss the use of the Caribbean dialects in literature.
- Engage with the best thinkers about the Caribbean diaspora around the world.

Upcoming book launches

You will discover brand new literary works by Caribbean authors.

Film screenings

Films set in the Caribbean are to be screened each day.

Over 50 authors and speakers:

Carolyn Cooper

Author and Professor of Literary and Cultural Studies: “I think it is so important for us to have this celebration of Caribbean writing, Caribbean speech, performance! So every day is just a wonderful feast!”

Vivek Narayanan

Poet: “Literature becomes a source of independent thoughts from the Caribbean and we shouldn’t be borrowing our thoughts from somewhere else.”

Rowan Ricardo Phillips

Poet: “You have writers here who are from Toronto, from Montreal, from the UK. It’s a wonderful way to have both a local and an international presence. It’s kind of a wonderful congregation!”

Jean-Claude Cournand

Youth Outreach Coordinator: “The closing scene of Bocas Lit Fest is a grand celebration of spoken word. It brings people from all different groups in society together to listen and celebrate literature.”

File 7 p. 79 • 50 years of independence

It's party time in Barbados, which marks 50 years of independence today.

On this day in 1966, the sun finally set on 300 years of British rule when the Caribbean island that made Britain rich in the age of slavery was finally free to make its own way in the world.

Since independence, Barbados has built its prosperity largely on tourism, establishing itself as a favourite Caribbean destination among Brits. [...]

The main attraction of this small island, just 20 miles¹ long by 14 miles wide, is its beaches, from the powder sands of the calm west coast to the seapummelled² shores of the east, and some of the best quality resorts and restaurants in the region have sprung up around them. But there is a smattering of³ other attractions, giving good reason to leave the beach for a while. [...]

Unsurprisingly, Barbados' strongest attraction is its colonial history. The landscape is scattered with⁴ sugar mills and plantation houses and the island's major annual celebration, Crop Over, in July and August, is rooted in the traditions of slave times. The top historic sight is the old quarter of the capital, Bridgetown, and its military garrison. Named a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 2012, it is home to some of the finest examples of Caribbean Georgian architecture, dating from when the island was the centre of operations for Britain's expansion into the Americas.

Kate Simon, *independent.co.uk*, November 30, 2016

1. 1 mile = 1.6 km 2. beaten 3. a few 4. parsemé de

File 7 p. 80 • Plans for future leaders

[The] Prime Minister of The Commonwealth of The Bahamas, at the recent official ribbon cutting of his country's foreign mission¹ in South Florida, shared that his administration has a 10-year plan to identify Bahamians both at home and abroad who could be developed as the future leaders of the country.

The Prime Minister—who shared that recently it was decided to start a system where they would look within the various government ministries to identify their needs—asked for help in identifying Bahamians who could be given jobs in those areas of need.

The Prime Minister said that persons identified from abroad and from the University of The Bahamas, [...] would be automatically offered a one-year contract to work for the government. Following the one year, he said that top colleges will be identified to send these persons to, so that they could complete a Master's Degree or whatever is necessary and at the full expense of² the Bahamas government.

He continued that on completion of the studies, the individuals would be expected to return to The Bahamas to assist in the building of the country. [...] He told those in attendance that when they identified persons who might be considered for the program to “tell them that there is a job waiting for them in The Bahamas.”

thecarribeancurrent.com, June 24, 2018

1. *service diplomatique*

2. *à la charge de*

File 7 p. 85 • Caribbean roots

CCH Pounder was born in Guyana in 1962, and grew up in the US and the UK.

Currently appearing in the US TV drama NCIS: New Orleans, Pounder is also known for her past roles on ER, The X Files, Law & Order SVU and in films like Avatar. Grateful for the support and appreciation of Caribbean fans, she says: “I love that it makes you proud when you hear I’m from ‘home’.”

She told Caribbean Beat: “Having left Guyana so young one would think that it was long left behind in my lifestyle, but my parents never lost what they brought with them and I was always the most curious in my family to go back and reconnect with what I remembered of Versailles Estate. I made my mother join me on one of my trips to Guyana to show me where she grew up (New Amsterdam) ... With the few aunts my mother was connected with, I sat and listened to Ole Haig¹ stories and made myself at home once again. I revisited all I remembered from childhood. [...]

“The impact of these journeys has been indelible and holds me closer to a country I now rarely see but never forget and always claim.

“My dear friend Lorraine Toussaint has always invited me to Trinidad and Tobago, her islands, and I find the same relaxing welcome waft² over me when I arrive before I start my expeditions of buying cloth, bedding and Carnival costumes. [...] Having lost my mother I’ve also lost many connections to Guyana but not the Guyanese people who seem to be scattered to the four winds in Canada, England, other Caribbean islands and the United States.

“We [Caribbean actors in Hollywood] often do not know that we share a Caribbean heritage until we are working together and somehow the subject comes up!... There is a commonality of certain age categories and styles, e.g. a remarkable amount of Caribbean artists may have been educated on a British system and therefore have a different discipline in the approach to their work.”

Caroline Taylor, *Caribbean Beat Magazine*, 2015

1. Caribbean folklore character

2. move in the air