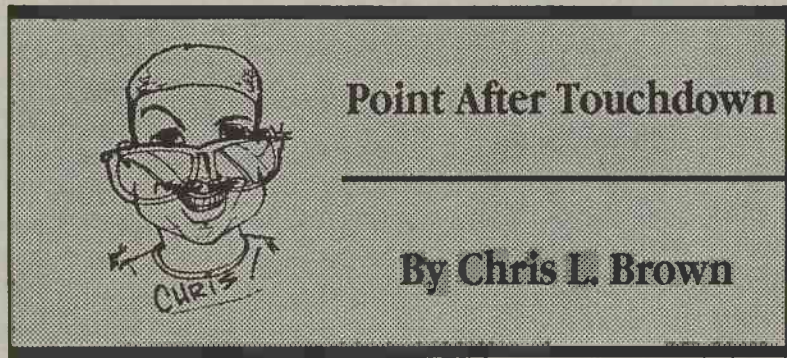


He Don't Speak No English (And You Do?!)

Yo, Whattup. Brown here, chillin' and dealin', bassin' and chasin', doin' my own thang. Wording it on up and on a serious tip, I've got some science to drop. TRANSLATION (or so they say): Greetings. Your friendly neighborhood columnist Chris L. Brown here, to summarize and quip from my vivacious corner of the world. Pay attention, because I have got a serious point to make.

WAIT! Don't turn the page. I did that to make a point. You, the reader, tell me— which version sounds more like someone talking to you and not at you? Which would draw your attention to this article? What? The first one? How dare you! Why, we all know that a publication as pressworthy as Black Ink would never tolerate such variant behavior! I suggest you take two bowls of Alpha Bits and see your English Professor in the morning.

"What's he talking about?" I'm talking about being awakend in the middle of my English class by a statement about the kind of english that I, and anybody related to me, who lives near



me, or looks exactly like me (see the last article) speaks. "Black English," she said. I pushed my desk pillow aside and found my hand making that familiar ascension upward. "Excuse me," I so politely inquired, "but who supposedly speaks 'Black English?'" She bifocused on me in a strange sort of way. "Of course, most Black Americans," she said. "Of course. "And what does Black English consist of?" I asked, so I could go ahead and be wholly offended instead of just partially. She proceeded to go through a series of slang mannerisms that granted, I have heard before from my African-American peers, but mostly those that hung out in the hall intersections at high

school and tried to sell you toothpaste that would "really wake you up in the morning." Essentially, she was saying that bad english was synonymous with Black English.

So, being enlightened that I was not speaking the type of English that my ethnic origin was supposed to yield, I immediately recompensated. "YO! I don't be understandin' dis, uh, uh, unconstipated (proud grimace at the release of a big word) language. Whassup wit dat?" Later, after being kicked out of class, I was walking around campus trying out my new-found heritage on everyone. I went to the J(ournalism)-School: "Ay yo secretary. Yeah, uh, checkdisout,

checkdisout. I would like to youknowwhut! I'm sayin', uh, regurgitate (score two on another big word) a weekly thang, you know, printing a newspaper fo' money and stuff... We could, like, sell it to people who don't be going to dis University, and thay could, you know, perpetrate (the one big word we do know, mainly stemming from rap) that they goin' here as well."

I went to Lenoir: "Yo, yo, yo, Homey, Home B, I would like some Crayfish and salad— Nah! Diss the Crayfish. I would like some southern fried chicken, some biscuits, yo, yo, yo,.....Good G! What is that? Stuff movin on my plate! Y'all Lenoir people be gettin' funky and what not. Ay, shuga— do fires come with dat shake? Heh, heh..."

I went to the Pit: "MY BROTHA! Whassup, Wahssup! Chillin' hawd. Yo, check out dis freak: I'mo rap. Hold up. (Ahem) Excuse me, I wuz just chillin' wit my boy over on de wall and I couldn't hep but notice your boodie— I mean beauty (heh, heh) from across

the way. So, well, youknow, howsabout me and you gettin' busy tonight at— WAIT! Aw, whassup wit dat, tryin' to be all uppity and stuff."

Yeah, right. This is an example. My English professor, no less, teaching us that there is a dialect exclusive to Black people in this country? That's very shaky, especially when you consider that you're in the middle of a University with some of the smartest, most illiterate African-Americans anywhere. Now, I surrender that we have our own cultural terms; that's a part of the heritage that I would never, ever want to lose. But is it enough to constitute a different form of a language? Like L.L. says, I don't think so.

I personally await the section on this dialect, and believe me, I plan to argue until I'm blue— well, navy blue— in the face. I think Inner City English is far more appropriate. If you'd like to come and see the throw-down, or if you simply want to go to my eight o'clock for me, let me know, I'll be glad to make the proper arrangements.

Dat be all.

BETTER DAYS

by Harvey Reid



UMOJA SERIES

Black Colleges vs. Predominantly White Colleges

Speakers will include Dr. Marion Phillips and Velma Leak.

Event will be held in North Dining Room of Lenoir Hall

\$ 3.00 due two days before the event at BSM Office