



ENGLISH CAFÉ – 179

TOPICS

Anti-miscegenation laws; Silicon Valley and the Research Triangle; freeway, highway, and expressway; to sport; dosey doe

GLOSSARY

miscegenation – people of different races (skin color) getting married or having a sexual relationship with each other, especially if they have children together
* Miscegenation was not uncommon in the old days, but most people in society did not accept it.

to frown upon (something) – to do or say something to show that you think something is wrong
* Even though there are no rules against dating a co-worker in our company, the management frowns upon it.

interracial marriage – marriages between people of different races (skin colors)
* What is the rate of interracial marriage among Asian Americans?

slavery – the practice of owning another person and forcing them to work without pay
* Americans consider slavery in the United States a very sad and shameful part of its history.

to abolish – to no longer allow something by law; to outlaw; to eliminate
* Our city tried to abolish cigarettes, but no one paid attention to the new law.

to repeal – to undo a law; to make a law no longer a law
* Angry citizens wanted the new taxes repealed because the poorest people would have to pay the most.

high-tech – related to advanced technologies, usually related to computers and communication, such as software and Internet services
* This radio show talks about high-tech toys and gadgets that are new on the market.

headquarters – main office; central office
* Are the headquarters of ESL Podcast in Los Angeles or Chicago?



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venture capitalist – a person or company that has a lot of money and helps new businesses get started by giving them the money they need to grow and become successful

* We have a great idea for a new business, but we won't have enough money to start it unless we can attract the interest of venture capitalists.

triangle – a shape that has three straight sides

* We made cookies in the shape of triangles and decorated them to look like Christmas trees.

to recruit – to find and hire new workers; to attract new workers

* Do you think we will be able to recruit enough students to participate in our new international studies program?

affordable housing – homes that people have enough money to live in; homes that are not too expensive and that the people living in them can afford

* This city does not have enough affordable housing, so families are moving further and further away from the city's center.

to advance (one's) career – to do well in one's work so that one can get a better job with more pay and more responsibility

* To advance Ian's career as a journalist, he will have to move to a larger city.

freeway / highway / expressway – a road made for fast driving and without traffic lights, and with controlled entry and exit so that cars can drive without stopping

* To get to my house, take the 10 Freeway to Highway 30, and then take the expressway to Main Street.

to sport – to wear; to have on; to display

* Did you see the new watch Dan was sporting? I bet it cost him a month's salary!

dosey doe – a dance move used in an American folk dance called "square dancing," in which each person folds his or her arms in front and goes around another dancer

* We watched the dancers dosey doe around each other at the beginning of the dance.



WHAT INSIDERS KNOW

The Movie Startup.com

The 1990s was an exciting time for high-tech companies and for “entrepreneurs” who wanted to take their ideas and start their own business. During this time, many individuals and small groups of people working in Silicon Valley tech companies wanted to “strike out on their own” (start their own business) instead of working for someone else. Those companies that used the Internet as a major part of their business were called “dot-com” companies, and these new businesses were called “start-ups.”

Many of these start-ups attracted investors who saw these high-tech companies as the “wave of the future” (important things in the future). Venture capitalists and others invested a lot of money into companies, even though many of them were not yet making money. Unfortunately, when the dot-com “bubble” (temporary period of time when people make a lot of money) ended, a lot of people lost very large amounts of money and many people were left without jobs.

In 2001, a movie called Startup.com was released. It was a “documentary” (movie about true events) film that told the story of dot-com start-ups by following one company over “the course of” (during the time of) two years. The filmmakers were friends with one of the two men who started this company. They followed the start-up from beginning to end, showing how the young men quit their jobs to start the company, how they got “funding” (money) for their business, and eventually, how the business failed.

The film showed the “exuberance” (lively energy) of the entrepreneurs who became millions “overnight” (very quickly). Many of these entrepreneurs, including those in Startup.com were university students or recent university graduates who were “carried away” (moved without thinking) by the “optimism” (positive attitudes toward the future) during this time.



COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

You're listening to ESL Podcast's English Café number 179.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 179. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

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On this Café, we're going to talk about anti-miscegenation laws that the United States used to have, certainly a very negative part of our history. These were laws that didn't allow people of other races or skin colors to marry each other; particularly white people were not allowed to marry people of color. Then we're going to talk about a part of California – Northern California called Silicon Valley and a part of the state of North Carolina called the Research Triangle, two very important areas for technological development in the United States. And as always, we'll answer a few of your questions. Let's get started.

This Café begins with a discussion of anti-miscegenation laws. "Miscegenation" (miscegenation) is a word that you don't hear very often in English, at least not anymore. It means having people of different "races," or skin colors getting married or having a sexual relationship with each other, especially if they have children together. Examples of miscegenation would be if an African American or black person and a white person got married, or if a Native American and Asian American person got married. Nowadays this is quite common and it might seem normal to you, or least it would seem normal to people in the United States. But in the past, this was very unusual, in fact it was illegal in the United States for many years.

For many years, society frowned upon miscegenation. To "frown" (frown) is the opposite of a smile. To frown means to turn the corners of your mouth down to show that you are sad or angry. The phrase "to frown upon (something)" means to do or say something to show that you think something is wrong. American society used to frown upon "interracial marriage," which is the same as



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miscegenation: marriages between people of different races. In fact, according to one study, even as late as 1958, 96% of white Americans frowned upon interracial marriage. Some Americans probably still think it's a bad idea, but that way of thinking is certainly not as common as it used to be.

Anti-miscegenation laws seem very wrong to most Americans today, but in 1883 the Supreme Court, the highest legal court in the United States, upheld anti-miscegenation laws, saying that there was nothing wrong with the laws. When we say a court “upholds” a law (the past would be “upheld”), we mean that they say it is okay – they approve it. The court thought that the anti-miscegenation laws were somehow treating blacks and whites equally by not allowing people from either group to marry people from the other group, so that this wasn't really discrimination since it applied to both groups.

In the past, several federal or national anti-miscegenation laws were “proposed,” or suggested, but they never became law. In the United States, marriage, in any case, is something that the individual states regulate or are in charge of – make laws about. There were several anti-miscegenation laws created by many different states. The first anti-miscegenation law was created before the United States even existed, when we were still colonies of Great Britain back in the 1660s in what were then the colonies of Virginia and Maryland. They also appeared in other parts of the United States. Anti-miscegenation laws were common especially in states that had “slavery,” the practice of forcing someone to work without paying them. In the U.S., that meant African slaves that were imported. In these states, slavery was clearly important for the economy. In order for slavery to work, there had to be clear differences between whites and blacks, and anti-miscegenation laws were one way to make these racial differences even stronger.

However, even after the United States “abolished” slavery, or after slavery was no longer allowed in the mid 19th century, anti-miscegenation laws continued in many states. Many states in the north and the west of the United States began to “repeal,” or undo their anti-miscegenation laws in the 19th and early 20th centuries, but most of the states that used to have slavery kept their laws the way they were, the states in what we would now call the South or the Deep South, the southeastern part of the United States. During the period of time between 1913 and 1948, 30 states had anti-miscegenation laws, which means states that didn't have slavery also these laws.

In the 1950s, many of these states started to repeal their anti-miscegenation laws. But it wasn't until 1967, four years after I was born, that the Supreme Court



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changed its earlier decision and decided that all anti-miscegenation laws were illegal because they went against the U.S. Constitution, our country's most important legal document. The Supreme Court decided that anti-miscegenation laws didn't treat everyone equally. At the time the Supreme Court ruled, there were still 17 states that had these racist anti-miscegenation laws. These were laws that were then ended because of the Supreme Court's decision. Today, Americans can marry whomever they want to, no matter where they live in the United States, although some people may still disapprove – may still frown upon that.

You might hear the phrase “love is colorblind.” “Colorblind” means you can't see colors, or you can't see the differences between colors. The expression “love is colorblind” means that two people of different races can fall in love and spend the rest of their life together, regardless of their skin color; it doesn't really matter. Love has now officially become colorblind in the United States. In fact, we have the president that is himself the son of a white and a black parent.

Now let's turn to our next topic, which is Silicon Valley and the Research Triangle. These are both well known parts of the United States that have very strong economies, or at least had strong economies for many years because the type of work that is being done there.

Silicon Valley is here in the state of California. It's located between San Francisco and San Jose. “Silicon” is a chemical that is used to make many products, including what are called computer chips. A “chip” is an electronic device that is used to control the computer. A “valley” is a low area of land between tall mountains. Silicon Valley isn't literally (actually) a valley made of silicon, of course. Silicon Valley got its name because many companies in the area began making these computer parts. Over time, more and more of these high-tech companies moved into this area of California. “High-tech” is a company that is involved in advanced technologies for computers and communication, software, the Internet. Not all of these high-tech companies work with silicon, but the name “Silicon Valley” has “stuck,” meaning it has remained for all companies in that area.

There are thousands of high-tech companies have their “headquarters,” or their main offices in Silicon Valley, here in California. These include Apple Computers, Cisco, eBay, Intel, Intuit, Sony (a least here in the U.S.), and, of course, Google. There are also many universities in this area. They attract a lot of students who want to study computer science and related fields so they can work in these high-tech companies after they graduate from college. Berkeley



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and Stanford, a public and a private university in that area are probably the famous or most famous ones.

Many computer engineers and venture capitalists live and work in Silicon Valley. A “venture capitalist” is a person who has a lot of money, or his company has a lot of money, and they help new businesses get started by giving them money they need to grow and become successful. “Venture” is another word, here, for a new project or a new business. Venture capitalists hope that companies will do well and then they will make a lot of money out of their “investment.” So when they give what we call a “start-up,” a new company especially in the technology area, money they will get part of those profits if the company is successful.

On the other side of the country there is a similar area, like Silicon Valley, in the state of North Carolina. It’s called the Research Triangle. A “triangle” is a shape that has three straight sides. The Research Triangle involves three cities in North Carolina: Raleigh, Durham, and Cary.

Originally the Research Triangle referred to the area around three research universities – three large universities, universities where scientists and other professors try to answer important questions. These three universities are Duke University, North Carolina State University, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Beginning back in the 1950s, many high-tech companies began moving into this area, or what were considered high-tech back in the 1950s. They created this large research center called the Research Triangle Park. There are also has many hospitals and medical centers and some government agencies – some government offices in this area.

Like Silicon Valley, Research Triangle attracts a lot of high-tech companies, but it also attracts other types of business, such as DuPont, which is a chemical company; American Airlines; GlaxoSmithKline, a pharmaceutical company, a company that makes medicines or drugs. Many of these companies work closely with the nearby universities to “recruit” or to find and hire new workers from among the students at the universities.

Both Silicon Valley and the Research Triangle have very strong economies. They attract a lot of very well educated workers. Because there is a lot of money in these areas, however, housing can be very expensive. People who have regular jobs often have problems finding “affordable housing,” or houses – homes where they can afford to buy (have enough money to buy). Nevertheless, many people want to work in Silicon Valley and the Research Triangle because



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they know that these areas offer a lot of opportunities to “advance their careers,” or to do well in their work and get better jobs and more pay in the future.

I read an article recently which talked about how important sometimes physical geography is in terms of innovation – in terms of new ideas and new companies. Even in this day and age, as we say, even in this time when the Internet and global or world-wide communication has become so much easier, it’s still important for you to be physically close to other people that you may be able to have dinner with or have a coffee with to talk about new ideas. Some people believe that Silicon Valley and the Research Triangle have been so successful because companies are very close to each other. That also means that if you work for one company, you can go work for a different company and not have to move to a different place. So, those are also some things that may contribute to the success of these two high-tech areas.

Of course, there are other high-tech areas in the United States, cities that have a lot of technology companies: Austin, Texas; Minneapolis, Minnesota. Even here in Los Angeles you will find a lot of these kinds of companies.

Now let’s answer a few of your questions.

Our first question comes from Huang (Huang) in China. Huang wants to know the meaning of the words “highway,” “freeway,” and “expressway,” when we use each of these three words. Well, all three words describe a road that is used for driving at high speeds – for fast driving. Usually they are roads that have special entrances and exits.

All can mean the same thing. “Freeway” and “highway” are more commonly used in the western part of the United States. I talk about the 10 Freeway – the freeway that has the number 10, which is here in Los Angeles. The U.S. national or federal government has a system of freeways or highways, and each state typically has its own system, with its own numbers for its freeways and highways.

As I say, “freeway” and “highway” are used especially in the mid-west and western U.S. If you are on the eastern coast of the U.S. (the East Coast), more likely you would hear the word “expressway.” Each state is different; in L.A., people will use “freeway” more frequently than “highway,” but they really mean the same thing. However, you will never hear anyone in Los Angeles call the freeway an expressway; that’s a term you will hear only in some of the eastern states.



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Also in the eastern U.S. you'll hear another term called "parkway." Parkways are freeways that do not allow large commercial business trucks and so forth. "Interstate" is also another word that has a similar meaning. Someone would say, "I'm going to take the interstate," they mean they're going to take one of those federal freeways – federal highways that the national government coordinates. That's also another term for the same kind of road. So we have "highway," "freeway," "interstate," "expressway," and "parkway."

Vladimir (Vladimir), originally from Russia, now living in the Netherlands, wants to know the meaning of the verb "to sport."

Well, "sport," you know, is a game – an organized game that people play, such as basketball or football. "To sport" as a verb, however, means to wear, to have on, to be wearing so as to show or display it to someone else. For example: "I see you are sporting a black t-shirt today." That means I see you are wearing a black t-shirt. This verb is often used – usually used as a present progressive tense, or a progressive tense, the "-ing": "he was sporting," "he is sporting," "he will be sporting." That's the most common use of the verb "to sport," to mean to wear or to display.

Finally, Hans (Hans) from Germany says he is a big fan of American country music, and he has heard the words "dosey doe" in the songs that he has listened to, in the words of the song, which we would call the "lyrics."

"Dosey (dosey) doe (doe)" is actually a part of a type of American folk dance called "square dancing," in which each person folds their arms in front of them, and then goes around another dancer. So, it's what we would call a "dance move," it is part of a dance.

Square dancing usually involves four couples, that is, eight people – four pairs of people. Each couple is at the side of a square facing each other, and then there is someone who is called the "caller," who doesn't dance, but who tells the dancers what to do. This is a very popular type of dance in some places in the United States. My parents, for example, for 10 or 15 years after they retired would go square dancing once or twice a week. So, it's a fun way for people to get together to get to know other people.

Square dancing is often associated with the United States, although it comes from the traditional dances of many European settlers – European immigrants who came to the U.S.



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If you have a question or comment, you can email us. Our email address is eslpod@eslpod.com.

From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thank you for listening. Come back and listen to us next time on the English Café.

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