

What I believe and what I believe should be taught

What do I believe?

If there is one thing that I believe with certainty and cannot ever remember seriously doubting, it is what has recently come to be called "Intelligent Design."

I believe that this world, this universe, and everything in it was created by and is watched over by an "Intelligent Designer," known to me as God.



D.G. MARTIN

I could never believe that the world, the people in it, and the universe that surrounds it all came about by accident.

Can I prove this to you? Absolutely not. I would not even try. My belief in a divine origin of the universe is a fundamental matter of faith with me-not something I could prove to you.

If I were I to doubt "intelligent design," I don't think anyone could prove it to me by using some kind of "scientific proof."

Should science teachers try to show students that scientific research and study somehow proves the existence of God or the creation of the universe by intelligent design?

Scientists and science teachers ought to be about the business of learning and teaching how the world and universe work-in a scientific framework. The imposition of my faith or anybody else's religious concepts would distort scientific teaching in the classroom and restrain scientific research in the laboratory.



Free and inquiring minds cannot be bound by directives to come up with results that fit in to a particular religious mold.

The most that should be said about Intelligent Design in the classroom or research lab is this: "What we have learned and what we expect to learn is consistent with the idea that there is an 'intelligent designer,' and it is also consistent with the idea that there is not one. Science will not prove it either way."

I don't want religious beliefs-mine or yours-grafted to science any more than I want them taught in other courses.

Take the study of history, for instance. I believe that God's hand is somehow guiding our history - that of our country and the rest of the world. (I confess to having doubts about this one from time to time, but it is nevertheless something I believe.) Still, I don't want my idea-or someone else's-of exactly how God's hand is guiding history to be a part of the history courses taught in school or college. Speculating about God's purposes, or which side He favored, in the American Civil War or World War II or trying to find God's hand in the events of September 11, 2001, may be good for discussion in a religious context. But, in a history classroom, the focus should be on causal factors that can be documented and examined.

I believe that the hand of God is in the beauty and orderliness of math and music. It must be. But great musicians and great mathematicians hold a wide variety of views about God's role in their work. Forcing them to conform their music or their math to my ideas about God would force them out of their fields.

I believe that a sick person's religious faith can play an important role in healing. But I want the health professionals to concentrate on applying the healing techniques that medical scientific research has so far revealed to be best.

In medicine, history, science, and other such academic subjects, the search for "human truth" can be hampered by the imposition of particular religious beliefs, including the idea of Intelligent Design history.

I believe that God's Truth is on a higher plane than "human truths." God's truth is not scientific truth and not human truth. We search for it in different ways and find it differently and to different degrees. We see that truth now "only through a glass darkly" if at all, and we have come to different ideas even then about what part of His truth God has revealed to us.

What we see only "darkly" should not prevent us from seeing and learning more about what God has allowed us to see clearly.

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Black is back, but who'll embrace it?

On August 20, black folks from across the country will convene on Detroit, but, more importantly, Detroiters themselves will converge in Cobo Hall to make a bold, action-oriented commitment regarding their economic and political empowerment. The Motor City, 85 percent black, is at the forefront of what will be a national initiative to develop and sustain black business enclaves wherever sizeable groups of black people reside in this country. The reality is that when the black business district comes to fruition in Detroit, other cities will follow its lead by planning, promoting, and developing similar enclaves.



JAMES CLINGMAN

You have probably heard by now about the proposal to build a black business district in Detroit, which has created somewhat of a furor in that city among politicians and business persons. Despite Detroit's overwhelming majority black population, there is no African-American business district. Yet, there are several different ethnic business districts.

To think that some, including a few blacks have called the plan to develop such a district "racist," "separatist," and "divisive," simply defies logic and speaks to the desperate economic state of our people in general. Additionally, the resistance to an effort to showcase and economically empower the majority population of Detroit, lets us know that unseen hands and higher forces are at work to keep black folks in Detroit economically enslaved.

Why hasn't anyone called Greek Town, Mexican Town, Polish Town, Korea Town, China Town, Hockey Town, and similar enclaves "racist" and "separatist"? I cannot believe that Blacks in Detroit will not move forward with establishing their own business district. Anyone with an ounce of sense knows it's not racism that drives these districts; it's economics.

What sense does it make for African-Americans to subscribe to the notion of "majority rule" and not utilize that principle when we are in the majority? Some black folks in Detroit and elsewhere are still looking for "minority" set asides and Minority Business Enterprise programs despite being in the majority. As a matter of fact, in Cincinnati where I live, blacks make up nearly 50 percent of the population. That, combined with the percentages comprised by Hispanics and Asians would create a majority for people of color. Yet these groups collectively allow the city to play fast and loose with public dollars, and they are subjected to "minority" rules in "minority" programs. How silly is that?

Detroit can set the example of what must be done to put black people in this country back on the road to economic prosperity. Yes, I said "back" on the road. Whether you realize it or not, our relatives have been there and done that when it comes to economic empowerment, by building and sustaining economic enclaves across the country despite the horrendous treatment they suffered.

So, as I asked in a previous article, what are you going to do, Detroit? Are you going to lead, or will you continue to follow? Will you rightly assume your correct and deserved position at the head of the table, in the "power seat," or will you continue to sit on the floor hoping a few crumbs will fall down for you to pick up? Will you correct the inappropriate behavior of the past, such as, settling for a minority economic position despite being the majority? Or, will you persist with the inappropriate behavior of denying who you are, being ashamed of your black heritage, and the self-deprecating practice of working against your own best economic interests and those of your children?

Make the proper decision and come out August 20 to the "Black is Back" Powernomics Economic Summit. This will be a day of serious commitment to restore and rebuild an economic infrastructure for the majority of Detroit's citizens. The speakers will include Claud Anderson, Bob Law, Rosie Milligan, Amefika Gueka, Kwame Kenyatta, Joann Watson, Barbara Rose Collins, Dorothy Tillman, and other conscious brothers and sisters that do much more than just talk about our economic problems.

The participants will rally at Cadillac Square at 9 a.m. and then march to Cobo Hall for the summit. Please spread the word about this initiative and encourage brothers and sisters from Toledo, Indianapolis, Chicago/Gary, Columbus, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Ohio, and other cities in the area to come to Detroit to lend their support. The development of a Black business district in Detroit will have residual effects across this country by sending out a wave of encouragement, confidence, and pride, and by providing the model for future enclaves.

We must do this, folks. We have no other choice, and we have no other alternative to sinking even further into the abyss of economic despair and desperation. Can't you see what is happening in this country? In this world? Black people are an afterthought, some little inconvenience that must be tolerated. More and more, we are treated with disdain, and the only worth our lives hold to many in this society is in a prison cell or in an army uniform.

While I pray that we will change, white and black, I pray especially that Black people will change. Status quo is a prescription for failure. Haven't you had enough failures? Aren't you tired of being mistreated and exploited? If so, come to Detroit a week from Saturday and make your statement that "Black is Back," and remember what Maggie Lena Walker said: "You can stand up and be counted, or you can lie down and be counted out."

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Easley and CMS still don't get it

"Americans," said the late Sir Winston Churchill, "will eventually do the right thing, but only after they have tried everything else first"-a statement made after he had attempted and failed to persuade the U.S. to enter World War II with Britain or against Adolph Hitler.

And clearly, this partial truism may be observed after recent news reports that Gov. Mike Easley has proposed to send state teams to assist certain low-performing Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

For state officials and CMS apparently believe, falsely, that they have "tried everything else" to improve education in low poverty schools. As stated by Easley, "These schools have consistently performed poorly and I want to know why." Duh!

Question: Are we to believe that "our" governor does not know why these "high-poverty" schools are not performing up to par? Well, maybe he doesn't, just as our "distinguished" (sic) CMS school board and their top administrators appear to be equally lost for answers to this problem.



GYASI FOLUKE

However, we must question whether or not they are really "lost" or, perhaps like most Americans, they are palpably uninformed about our authentic black history that, tragically, is not taught in "our" public schools. Moreover, perhaps the governor and CMS are in denial, psychologically, about major under-estimated damages, both economic and psychological, that the majority society has inflicted upon Africans in America, sometimes called African Americans, and/or they do not understand another simple truism, perhaps best stated by Professor Roger Wilkins-to wit: "We can't have equal outcomes for children whose parents face dreadfully unequal circumstances in this life." Bingo! Amen!

Indeed, if "mediocrity in education is no longer an option," according to the governor, then he and CMS must face, not simply low performing poverty schools, per se, but grossly disproportionate black poverty, period, about 51 percent in Mecklenburg County, in contrast to about 12 percent for whites. And this gross wealth disparity, distinctly but not absolutely related to academic disparities, is traceable to the ugly reality that black wealth or resources have been stolen for nearly 400 years in this nation that, allegedly, promotes "liberty and justice for all"-or is it "just us" white folks?

Moreover, adding insult to injury, this economic disparity is aggravated by a paucity of vision and the failure to implement more successful educational strategies by the state and CMS "educators," the latter who continue to receive large financial bonuses for perpetuating "academic genocide" (Judge Howard Manning) on our black students.

Fortunately, there is no mystery about what needs to be done to improve educational strategies. For, some of us have proposed to the school board and top administrators many measures to reform "our" schools-all to no avail. Indeed we should now be convinced that CMS officials are afflicted tragically with "The Ostrich Syndrome," having chosen, metaphorically, to bury their heads in the sand, while ignoring obvious racial implications underlying volumes of school data. Indeed, we need major reforms in CMS to change:

- (1) The Euro-centric curriculum that, subconsciously, teaches black students to worship White people-like that artistic rendition of "Jesus," in reality Michelangelo's cousin, in our churches-while blacks simultaneously learn to hate themselves;
- (2) academic teaching, student "tracking" and tests, while concurrently addressing those despicable gaps on test scores;
- (3) unfair punitive practices to reduce punishment rates, retention rates and drop-out or "push-out" rates;
- (4) the grossly disproportionate number of white teachers, mostly female and most often racially biased, at least subconsciously;
- (5) the failure to provide authentic professional education to teachers on African American heritage-culture, beginning with ancient Africa, "The Cradle of Civilization;"
- (6) the failure to assign "quality teachers" where most needed, although generally they are non-existent within CMS, if they have not learned black heritage-culture; and finally;
- (7) CMS should adopt several new strategies, including supplemental African-centered educational centers or magnet schools, to address special needs (damages) of "disadvantaged" black parents and students, based upon the most important "Polyglot Factor," the uniqueness of "the black experience" in America, etc, ad nauseam.

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