

EDITORIAL / OPINION

Perspectives



Isaac Newton: Black History Student Part 2

by Professor McKinley Burt

Last week I quoted Isaac Newton, "The most significant astronomical beliefs of the ancient Greeks were derived from the Egyptians." Nothing like going right to the roots when formulating a great theory (Universal Gravitation) that will shape the scientific thinking of the world for centuries to come. No apple fell on Newton's head (Voltaire), just basic Black history.

When I described Atlantis, the science-oriented colony of Africans in what is now Libya, North Africa, I struck a familiar chord among several readers. Plato, the Greek philosopher, having already given credit to the Africans for having invented mathematics, astronomy and letters, apparently could not bring himself to allocate Atlantis to Blacks—he described it as an island somewhere off the coast of Africa, and populated it with a mysterious race of white geniuses (Plato, *The Timaeus*).

Now for my quote of historian Atkinson, "The Greeks were notorious thieves." This opinion develops from the fact that, admittedly, almost all of the 'Greeks' alleged to have founded our science and culture were students in the temple schools of Alexandria, Egypt, and were patrons of the two-thousand year old libraries there: Euclid, Pythagoras, Archimedes, Erastothenes, Thales, Hero, Aristarchus, Apollonius, Hipparchus, Ptolemy, Theon and Hypatia among others. They were preceded centuries earlier by Moses who studied at the Heliopolis branch on the Nile—This is the "On" university described in the Bible.

Obviously, it was not that difficult to return to Greece and

setup famous scientific schools, for these imitators had the opportunity to learn (and copy) "a curriculum that included physics, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, medicine, chemistry, geology, meteorology and music ... librarian callimachus alone collected 400,000 books ... Ptolemy Sorter inherited 500,000 volumes; the collection of all the Ptolemys exceeded a half-million rolls of papyrus, the equivalent of tens of thousands of books today." (see *George James, Stolen Legacy; Brinton, A History of Civilization, Vol. I*)

Isaac Newton, after researching the oral traditions of the poet, Homer (*The Iliad and the Odyssey*), tells us, "After the times of the Argonaut expeditions and the Trojan wars, the communications between Greece and Africa ceased (& Astronomy lay neglected) till the reign of Psammiticus. In his reign the Greeks had free access to Egypt ... Thales traveled hither, revived Astronomy, observed the stars" (I bet!). This Psammitichus is the African King who gave Greek names to the Africans he installed in Egypt's Greek provinces, and who hired Greek mercenaries to fight off Persian invaders (526 B.C.).

The really great invasion of Africa by culture-seeking Greeks came with the conquering 'Alexander The Great' who destroyed so many of the libraries. From what has been reported here, we may safely assume that any number of these famed 'Greeks' were in fact Black Africans—like Euclid who was born in Africa, and died there (there are no actual marble busts from this period). Bill Cosby was right in that 1960s video: "Black History, Lost, Strayed or Stolen."



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Response To Mr. Williams, Oct. 6 Column, Mr. Lavell Matthews Article

Dear Editor:

I hope this letter is not too late to be of use to you. It is a response to a column by Mr. Harold Williams that appeared in the Oct. 6, *Observer*. In it, Mr. Williams asked for letters of support to get Mr. Lavell Matthews out of prison and into some program that can help him get his life back together. That sounds like an important thing to do.

I did not read the Oct. 2 article that Mr. Williams mentioned concerning Mr. Matthews, but is he the same individual who turned himself into the police—after he had fired a couple of wild shots from a doorway at Jefferson High school to fend off some other gang members who were hunting him down in a car? It seems to me I read about that in the 'Oregonian'. I was absolutely sickened to read that this young man (who was evidently trying to end his own gang involvement and asking for help) was then given a 10-year sentence by some self-righteous judge who mouthed platitudes about how 'this is to prove that gang involvement just won't be tolerated.'

At that time, I told several friends, 'If the authorities really want to end the gang violence, how stupid can they get?' This type of sentencing gave a very clear message to other young people who realize they have gotten in over their heads (in gangs) and would like to back out. The message is, 'Forget it! If you turn yourselves in, we'll just give you a vicious, ludicrous prison sentence, too!' There has to be hope for these young people.

The African-American community has a long history of everyone in the community feeling responsible for how all the children come up. I am proud of you for your concern. Whether or not Lavell Matthews is the same young man I was thinking of, I want to support you.

We are living in a war zone with this new gang violence, but, we can't just turn our backs on the young people who have gotten drawn into it. They are our children, too! Even though the edge seems to have temporarily softened (to gang violence) and no one that I know of has been attacked for wearing Red (around here), I think the calm is deceptive. The underlying problems have hardly been addressed, let alone solved. As Isaac Shamsud-din put it in an article that was published right after his niece was shot, "many of the kids who are drawn into this are kids with a high level of self-hatred, little coping skills, little support and a deep need to be accepted and to belong."

After watching the way the Portland Public Schools have treated my son (and other Black boys), and after fighting a sort of holy war with the school systems on my own son's behalf, (since he was in kindergarten), I can understand this. He is a good child, doesn't fight and is very bright. This is very threatening to the schools, I have found. My son has gotten so depressed from it all that sometimes it frightens me. As a working parent, it has been hard for me to even find the time to go and keep fighting this on-going battle, but, I try my best. We also have a very supportive church that helps us to make sense of our daily struggles. Lots of children do not.

My son often comes home worried about the other youngsters he attends school with. He says they don't seem to understand the purpose of their education and often think that gang involvement is cool. He tries to find a low-keyed way to tell them its not ... a big burden for a 11-year old boy!

Thank you for your efforts to help. Please keep it up! I enjoy all of your columns.
Sincerely,
Chris Spalding

In Response To The Question: "How Do You Love A Black Women?" "How Do You Love A Black Man?"

Dear Editor:

While I understand that each of us have had what we may term, "bad experiences" with our Black counterparts. As for myself, and I hope many others—they have not been such that I have ever wanted to turn away from a black man for someone of another race.

I find Black men to be [as a whole], intelligent, amusing, loving, multi-faceted, and simply 'worthwhile' in terms of spending the necessary time to cultivate a long-term union of love and respect for one another. In fact, I just married such a man, and I'm glad that I didn't give up.

Ladies, our men need to be understood, supported and loved for themselves. Men, we women need a commitment from you that you will do the same. Sometimes I know this is a hard bill to fill, but it is not only necessary, but worth it for us to do so that we can assure

a positive future for us and our Black children, through example. If we do not show our children that this is an important endeavor - why should they put forth the effort to work out the misconceptions seen or heard in the media. Don't we understand that all of the nonsense covered in the media is designed to separate us from one another on the 'foundation level'? Each of us should know our own strengths - and compounded with that of another person just as strong, would equal POSITIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS — PROGRESS! They sure know it! Why do you think that such an enormous amount of money has been set aside for exploiting this issue? Open your eyes - we need one another to create a better world for us as Black People!

Sincerely,
Charlene Fair-Whitley

Thank You

Dear Editor:

I am Stanley E. Holmes. I am an inmate at Oregon State Prison. I am writing to thank you and my African-American community for their letters and support on my behalf with the Parole Board.

I would like to thank the following named persons. Mrs. Jacquie Holmes, Ms. Beverly M. Terhune, Ms. Creasia F. Hairston, Mr. Nyewusi Askari, Mr. A. Halim Raasaan, Mr. Charles Dalton, Mr. Bill Parker, and Mr. Hal H. Hargreaves. Along with the entire African-American inmate community here in O.S.P. for their support.

However, the Parole Board did not think that the support from my family and community was significant enough at this time to warrant my reuniting with my family and community. After 9 years of in-

carceration and jobs made available for me by my African-American community. Please I want my family and community to know, I only desire reform to the best of my power; and my success (in the task) can only come from God. In Him I trust, and unto Him I look.

Furthermore, I would like to thank my family and community for their support for without their support, I would not have been able to acquire a framework of integrity, training, effort, and accomplishment that I have in an environment structured for failure. Please I would appreciate you sharing this with my African-American community, because I love you all.

Sincerely,
Stanley E. Holmes

CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL



"Trail Of Tears" Remembered

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the infamous "Trail of Tears" forced removal of approximately 20,000 Indians from their native lands in the southeastern United States. It was back in 1838 that gold was discovered in the tribal lands of the Cherokee Indian Nation located in North Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia and Alabama. As a result the federal government decided to remove the Cherokees and force them to walk several thousand miles to an Indian reservation in the state of Oklahoma.

History is important, especially if it is remembered in a way that engenders a greater public commitment to correct the causative factors of past historic injustices. The attempted genocide of Native Americans in the United States should never be forgotten. It is important for all victimized communities to be in solidarity with our Native American sisters and brothers.

The persecution and the exploitation of Native Americans is a consequence of two fundamental evils interwoven in the very fabric of this society: Racism and Greed.

Yes, we must remember the "Trail of Tears" march in the same vein that we remember other acts in the history of holocausts throughout the world. More than 5,000 Native Americans died as a result of this forced removal. Today the U.S. government has officially recognized the injustice inflicted upon the Cherokees. Since 1974 Native American lawyers have been attempting to reach agreement on the distribution of a five million dollar settlement that was awarded to the Cherokee Nation in partial payment for dam-

ages resulting from the "Trail of Tears" march.

Today there are approximately 75,000 Native Americans of Cherokee decent who reside in Oklahoma, and there are still more than 10,000 who remain in Cherokee, North Carolina. In many sections of North Carolina there are thousands of Native Americans, many of whom are still facing racial discrimination and exploitation. Just within the last few days a victory was won in the case of Eddie Hatcher, a Native American activist, who was facing federal charges of "hostage taking" in a protest that took place earlier this year in North Carolina. Hatcher and others staged a protest at the office of the local newspaper in Lumberton, North Carolina. Hatcher stated that he and others blocked the doors of the newspaper office to dramatize the oppression of Native Americans in Robeson County, North Carolina where the Tuscarora and Lumbee Indian nations are located. These two tribes refused to take part in the "Trail of Tears" march to Oklahoma. Although they are the majority population of Robeson County, these Native Americans are still systematically exploited. The good news is that Eddie Hatcher was not guilty.

The human rights of Native Americans must be respected if this society is to ever have a standard of equal justice. The challenge of the future is not only to remember this anniversary of the "Trail of Tears" but also we all must recommit ourselves to continue to challenge all the old and new manifestations of racism and exploitation.

The Other Side

Freedom Of The Press



by Harold C. Williams

We are fortunate in our community to have two outstanding individuals who make sure that the Black community can be involved in the world of communication by getting our ideas and our concerns on the front burner of society. This freedom of the press that these individuals try so hard and struggle financially, socially, and economically insures that we have our voice heard on a weekly basis. For Mr. Leon Harris, who is the heartbeat of the *Portland Observer*, and Mr. Bernie Foster of the *Skanner*, freedom of the press is not free.

It would be an interesting event if the community could see the sacrifices that these men make on a daily basis in order that the Black perspective is given in the news media. The *Skanner* has been in existence for well over ten years, the *Portland Observer* has been in existence for 15+ years. It is not by accident that government, governmental agencies and political leaders pay attention to our community. They do so because two newspapers stand tall in defend-

ing the Black community's integrity applauding those politicians and public officials when they are right and calling them to task when they are wrong.

The positive economic changes that are happening in and around our community have been greatly influenced by the voices of concern from the *Portland Observer* and the *Skanner* newspapers. In order for us to maintain the freedom of the press in the Black community, we must pay special attention to our voice by supporting those who support us. Mr. Leon Harris of the *Portland Observer* and Mr. Bernie Foster of the *Skanner* newspaper deserve the community support. We must embrace their efforts by supporting them and what better way to do so than to take out a subscription in their newspapers. Freedom of the press is not free. If we truly care about our voices being heard, let's stand up and be counted and give support to those who are speaking for us. My hats off to these two great men, Mr. Leon Harris and Mr. Bernie Foster. They are the true meaning of freedom of the press.

FACTS AND FIGURES

Region	Total	% of Total
Northeast	708	10.6
North Central	1,275	19.2
South	4,287	64.5
West	378	5.7
Total*	6,648	100

* The 35 DCs in the Virgin Islands are not included because that territory is not included in the Divisions of the United States used by the U.S. Census.

Name	Term Expires	City	Percentage Of Black
Eugene Sawyer Jr.	4/89	Chicago	40.0
Thomas Bradley	7/89	Los Angeles	17.0
W. Wilson Goode	12/91	Philadelphia	40.2
Coleman Young	12/89	Detroit	63.1
Kurt Schmoke	12/91	Baltimore	54.8
Miron Barry	12/90	Washington	66.6
Sidney Bartholmey	3/90	New Orleans	55.3

Source: Joint Center for Political Studies

Creed Of The Black Press

The Black Press believes that America can best lead the world away from social and national antagonisms when it accords to every person, regardless of race, color, or creed, full human and legal rights. Hating no person, fearing no person, the Black Press strives to help every person in the firm belief that all are hurt as long as anyone is held back.

Need Information On Black Newspapers

Dear Editor:

I am doing research on the Black press in American media. I am interested specifically in Black newspapers in the Portland area. This is for a paper for my Mass Communications class at Linfield College. Any help I can get from the *Portland Observer* would be greatly appreciated.

Would you send me a copy of your newspaper with a brief history, such as when the paper was started, who founded it, etc.?

would also like to know if there are any other Black newspapers in the Portland area.

I would be grateful if this information could be sent as soon as possible, as I have a time restriction on this paper.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,
Heather Tapper
Box 3099
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McMinnville, OR 97218

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