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A journal for restless minds

Colloquī *: to discuss*

Splitting the Adam

The devolution of being human

Deacon's Diner

Food for a restless mind

Splitting the Adam

The devolution of being human

The Greeks have a word for it, *gnōsis*: knowledge. Somewhat paradoxically, they make the short the long of it and the long the short of it, *gignōskein*: know. The root syllable in either case is *gnō* which, strange as it may sound to postmodern plugged-in ears, is pronounced precisely like the English word “know”. The antonym or opposite of “know” is quite unsurprisingly, “not know” which is another way of describing ignorance. Yet a more pedantic word, perhaps, for ignorance is agnosticism, which quite plainly means anyone who claims to be agnostic is ignorantly acknowledging himself an ignoramus.¹ Or, as Dale Ahlquist writes, “people are ignorant of what agnosticism is; they are ignorant about ignorance.”

In the course of the last two centuries, agnosticism has taken on some kind of noble connotation as those who think that by refusing to come to a conclusion about the most important things, they are intellectually superior to those who do. It is somehow more respectable to disbelieve than to believe. They calmly cast doubt on everything, which is the contrary of learning; it is destructive rather than instructive. You cannot build a philosophy based on doubt, and if you are not building a philosophy you are running in the opposite direction from wisdom. You are running away from reality.

Ironically, the Agnostic will claim to be the realist because he claims to base his ideas only on what he can see and prove. Chesterton says that the difference between the Agnostic and the Catholic “is that the Agnostic lives in two dimensions, and the Catholic lives in three.” The Agnostic is superficial, that is, “he can only go by the appearances of things; indeed there are no things except appearances – to all appearance. Our third dimension of depth, the idea of metaphysical or mystical ideas behind the images evoked by our senses is to him an unsupported speculation or an idle dream.”²

Chesterton, of course, never at a loss for words, had a great deal to say on the subject. In a series of articles

written for the Clarion in 1904, which were subsequently published by Macmillan under the title *The Religious Doubts of Democracy*, and perhaps better known as *The Blatchford Controversies* Chesterton argued “Complete agnosticism is the obvious attitude of man. We are all agnostics until we discover that Agnosticism will not work. Then we adopt some philosophy, Mr. Blatchford’s or mine or some others, for of course Mr. Blatchford is no more an Agnostic than I am. The Agnostic would say that he did not know whether man was responsible for his sins. Mr. Blatchford says that he knows that man is not.”

Here we have the seed of the whole huge tree of dogma. Why does Mr. Blatchford go beyond Agnosticism and assert that there is certainly no free will? *Because he cannot run his scheme of morals without asserting that there is no free will.* He wishes no man to be blamed for sin. Therefore he has to make his disciples quite certain that God did not make them free and therefore blamable. No wild Christian doubt must flit through the mind of the Determinist. No demon must whisper to him in some hour of anger that perhaps the company promoter was responsible for swindling him into the workhouse. No sudden scepticism must suggest to him that per-

haps the schoolmaster was blamable for flogging a little boy to death. The Determinist faith must be held firmly, or else certainly the weakness of human nature will lead men to be angered when they are slandered and kick back when they are kicked. In short, free will seems at first sight to belong to the Unknowable. Yet Mr. Blatchford cannot preach what seems to him common charity without asserting one dogma about it.

And I cannot preach what seems to me common honesty without asserting another.

Here is the failure of Agnosticism. That our every-day view of the things we do (in the common sense) know, actually depends upon our view of the things we do not (in the common sense) know. It is all very well to tell a man, as the Agnostics do, to “cultivate his garden.” But suppose a man ignores everything outside his garden, and among them ignores the sun and the rain?

This is the real fact. You cannot live without dogmas about these things. You cannot act for twenty-four hours without deciding either to hold people responsible or not to hold them responsible. Theology is a product far more practical than chemistry.



Some Determinists fancy that Christianity invented a dogma like free will for fun—a mere contradiction. This is absurd. You have the contradiction whatever you are. Determinists tell me, with a degree of truth, that Determinism makes no difference to daily life. That means – that although the Determinist knows men have no free will, yet he goes on treating them as if they had.³

The dogma of Free Will; now this is where an Agnostic's rubber leaves the asphalt, where Determinists (materialists, Atheists, secularists, Agnostics) first find themselves losing their grip on reality, slipping uncontrollably as though on black ice in the middle of a blinding snowstorm. Of course, ultimately, it is their argument that a power greater than themselves is as imaginary as a cow jumping over the moon; such a godless *theosophy*⁴ framing their foolish reality. Without God to create man, a rational being, Free Will is but a delusion fomented by mythical beasts and bloviating bovines. "We are no longer in a world in which it is thought normal to be moderate or even necessary to be normal. Most men now are not so much rushing to extremes as merely sliding to extremes; and even reaching the most violent extremes by being almost entirely passive ... We can no longer trust even the normal man to value and guard his own normality."⁵

Determinists, on a fundamental level, are determined to make the impossible possible and the impracticable practical by splitting the Adam: denying the spirit, leaving only the material body, the superficial perceivable appearance of a two-dimensional thing. There is no spirit, nothing mystical or metaphysical beyond the images evoked by the senses. Where there is no soul, man is mere matter, nothing more, an inchoate mass masquerading as a living, thinking, rational being. They push the unprovable and improbable theory of evolution; what they actually offer is the devolution of being human, denying what makes the human person, human. The body, absent the spirit is thus devolved into some odd mixture of chemicals and matter, to be used and ground up in the nearest available garbage disposal without penalty of remorse or twinge of conscience (whatever that might be.) Without the breath of life, the incorporeal soul, there can be no consciousness of a *self*, no understanding of purpose or meaning, no answer to the questions, "Who am I?" or "Why am I here?" or "What shall I have for dinner?" Whether we are willing to admit it to ourselves or aloud, "we all have a conscious-

ness of being a *self*." Without self-awareness there can be no acknowledgement of the inestimable value of ourselves to our *self*, to others or to the world in which we live.

At base, this connects to our sense of individuality. I am aware that I am me and not, say, George Clooney or Donald Trump. ... I use the term to mean more than simply a basic level of self-consciousness. For me to be a self in the sense I am using the term here involves an understanding of what the purpose of my life is, of what constitutes the good life, of how I understand myself—my *self*—in relation to others and to the world around me.⁶

Up to 60% of the human adult body is water; cremation reduces the body to approximately 4% of a person's healthy body weight, worthless ashes for those who would deny the spirit and the resurrection. Without a self, there is no concept of person, no individuality, no independent thought, no sense of uniqueness or individuality. "What is commonly called modern thought might more correctly be called modern thoughtlessness. Ever since people left off thinking lest it should lead to theology, there has been something crudely coercive and materialistic about their method of attacking any moral evil. If a criminal murders a neighbor with a mutton bone and hides his body in a cupboard, there is sure to be a cry for legislation against cupboards and cold mutton."⁷

The Christian and Jewish religions share a common sense of what it means to be human, which is that man is a creation of the one true God created in his divine image and likeness (Genesis 1:26). "God formed man of dust from the ground," his body, "and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," his spirit, "and man became a living being" (Genesis 2:7). Without the spirit, the body is a lifeless form, dust of the ground; just as water requires hydrogen and oxygen to be "water", so man requires spirit and body to be human.

The human body shares in the dignity of "the image of God": it is a human body precisely because it is animated by a spiritual soul, and it is the whole human person that is intended to become, in the body of Christ, a temple of the Spirit. (CCC §364).

God created man a rational being, conferring on him the dignity of a person who can initiate and control his own actions (CCC §1730).

God wills that man should be “left in the hand of his own counsel,” so that he might of his own accord seek his Creator and freely attain his full and blessed perfection by cleaving to him (*Gaudium et Spes* §17).

Man is rational and therefore like God; he is created with free will and is master over his acts.⁸

Man, though made of body and soul, is a unity. Through his very bodily condition he sums up in himself the elements of the material world. Through him they are thus brought to their highest perfection and can raise their voice in praise freely given to the Creator. For this reason man may not despise his bodily life. Rather he is obliged to regard his body as good and to hold it in honor since God has created it and will raise it up on the last day.⁹

The unity of soul and body is so profound that one has to consider the soul to be the “form” of the body: i.e., it is because of its spiritual soul that the body made of matter becomes a living, human body; spirit and matter, in man, are not two natures united, but rather their union forms a single nature (CCC §365).

Our ignorance is in some small sense self-induced, like a junkie filling his veins with heroin so to forget the pain of a cruel meaningless existence; but our addiction is encouraged and exacerbated by the dishonest indoctrination purposely perpetuated by the unholy alliance of Academy and State, with the perverse complicity of the propagandizing media and the active suppression of any, and all, dissenting points of view by the corporate oligarchy of Big Tech and social media. You might assume they know better, which of course, having become addicted to their unrestrained power, they insist you inhale from the hookah they so gratuitously offer. “The institution called Government or the State, has a past more shameful than a pirate ship. Every legal code on earth has been full of ferocity and heartrending error. The rack and the stake were not invented by Christians; Christians only picked up the horrible cast toys of Paganism. The rack and the stake were invented by a bitter Rationalism older than all religions. The rack and stake were invented by the State, by Society, by the Social Ideal—or, to put it shortly, by Socialism. And this State or Government, the mother of all whips and thumbscrews, this is, if you please, the very thing which Mr. Blatchford,” even more so, the current socialist, progressive left, “and his socialistic following would make stronger than it has ever been under the sun.” Chesterton wrote that the real question is not, “Why

is Christianity so bad when it claims to be so good?” The real question is “Why are all human beings so bad when they claim to be so good?” “Why is not the most noble scheme a guarantee against corruption?” He notes that Christianity begins with “a strange thing running across human history. This it calls Sin, or the Fall of Man.”¹⁰ “This weakness in civilization is best expressed by saying that it cares more for science than for truth. It prides itself on its ‘methods’ more than its results; it is satisfied with precision, discipline, good communications, rather than with the sense of reality.”

Interestingly, Thomas Sowell, makes a compelling argument, without perhaps directly intending to do so, which both supports and illustrates what Chesterton wrote well more than a century before.

One of the bases for many of the intellectuals’ sweeping pronouncements about whole societies is conceiving of people in the abstract, without the innumerable specific, systematic and consequential *differences* in characteristics found among flesh-and-blood human beings as they exist in the real world. For example, the intellectuals’ consuming preoccupation with various inequalities in outcomes is understandable if the individuals or groups that differ in their outcomes do not differ in the many things which produce those outcomes—as they would not with abstract people.

Abstract people are very convenient for intellectuals’ discussions or research. Abstract people can be aggregated into statistical categories such as households, families, and income brackets, without the slightest concern for whether those statistical categories contain similar people, or even the same numbers of people in the same categories over time.

Thinking of people in the abstract, and dismissing observed differences between them as mere “perceptions,” or “stereotypes” provides the intelligentsia with innumerable occasions for waxing morally indignant at the concrete differences in economic and other outcomes among different individuals and groups as they exist in the real world.¹¹

Abstraction carries with it the added “benefit” of dehumanizing the individual, homogenizing *homo sapiens*, thus, obfuscating the intentional relativization of reality. Clarity of thought and charity of individual action are of little to no value in such an abstract, knowledge-controlled environment, such uncontrolled notions anathema to good social order. No one should ever forget or ignore

what the intellectual and political elite know that you don't know, which tracks closely with what former Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld once quipped, "We know what we know, we know what we don't know, but we don't know what we don't know." Those in power want you to know what they want you to know, not know what they don't want you to know, and definitely not know what they don't know. "Mean what you say and say what you mean" will immediately get you cancelled and ostracized. "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" has been reduced to three words, "Do unto others."

Children, and adults as well, are no longer taught how to think but what to think; there is of course a difference but for those who know not how to think, what to think leaves them smugly satisfied. One could easily fill a library of dust covered forgotten pages with dystopian tales dark enough to drive sanity insane. For more than half-a-century, parents have encouraged their children to get a good education in order to "get ahead" in life, to go to college in order to qualify for a high-paying career, to have a "better" life than they had. Education was the pathway to success, but no one has been paying much attention to the curricula. The University, as originally developed, was where students went to learn how to think, to be exposed to new and often conflicting ideas, and to come to know how to discover and discern the truth. Today, the University indoctrinates, instruction focuses on what to think and what is unthinkable, independent thought and critical thinking are indicative of a disordered mind. The product of this "higher education" is not higher education, but mindless drones who know nothing and have no curiosity to know anything at all; the University produces a woke caste incapable of espousing such ideals as individual initiative, self-reliance, or independent decision making. Rather than seek freedom from government, they demand their "fair share" of government handouts: forgiveness of student debt, free health care, but above it all, freedom from having to personally exert unnecessary effort to compete in the marketplace. Thus, in recent years, there has been a significant shift in major political party alliances. "College-educated voters," according to a recent article in *New York* magazine, are "way less likely to identify as moderate."

So as Democrats have traded non-college-educated voters for college-educated ones, white liberals' share of voice and clout in the Democratic Party has gone up. And since white voters are sorting on ideology more than nonwhite voters, we've ended up in a situation where white liberals are more left wing than Black and Hispanic Democrats on pretty much every issue: taxes, health care, policing, and even on racial issues or various measures of "racial resentment."¹²

What should not be missed, though the writer obviously did, is that blue-color, middle-class America of every stripe and color brooks no favor with the tortured ideological twist to the left that the college-educated, urban, upper-middle-class and wealthy are now so eager to embrace. The woke elites, like Marie Antoinette, are equally fond of saying of the basket of deplorables, "*Qu'ils mangent de la brioche.*"¹³ Outside the urban woke centers, socialism and all its variants remain a nightmarish scenario, the antithesis to the American dream, and rural, suburban, and middle America want nothing to do with the empty promises of Woketopia; they still believe in the shining city on a hill. It really is quite perplexing how so many writers from the early years of the twentieth century seemingly foresaw the world of the twenty-first. Sinclair Lewis's 1920 novel *Main Street* satirized small town values, something that seems but a hoped for dream yet to come. "Lewis's book explains the disdain that supercilious, educated elites held humble Main Streeters in then, and hold Red State residents in now. Sardonic in its intent, *Main Street* unwittingly spelled out today's Red/Blue divide, the coasts' hatred of flyover country, and the damage Progressive Era nostrums wrought on the American middle class." *Main Street*'s main character, a judge's daughter named Carol Mitford, is a college-educated progressive who marries a physician she does not love (or like for the matter) and after years of frustration abandons both her husband and infant son for somewhere or something better.

Commitment, tradition, and duty have no place in the progressive worldview. A whining baby would have diverted Mitford from her drive to create heaven on earth. Today's careerist parents use postnatal birth control, nannies, and daycare, as they too prioritize professional success over family values. Or, as Mitford preaches, "If you have got a college education, you ought to use it for the world" rather than focusing on

the local—the local being her son, her family, and her neighbors. Unwilling to condone Gopher Prairie’s backward ways, she dedicated her life to changing the town, striving to “awaken it, prod it, ‘reform’ it.” Her self-proclaimed good intentions blinded her. Mitford never thought to ask her neighbors if they wanted her help. They didn’t.

Mitford ... came to understand her husband’s small-town wisdom regarding the chasm of understanding separating the 1920s progressive busybodies and, well, America: “There are two races of people, only two, and they live side by side. His calls mine ‘neurotic’; mine calls his ‘stupid.’ We’ll never understand each other, never; and it’s madness for us to debate—to lie together in a hot bed in a creepy room—enemies yoked.”

The hot bed of social media and zero-sum elections now festers in that creepy room, contaminated with COVID-19 and identity politics. Unfortunately, today’s “enemies yoked”—Red and Blue America—have finally reached an agreement: debate is indeed madness.¹⁴

What was not that long ago mainly concentrated within the halls of the elite institutions of higher education, has over the last decade, permeated the classrooms of public education at all levels. No longer are children taught “readin’, ritin’, and rithmetic” and the abc’s, such subjects are presumed to be racist and undeniably totems of white privilege; today’s lessons focus on non-binary gender, sexual preferences, racial inequity, white privilege, and a sundry of long-standing social and cultural issues.

There are, without a doubt, no less absurd abstractions to illustrate (there are many more) the rapid devolution of the being once identified as human more than the postmodern obsessive-compulsive disorder concerning identity and race. Reality, objective truth, and above all else, common sense are disallowed, denied mention, burned at the stake for heresy against woke dogma. It is the “original sin” of apostasy to challenge the all-knowing feelings of the woke gods, punishable by cruel unyielding cancellation by indefinite internment in woke reeducation camps. Death is not an option. You will *be* woke or suffer unending misery at the hands of your woke masters. There will be those who doubt, of course, who consider this hyperbole or a conspiracy theory, but here is just one very real example of where wokeness is heading, and understand, it is coming soon to a place where you live.

In January 2020, the Socialist government of Spain, led

by Pedro Sánchez, proposed a bill of profound cultural and political significance: a “Law of Historical and Democratic Memory.” If adopted, this law will bring to completion a twenty-year effort on the part of the Spanish left to limit speech and reshape civic life. It would establish a national “Council of Memory,” an organ of state comprising public officials as well as professional “experts” and representatives of nongovernmental but politically reliable organizations. It would elaborate a comprehensive state policy to promote a left view of Spain’s early and mid-twentieth century.

The proposed law is highly punitive. Symbols, meetings, or statements judged to approve of the Franco regime and the victors in the civil war are deemed infractions against “historical and democratic memory.” Proposed penalties include an elaborate schedule of fines ranging from two hundred to a hundred thousand euros, the closing for a period of six months to two years of any entity found in violation, and the confiscation of the means or goods involved in such activities. That this law will dramatically restrict freedom of expression and thus violate the Spanish Constitution is apparently irrelevant to the Sánchez government.¹⁵

Fundamentally, wokeness is a religion founded upon a doctrine of denial and a dogma of hatred for all that is human. This is nothing personal, for personhood has long been proved a fallacious religious artifact best tossed down the memory hole along with God, miracles, majesty, mystery, beauty, and cute tiny beings that insist on trying to grow up. “Wokeness is the new religion, growing faster and larger than Christianity. Its priesthood outnumbers the clergy and exercises more power. Silicon Valley is the new Vatican, and Amazon, Apple, Facebook, Google and Twitter are the new gospels.”¹⁶ You cannot believe in goodness, beauty, human kindness, love, or God and be woke. You can only be one with the universal abstraction, one with the mob, the group, the race, the Borg, the amorphous mass yearning to be assimilated into the all-knowing wokeness. Resistance is futile. Above all else, you shall not think outside of wokeness, you shall live in the world of the great “WE”¹⁷ no longer a part of “them,” “those types of people,” the “basket of deplorables,” the unwashed “unwoke.” You shall have, however, identity, though neither an ID nor a name, you shall be referred to and known as “we”; your individuality suppressed, your thoughts no longer your own.

This is how you shall live in Woketopia. Identity belongs to the abstraction. There is no longer the individual, the self is an anachronistic relic antithetical to good social order and must therefore of necessity be absorbed into the one, the all-powerful, the great “WE”; no more liberals or conservatives, gays or straights, CIS gendered or misgendered (use your imagination,) racists, sexists, misogynists or gynecologists (a little levity goes a long way; no offense intended, some of my best friends are gynecologists though I personally have never found their specialty particularly useful or biologically necessary,) black, yellow, brown, any color but white, you get the picture.

The *crème de la crème* abstraction distraction of the woke cancel culture mob is race¹⁸: racial bigotry, racial bias, racial injustice, racial discrimination, racial cupcakes with rainbow frosting, racial this and racial that, everything racial. Abstraction run amok; Racism, the go to *cause célèbre* of the woke cabal. It is easy if you cry crocodile tears and blame the white guy. It matters not the color; it matters what it is not. Today, white is racist, tomorrow blue, yesterday red, who knows what hue or dye a week after the morrow will color the racist rainbow. Know only everyone and anything can and will be racist if you blink your right eye when only your left will not offend; culturally misappropriate by donning a cheap sombrero with a cardigan kaftan over a Nehru muumuu sans socks in wooden shoes; forget to genuflect at the precise stroke of midnight at the onset of the winter solstice while howling at the moon. Racial abstraction distraction has descended—far deeper than the nine circles of hell—to a depth where even Satan dares not go. Satan may be a fallen angel, evil incarnate, but having been the biggest, baddest angel in the hood of heaven, he should never be taken for either insane or stupid.

A small sampling of the “everything racist” mentality will more than adequately illustrate the insanity of the racist gambit.

Members of the Environmental Justice Advisory Council, a dubious conglomeration, tasked with providing “advice and recommendations to the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and the White House Environmental Justice Interagency Council on how to address current and historic environmental injustices” have

laid claims connecting fossil fuels to racism. One member claimed that the federal oil and gas program “perpetuates environmental racism and the racial inequity of climate vulnerability,” insisting that “racial discrimination is central to oil and gas operations.” The same member went further, linking energy development to slavery and Jim Crow. Another member stated, “Climate change isn’t just a scientific issue—it’s an issue of racial inequity, economic inequity and cultural genocide,” while also tying climate change to “colonialism.”

It’s essential to note that Indigenous vulnerability and resilience to climate change cannot be detached from the context of colonialism, which created both the economic conditions for climate change and the social conditions that continue to limit the capacity for Indigenous resistance and resilience. Both historically and in the present, climate change itself is thoroughly tied to colonial practices. Greenhouse gas production over the last two centuries hinged on the dispossession of Indigenous lands and resources.¹⁹

If you are now confused and befuddled, join the club. To be sure, everything about this council to a council to a council is dismal racial abstraction, a disingenuous gambit intended to distract and confuse the most ignorant Agnostic. And yes, I know, I repeat myself.

The second example is not only insane, but ludicrously preposterous. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg claimed in a recent interview that racism is “physically built” into parts of the U.S. highway system. Responding to an allegation by a White House correspondent’s statement that the interstate system was “built on a racist system” meant “to keep certain groups in and certain groups out,” Buttigieg agreed, “Yeah, often this wasn’t just an act of neglect. Often this was a conscious choice. There is racism physically built into some of our highways.”

The final example, though there are seemingly an infinitude to be found, comes from the heretofore obscure, platitudinous Mathematical Association of America (MAA),²⁰ “the world’s largest community of mathematicians, students, and enthusiasts²¹,” who released a statement from the MAA Committee²² on Minority Participation in Mathematics. In coming to its conclusion that there was racism in mathematics, they employed the following application of the “scientific method”:

Critical race theory,²³ referenced in recent Executive statements by the President of the United States, is an established social science inquiry which is grounded in decades of scholarship. It is misguided, at best, to reduce this theory to the race-blaming of white people and to define it and the discussion of systemic racism as a “divisive concept.” Furthermore, banning training utilizing this scholarship to raise consciousness, from federal and federal contractor workplaces, is an encroachment on science and the academy. At the first presidential debate this year, President Trump’s refusal to disavow white nationalism and his encouragement of groups that the FBI has identified as the greatest threats of domestic terrorism, only serves to reinforce the sense that his administration seeks to reverse decades of progress on civil rights for all citizens. These actions frame a current United States leadership that consistently promotes policy in direct opposition to data and science-based evidence.

As one commenter noted, “We are unsure if Dr. Rochelle Gutierrez, Professor, Curriculum and Instruction, at the University of Illinois, is a member of the MAA Committee on Minority Participation in Mathematics, but she has made her own contribution to the discussion, including:”

On many levels, mathematics itself operates as Whiteness. Who gets credit for doing and developing mathematics, who is capable in mathematics, and who is seen as part of the mathematical community is generally viewed as White (sic), ... curricula emphasizing terms like Pythagorean theorem and pi perpetuate a perception that mathematics was largely developed by Greeks and other Europeans.

Obviously, the good doctor was speaking to a home economics baking class and simply forgot to stir a third of a teaspoon of “e” into the pi.

The MAA Committee on Minority Participation in Mathematics thus abstractly concluded:

It is time for all members of our profession to acknowledge that mathematics is created by humans and therefore inherently carries human biases. Until this occurs, our community and our students cannot reach full potential. Reaching this potential in mathematics relies upon the academy and higher education engaging in critical, challenging, sometimes uncomfortable conversations about the detrimental effects of race and racism on our community. The time is now to move mathematics and education forward in pursuit of

justice.

One must ask—without anticipating a cogent answer—when did $2 + 2 = 4$ become a racist cant in pursuit of racial justice? This mathematical subtraction distraction game is unadulterated agnosticism on its face. Retired mathematics teacher, Alan Malizia, in his response to the MAA’s conclusion that “since mathematics is created by humans who are biased then mathematics is inherently biased,” wrote, “Cited were a number of mathematicians throughout history who were white. What I gathered from the article is that the MAA apparently believes that students of color cannot become successful and proficient in mathematics because of racism. I offer ten of the most impactful black mathematicians as an evident refutation of the MAA bias premise.” His list begins with Benjamin Banneker (1731-1806) and ends with Jesse Ernest Wilkins Jr. (1923-2011) with eight sandwiched in between ($1 + 8 + 1 = 10$ for those mathematicians, students, and enthusiasts who are unable to accurately decipher or cipher.)

As a retired high school Mathematics teacher, of 30 years, I would like to say that the MAA is wrong on two points. First, mathematics is not a creation of man. How is this so? Think of an original thought that can be brought by you to reality without something that already exists aiding in that “original” thought. I know that I can’t. One might argue that the creation of the sail that powers boats along the waterways and across the seas is a creation of man. But we must ask this question: What if there were no winds to be harnessed by the sail? Would there be any motivation to make such a thing if it would have no purpose? I think not. No wind, no sail. But there is air movement. Therefore, a sail served a purpose. Now as defined: to invent is to be the originator of something not known. So our first sail maker is better labeled as inventor rather than creator. A prior creation was requisite for that invention. God created the heavens, the earth and all hierarchies of life from nourishing minerals to man. Man invented mathematics because God created order in the universe and a human mind that recognizes and appreciates order.

Secondly, it is a perversion of truth to say that students of color cannot learn mathematics because of a bias in mathematics. The problem is not racism. The problem is our school system.

Black author Thomas Sowell, in his book *Charter Schools and Their Enemies*, discusses a study made of a particular inner city school district with students from both public and charter schools housed in the same building.

Math test scores were compared over time with only 10% of public school students passing, while 68% of their counter-part charter school mates passed. Both having the same curriculum and the mode of evaluation. Why is this so? It can't be bias as professed in the article, for no advantage was given to the charter school over the public school students other than, perhaps, in the goals set for the students by their teachers and administrations. Here is the likely difference. The modern charter school's priority emphasizes teaching students to think, the public school's priority appears to emphasize teaching students what to think. This is the difference between success and failure, hope and despair.²⁵

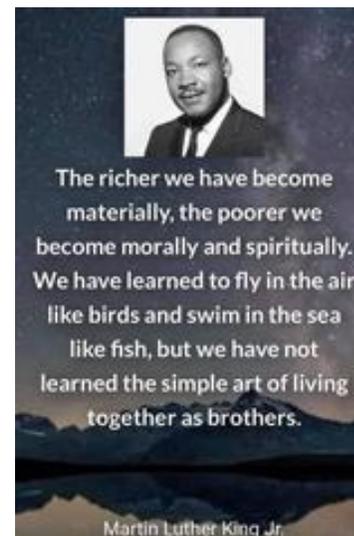
Being the racist *du jour*—that is Caucasian (otherwise known as white, specifically of the male persuasion, and an old coot to boot)—I can, and will, eagerly admit to being, unabashedly and unreservedly, a human racist, for it is the only race to which I proudly profess active participation and membership. I refuse to sub-categorize humanity by any physically observable attribute. When you look at another human being as a unique and marvelous creation, with all the variety one can possibly imagine, how can you not stand in awe at all God has so wonderfully made. Though there are exceptions to every rule, the exceptions are never more than the accidental cosmetics of nature, created by God, with no qualitative physical disparities between one or another. Blue eyes, green eyes, brown eyes. Dark or light skinned, brown, olive, fair, smooth, stained, or wrinkled, every hue under the sun. Brown hair, red hair, blond, black, gray or no hair. Male and female, only two, thanks be to God for his grace and wisdom. Two arms, two legs, one head, one heart, one mouth, one nose, two eyes, two ears, ten fingers, ten toes. Tall, short, young, old, left-handed, right-handed, knock-kneed, agile, lame, deaf, dumb, blind, each one unique yet all the same where it counts: all are human, body and soul inseparably joined, wonderfully made, each equal in the sight of God who loves each equally as his own. The human race is an exclusive club, no lions, tigers, or bears may qualify, no matter how much they pretend to evolve. Membership is automatic and forever, only death can split the Adam, but then, only until the end of time.

1. Ignoramuses are commonly believed to be related to and/or descended from useful idiots, whether by evolution or genetic mutation has yet to be scientifically determined. Further peer reviewed controlled studies are

needed to resolve the issue.

2. Dale Ahlquist, "‘I don't know and I don't care': On the devotion of the Nones", *The Catholic World Report*, April 4, 2021.
3. G.K. Chesterton, "Why I Believe in Christianity", *The Blatchford Controversies: G.K. Chesterton Collected Works, Volume I* (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1986) 382-383.
4. G.K. Chesterton (*New York Herald*, Feb. 20, 1921). Here then is another word worth remembering, a word best defined as a Chesternition: "theosophy: a theology for atheists, synonym for the higher foolishness."
5. G.K. Chesterton (*America*, Jan. 4, 1936).
6. Carl R. Trueman, "The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self: Cultural Amnesia, Expressive Individualism, and the Road to Sexual Revolution" (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020), 22.
7. G.K. Chesterton (*St. Louis Star and Times*, Oct. 16, 1921).
8. St. Irenaeus, *Adv. Haeres.* 4, 4, 3: PG 7/1, 983.
9. *Gaudium et Spes* 14 §1; cf. *Dan* 3:57-80.
10. G.K. Chesterton, "The Eternal Heroism of the Slums", *The Blatchford Controversies: G.K. Chesterton Collected Works, Volume I*, 391-392.
11. Thomas Sowell, "Intellectuals and Society: Abstract People in an Abstract World" (New York: Basic Books, 2011), 114.
12. David Shor, "Why Trump was Good for the GOP", *New York magazine*.
13. "Let them eat cake" is the traditional translation of the French phrase "Qu'ils mangent de la brioche", said to have been spoken in the 17th or 18th century by "a great princess" upon being told that the peasants had no bread. The French phrase mentions brioche, a bread enriched with butter and eggs, considered a luxury food. The quotation is taken to reflect either the princess's frivolous disregard for the starving peasants or her poor understanding of their plight.
14. Mark G. Brennan, "Ivory Tower Iconoclast: Main Street is Gone", *Chronicles*, March 2021, 46-47.
15. Stanley G. Payne, "The Politics of Memory", *First Things*, May 2021, p. 21-22. The pandemic has stalled further consideration of the "Law of Historical and Democratic Memory." Spain has suffered proportionally the greatest devastation of any Western country, due in part to the incompetence and irresponsibility of its government. ... The proposal to institutionalize "democratic memory" nonetheless remains. It is the most elaborate project in the Western world for the systematic weaponization of history. ... It is a sign of where leftwing movements across the developed world will head if they are allowed to advance unopposed. Evidence of such an attempt to weaponize history in America can be found in the New York Times 1619 Project and the de-commissioning of the President's Advisory 1776 Commission. The 1776 Commission submitted its report to

15. (cont.) the President two days before the current administration was inaugurated into office, January 18, 2021. The report explains the core principles of the American founding and how they have shaped American history, considers the leading challenges to these principles at home and abroad, and calls on all American to “restore our national unity by rekindling a brave and honest love for our country and by raising new generations of citizens who not only know the self-evident truths of our founding, but act worthy of them. It should come as no surprise to any American that such a report is despised by the radical left.
16. Victor Davis Hanson, “*The 10 radical new rules that are changing America*”, Fox News, April 11, 2021. In brief, the 10 rules are: 1) Money is a construct; 2) Laws are not necessarily binding anymore; 3) Racialism is now acceptable; 4) The immigrant is mostly preferable to the citizen; 5) Most Americans should be treated as we would treat little children; 6) Hypocrisy is passe. Virtue-signaling is alive; 7) Ignoring or perpetuating homelessness is preferable to ending it; 8) McCarthyism is good. Destroying lives and careers for incorrect thoughts saves more lives and careers; 9) Ignorance is preferable to knowledge; and 10) Wokeness is the new religion, growing faster and larger than Christianity.
17. Ayn Rand, “*Anthem*” (1938). *Anthem* is Ayn Rand’s classic tale of a dystopian future of the great “We”—a world that deprives individuals of a name or independence. They existed only to serve the state. They were conceived in controlled Palaces of Mating. They died in the Home of the Useless. From cradle to grave, the crowd was one—the great WE. In all that was left of humanity there was only one man who dared to think, seek, and love. He lived in the dark ages of the future. In a loveless world, he dared to love the woman of his choice. In an age that had lost all trace of science and civilization, he had the courage to seek and find knowledge. But these were not the crimes for which he would be hunted. He was marked for death because he had committed the unpardonable sin: He had stood forth from the mindless human herd. He was a man alone. He had rediscovered the lost and holy word—I. The man without a name begins, “It is a sin to write this. It is a sin to think words no others think and to put them down upon a paper no others are to see. It is base and evil. It is as if we were speaking alone to no ears but our own. And we know well that there is no transgression blacker than to do or think alone. We have broken the laws. The laws say that men may not write unless the Council of Vocations bid them so. May we be forgiven!”
18. For the left, class struggle and the oppression of the proletariat as described by Marx has, until recently, been their primary motivation. Many prominent leftists now insist that the focus on class obscured the need to zero in on white supremacy as the real dragon to be slain. This shift from class to race has led to some curious results, one of the results is the growing suspicion among leftists that Marxism is a species of white supremacy, precisely because it devotes more attention to class than to race. Perhaps, someone should inform the trained Marxist activists of BLM that they are white supremacists in black.
19. Ashe Schow, “*Members of Biden’s ‘Environmental Justice’ Advisory Council Have History of Radicalism, Claiming Fossil Fuels Are Racist*”, DailyWire.com, April 10, 2021.
20. MAA sounds strangely like a juvenile delinquent bleating for mama, but then, “Who am I to judge?”
21. Who is kidding who? Name one mathematics enthusiast. I won’t hold my breath. There’s a reason it’s been called the dismal science. Oh wait! That’s economics, but that really the same thing only with the \$ sign.
22. A committee, like a council, is a Hydra, a body with many heads and no brain, producing nothing of value or substance but an overabundance of rancid hot air that poisons anyone not adequately social distancing or triple masking.
23. To claim Critical Race Theory is established social science grounded in decades of scholarship is at best absurdly asinine and at worst a domestic threat to our national security. What the MAA implies is that there has been serious, decades long scientific research and studies. Scholarship is academic study not science and social science is an abhorrent abuse of the scientific method which it can neither use nor exercise.
24. Mark Pilon, “*News with Views: Mathematicians Go Mad*”, Gilbert, Vol. 24, Num. 2, November/December 2020, p. 16.



Deacon's Diner

Food for a restless mind

For those restless minds that hunger and thirst for more. Each week this space will offer a menu of interesting and provocative titles, written by Catholic authors, in addition to those referenced in the articles, for you to feed your restless mind.

BOOKS

Things Worth Dying For

Charles J. Chaput

Henry Holt and Company

2021, 258 pages.

Faith and Politics

Joseph Ratzinger (Benedict XVI)

Ignatius Press

2018, 269 pages.

Voyage to Alpha Centauri: A Novel

Michael D. O'Brien

Ignatius Press

2013, 587 pages.

The Everlasting Man

G.K. Chesterton

Dover Publications

2007, 270 pages.

Catholic Christianity: A Complete Catechism of Catholic Beliefs

Peter J. Kreeft

Ignatius Press

2014, 426 pages.

The Irony of Modern Catholic History:

How the Church rediscovered itself

George Weigel

Basic Books

2019, 322 pages.

Letters on Liturgy

Father Dwight Longenecker

Angelico Press

2020, 164 pages.

Immortal Combat

Father Dwight Longenecker

Sophia Institute Press

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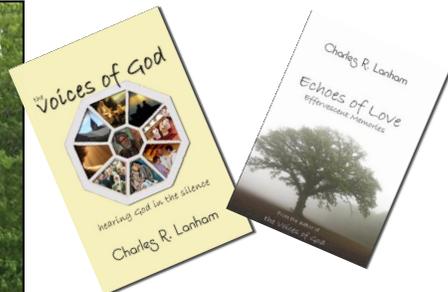
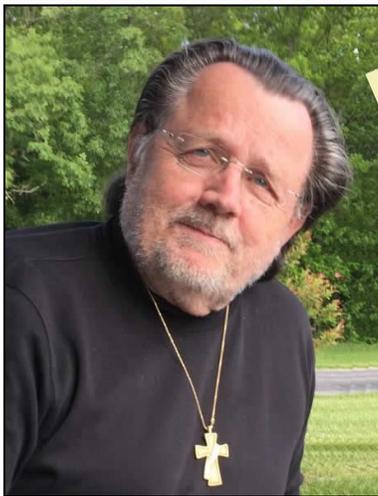
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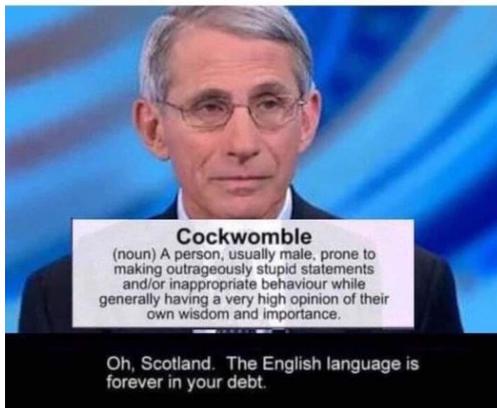


Books are available on
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Deacon Chuck Lanham is a Catholic author, columnist, speaker, theologian and philosopher, a jack-of-all-trades like his father (though far from a master of anything) and a servant of God. He is the author of **The Voices of God: Hearing God in the Silence**, **Echoes of Love: Effervescent Memories** and has written over 500 essays on religion, faith, morality, theology, and philosophy.

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