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Understanding the Gangsta’s God II: Complexities and Contradictions

By Rev. Donald L. Perryman, D.Min.
The Truth Contributor

People need to get high off something spiritual, and I’m the holy dope dealer. I got this drug, I got this Jesus rock. And you can have a type of high that you’ve never experienced. - Kirk Franklin

I spoke with Ebony Utley, Ph.D. concerning the rich insights provided by the lived experiences of women and inner city youth, knowledge which is often overlooked or marginalized in serious public conversation. Utley is an expert on popular culture, race and romantic relationships and author of the critically-acclaimed book, Rap and Religious Identities: Understanding The Gangsta’s God.

Part II of our conversation deals with the seeming hypocrisy of references to God within rap music.

Perryman: For me, one of the great ironies is that the explicit mention of the Divine or Holy occurs less and less in contemporary gospel music but increasingly more in rap. How is God conceptualized in rap music?

Utley: For one, the Daddy God is usually the typical protective provider that women are encouraged to look for and one who can take care of them, someone who will fight their battles. Lots of rappers explicitly call themselves God’s Son. Jessie J. was the first one that comes to mind, Tupac as well. And because ‘they’re God’s sons’ they’re invincible and God will protect them. So if God is riding or doing for you as your Daddy God, then who can get to you, combat you, drain you, or who can best you? So having that kind of heavenly father on your side can give you a sense of empowerment that might have been missing because you were lacking a bio father.

Perryman: That’s an interesting contrast to the contemporary gospel genre, of which some have likened to Karl Marx’s “optate of the masses” because of its transition from liberation to a “praise-centered” focus. But, how do you reconcile rap’s apparent moral contradictions?

Utley: I personally don’t see them as contradictions. I see them as multifaceted aspects of a very complex-lived existence. And don’t know anyone who can say that their reality isn’t complex. Jay-Z has defined, “I’m like the Guevara with bling on. I’m complex, yeah it’s complex.” I would like for people to let go of the moral contradictions and just see how complicated other people’s lives are and feel comforted when their own lives are complicated in similar ways.

Perryman: There are a lot of politically-charged terms centered around the less privileged. What thoughts do you have concerning language such as gangsta, personal responsibility and similar expressions?

Utley: Whenever you want to look for how society has shifted over time, you look at changes in language, changes in what people have called themselves over time. African Americans have moved from negroes to Negroes to colored people to black people to Afro Americans to African Americans and in some cases Afro black people. Each of those moments will tell you something about the political history of the United States. The same thing if we look at the word “queer,” or if we look at the word “bitch.” So these key words describe the conservative right shift that we’re having right now that coincides with the war, coincides with the right’s desire to take back our country from a black president, coincides with this epic economic crisis that the country is in. The only way to fix it, they say, is for people to take more personal responsibility and stop relying on these social programs that we want to cut.

So we have to change our language or change definitions of words that we’re familiar with so that we can prepare ourselves to either a) deal with it or b) pretend like nothing has really changed.

Perryman: Previously, you have connected God and capitalism, Christian and cash. Please elaborate.

Utley: I used the phrase “in God we trust” because I think it sums all this up. Yeah, you trust in God as long as he’s coming with that “paper.” It’s not an accident that the bling trend started in the inner city, coincides with the war, coincides with the right’s desire to take our country from a black president, coincides with this epic economic crisis that the country is in. The only way to fix it, they say, is for people to take more personal responsibility and stop relying on these social programs that we want to cut.

So what do we say to change our language or change definitions of words that we’re familiar with so that we can prepare ourselves to either deal with it or pretend like nothing has really changed.

Perryman: What are you looking for people to come away with after reading Rap & Religion?

Utley: I want people to have a greater sense of the complexity of rap music and a greater sense of the complexity of our ideas about God, particularly this day and age where a lot of people are declaring that hip hop is dead, just ridiculous, not music, or that we need to get back to real hip hop. So I want to increase people’s appreciation for rap music. Just because it’s not what you’re used to listening to doesn’t mean you have to like it, but you shouldn’t dismiss it out of hand.

I also want people to understand that there are lots of different ideas about God. Your idea about God is not the only one and it’s not as important to try to figure out who’s right and who’s wrong, but why these ideas emerge in certain times in what they do for people.

And I especially want my readers to ask themselves who is my God and what does my God do for me and how is that similar to or different from my neighbor’s God and what my neighbor’s God does for him or her.

Ebony Utley, Ph.D. is an associate professor of communications studies at California State University Long Beach. Her writing has appeared in a variety of high-profile publications.

Community Calendar

June 1-28
Arts Commission of Greater Toledo “Hot Glass” Exhibition: Edison Building Lobby; Fund raiser for Young Artists at Work, Art in TARTA, Artomatic

June 18-27
Canaan Outreach Center Summer Enrichment Program: For ages 5 to 14; Math and language arts, physical activity, drama, dance, field trips; 11 am to 3 pm; Pre-registration starts on June 13 from 11 am to 3 pm: 419-244-5700

June 25-29
Vacation Bible School: Free dinner every day at 5 pm; Classes 6-8 pm – preschool and adults – St. Paul AME Zion; K-5 grade – Amazing Grace AME Zion; Grades 6-12 – Walls Memorial Chapel AME Zion: 419-243-1065 or 419-215-1464

June 27
Hope and Healing Abortion Support Group: 7 pm; Heartbeat: 419-241-9131

June 29
United Church of God Prayer Vigil: 10 pm: 419-509-7027

Southern MBC Second Pastoral Anniversary: Pastor and First Lady Lemuel Quinn: 7 pm; Guests Rev. John Williams and Eastern Star

June 30
Free Live Recording Concert: For the group Usher; 6 pm; WPOS: 419-810-7316

United Church of God Men’s Share and Breakfast: 8:30 am

July 1
Charity MBC 31st Pastoral Anniversary: Rev. Bobby and First Lady Vickey Wellborn; 4 pm; “A Pastor Looking after the Flock;” Guests St. Mark’s Baptist and Rev. I.J. Johnson: 419-555-1925

July 3
Cornerstone Church Live in Concert: Planetsheakers; 7:30 pm; www.cornerstonechurch.us

July 4
Bradent United Methodist Church Community Picnic and Fireworks: 6 to 10 pm; Free food, fellowship and fireworks: 419-386-2700

July 6
23rd Pastoral Anniversary Musical: 7 pm; Upperroom Tabernacle CLG; Guests – The Brown Sisters, soloists, ensembles, praise dancers: 419-691-7233

July 8
Southern MBC Second Pastoral Anniversary: Rev. and First Lady Lemuel Quinn: 4 pm; Guests Rev. Robert Lyons and Greater St. Mary

July 14
Bereavement Meeting: 10 am; Bethlehem Baptist Church

July 15
Southern MBC Second Pastoral Anniversary: Rev. and First Lady Lemuel Quinn: 4 pm; Guests Rev. W.L. Perryman and Jerusalem MBC

July 17
Gamma Rho Sorority Open Recruitment Day: Opportunity for young women and parents to learn about the sorority’s youth affiliate program – River Club; Mott Branch Library; 2 to 4 pm: 419-509-3625

July 22
Southern MBC Second Pastoral Anniversary: Rev. and First Lady Lemuel Quinn; 4 pm; Guests Rev. Bobby Wellborn and Charity MBC

The Sojourner’s Truth

Toledo’s Truthful African-American Owned and Operated Newspaper

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Toledo to Receive $1.875 Million From COPS Program for 15 Police Officers

New Officer Positions Must Be Filled by Military Veterans

Special to The Truth

The city of Toledo will receive $1.875 million from the Department of Justice under the COPS Hiring Program. Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur (OH-9) said the award would provide funding for 15 officers.

The award to Toledo is one of only 12 in Ohio in the latest announcement and part of $111 million nationally to create or preserve local law enforcement jobs.

Of the 57 officer positions funded in Ohio, Toledo received funding for 15 officers, Akron 12, the Cuyahoga County Sheriff’s Department eight, Canton seven, Youngstown seven and the balance in small towns throughout the state.

Under new provision in 2012, all new officers hired under the grant must be military veterans who have at least 180 days of active service, any part of which occurred on or after September 11, 2001.

The COPS Hiring Program provides funding to address the full-time sworn officer needs of state and local law enforcement agencies. CHOP grants go directly to the local agencies to hire new and/or rehire career law enforcement officers to increase community policing capacity and crime prevention.

The award provides 75 percent of funding for approved entry-level salaries and benefits for three years (36 months). Any additional costs above the approved entry-level salaries and fringe benefits, up to $125,000, are the responsibility of the grantee.

NAACP Statement on Supreme Court Decision to Uphold Key Provision of Immigration Law

The NAACP released the following statement on today’s decision by the Supreme Court of the United States to ban mandatory sentences of life in prison without parole for juveniles:

“This is a big step forward for the American justice system,” stated Benjamin Todd Jealous, President and CEO of the NAACP. “When it comes to juveniles, life sentences without possibility of parole indeed constitute cruel and unusual punishment. Judicial discretion is extremely important in these cases, but the NAACP will continue to fight until the sentences are banned outright.”

Today the high court struck down laws in 29 states that mandated a life term for murderers, including those under age 18. While the Court did not categorically ban juvenile life without parole in all circumstances, Justice Kagan wrote for the majority that, “given all that we have said in Roper, Graham, and this decision about children’s diminished culpability, and heightened capacity for change, we think appropriate occasions for sentencing juveniles to this harshest possible penalty will be uncommon.”

Racial disparities remain extremely pronounced in the Juvenile Justice system. African American children are 10 times more likely than their white peers to be sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.

“We remain concerned that racial disparities will continue to be evident as courts exercise discretion in making this assessment,” stated Jealous. “If past sentencing is any guide, this most severe sentence may remain all too common for children of color.”

In 2005, the Court banned the death penalty for juveniles who commit aggravated murder. Then, in 2010, the justices held that juveniles found guilty of non-homicides could not receive life without parole.
Toledo Entrepreneur Johnathon Bush was selected to attend the NYSE NextGenBootcamp. This special program, held at the NYSE June 18-20, is a unique opportunity designed to provide young adults with a better understanding of the financial markets, and will include guided visits to New York City business sites and tourist attractions. Bush was invited on behalf of the Entrepreneurs’ Organization (EO) which is a global business network of 8,000+ business owners in 121 chapters and 40 countries.

Delegates will gain knowledge in the following areas:
- Financial Markets Overview
- History and Various Product Segments
- Role of the Investment Bank and Traders
- Market Data and International Benchmarks
- Marketing, Advertising and Media Relations
- Tactics in creating a world-class brand and delivering an effective advertising and media relations campaign

Opportunity Includes:
- Financial market training with NYSE Executives, which includes a visit to the NYSE trading floor and NYSE bell ringing
- Breakfast with NYSE Euronext CEO Duncan Niederauer
- Nightly networking activities (Broadway show and NYC tour)

“I’m extremely honored to attend the NYSE NextGenBootcamp. Looking forward to learning a lot, meeting NYSE executives and CEO Duncan Niederauer and many great students from around the country”

Earlier this summer Bush attended the G20 Young Entrepreneurs Summit (YES) in Mexico City, Mexico, June 2-5 as a U.S Delegate. Bush was also invited on behalf of the Entrepreneurs Organization based on his participation as 2011 finalist in the Global Student Entrepreneurs Awards. He also joined more than 400 young entrepreneurs all around the world at the G20 YES to promote business, the importance of youth entrepreneurship and provide valuable input to government leaders to assist in driving sustainable global economic growth, exchange ideas and to foster international partnerships and collaboration.

“‘I had a great time in Mexico City at the G20 Young Entrepreneurs Summit,” said Bush. “Learned a lot and met great entrepreneurs from all over the world! We visited the home of President Felipe Calderón (to deliver communique), met Gov. Jose Eduardo Calzada of the State of Querétaro, most importantly, learned and collaborated on how youth entrepreneurship leads to economic growth, jobs, and innovation. Young Entrepreneurs from the G20 countries all came together to share the importance of entrepreneurship and how the G20 countries can better foster and encourage entrepreneurship in their countries”

Not Just Cookies can be found in area stores such as Monnettes and Walt Churchills, and also provides cookie dough for fundraisers.

For more information on Johnathon’s participation in the NYSE NextGenBootcamp, cookie dough fundraisers, or how to get cookies in your retail establishment please contact Kimberly Connor at Kimberly@notjustcookies.com
Books 4 Buddies Drive Aims to Increase Youth Literacy

Collection effort kicks off this Saturday, June 30 at Westfield Franklin Park Mall

Special to The Truth

A campaign to engage Toledo’s young people in reading, with boys as the main target, will launch from noon to 6 p.m. this Saturday, June 30, outside the bd’s Mongolian Grill entrance at Westfield Franklin Park Mall.

The first Books 4 Buddies public book collection drive will start with a remote broadcast by Cumulus Radio from noon to 2 p.m., followed by a puppet show and storytime (hosted by the Toledo-Lucas County Public Library, The Blade, Toledo Public Schools, the Lucas County Sheriff’s Office, Toledo NAACP, Toledo Mayor Michael Bell, and many more).

Young Touré says that books will be made available to all interested youth, but he recognizes a particular need to encourage reading among young men. “A lot of us are into other things besides books,” says the honor student. “We miss out on a lot of things by not reading.”

Books 4 Buddies is represented by “Book Ambassadors,” including Touré and several other area male teenagers, who will help to promote the program at public appearances and special events that include guest speakers and outings with local leaders and celebrities.

“The Library is extremely proud to be a part of something so important,” Library Director Clyde Scoles said. “A community where more people are excited about reading means more patrons at our branches, and that translates to increased resources that help us better serve those same patrons.”

Businesses, schools, private organizations and individuals are all encouraged to donate at this Saturday’s (June 30) launch and throughout the campaign; cash donations are accepted. Anyone interested in volunteering as a reading tutor is also encouraged to attend. Updates on coming events will be regularly posted to the “Books 4 Buddies” page at Facebook.com.

What do Clifford the Big Red Dog, the Cat in the Hat and Super Why share in common? They will all be at WGTE’s Family Fun Day on Sunday, July 1 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. at WGTE, 1270 South Detroit Avenue.

The event, sponsored by the Conda Family, is free and open to the public. Families can visit anytime during the event. Children ages two to eight will especially enjoy the day.

Ann Arbor-based 13-year-old twins Ariel and Zoey Engelbert and their younger brother, 11-year-old Eli will make a special concert appearance. Their nationally syndicated music variety television show “Ariel & Zoey & Eli, Too” airs every Wednesday at 5:00 p.m. on WGTE TV, beginning July 4.

“Gently used” children’s books will be accepted and donated to Early Literacy Partners (ELP). ELP, of which WGTE is a member, will place the books around the city on bookshelves where adults and children have to wait, like a car repair shop or a Laundromat.

Look for the big tent at WGTE on July 1. It will be filled with literacy, math and science activities. Children can read to a therapy dog, get a temporary tattoo, receive PBS Kids giveaways, and meet Clifford, Cat in the Hat and Super Why, and more.
Owens Community College Announces Gateway College Program

By Fletcher Word
Sojourner’s Truth Editor

On Tuesday Owens Community College announced that the institution has formed a partnership with Toledo Public Schools and the Gateway to College National Network to bring a program to the Toledo area designed to bring high school dropouts back into the educational process.

The innovative program, designed for young adults ages 16 to 20 who have either dropped out of high school or are significantly behind in credits and are at risk of dropping out, is more than just a means for such youth to earn a diploma. It’s a gateway to a college education.

“We have a chance to change the trajectory of the lives of families,” said James Jackson, Owens’ specialist for the Gateway to College program. “Even though you have dropped out of high school, you are going to be a college student.”

The program, now one of 35 across the nation in 20 states, originated in Portland, Oregon in 2000 to help reconnect high school dropouts with their education. Owens was awarded a grant of $325,000 to implement the program from the National Network in 2011 and is currently seeking 50 students for the fall semester and an additional 25 for the spring semester.

“We are giving students a second chance,” said Tamara Williams, Owens assistant vice provost. “It’s about making a difference in students’ lives.”

According to Jackson, the program is designed for those who are between the ages of 16 and 21, who have dropped out or at risk of dropping out of high school, who can complete high school by the age of 22 and are ready to make the commitment – the investment in doing the work necessary to graduate and move onto college.

In addition to reading, writing and math, students, according to information provided, will take a college skills class to develop the habits needed to transform themselves into successful students. They will be provided with resource specialists to act as coaches, mentors and advisors.

Students will be placed into small learning communities during their first term. After completing that term, they will transition to the larger campus, taking classes with the general student population. They will graduate from the Gateway to College program once they have earned their high school diplomas but they will have accrued an average of 35 college credits, placing them on their way to earning a college degree.

It is expected that approximately 150 students will be served by the program over the next three years.

For more information about the Gateway to College program, call 567-661-7241 or 1-800-GO-OWENS, ext 7241 or email gateway@owens.edu. Applications are being accepted.
The Arts Commission Announces 2012 Hot Glass Gala & Auction event, Thursday, June 28

The Arts Commission’s signature Hot Glass Gala Auction fund raiser returns in 2012 with a few unique twists. Begun in 1991, the biennial Hot Glass fund raiser has been integral to fostering The Arts Commission’s mission and benefitting its programming.

The event gathers original creations of leading glass artists from around the world for a truly stunning exhibit, culminating in a special Gala Auction evening event, where all works are sold to help raise funds for Arts Commission programs such as Young Artists at Work, Art in TARTA, Artomatic 419!, Art Walks, the Parkwood Gallery and more. The 2010 Hot Glass event raised more than $100,000 for the organization, in addition to paying more than $65,000 to artists for their works.

The Arts Commission is excited by the opportunity to create another spectacular auction of the best that our regional, national and international glass artists have to offer. The 2012 Hot Glass Exhibition features more than 100 original works in glass. Hot Glass takes place in June this year to coincide with the recent national Glass Association of the Great Lakes (GAS) Conference, which was a week-long celebration of Toledo’s place as the birthplace of the studio glass movement.

The Hot Glass Exhibition has been displayed on screen since June 1, and enjoyed a successful run as a celebrated venue throughout the evening. The event features heavy hors d’oeuvres, and a cash bar, and entertainment. Tickets are $5 per person, and available through The Arts Commission. Please call 419-254-2787 or email hotglass@acgt.org.

The exhibition and Gala Auction will both be featured in the Edison Building Lobby, 300 Madison, in Downtown Toledo (corner of St. Clair).

Special Feature: Tom McGlauchlin career retrospective

The Arts Commission is very pleased to present a special career retrospective exhibition of more than 20 works from the personal archive of Toledo artist Tom McGlauchlin. This highly acclaimed and revered local artist recently passed away. His distinctive style is instantly recognizable. Tom was among the first Toledo-area artists to participate in the infamous experimental garage sessions at the Toledo Museum of Art in the early 1960s. Along with Dominick Labino, Harvey Leafgreen, and Harvey Littleton, these artists marked the beginning of the studio glass movement, now celebrating its 50th anniversary. The works included in this special sale reflect more than 30 years of Tom’s work in glass, with some blown works from the beginning of the studio glass movement in the 1960’s.

Proceeds from the sale of these works will benefit the youth programs of The Arts Commission and the Toledo School for the Arts.

Packing

Parking for the June 1 opening reception and for the gala auction on June 28 will be available at no charge in the Edison Building parking garage. The parking facility is accessible via the Summit Street entrance and will accommodate vehicles up to 6’6” in height. Parking for tours will be available on St. Clair Street or in the public parking garages on St. Clair Street. Note: All street parking is free weekdays between 11am and 2pm, after 5pm, and on weekends.

Public Tours

Free guided tours will be scheduled. Tours will be approximately 45 minutes in length, and will be conducted by a member of the Hot Glass 2012 Acquisitions Committee. Contact The Arts Commission to arrange a private, guided tour for 10 people or more.

Gallery and On-line Bidding

From June 17-28, The Arts Commission will accept bids. Shipping is available at cost to the purchaser. Those wishing to take advantage of the online bidding opportunity (ideal for bidding on works remotely) can do so via: www.theartscommission.org

Hot Glass 2012 Participating Artists

Arts Commission Gallery Hop

The Arts Commission of Greater Toledo held its annual summer Gallery Hop on Friday June 15 in collaboration with the Glass Art Society, which was holding its 42nd Annual Conference during the same week.

The event brought together more than 30 venues – galleries, stores and restaurants – to host local residents and visitors in a free event. The art lovers were transported to the sites – in downtown, uptown, the warehouse district and the Old West End – by buses.

Photos by Monique Ward of Pozitiv ProMotions, LLC
The Crosby Festival of the Arts has long been known as this region’s original fine arts festival. The 47th Annual Festival was held this past weekend, June 23-24, at the Toledo Botanical Garden and featured not only fine arts exhibits but also a lineup of entertainment on both days. Food and children’s activities were also to be found in abundance.

Photos by Monique Ward of Pozativ Promotions, LLC
PRIZM Opens New Exhibit at Starbucks in Perrysburg

Special to The Truth

PRIZM Creative Community is sponsoring a new collection of Art at the Starbucks in Levis Commons, Perrysburg. The Coffee Shop located at 3145 Levis Commons Blvd., offers a full coffeehouse experience with appealing music and art. Featured art from PRIZM artists will be available for viewing during regular business hours of 6 a.m.-11 p.m.; Mon-Thurs.; 6 a.m.-12 midnight on Fridays; 7 a.m.-12 a.m. Sat., and 7 a.m.-10 p.m. Sundays.

The current display called, “COLOR ME VIVID,” features the work of three PRIZM Artists and will be on view June 20 through the month of July. Participating in the exhibit is Ruth Koskinen, Katherine Pattay, and Nancy Stonerock. Whose combined talents represent a wide variety of media and techniques. Ruth Koskinen is a retired Art teacher whose palette knife floral painting shows both spontaneity and creative use of color. Her graphic tri-canvas painting called “She Plays with the Primaries,” uses shapes of color placed at seemingly different distances creating interesting patterns. Katherine Pattay whose recent retirement has allowed her to pursue a lifetime passion for creative work includes works in a wide variety of media and for this public display including printmaking, embossing, pastels, and watercolor. Nancy Stonerock is an accomplished watercolorist who has chosen to share two original paintings of Indian Dancers in her Sundancer Series. She also has on display vibrant watercolor floral and contemporary oil. PRIZM Creative Community is a 501 c. 3 non-profit organization for education, service, and collaboration in the literary and visual arts. PRIZM currently receives partial funding from The Ohio Arts Council, The Toledo Community Foundation, and public and private sources. For more information on upcoming PRIZM educational workshops and exhibition opportunities in the visual and literary arts visit our website @ www.myprizm.com, email prizm@bex.net or call 419-931-8732.

Young Rep to Present Footloose

Special to The Truth

The Toledo Repertoire Theatre’s Young Rep Production of Footloose will play the 10th Street stage on July 12, 13, 14 at 7:00 and July 15 at 2:30.

When Ren and his mother move from Chicago to a small farming town, Ren is prepared for the inevitable adjustment period at his new high school. What he isn’t prepared for are the conservative local rules that include a ban on dancing instituted by the local preacher. When the Reverend’s rebellious daughter sets her sights on Ren, her roughneck boyfriend tries to sabotage Ren’s reputation.

The heartfelt story that emerges is of a father longing for the son he lost, and of a young man aching for the father who walked out on him. The Oscar and Tony-nominated top 40 score includes the hits “I’m Free”, “Holding Out for a Hero”, and of course, “Footloose” along with dynamic new songs written for the stage. Footloose celebrates the wisdom of listening to young people, and guiding them with a warm heart and an open mind.

Under the direction of Sara Speelman, Footloose features some of the area’s top young talent ranging in ages from 14 to 19. Tickets are just $10.00 for adults and $5.00 for students.

For tickets or more information please call The Toledo Rep box office at 243-9277, or visit The Rep online at toledorep.org. The Toledo Repertoire Theatre is located at 16 10th Street in downtown Toledo.
Black Public Media is thrilled to announce the launch of the second season of *Black Folk Don’t*, a satirical, documentary web series that challenges common stereotypes. Provocative, irreverent, and engaging, Black Folk Don’t asks uncomfortable questions and invites dialogue about common assumptions of the behavior of black people. The entire series is available online at blackfolkdont.com and BlackPublicMedia.org.

In some cases, “black folks don’t” is a statistical fact — black folk don’t go to the doctor in the numbers they should. In other cases, “black folk don’t” is an anecdotal idea and concept that is based on a negative stereotype. Season 2 is made up of audience suggestions, episodes covering things “black folk don’t” do like swim, go camping, have eating disorders, get married, do atheism, and commit suicide.

*Black Folk Don’t* is the brainchild of director-producer Angela Tucker, whose career has been marked with creative, bold and varied social issue-based projects, including feature length films, documentary and fiction shorts, web series, advocacy videos, and PSA’s. Set in New Orleans, interviews include MSNBC host Melissa Harris Perry, noted cultural critic Toure, and numerous local residents of varying socioeconomic backgrounds, balanced gender representation, and ages ranging 14-80.

“I’ve always done things that is said black people typically don’t do. I wanted to turn the stereotypes on their heads, and it was important to me to get a wide range of perspectives from everyday folks,” Tucker said. “*Black Folk Don’t* will make you laugh, make you pause, and I expect it will enrich the general perspective of how everyday people live their lives.”

“We’re thrilled to see the success of *Black Folk Don’t* and excited to take the second season to New Orleans,” said Nonso Christian Ugboele, Black Public Media Director of Digital Media. “We’ve been really invested in reaching new audiences through web interactive projects, and connecting those audiences with public media as a whole. Black Folk Don’t has helped us do just that thanks to Angela’s unique ability to take even tough topics and give them an inviting and casual tone.”

Online video watching has increasing exponentially, with great success for shorter videos that are humorous and spark discussion. “Before there was Sh*t Gay Guys Say or Sh*t Gay Guys say or Sh*t White Girls Say or Sh*t White Girls Say to Black Gay Girls or whatever it’s morphed into (I lost track) — there was Black Folk Don’t,” wrote Film Independent’s Erika Yance in an interview with Tucker.

*The first season of Black Folk Don’t was set in New York City, included interviews with author/comedians Baratunde Thurston, actress Yolonda Ross and other local residents, and covered subjects such as “black folk don’t” tip, go to therapy, travel, do winter sports, go to the doctor, and do yoga.*
Hunger Doesn’t Take a Summer Vacation

By U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown
Guest Column

More than 840,000 children in Ohio depend on school for more than an education. For children living well-below the poverty line, schools also provide a dependable source of food and nutrition.

During the school year, more than 840,000 Ohio children receive nutrition assistance through free or reduced-price school lunches. So what happens to these children during the summer months? While critical lifelines – providing essential support – are available, many Ohio families don’t know about them.

Now that school is out for summer, these Ohio children whose parents, grandparents, or guardians are struggling to make ends meet can still have healthy meals.

With our nation’s abundance, no child should ever go hungry even when school is out for the summer. To close the hunger gap, the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Summer Food Service program works with the Ohio Department of Education to provide school-aged children with the healthy meals they need to grow strong and thrive academically.

The Summer Food Service Program – which provides breakfast, lunch, or a snack for children under 18 – is critical to staving off a potential lack of nutritious food during the summer months that can further disadvantage children who live in food deserts or who come from low-income, working-class families.

The demand for these services is significant. Last year, nearly 1,500 food service sites throughout Ohio reached children in 74 counties. And this year, there are even more sites to which Ohio families can turn – more than 1,700 across 77 counties. With too many families still out of work, we have to expand outreach to the families who need help now.

Ensuring that schoolchildren have access to healthy food during the summer is critical because malnutrition during childhood can lead to major health problems in the future. Childhood obesity, diabetes, delayed growth, and brittle bones are all possible health effects for young people who don’t have their nutritional needs met – stacking the odds not only against their well-being, but also burdening Ohio’s Medicaid system and economy.

Although Summer Food sites are located throughout the Buckeye state, only 66,000 of the 840,000 children who receive nutrition assistance during the academic year participate in summer meal programs. That’s why two years ago, I co-hosted a first-of-its-kind hunger summit at the Mid-Ohio Foodbank with leading anti-hunger advocates from across Ohio.

This past year, USDA Undersecretary Kevin Concannon came to Ohio to hold the second summit. Rather than lament a growing problem, we discussed how Ohio stakeholders can work together to increase the number of community leaders, sponsors, volunteers, and sites that can provide children with nutritious meals during both the school year and summer months.

While 11 Ohio counties lack summer food service program sites, it’s not too late for potential sponsors to set up a program in their town. Though the official deadline was May 31, interested sponsors and volunteers can still work with the Ohio Department of Education to establish new centers for children to get meals.

At schools in Appalachia, places of worship in urban areas, summer camps in rural areas, and recreational centers in big cities, young Ohioans can get the food they need to succeed.

Summer break shouldn’t mean a break from good nutrition. The single biggest thing we can do is to make sure more people know about this program. Outreach and public awareness are critical components to ensure that the end of the school year doesn’t mean an end to hunger.

For a complete list of summer food service program sites in Ohio, please call 800-808-MEAL (6325) or visit my website at www.brown.senate.gov.
Talking Heads Have Turned the World of Sports Topsy Turvy

By Michael Hayes
Minister of Culture

Now that LeBron James has become a world champion, the world of sports and pop culture media has to take a hard look at itself. The villain is now the victor, but who made him the villain in the first place? The over-hype and constant scrutiny ever since his junior year in high school, is that LeBron’s fault? No, that’s the media. Leading fans to hold him to impossible standards, is that LeBron’s fault? No, that was the media again. And who exactly is this ‘media’?

Does every opinion qualify as an informed opinion simply because it has followers? I put about four alternators in my first car, gave it tune ups, changed belts, etc. But just because I spent time under the hood didn’t make me a mechanic.

It seems every person able to gain an audience for their opinion considers themselves participants in professional media. If a blog can become just as popular as a newspaper and hit just as many subscribers, is that a “blogger” or a “professional writer”?

Does the person writing that blog have the same sensibilities and training in constructing a message that an educated writer has? If the pen or written word is mightier than the sword, what does it mean when those wielding such a weapon use it recklessly? You can lay waste to entire brands, reputations and perceptions with writing. TV and radio people can do even more damage because the audiences have to hear the same biases and opinion each day they turn in.

Lebron James hasn’t had the widespread off-court scandal as Kobe Bryant and others. No run ins with the law. No half-assed attempts at rapping. No gambling problem.

Yet he has been one of the most maligned figures in the modern sports era. Even when game by game statistics over the course of his career prove otherwise, public perception of his fourth quarter performance turned from simple basketball talk to personal insult. You would think that the national sports media would do their job to keep things civil and centered around the game being played. Such was not the case.

I’m not trying to say people shouldn’t have ‘picked on’ LeBron, because commentary always involves criticism. But the same way Cleveland fans burned his jersey in the streets, the media verbally burned his name in and night out. Sports media is awash with utter-saturation, to the point that anything can be magnified far beyond it’s intended scope.

Grown men get dressed up in suits and ties to discuss games played by other grown men. The discussions range from sweeping predictions years in advance down to the tiniest minutia of a particular play that lasted mere seconds.

Every time I watch Stephen A. Smith, I think to myself “if this guy applied this same passion to discussing politics he might make a difference.”

When I watch ESPN in general, I think of MSNBC and how much further we could be as a nation if people were as informed about their favorite athletes as they are about the branches of government making decisions that affect our daily lives.

Then, me being me, I check myself. Which do I watch more, ESPN or MSNBC? And the answer is MSNBC, but during the NBA playoffs I do get run to ESPN, Yahoo, Ball Don’t Lie and even …dare I say, Fox Sports for a fix or two. The talking head has become an American tradition.

Now that Lebron James hasn’t had the widespread off-court scandal as Kobe Bryant and others. No run ins with the law. No half-assed attempts at rapping. No gambling problem. Yet he has been one of the most maligned figures in the modern sports era. Even when game by game statistics over the course of his career prove otherwise, public perception of his fourth quarter performance turned from simple basketball talk to personal insult. You would think that the national sports media would do their job to keep things civil and centered around the game being played. Such was not the case.

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The talking head has become an American tradition. No matter if it’s sports, politics, gossip or that rundown of atrocities they try to pass off as nightly news…every person with eyes on a screen has to be keenly aware of what the talking head is actually communicating.

If some player gets a triple double and it marks the 15th time a player wearing this number has notched the same achievement while playing on this particular holiday…is that really statistical information we need? I think we need to just calm things down, relax the media machine. We need to chill the hell out.

The Miami Heat can’t even enjoy the championship they earned because professional and amateur media have still been vilifying and pressurizing the accomplishment.

Baseball player Roger Clemens was just acquitted on charges of lying to Congress about his use of performance enhancing drugs during his legendary career. The case was in a U.S. District Court.

Why the hell are sports drug cases landing before Congress in the first place? It seems we have crossed the line into craziness and no one noticed. There is TOO much coverage, too much media, too many extremes. Sport is a microcosm of life. There’s triumph and adversity. There’s self improvement and fellowship. But professional sports and the hype around it has become a deadly concoction of ratings, manipulation and detachment from reality.

It’s getting far too difficult to know which talking head is giving professional insult and which one is just ranting and raving hoping to incite their audiences into a frenzy.

But as long as the media remains a necessary evil, I wish we had more guys like Stephen A. Smith. The one talking head to man up and give LeBron James some well over due praise and admit that some of his former criticism may have been a bit much. Now that’s the kind of person I don’t mind giving me information.

In the words of Nas, “watch what you watchin.” Peace.
Hogs for Harbor House Rolls Out

Special to The Truth

Calling all motorcyclists!! Harbor House is sponsoring its first annual poker run, Hogs For Harbor House. The fund raiser is scheduled for Saturday, July 14 at Toledo Harley-Davidson, 7960 W. Central Ave. with registration from 10 a.m. to noon and first bikes out at 11:30 a.m. This sober, 105 mile round trip course will wind through scenic country roads beginning and ending at Toledo Harley-Davidson. Registration fee is $20 for single riders and $25 for double riders and includes coffee and donuts, water bottle, poker chips, dog prizes and a barbeque dinner at the end of the race.

Food provided by Shankland’s Catering, featuring “Maumee River Death Dogs”.

A 10 percent off coupon for use at Toledo Harley-Davidson will be given to the first 50 registrants. A silent auction of personalized motorcycle helmets will be conducted at the end of the race and several vendors will also be present.

Established in 1989, Harbor House is a transitional housing facility for homeless women who are recovering from drug or alcohol dependency. For more information, call Harbor House at 419-244-6300 or register on-line, go to http://harbor-house-hogs.eventbrite.com

Northwest Ohio Psychiatric Hospital

Volunteer Opportunities

930 South Detroit

Toledo, Ohio 43614

Volunteering provides a wonderful opportunity to the public to give back to the community while gaining knowledge and understanding about mental illness, a disease which will affect one in five individuals.

Volunteers can work as a group (such as a church or school group) or individually. Volunteers working must be at least 18 years old.

Volunteer assistance is needed in the following areas: fund-raising, event planning, clerical assistance, computer/organizational skills, fund raising, processing donated clothing, and organizing craft rooms and clothing rooms.

We also need volunteers to share their talent for our Summerfest “NOPH GOT TALENT SHOW” Monday, Aug 27 at 4pm.

The Volunteer Services Department’s goal is to make your volunteer experience as worthwhile as possible. Give a little, get back a lot!

Contact: Jan Volunteer Coordinator
419-381-1881 Ext. 4464
wasiele@mh.state.oh.us

AOD THERAPIST

Unison Behavioral Health Group, Inc. is seeking an experienced AOD Therapist to provide individual, family and group counseling and case management services.

Candidate must possess a Bachelor’s degree, Master’s Degree preferred and have a minimum of two years experience working with adults with mental health and chemical dependency issues. Dual mental health (LSW, LISW, PC, PCC) and chemical dependency licensure (CDCA, LCDC II, LCDC III or LCDC) required.

Send resume with salary requirements or contact:
Human Resources - AOD
Unison Behavioral Health Group, Inc.
1425 Starr Ave.
Toledo, OH 43605
Fax: 419-936-7574
Email: hr@unisonbgh.org

St. Martin de Porres

Parish is seeking a part-time accountant, 12-16 hours a week. Proficiency in QuickBooks and Microsoft Excel, a must. Experience in a church setting a plus. Associate degree in accounting is required. Send letter of inquiry and resume, with references, to Search committee, St. Martin de Porres Catholic Church, 1119 W. Bancroft St., Toledo, Ohio 43604. Email to virginia@slaughterhotmail.com. For more information call 419-241-4544.

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Baptist Church

Lijah, who consoles himself with his father’s assurance that in the character of this home.

Barbacco - $30,000

Dark stained, older brick home located Olde South End. Totally remodeled! Over 1,500 sq. ft. home furnished with appliances, 1st floor LNDY room, large bedroom. Large closets. Extra loft for entertainment. Must see!

Seaway Asset Management

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Kim

$49,000

Seaway Asset Management

Kim

3000 Roosevelt Ave

Call Kimberly Brown - 419.810.7097

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Church looking for a dedicated, responsible and dependable Gospel Pianist to play for Sunday morning services. For more information contact: 419-215-9020

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PARALEGAL

Lucas Metropolitan Housing Authority (LMHA), located in Toledo, OH is seeking experienced applicants for a Paralegal position. For complete details of the position and application information, visit our website at www.lucasmha.org. Please note on your submittal if you are a LMHA Public Housing resident or Housing Choice Voucher Program participant. This is a Section 3 covered position and HUD recipients are encouraged to apply. All materials submitted must be received at LMHA not later than 5:00 P.M. on Monday, July 9, 2012.

NO PHONE CALLS

Equal employment opportunity shall be afforded to all qualified persons without regard to age, race, color, religion, religious creed, sex, military status, ancestry, disability, handicap, sexual orientation, genetic information or national origin.

ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

John H. McKissick Senior Apartments are accepting applications for 1 bedroom waiting list for elderly housing. 62 years or older. Rent will be based on income. Applications will be taken on a FIRST COME FIRST SERVE BASIS on Thursday, July 5, 2012 from 9:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M. at 1030 Brookview Drive, Toledo, Ohio. For further information, call (419) 389-0361, M-F 8:30 A.M. – 4:30 P.M.

Tutoring Assistance

Does your son or daughter need help with school work? I am offering tutoring! Give me a call – Ms. Sherri – 419-215-8742. I will be able to help.

Wanted to Buy: Diabetes Supplies

Earn up to $12 per box of 100 test strips Must expire after September 2012. Leave labels on boxes. We remit by check. Call 419-740-7162 and leave message.

NORTHGATE APARTMENTS

610 STICKNEY AVENUE

Now Accepting Applications for 1 and 2 Bedroom Apartments

Mature Adult Community for Persons 55 and Older. Rent Based on Income. Heat, Appliances, Drapes, Carpeting Included. Call (419) 729-7118 for details.

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Houses for Rent


Abundant Life of Perrysburg is a subsidized independent housing facility for those 62 or older. We are located in a beautiful, quiet residential setting in Perrysburg. Abundant Life offers one bedroom garden apartments with private patios, indoor mailboxes, reserved parking and busing to local grocery stores.

Applications are now being accepted Call 419-874-4371.

Northwest Ohio Psychiatric Hospital

Volunteer Opportunities

930 South Detroit

Toledo, Ohio 43614

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Volunteer Coordinator
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wasielej@mh.state.oh.us

WANTED TO BUY

Bilge Pumps

Contact: Mr. Bill Fry
419-775-3748

The Truth Toledo Classifieds

June 27, 2012

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Saturday Fights at Promenade Park

The Jeremy Lincoln Football Camp