

# THE REAL DEAL

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➔ PAGE 6



Coates told City Club that racial issues flare up with predictability in America. Depicted above is street scene from last month in Ferguson, MO, after police officer shot and killed unarmed teenager Michael Brown. [GETTY IMAGES].

## REPARATIONS: No Longer A “Crazy” Idea?

National writer tells City Club “no way of dealing with the present without dealing with the past”

**By R. T. Andrews**  
Editor

Ta-nehisi Coates was in Cleveland last month to speak at the Citadel of Free Speech, aka The City Club of Cleveland.

He gave a powerful push to a long-simmering issue that has the potential to significantly affect how we look at the nation’s chronic “race relations” crisis.

Coates wrote a 50,000-word article for *The Atlantic*

magazine earlier this year, “The Case for Reparations”, in which he laid out in painstaking detail the degree to which [white] America has systematically, continuously and intentionally robbed her black cit-

izens of their labor, their land and their property, by virtually any means imaginable. His trip here was his very first talk on reparations. You can count on there being many more.

Coates prosecutes his case

by compiling fact upon documented fact, interlaced with riveting narratives of the lives of flesh and blood Americans whose flesh and features made them prime fodder for the

**Continued On Page 4**



Manuel Gonzales, Chief Executive Officer of the National Society of Hispanic MBAs (NSHMBA)

## Minority Problems Directly Hurt U.S., Hispanic Leader Says

**By Kirby Freeman**  
Real Deal Press Correspondent

Local and national economic problems can be directly traced to demographic changes, as the African American and Hispanic communities grow, while still not gain-

ing the economic clout to fully enter middle class status, according to Manuel Gonzalez, Chief Executive Officer of the National Society of Hispanic MBAs (NSHMBA).

“The problem is that the growing population of African-Americans and Hispanics

don’t have the wealth that the whites have to buy single family homes,” Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez spoke at a joint reception given with the Cleveland chapter of the National Black MBA Association at the Federal Reserve Bank of

**Continued On Page 2**

**“Sometimes we just talk to ourselves. We have to diversify our audiences.”**



## Black and Brown Demographic Growth Poses Challenge for U.S.

Continued from Page 1

Cleveland on August 14.

Gonzalez said the fact that blacks and Hispanics have suffered much higher unemployment and poverty rates than whites, means that those growing populations are not the rapidly aging white middle class populations of previous generations.

"The white population is growing smaller and older. Our population is growing. . . The biggest problem we have in Cleveland is poverty," Gonzalez said. He added that the challenge to the economy of the U.S. and Northeast Ohio

over the next few decades will be how large masses in the black and Hispanic communities can be lifted out of poverty.

Gonzalez said the most effective way to address the issue of economic hardship in both communities is through education. "Education is the equalizer for this country to expand and grow." He said the energy and commitment in the African American and Hispanic community needs to be placed on getting their children ready for opportunities in the business sector.

He said it was a real chal-

lenge even to get minority students with undergraduate degrees ready to take on the opportunity of entering graduate school. He said his organization routinely has discussions with graduate schools and corporations, who have said they are aggressively looking for young people of color to fill their ranks.

He estimated that 75% of minority candidates to graduate business school programs score below 570 (out of 800) on the Graduate Management Aptitude Test (GMAT). He said that if a lot more focus

was placed on somehow getting those potential minority students to score above 600 on that test alone, many more opportunities would be available for those students, and the communities they represent.

Gonzalez said NSHMBA has been working toward encouraging and helping fund Hispanic college graduates to take GMAT preparation courses to compete more effectively with those in the majority community, who are more likely to have the resources to take these prep courses.

Gonzalez said that much

of the economic problem in black and brown communities continues to be that most managers in majority-owned businesses do not know enough about potential minority candidates.

Gonzalez challenged organizations like NSHMBA and NBMBA to be more aggressive in bringing more members of the majority community to minority MBA and minority organizational receptions.

"Sometimes we just talk to ourselves. We have to diversify our audiences," he said.

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## Fed Economist sees long road to “Full Employment” for US workforce

By Kirby Freeman

Real Deal Press Correspondent

Workers may have to accept a “new normal” world of low wage growth and years before businesses are strong enough to hire millions of long-term unemployed citizens, according to Mark Schweitzer, research director for the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland.

Schweitzer spoke Aug. 14 at a networking reception jointly hosted by the Cleveland chapters of the National Black MBA Association and the National Society of Hispanic MBAs. The Bank hosted the event.

He said that despite expected short-term improvement in the U.S. economy, all workers, managers, and business owners need to live in a new climate where everyone is competing with newer factories and lower-wage workers in places like India, Brazil and Nigeria.

Schweitzer said that despite the dislocation that so many in the economy are feeling, the U.S. “was the closest thing to being a closed economy” compared with most other nations. “We are dependent on the world economy. . . But other countries are much

more dependent.”

Reflecting the impact of globalization, the Fed economist said that his biggest short- and long-term worry regarding the economy was the expected slowing of the growth of China’s economy – which has posted double digit annual growth for years.

“How does China evolve as their economy slows?” He said it could be a very big issue, if their growth tapers down from double digit levels to mid-single digits. China is currently the world’s second-largest economy, and some economists have estimated that China’s GDP could overtake that of the U.S. – on a nominal basis – within the next 20 years.

Schweitzer noted that second quarter Gross Domestic Product (GDP) economic growth in the U.S. averaged approximately 4.0%, mainly reflecting consumer demand drawing down supply inventory for manufacturers. This compared with a decline of about 2.4% in the first quarter, mainly reflecting the impact of harsh winter weather conditions in early 2014.

Even though the Fed economist said growth may not jump as sharply as it did in the second quarter, he noted the acceleration

of monthly employment above the 200,000 level consistently for the last several months. He expected that pace to continue to accelerate consumer demand and generate even higher rates of job growths for the next few years.

Schweitzer said he expected the national unemployment rate to remain at around 6.0%, or dip just below that benchmark. What will keep that rate from going much lower is the very large number of long-term unemployed – many of whom have been discouraged from seeking employment, and therefore are not counted in official numbers – who will likely re-enter the workforce as the economy continues to expand.

One of the major indicators of what Schweitzer said is the “new normal” is the view of most economists that official national unemployment cannot drop below approximately 5.0% to 5.75%, without generating high levels of inflation – which would touch off a spike in high prices throughout the economy.

That floor in the long-term unemployment rate, which is called the level of “full employment” by most economists, is significantly higher than the recognized rate of 4.0% during the 1980s and 1990s.



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#### LEADERSHIP CHANGE IN WARRENSVILLE SCHOOLS

**Marva Kay Jones** resigned last month as Superintendent of Warrensville Schools. Business manager Mark Fritz has followed her out the door. **Acting Superintendent Denise Ward** has vowed to make the District effective on the state report card within three years.



## Reparations Continued from Page 1

wealth creating engines of the American economy.

Coates spent two years researching the American socioeconomic system of slavery. He traced the mutations of this social and economic institution as it evolved into Jim Crow and other forms of discrimination. Sometimes the discrimination was lawful under the laws and mores of the day, but at other times it was in violation of even a community's unequal laws. It was plunder for profit and plunder for fun.

For Coates, racial discrimination is as American as apple pie and the Fourth of July. "The denial of rights to black people in this country is not a contradiction," he said. Asserting that slavery and human abuse are not incompatible with true democracy, he said that they were a crucial ingredient in the American experiment. As he put it, "You can't have a mountain if you don't have a valley. And black people are the valley."

At every turn, Coates marshaled historical evidence to support his jarring contentions, and he implored his audience repeatedly to consult the record, saying, "You don't have to believe me, consult the sources yourself." He disputed, for instance, the notion that racial tension in this country is the result of cultural differences or misunderstandings. He argued instead that slavery is best understood if we realize that it was as deeply ingrained in American culture before the Civil War as home owner-

ship is today.

### Understanding and Analysis, not Blame

One of the remarkable aspects of Coates' writing and speaking is his ability to articulate the horrific acts of America's racists — past and present — without demonizing them. He achieves this feat through relentless focus on behaviors and their consequences. He doesn't need to characterize the perpetrators. He lets their acts speak for themselves.

And though he acknowledged almost in passing during his August 22 talk a real anger at official state action in Ferguson, Missouri, his talk was devoid of any rant or threat or ultimatum. He was actually, given the nature of his topic — American violence and thievery — disarmingly congenial. He seemed to find irony in much of American history, even as he pleasantly dismantled, with intellectual precision and ferocity, myth after myth of America's essential goodness and exceptionalism.

### Patriotism makes strange bedfellows

Coates' equanimity in speech and prose is likely related to keeping his eyes on the prize. It turns out that Coates views himself as a patriot. His voice softened and his pacing seemed to change when he talked about his love of country being the reason he is so critical of her behavior. And while he believes that the outcome of any genuine analysis of the effects of America's relentless assault upon its darker

citizens would be some sort of reparations, he minimized in his City Club appearance the details of how reparations would work. He cited precedents established by the German government after World War II and the U.S. with respect to the Japanese Americans who were interned during that conflict as indicators that a reparations program could be implemented.

Coates has a remarkable gift for assembling basic facts into a compelling narrative. In doing so he does not spare liberal icons like Franklin Roosevelt. The New Deal, Coates pointed out to his City Club audience, was achieved because Roosevelt agreed to let the South preserve segregation. Policies were written in such a way that African Americans were always entitled to less. Thus, 65% of African Americans were ineligible for Social Security when the bill was written, a figure that rose to 85% in the South. And the GI bill was written in such a way that black participation was limited.

A good chunk of the Atlantic article deals with how the federal government used the Federal Housing Authority as a basis to redline black communities throughout the nation. A classification system was employed that grossly restricted the ability of black Americans to build wealth the way their fellow citizens could and did. And it did so in a way that has repeatedly devastated black communities time and again, most recently in the housing meltdown of 2008. Coates merely touched on this sub-



(Right) Ta-nehisi Coates speaking at Cleveland Public Library in February [RDP File Photo].

ject here, but it is a core part of his argument in *The Atlantic* for reparations.

A diverse and unusually attentive City Club audience was on hand to hear Coates, including many thought leaders in Cleveland's black community. As increasingly militarized police forces mow down black people at a steady rate — some studies say on average almost two unarmed black men were killed by police over about a decade in this century, a number that in the aggregate recalls some annual lynching totals in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries — Coates may be pointing us to a new way of addressing issues that have bedeviled America since its gestation.

Readers can find both Coates' magisterial June article on reparations as well as a video of his August City Club appearance at <http://www.theatlantic.com/ta-nehisi-coates/>. As a bonus, you can also find his thoughts about Michael Brown, the situation in Ferguson, and the demonization of black males, among other topics.

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PUBLISHER & EDITOR:

**R. T. Andrews**

ADVERTISING SALES:

**Paul K. Jones (216.338.7038)**

CONTRIBUTORS:

**Mordecai Cargill; Derek Dixon; Kirby V. Freeman; Jeremy F. Taylor; Alan Howard; John S. Worthy.**

LAYOUT & DESIGN:

**Steve Aresman Thomas**

**The Real Deal Press**

216.282.5111 voice

216.672.4304 fax

[rta@TheRealDealPress.com](mailto:rta@TheRealDealPress.com)



# HEALTH CALENDAR



## SEPTEMBER 27

**Take Charge of Your Health Day:** Bring Someone You Love To The Doctor at Stephanie Tubbs Jones Health Center, 13944 Euclid Ave., East Cleveland, OH 44112. For more information or to register, call 216.767.4447 option # 3. [ccf.org/stjhc](http://ccf.org/stjhc)

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- Financial counselors available with the ability to schedule follow-up appointments.
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## RECURRING PROGRAMS

Sister Circle is a support group for African American women with any type of cancer. Meetings this month will be Thursdays, September 4 and September 18 from 6:30-8:30pm at The Gathering Place East, 23300 Commerce Park, Beachwood. No registration required. Call 216.595.9546 for info.

KidShop/Teen Shop is a program to help children and teens cope when a family member has cancer. Mondays, September 8 & September 22, 6:30-8:00pm at The Gathering Place East 23300 Commerce Park, Beachwood.

The Gathering Place is a caring community supporting individuals and families touched by cancer through programs and services provided free of charge. Call/visit 216.595.9546/[www.touchedbycancer.org](http://www.touchedbycancer.org) for more info.

## NEWSMAKER • SEPTEMBER 2014



**William H. Gary, Sr.** has been named executive vice president of Cuyahoga Community College's Workforce and Economic Development Division (WEDD).



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## COMING NEXT MONTH:

- What's on your ballot? We preview the November Election [Voting starts early October!].
- The Real Deal Press tries to make sense of the tumult roiling in Richmond Heights. [You do know Mayor Headen is facing recall. We'll tell you what the PD won't.]

### Euclid Ave. UCC Church moves, adopts new name

Euclid Avenue Congregational Church has moved to 4217 Bluestone Rd in South Euclid and changed its name to South Euclid United Church of Christ. The congregation was for many years located at 9696 Euclid Ave. The church's edifice burned to the ground in January 2010 after it was struck by lightning. The congregation had worshiped at the former First United Methodist Church at Euclid and East 30 St. since the fire. Rev. Courtney Clayton Jenkins is pastor.



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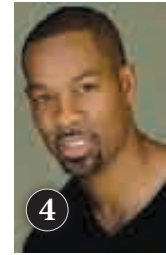
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(1) Cru Festival Winner Shot, (2) Donna Dabbs, (3) Nadine Ellis, (4) Darrin Dewitt Henson and (5) Tanya Kersey.

## Cleveland's Urban Film Fest looks for record attendance

By Derek Dixon

Real Deal Press Correspondent

Urban film buffs are getting ready to continue the positive Cleveland summer vibe epitomized by the swift makeover of the Cleveland Cavaliers, spearheaded by the return of LeBron James, snagging the 2016 GOP convention, and hosting this year's Gay Games.

Organizers of the upcoming 3rd Annual Greater Cleveland Urban Film Festival (GCUFF), scheduled for the last weekend of September at the Shaker Square Cinema, are expecting the event to draw double the approximately 800 participants at the inaugural 2012 festival. The festival's purpose is to expose and support all aspirants in the film spectrum—from casual moviegoers to hopeful actors and actresses to dedicated film producers.

"GCUFF was created to better expose and more greatly appreciate the work of many African American filmmak-

ers, actors, actresses and writers," said Donna Dabbs, the GCUFF executive director, on the event website. That's not just stage talk. Dabbs and the event's organizers have cornered top tier industry leaders to buoy the event.

"We've gotten responses from local and national artists who wish to bring their films to the Midwest markets," she says. Two of those artists — actor/director Darrin Dewitt Henson and Hollywood executive and career coach Tanya Kersey — are not only household names, but serve as the official 2014 GCUFF ambassadors.

Henson is a 30-year show business veteran with credits ranging from work with the 1980s hip hop group Boogie Down Productions to his current acting/producing project "Four of Hearts", a romance co-starring Nadine Ellis, GCUFF's other 2014 ambassador. Between the two is a laundry list of acting and production accomplishments. Henson's work includes the

Showtime series "Soul Food", HBO's "Life Support", and dance choreography for the likes of Jennifer Lopez, Britney Spears and 1990s boy band 'N Sync.

Ellis' credits start with attendance as a student at the former New York School of the Performing Arts under legendary actress/choreographer Debbie Allen. Her involvement in music and film includes the defunct girl group Pussycat Dolls, and television series such as Everybody Hates Chris and Cold Case.

The presence of these entertainment veterans is a boon for those seeking to build positive connections in the film and entertainment world. When reached by email, Henson said he's coming to Cleveland to make an impact on future filmmakers. "I will be hosting and presenting new innovative ideas for filmmakers, actors and producers. I am looking for a festival worthy of being called 'greater', with creative introductions for today's

marketplace."

Breaking into the hyper-competitive world of film production is most often a frustrating struggle. GCUFF will tackle this issue by bringing in Tanya Kersey, executive director of the Hollywood Black Film Festival and has had experience in nearly every conceivable area of show business and production since the age of five. Known as the "filmmakers' career coach", reviewers on Kersey's website repeatedly describe her work as invaluable and place her services among the top available to would-be artists.

"Tanya Kersey will be joining us this year to help filmmakers and actors learn valuable tips and tools for growing careers," said Dabbs.

For casual moviegoers, or those just wanting to enjoy the presence of emerging and veteran urban film talent, the 2014 GCUFF is equally relevant. Films of diverse genres will be available for viewing throughout the weekend.

Of course the length and overall quality of the festival is

the result of widespread corporate and community financial support. Dabbs, who is also vice president of the Society of Urban Professionals [SOUP] doesn't hesitate to emphasize the ongoing need for donations.

"The (two) biggest goals this year are covering costs and increasing audience numbers and awareness," she says. Contributions will be accepted online [www.GCUFF.org] right up until the day of the event. SOUP and festival co-founder Alton Tinker said his annual chicken and waffle party "drew a record crowd" of fundraisers and financial supporters for festival, but Dabbs said donations were still needed.

Pricing for the festival starts at \$10. A VIP all-access pass is \$100. In addition to the dozen or so films, planned events include both opening night and closing receptions, panel discussions, filmmaker breakfast receptions, and a GCUFF party.

*More information is available at [www.gcuff.org](http://www.gcuff.org).*



# License Plate of the Month



This is NOT Kevin Love's ode to Cleveland. The plate was spotted before the trade became official, not that he would fit into a roadster anyway. Snapped July 25 on Cedar Rd just west of Taylor Rd in University Hts.

See a plate that grabs your eye? Grab it back with your camera phone and mail it to us at [rta@TheRealDealPress.com](mailto:rta@TheRealDealPress.com) along with where and when you took it. You could win a prize.



## Friday, September 26

• The Housing Ministry of Lee Memorial AME Church is hosting an evening of cool jazz featuring Forecast from 7-11pm at the Willoughby Hills Community Center, 35405 Char-don Road in Willoughby Hills 44094. Tickets are \$25. Tasty appetizers are promised. Call 216.731.8787 or 761.4447 for info/tix.

## Saturday, September 27

• The 2014 version of the annual Collard Green Cook-Off & Arts Festival will take place on from 10am to 12:30pm at Snickerfritz, 13240 Euclid Ave. in East Cleveland. Jazz and gospel sounds will resound with proceeds going to benefit art students and warming the heart of artist/entrepreneur Ed Parker. Call 216.851.6910 for info/tix.

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