

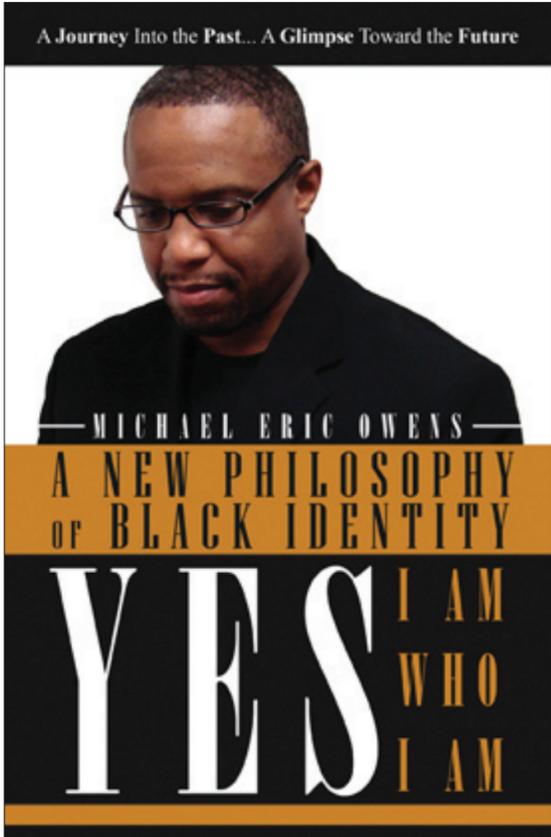
BOOK REVIEW

YES, I AM, WHO I AM:
A New Philosophy of Black Identity
by Michael Eric Owens

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The struggle for identity is an American tale. The recent and historic election of Barack Obama offers a wonderful opportunity to embrace a national, intelligent conversation on race. Stirring up this discussion is author Michael Eric Owens, whose latest literary work is entitled YES, I AM, WHO I AM: A New Philosophy of Black Identity. Professor of History Laura Gellott sums up the book as "... part history, part memoir, part meditation... a hope filled summons to Blacks to embrace and claim their full identity as Americans." She cites as compelling Owens' critical analysis of the nomenclature African American, and the book's synthesis "towards a usable Black identity for contemporary America."

Born and raised in the inner-city of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Michael Owens experienced first hand the many challenges facing minorities today. Following a successful career in the United States Navy where he achieved Sailor of the Year honors, he attended the University of Wisconsin-Parkside earning degrees in History and Political Science, as well as the Outstanding Graduate Award. He received his



Master of Library & Information Science from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Professor of Psychology Heather Frederick describes Owens "as an agent of truth, who confronts the Black identity crisis with courage and dignity. [His book] is a thoughtful exposé that ventures beyond a historical account of the Black experience in America to offer a solution; a timely read for anyone who calls themselves an American."

Owens is the Manager of Library Operations

at the prestigious Ralph Ellison Library in Oklahoma City. He is also a distinguished scholar, writer, speaker, and activist who has used his voice and literary passion to illuminate the untold stories of Black America. Owens' charisma and eloquence make him a leading voice on race relations in the 21st century.

Order your copy today at: <http://www.yesiamwhoiam.com>

And enter the Black Identity discussion at: <http://blkidentity.com/phpb2/>

Clyburn ... continued from page 1

He must distance himself from the first African-American president or he'll jeopardize his lily white political base, and what better way to do so than to posture against federal aid?

Texas Governor Rick Perry is closing in on his 200th execution since taking office (George W. Bush only managed 152, but both governors hold national records). Perry also vetoed a measure that would prohibit executing mentally retarded people. The vast majority of inmates Perry (as well as Bush) put to death were blacks and Hispanics.

A spokesman from Sanford's office responded, "Representative Clyburn is no stranger to playing the race card, because he has no defense for the runaway spending and the deficits contained in this so-called stimulus bill that will hurt our economy. Spending money at the federal level that we do not have represents a future tax increase on all South Carolinians, regardless of their color - and in the process of doing so, he's ripping off everyone he claims to represent."

Harsh words from an agent of the people who is increasingly absent from the constituency he "claims to represent". It's no secret that Sanford has his eye on the highest office. Potential GOP presidential candidate is now synonymous with his name. Much to the dismay of local officials, Sanford has been busy

traveling the country to socialize with the GOP elite. Last weekend, amid the stimulus controversy, Sanford visited California and Texas to address his fellow party members.

"It's time for Mark Sanford to step up for the people of South Carolina instead of wandering around the rest of the country," said South Carolina Democratic Party Chair Carol Fowler. "The governor of the state with the third highest unemployment rate in the nation still hasn't managed to decide how much of the stimulus funds he will use for South Carolina. If a governor has such an important decision to make he should be at home making it, not rubbing elbows with a bunch of politicians in California. Other states are already establishing commissions to maximize the benefits of the money or writing grants to be sure they get the funds they need. Governor Sanford's dithering is going to put us months behind in the process."

As to Clyburn's priorities, "Whenever I approach legislation in Congress, I view the bill through the lens of South Carolina and the needs of my constituents," Clyburn said. "Because of the potential impact of this economic recovery package, I worked to protect South Carolina's interests and ensure the Palmetto state would benefit from these crucial federal investments."

"Our Governor has repeatedly expressed po-

litical and philosophical aversion to using federal assistance as we work our way out of the economic conditions that are visiting significant difficulties upon businesses and families throughout our beloved state," Clyburn continued.

Fortunately for many who would be devastated by this cruel political maneuvering, Clyburn insisted on language in the bill that would give state legislatures the power to over-ride the dictates of governors. Clyburn has said, "No community or constituent should be denied recovery assistance due to their governor's political ideology or political aspirations."

He also championed the effort to invest in rural communities. At least ten percent of rural development funds included in the package will be dedicated to counties having 20 percent or more of its population living in poverty over the past 30 years. There are 12 South Carolina counties eligible for these funds all along the I-95 corridor.

Millions of Americans went to the polls in November and voted to give change a chance. These GOP Governors are clinging to failed policies and privilege-based ideologies that are the very reason Americans find themselves in this economic nightmare. It is because of the efforts of Congressman Clyburn that we might see some relief, and once again, he is there to represent and fight the good fight in the struggle for equality.

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Eau Claire Cooperative Health Centers is participating in a State funded program to engage the community in an effort to eliminate barriers and decrease the frequency of colon cancer in the African American community. Call 803.733.5969 x4162 for more info.



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