

## 6 Figure\$ brings 8 Black Hands to Indianapolis: Analysis with commentary

"African American teachers can colonize students just like white teachers."

~ Dr. Chris Emdin

*Corporate reform of education attempts to expand privatization to, would you believe, our public schools as is done with parking meters and prisons. Our public schools, with a legacy of mis-educating Black Americans, are not broken, but doing what they were created to do, are easy targets for spiels aimed at hapless urban families stuck in the colonality of schooling itself. The appeal of a small, select charter where their child can wear a nifty school costume makes families vulnerable to education macks like Mastery Schools, with revenue of \$153.1M—an organization that's nothing more than a cartel of the education industrial complex.*

"Elected school boards are the bedrock of American democracy." ~ Tom Ultican

*Thus, organizations, even small groups of Black Americans, are moving across the country in some sort of travelling shows, trying to, of all things, convince Black American families, especially, to send their child/ren to a charter school, with a board they can't elect, and where private citizens, some of whom are hardly known, and who aren't directly accountable at the ballot box, run it. What's going on here? Are our public institutions to remain public? Is America possible, or not?*

"For the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house. They may allow us to temporarily beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change."  
~ Audre Lorde

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"The Education Industrial Complex is an immense bureaucratic establishment and large education product and assessment industry with massive economic and political influence in our governments. "

~ Kyle Pearce

### INTRODUCTION

On the evening of October 5, Indy education power brokers, The Mind Trust, brought national-level media personalities, the 8 Black Hands crew, to the Walker Legacy Center. Here's link to the program's video: <https://www.facebook.com/TheMindTrust/videos/1013735979171871>.

The conversation centered on the importance of reading and math for Black children. The awful results of Indiana's 2020 ILEARN exam measuring student achievement and growth, where only 8.1% of Indiana's Black students were proficient in ELA and math, were emphasized.

These tragic scores were used by 8 Black Hands to justifiably challenge any Indiana school leader and their staff which could not teach Black children to read<sup>1</sup> to quit education and find another job. NYC's Success Prep charter was used as an example that high proficiency rates can be reached by Black children. So, why aren't other schools successful, asked 8 Black Hands?

Marqueed as "...bold advocates, truth-tellers, and education champions," obviously the 8 Black Hands are Black men. They each have both book smarts and street smarts. The men made valid points all evening. Their truths came from personal experiences, not from a book.

What's authentic, they do not lie about the infamous history of mis-education our traditional education/schools have. Yes, America's public schools were never created to educate all children, and to particularly educate and love Black children; and, they have been successful at doing that. Thus, our traditional public schools don't need "fixing." We can't call schools designed to fail, broken.

It's just that the 8 Black Hands are on the wrong side of history: Democracies do not de-nationalize their public schools. Their answer to this American legacy of mis-education or no education of Black children is the same as the corporate reformers<sup>2</sup> and that's privatization. To be sure, the experienced, well-informed, and critically conscious 8 Black Hands see the status quo as so bad, they don't know what else to do but to seek the liberation of their community from the coloniality of public education through the promise of charters. And, we can't forget the politics of the million\$ of dollar\$ behind privatization, thus the "moneyvation" of possible 6 figure\$ salaries for the group and each of their families.

If "truth telling" is their motto, this review wants to see their yearly group/individual income related to their 8 Black Hands work. Is 8 Black Hands a 501c3? Let the public see their 1099.

### **Democracies do not privatize their public schools.**

Why would a democracy privatize its own public schools, the very governmental institutions it created for a civic purpose: to educate students for self-rule/self-government? No, a democracy would not. This would eventually end self-determination. Now what's interesting, a corporatocracy would privatize its public schools.

### **This commentary does not let traditional public ed off the hook**

Parents Across America reports Parent Power's plan to reunite Black families and public education: <http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Parents-Across-America-reports-Parent-Powers-plan-to-reunite-Black-families-and-public-education.pdf>

### **8 Black Hands: Civil Rights era Dr. Howard Fuller's hip hop protégé**

To help see the issues here, please note 8 Black Hands, who are Civil Rights era Dr. Howard Fuller's hip hop protégé, definitely follow his approach—if charters provide a viable way to educate Black children, what does it matter where the money comes from or how it happens?

Also, the anti-teachers union diatribe of 8 Black Hands throws red meat to the Mind Trust's corporate sponsors. All of this will be made clear by viewing Black activist Glen Ford's *Corporate assault on public education* lecture: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JdPACwRgwO4>.

Here you'll learn the history of the corporate efforts to neutralize the teachers union—notably by Milwaukee's Bradley Foundation use of Dr. Howard Fuller and US Senator Corey Booker.

As seen by this report, 8 Black Hands is an cultural/political extension of 1) Dr. Howard Fuller's Black Alliance for Educational Options (BAEO): <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Black-Alliance-for-Educational-Options>, and 2) today's, "School choice is the Black choice" movement: <http://schoolchoiceistheblackchoice.com/>, popularized by media personality, Mr. Roland Martin.

### **WHAT IS GENUINE CHANGE?**

*"For the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house. They may allow us to temporarily beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change."* Here a paraphrased version explaining the predicament of 8 Black Hands:

For the master's tools (corporate reform via charters) will never dismantle the coloniality of public education. The corporate reformers may allow 8 Black Hands to temporarily beat the traditional education system at its own game, but they will never enable these men to bring about genuine change.

Still, despite all these great recommendations for Black principals and teachers, and Black families and students, the 8 Black Hands seem to know their limits.

From the standpoint of this evaluation, 8 Black Hands are compromised by big corporate money and its international aims of Cocacolonization/philanthrocapitalism--as will be discussed--and, so must accept this new *status quo* where they'll never get the *genuine change* each envision as Black men trying to survive in America: education for liberation: education as the practice of freedom. Consequently, because of their rank in the echelons of corporate society, tragically 8 Black Hands will not receive the promise of a *Blank Check* sung about by hip hop's Jason Chen: <https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/jasonchen/blankcheck.html>.

### Who are men of 8 Black Hands?

- Mr. Chris Stewart <http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Chris-Stewart.pdf>;
- Dr. Charles Cole, III <http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Dr.-Charles-Cole-III.pdf>;
- Mr. Raymond J. Ankrum, Jr. <http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Raymond-J.-Ankrum-Sr.-doc.pdf>; and,
- Mr. Sharif El Mekki <http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Sharif-El-Mekki.pdf>

Here's a quote from an 8 Black Hands commercial: "Deep in the heart of public school education wars rage on, and few warriors come to fight for the people. Yet, there is one small band of freedom fighters bring sanity to the village. Anyone who threatens the education of our 8 million black children is likely to catch these eight black hands."

"African American teachers can colonize students just like white teachers."

~ Dr. Chris Emdin, [For white folks who teach in the hood: A lesson in campus colonialism](#)

From the perspective of this commentary, Indy's education power broker, The Mind Trust and its "6 Figure\$" staff are bringing in 8 Black Hands to rationalize charters and the privatization of IPS to: 1) Teach for America (TfA) staff and its current cohort of teachers in training, and any of the Marian U ed professors who co-conspire with national TfA leaders to "get rid of bad teachers and the unions that support them"; 2) any current Indy charter/Innovation school board members, staff, teachers, and principals, as well as Hogsett's Charter board, and the IPS board and district administration, and staff; and 3) any media (Star, *NUVO*, *Indianapolis Business Journal*, *WTLC/Community Connections* radio show [host Tina Cosby], *WFYI*), the NAACP, the Indianapolis Urban League, and state legislators and city-county councillors.

8 Black Hands is a well-oiled Mind Trust mechanism that serves any number of a range of functions that assemble, collect, interpret, package and convey research evidence to consumers

for either substantive or symbolic use in convincing the Black poor and middle class to go along with corporate control via privatization of their very own public schools, schools which in many cases they pay for with their taxes.

### **The connections of 8 Black Hands to the charter movement are glaring**

For one example, note, on Mr. El Mekki's LinkedIn page, his connection to Education Trust: <https://edtrust.org/> and The New Teacher Project: <https://tntp.org/blog/post/getting-teachers-of-color-in-the-door-isnt-enough>.

As well, note his 11 years of work for Mastery Charter Schools--an organization with \$153.1M in revenue: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/masteryschools/> or <https://masterycharter.org/>. Wow! This amount of "revenue" for a non-profit charter group turns it into a quasi-for profit and enables the "segrenomics business" of the Education Industrial Complex, which according to Professor Noliwe Rooks, CMOs)/EMOs<sup>3</sup> profit off segregated poor communities by selling them education services.

This is what is happening with neo-colonial charters in Black areas where Indy now has the new Kolonizing Indigenous Poor People (KIPP) High School in Brightwood.

What's relevant to this analysis and opinion piece is that the 8 Black Hands are the generational peers for the MT fellows, the many Marian U Teach for America staff, students and grads, and more particularly, those RiseIndy folks who want to see themselves as hip as 8 Black Hands.

### **Rise Indy members only club**

In fact, let's look at the RiseIndy (<https://riseindy.org/home>) members only club who gathered some \$136,638.15 for all 4 of the IPS 2020 corporate school reform board candidates. See: <https://www.badassteacher.org/bats-blog/school-board-elections-2020-the-good-the-bad-and-the-ugly-by-thomas-ultican>.

Hey, just think, \$136,638.15 is a lot of money. Yet, again, this money (from billionaires: <https://dianeravitch.net/2020/10/29/indianapolis-stop-the-billionaires-from-capturing-our-school-board/>) has been hard to turn down by some millennials in today's charter movement--especially if your college debt pushes you financially and your need to stay hip, pushes you personally and culturally.

### **What's tragic here is the hidden agenda enabled by 8 Black Hands**

"More specifically, TFA and its international iterations by way of TFAI [Teach for All], represent a systemic deregulation of teacher preparation away from state-run colleges of education while also producing corps members that embody neoliberal assumptions about meritocracy and credentialism as a means and method of individualistic economic competition." See: "Teach For America and Teach For All: Creating an Intermediary Organization Network for Global Education Reform" at <https://www.redalyc.org/pdf/2750/275041389068.pdf>

### **Neo-liberalism, globalization, imperialism: New markets for 8 Black Hands show!**

What's unfortunate for Indy's Black parents and taxpayers, is the seeming lack of awareness by the 8 Black Hands men of exactly whose interests they're serving. It's not just Black America's.

At this stage, the privatization of public education influences the world. Now, 8 Black Hands has a global marker for its travelling show.

"This is not about education at all; it's about power." ~ James Baldwin

One just has to study the advancement of privatization via neo-liberalism to its embrace of globalism, all converging for US corporations and the validation America's global economic ideology, e.g. the imperial commoditization and socio-political spread of the international "Coca Cola culture" (Cocacolonization) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NUzql4U5t8E>, which is the playbook for the global privatization of education movement.

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~ Audre Lorde

### **The 8 Black Hands are now dirtied via an unwitting entanglement with philanthrocapitalism and "the master's tools"**

"Philanthrocapitalism" what the...? See this important complexity around "the master's tools" unpacked on pages 5-8 of the analysis: "Impact Investing and Critiques of Philanthrocapitalism" <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/104505/impact-investing-and-critiques-of-philanthrocapitalism.pdf>.

### **Public education needs liberators, not reformers**

Indeed, in many respects, the current efforts to organize certain Black educators who are out to reform our public school system can be an important move in the right direction, but it has not arrived in the way that it is being sold by 8 Black Hands, especially when using the word "liberation." Unfortunately, because of the neoliberal definition of liberation, and unfortunately due to all of the big, big, big money supporting this neoliberal turn in Black politics <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k5prifYxTsE&t=69s>, as well as Black educational politics, these attempts at education for liberation, as in the past, have been compromised.

### **CONCLUSION**

What's tragic here is the waste of time, energy and mostly money because the 8 Black Hands men are reformers, not the true revolutionaries traditional public education needs to liberate education from the grips of the coloniality of schooling. But, revolution won't happen in Indianapolis, Indiana. 8 Black Hands and co-conspirator The Mind Trust know their limits.

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1. Regarding US 2020 scores, only 18% of Black 4<sup>th</sup> graders scored proficient or above in reading; the figure for white 4<sup>th</sup>-graders was 45%. For 8<sup>th</sup> graders, the percentages were 15 and 42%. Alarming!
  2. Billionaires like LinkedIn's Reid Hoffman or former NYC mayor Mike Bloomberg, groups like Democrats for Public Education, and Indy's Mind Trust, Al Hubbard, Marianne Glick, Bart Peterson, or Reid Litwack
  3. Charter Management Organizations (CMOs)/Education Management Organizations (EMOs)

## The coloniality of today's urban schooling

1875: Kill the Indian, save the man  
2021: Kill the homeboy, save the man

*Schooling the World -- The White Man's Last Burden*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ENlvc19eXnM&t=7s>



1875: Kill the Indian, save the man

"We instill in them a pronounced distaste for the native life so that they will be humiliated when reminded of their origin. When they graduate from our institutions, the children have lost everything native except their blood."

~ Bishop Vital Grandin, Canadian Indian boarding school advocate, 1875



2021: Kill the homeboy, save the man

"Urban students quickly receive the message that they can only be smart when they are not who they are. This in many cases is classroom colonialism."

~ Prof. Chris Emdin, "Reality Pedagogy"

**Counter-narratives to the 8 Black Hands by their social-cultural peers**  
*This analysis with commentary challenges Mind Trust to bring in these Black hands*

**Dr. David Stovall**

7-20-21 - Dr. Tim Slekar - Host Dr. Johnny Lupinacci — Cohost

Today we're joined by David O'Stovall to discuss his recently published article in The Hechinger Report: "Opinion: Using critical race theory to understand the backlash against it."

<https://hechingerreport.org/opinion-using-critical-race-theory-to-understand-the-backlash-against-it/>

Join us as we dissect this high-minded, collegiate level subject matter to try and find why it can be so useful <https://www.devilradio927.com/podcast/8-3-21-busted-pencils/>

**Dr. Jeffery Duncan-Andrade**

Disrupting Systems of Social Reproduction - Jeff Duncan-Andrade

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XEG-yPAUUYg>

**Dr. Chris Emdin**

Teaching & Being "Rachetdemic" Christopher Emdin

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4QmFREcXri0>

Keynote at Coalition of essential schools

<https://www.coseboc.org/gol18-dr-chris-emdin>

**Dr. Shawn Ginwright**

[https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=2854631208129599&ref=watch\\_permalink](https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=2854631208129599&ref=watch_permalink)

**Additional information**

- **8 Black Hands video playlist**  
[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLxL2\\_4Oq mzPhkfCX52AyjbQF6WgvH6fax](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLxL2_4Oq mzPhkfCX52AyjbQF6WgvH6fax)
- **To the Black Education Reform Establishment: Be Real with Who You Are and Whose Interest You Represent**  
<http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/To-the-Black-Education-Reform-Establishment-Be-Real-with-Who-You-Are-and-Whose-Interest-You-Represent.pdf>
- **Do we want Teach for America running our IPS? I don't: The hidden influence of Teach for America ideology on education in Indianapolis.**  
<http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Does-Indianapolis-actually-want-an-entire-privatized-school-system.pdf>
- **Why People of Color Must Reject Market-Based Education Reforms**  
<http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Why-People-of-Color-Must-Reject-Market-Reforms-Aimed-at-Privatizing-Our-Public-Schools.pdf>



- **Education or Neo-colonialism? Comparing the historical and educational situations of Australian Aboriginals and African Americans students**  
<http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Education-or-Neo-colonialism.pdf>
- **What is a quality education for urban students? Education for liberation: Education as the practice of freedom**  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317098285\\_What\\_is\\_a\\_high\\_quality\\_education\\_for\\_urban\\_students\\_Education\\_for\\_Liberation\\_Education\\_as\\_the\\_practice\\_of\\_freedom](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317098285_What_is_a_high_quality_education_for_urban_students_Education_for_Liberation_Education_as_the_practice_of_freedom)
- **Does Indianapolis really want an entirely privatized public school system?**  
<http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Does-Indianapolis-actually-want-an-entirely-privatized-school-system.pdf>
- **Bait & Switch: Understanding the closing of Broad Ripple, Northwest, and Arlington high schools and the opening of The Bottle Works**  
<http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/BAIT-and-SWITCH-Understanding-the-closing-of-Broad-Ripple-Northwest-and-Arlington-high-schools-and-the-opening-of-The-Bottle-Works.pdf>
- **Parents Across America reports Parent Power's plan to reunite Black families and public education**  
<http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Parents-Across-America-reports-Parent-Powers-plan-to-reunite-Black-families-and-public-education.pdf>
- **Why Black and Latino Males Don't Go into Teaching and What to Do about It**  
<http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Why-Black-and-Latino-males-dont-go-into-teaching-and-what-to-do-about-it.pdf>
- **The Mind Trust's Neo-colonial War on Parents Part One**  
<http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/The-Mind-Trusts-Neo-colonial-War-on-Parents-Part-One.pdf>
- **The Mind Trust's Neo-colonial War on Parents Part Two**  
<http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/The-Mind-Trusts-Neo-colonial-War-on-Parents-Part-Two.pdf>
- **The Mind Trust as Whiteness**  
<http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/The-Mind-Trust-as-Whiteness.pdf>