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Students should see exhibit

I found it somewhat ironic that on the front page of the Enquirer April 29, Sonya Ross's article, "With sighs and sorrow, blacks daunted by 'birther' questions" was next to the article about the opening of the Jim Crow exhibit, "Hateful Things," at the art center.

By 11 a.m. there were over 30 online comments about Ross's article, most of them critical. Ross did not say that Donald Trump, or any of the people who believe in the so-called birther conspiracy, were racist. What she said was that for people of African-American heritage, it was a troubling event. For people who have experienced racism first-hand, or who have had parents or grandparents who perhaps had to "show their papers" in the past, this incident was a hurtful reminder of the "Jim Crow" past of this nation.

The greatest irony to me, in the placement of the two articles, is the fact that the administrations of the two city school systems have for some illogical reason decided that the Jim Crow exhibit would be too divisive, and therefore are not allowing their students to attend, as originally scheduled. I was shocked and appalled to learn this at one of the docent training sessions. Dr. David Pilgrim, the founder and creator of the Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia at Ferris State University, has said, "The mission of the Jim Crow Museum is straightforward: use intolerance to teach tolerance."

How sad that the so-called leaders of the city's two public schools have so little faith in their professional staffs. I have worked with several teachers who had originally planned to take students to this exhibit and I am very confident that those students would have been well prepared to view the exhibit in the manner Dr. Pilgrim intended it to be viewed.

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