SOAPBOX: Phil Brown, Science Fact Fan and Science Fiction Fan, is in The Outer Limits...

Do not adjust your monitor (or magazine) we are controlling the vertical and the horizontal....

Myths, Legends, Textiles and Life

The myth about bald men being bald is incorrect. I have plenty of hair, I just don't have as many fibers on my head as I used to.

The myth about textiles is that they are disappearing. But are they? The truth about the textile industry is that it has always moved to those parts of the world where it could operate for the least cost.

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Why not reality

So there I am at a formal dinner with professors from different departments and a large number of high school teachers—around 30 or so. I had been working with the teachers on developing fiber science experiments that they could do in a classroom. They had been around to other departments, doing similar things. The ensuing conversation went something like this:

Pompous Professor (PP): “So what do you work on Phil?”
Me: “I work with synthetic fibers mainly.”
PP: “You mean textiles.”
Me: “Yes, I do some of that.”
PP: “Well, that’s just weaving isn’t it, been around for thousand of years. (blah, blah, blah) Can’t be anything new in that.”
Me, trying to change the subject: “So, what department are you in?”
PP: “Materials.”
Me: “Materials have been around even longer than textiles. Surely there is nothing new in that!” From that point onward we sword fight with words for 10 minutes.... What a waste of time!

It seems to me that because many people see fibers and textiles every day they assume that they must be very basic, or an easy topic, or they present nothing new, or that the field is not at all scientific. If only they knew.

With a little education, I think these skeptics would see that what we do is more akin to rocket science than the scathing “socks washing” perception of the misinformed, arrogant, and ignorant.

As always, improving education, conducting research, and creating new textiles are important missions.

I walk this route for one reason—to help another man think for himself.

The “music of our art” is roots based. We keep it real, but we revolutionize the world with our inventions.

I urge industrialists, technologists, technicians, students, professors, and clerics in our field to take great pride in the work that we all do and to take the time to explain to those around (and to those who will listen) exactly what it is we do.

Together we can do this—and we need to, in order to do the word “textiles” the justice it deserves.

Wisdom from the Stars

On Dying: Life is too short to figure everything out. Enjoy it while you can.

On Dying: Talk to God. God only knows what happens most of the time.

Beam me up Scotty!

Back on planet Earth....
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