

Remarks of William J. Bowe

At a Dinner Honoring Edward E. Gordon and Douglas F. Schroeder

The Cliff Dwellers

September 12, 2018

I've gotten to know Ed Gordon and his wife and business partner Elaine pretty well from conversations at the Members' Table here. So when Eve Moran asked me if I'd say a few words tonight about Ed, I immediately said yes.

It gives me a chance to not only recognize Ed and Doug's work on behalf of The Cliff Dwellers, but also to note Ed's distinguished lifetime of public service and achievement that not all of you may be aware of.

Ed's early education gives an indication of his later lifelong focus on history, literacy and workforce development. After his undergraduate degree from DePaul University Chicago in history and education, Ed was awarded an M.A. in history from De Paul and a Ph.D. in history and psychology from Loyola University Chicago.

By trade Ed became a professional historian, researcher, writer and speaker and has been a consultant to leaders in business, education, government and non-profits for the last 50 years. And for 20 years along the way he has taught history courses at DePaul and business subjects at Loyola and Northwestern.

Given Ed's educational background and interests, we shouldn't be surprised that over his career he is the author or co-author of 21 books and over 300 articles. The culmination of his pioneering scholarship on economic development can be found in his 2013 book, Future Jobs: Solving the Employment and Skills Crisis.

As I said on in my cover review of that book, "By explaining the gaps between our educational system's current outputs and the different skill sets employers are increasingly seeking, Ed Gordon has done a service not just for students, their parents and educators, but most importantly, for the executives now losing the global talent search competition."

On the history side of Ed's books, many of you may have attended the dinner program last October here in the Kiva when Ed and his English co-author David Ramsay talked about their new book, Divided on D-Day. This work offered a new view of the Allied campaigns at the end of World War II and profiled Eisenhower, Patton, Bradley, Montgomery and co-author David Ramsay's kin, Sir Bertram Ramsay. Sir Bertram is the British Admiral who had earlier overseen the successful evacuation of British forces from Dunkirk.

Apart from books and articles, Ed was so prolific that he regularly blogged on my employer Encyclopaedia Britannica's website home page on issues of the day. When I asked for equal time, Britannica said that, unlike Ed, I was a scatterbrain who had nothing to say.

As a professional speaker, Ed has been heard by over 500,000 people and millions more on television and radio outlets such as CBS's The Early Show, The PBS News Hour, CNN, NBC, Bloomberg TV, WGN, NPR and many others.

This is another high bar Ed has set. Even if I were to regularly raise my voice at the Members' Table I don't think I could begin to reach that kind of crowd.

So, all and all, Ed has hit it out of the park both in his personal and professional life, and at The Cliff Dwellers. But enough is enough! This all being said, make no mistake, Ed is in no way a man for all seasons.

Typically in the winter months when I turn up for lunch at the Members' Table neither Ed nor Elaine are ever around. And why is that you may ask. It's because they winter by a pool in steaming hot Palm Desert in southern California, that's why.

So while Cathy and I and many of you are abandoned in freezing Chicago and have to plough through January and February in quiet desperation, Ed and Elaine are lounging in the desert having a la-de-da time with little thought for those they've left behind.

But so be it. Ed and Elaine, we thank you, we love you and we salute you tonight. And, as evidence I am capable of putting aside petty resentments, I personally extend to you both all the best – not just for the coming winter, but for every winter thereafter.