



ASK DEANNA! Real People, Real Advice

Ask Deanna! Is an advice column known for its fearless approach to reality-based subjects!

Dear Deanna!

I am always on the end of cheap gifts from my friends. I never say anything because, of course, it's the thought that counts. I spend good money for birthday presents, gift cards and holidays. We all agree to exchange gifts. I have purchased bottles of perfume, electronics, and jewelry but I always get a book, gift certificates or towels. I want to express my feelings but I'm afraid it will cause problems. How do I get this off of my chest?

Necie
Dayton, OH

Dear Necie:

This is a tacky situation but you should be direct and come out and let them know you feel the gifts they buy are cheap in comparison to yours. This is not the first time doing the gift exchange so they should've noticed by now the quality of your purchases. It may be to your advantage to stop participating. However, if you choose to continue you should purchase a greeting card with a nice message, enclose a simple gift certificate and keep it moving.

Dear Deanna!

My best friend wrecked my car. I didn't have insurance at the time. She agreed to give me the money to get my car repaired. I didn't want to drive the car, so I paid for the repairs and we made an agreement that she would pay me monthly payments. Our friendship is suffering because instead of paying me, she has purchased a new television, clothes and I lost it when she got a new car. She is ignoring my calls and I want to know what I should do next.

Furious Friend
Online Reader

Dear Furious:

You got what you deserve for letting someone drive your vehicle without insurance. If you didn't get an agreement in writing you have nothing but an empty promise. Obviously she has money because she's enjoying leisure purchases and slapped you further with a new car purchase. Your best bet is to approach her and seek a promise in writing. If she won't comply, take her to small claims court but be willing to kiss the friendship good-bye in the process.

Dear Deanna!

My son and his wife are living in our basement. This was nice at first because we wanted them to save money and prepare to get their own home. A few months turned into two years and now they have a baby on the way. I want them to leave because they're ready from a financial stand point. They have jobs, vehicles and good credit. When I bring it up, my son and I argue and my wife accuses me of throwing them in the street. How do I win this battle?

Tied Up Husband
Indianapolis, IN

Dear Husband:

As the man of the house, it's time to give your son an eviction notice. It sounds as if you've been patient and equipped him with tools to be successful. In other words, you have allowed the free loading to last long enough and they need to get out now so they'll have a place for their baby. If your wife insists they must stay, then create a lease, begin to collect rent and utilities and watch the door because they'll soon leave just as you wish.

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Takes team to raise a child

By Hazel Trice Edney
Special to Sentinel-Voice

WASHINGTON (NNPA) - Year after year, decade after decade, Black organizations and leaders have written about, talked about, preached about, held forums, campaigns, conferences and conventions about the state of Black America — particularly Black youth — and how to make progress.

Yet, according to a new book, "Crisis in the Village: Restoring Hope in African-American Communities," the state of Black youth remains as follows:

- Every five seconds during the school day, a Black public school student is suspended.
- Every 46 seconds during the school day, a Black high school student drops out.
- Every minute, a Black child is arrested, and a Black baby is born to an unmarried mother.
- Every three minutes, a Black child is born into poverty.
- Every hour a Black baby dies.
- Every five hours, a Black child or youth is a homicide victim.
- Every day, a Black youth under 25 dies from HIV infection.
- Every day a Black youth under 20 commits suicide.

The author, Robert M. Franklin, asks in the book, "In view of our diagnosis of what ails the village, the question now is, what will we do?"

A distinguished professor of social ethics at Emory University, Franklin outlines a strategy that includes enlisting specific Black institutions as catalysts, presenting a framework for accountability and appealing for broad public and philanthropic support. But, in an interview with the NNPA News Service, he and other supporters of the book's plan, concede that the cycles of the past prove that it will take much more work than talk in order to make major strides for Black progress.

"It is an interesting pattern in American protestant religious life that we have these cycles of revival and renewal that, then, sort of settle down and there's need for a call for back to revival," Franklin said after a discussion of the book at the National Press Club in Washington.

"In some ways, I've seen these efforts for village renewal assuming much the

same sort of patterns. We hear the alarms — the Million Man March, the National Urban League, the Gary, Indiana, political conventions — people hear the alarms, they hit the snooze buttons and they rest awhile and then they return."

Franklin says "Crisis in the Village," is a book that he hopes will, at least, begin galvanizing people from the grassroots up instead of waiting on Black leaders to motivate them.

"I don't expect a rapid response on this," he said. "I expect it to germinate, to grow and mature. If young people take it up, I believe it will have legs for the future, and public school teachers and community agents and barbers and beauticians. Those are the leaders that I think will give the substance, so I'm really in for the grassroots."

The "village" in the book



"In view of our diagnosis of what ails the village, the question now is, what will we do?"

— Robert Franklin
Author of
"Crisis in the Village"

is used to describe Black community institutions, such as churches, educational institutions, businesses and social and civil rights organizations on which African-Americans have traditionally depended for progress.

It is through the growth and involvement of these same institutions that African-Americans will excel, says Hugh Price, former president and chief executive officer of the National Urban League, who also spoke at the forum. But, the challenge will be to excite Blacks around social issues rather than symbolism.

"Anger galvanized us around the confederate flag flying in the South, but development issues do not galvanize us," said Price. "We will not march on behalf of development for our children, but we will march to bring the Confederate flag down off of a capitol building."

Price said that in his former "State of Black America" speeches, "the story was repeated over and over again about those as-

pects of the Black community that needed attention." Since stepping down from the Urban League in 2003, Price said he has observed that African-Americans must also find common issues with Blacks from other nations for strength and unity.

"The village, make no mistake about it, has dispersed geographically, and has dispersed economically, spiritually. There is no unifying purpose; there is no unifying bogymen. There's no sense that we're all in the same boat," Price said.

"There's been a dilution of color solidarity in the African-American community. With the advent of immigration, people are coming from various parts of the Diaspora, people with different backgrounds and experiences. Building solidarity as a country now is a challenge," Price said.

That unity must not only

and '80s, decreasing tax bases and leaving cities to suffer, Sanders says.

"We have decided in our church that no matter what pressure we're under — and we have been under specific pressure — to give it up, to move," Sanders said.

"And we have decided that if this is one of the hot properties, then maybe we'd better stick around and experience what's making it hot. So, we have decided that we are not going to leave."

Jim Wallis, author of "God's Politics: Why the Right Gets it Wrong and the Left Doesn't Get It," agreed with Sanders, saying people on opposite sides of the political spectrum must also find common ground in order to push Black progress.

Quoting Franklin's book, Wallis calls this "a grand alliance" of progressives and liberals and conservatives who would bring a strategic investment to issues such as health care, childcare, affordable housing, and fair tax policies.

"That kind of grand alliance will help break up this logjam of just blaming each other for poverty. We have to stop blaming each other for problems and ask what are the solutions," said Wallis.

Jawanza Kunjufu, author of the 1986 book, "Countering the Conspiracy to Destroy Black Boys", who has also read Franklin's book, said in an NNPA interview that he agrees that Black progress is less about outside influences and ultimately about what grassroots Blacks will do among themselves.

As one example, "The million dollar question is, what can Black people do to increase the amount of dollars they spend with Black businesses," Kunjufu said.

"If the quote-unquote Black middle class no longer lives in the Black community, then they shop in the suburbs," said Kunjufu. "So, that's the dilemma, that if you live in a country that's capitalistic and patriarchal — and we do — then how are we going to increase this percentage of African-American men who stay with their children and their families if, one, they are miseducated by their school systems and secondly, there are no economic options available for them. So, unfortunately... all the conferences in the world and all the books and forums in the world are not going to

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