



## ASK DEANNA! Real People, Real Advice

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

Dear Deanna!

I think I'm in a relationship that is one-sided. In the beginning my boyfriend and I shared a lot, communication was good and we talked about our goals. Now we don't do anything recreational unless I make a suggestion and pay for everything. I keep trying to love him, support him and find out what's going on. He won't respond but he won't be rude nor leave the house. I'm very confused and these mixed signals make it worse. How do I get through to him?

Going Crazy  
Toledo, OH

Dear Going Crazy:

Your boyfriend has simply fallen out of love with you. He thinks he's being nice and respectful but he's really being dishonest with you. He has some pent up feelings and thoughts that will only come out if you ask direct questions. You should ask him to share his feelings about the relationship, find out where you stand and if he wants to be with you. Don't make assumptions but rely on his direct response and actions and be willing to take the good with the bad.

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Dear Deanna!

My cousin is dating someone but they have an open relationship and have been known to date other people. They still have a good relationship because they are upfront with everything. Now, her boyfriend is interested in dating me on the side. I am also interested in him but I don't know how my cousin will react. I know it wouldn't be anything serious because they often joke about the people that try to come between them. Should I date him anyway?

Anonymous  
Dallas, TX

Dear Anonymous:

This is not the solution if you want something meaningful in a relationship complete with respect and sincerity. You already know going in that you would have your cousin's leftovers and everyone else's because he's a recreational dater. Then you have to ask yourself if this man is worth the confusion with your cousin and family drama that will be sure to follow. Choose someone else to date unless you purposely want to be second fiddle with no options.

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Dear Deanna!

I'm engaged to a good man and we love each other. He cheated on me and got someone pregnant and I stuck by his side from the beginning to the end. He has no plans of leaving me but the child's mother doesn't understand that. She's using every trick she can think of but he won't budge. We are getting married soon. Am I supposed to sit and watch or is there something I can do to help him?

Committed  
Hickory, NC

Dear Committed:

It's good that you're standing by your man and even better that you're getting married. Your future husband obviously told this woman things she wanted to hear because there's a baby and she has hope. Your husband is the key to this puzzle. He needs to establish a paternity suit, make child support decisions and a custody arrangement. You need to support him while he puts things in order and then go into a clean marriage with no baggage.

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Write: Ask Deanna! Email: [askdeanna1@yahoo.com](mailto:askdeanna1@yahoo.com) or 264 S. LaCienega Blvd. Suite 1283 Beverly Hills, CA 90211 Website: [www.askdeanna.com](http://www.askdeanna.com).

# Study: Blacks ready for future

Special to Sentinel-Voice

(NNPA) — According to one of the largest-ever studies of Black America, 70 percent of African-Americans already have a plan for their future. The results of the survey were recently released by Radio One Inc., the study's sponsor, and Yankelovich, the Chapel Hill-based research firm.

The survey of 3,400 African-Americans between 13 and 74 years of age, the only study to include Black teens and seniors, also found that 54 percent were optimistic about their future and 60 percent believe "things are getting better for me."

The study, released in late June, provides the most detailed snapshot of African-American life in the United States today, and finds strong group identity across age and income brackets.

It also discloses a comprehensive and nuanced look at how African-Americans feel about many aspects of life in America, and cautions against a simplistic reading of Black America as a monolithic group.

In fact, it shows that Blacks are divided evenly on how they liked to be described, with 42 percent (who are more likely to be affluent) preferring to be called "Black" and 44 percent preferring "African-American."

The survey, representing nearly 30 million Black Americans, identified eleven specific segments within Black America today, ranging from Connected Black Teens, Digital Networkers and Black Onliners at the younger end, to Faith Fulfills, Broadcast Blacks and Boomer Blacks at the older end.

The segmentation analysis identifies differences in Black America regarding everything from what it means to be Black today, perceptions about African-American history and expectations for the future of Blacks, to consumer trends, media preferences and confidence in key institutions (such as the church, government, financial services companies and the media).

For instance, among the Connected Black Teens segment, 25 percent are saving to start a business. Yet, among Digital Networkers, the majority of whom are in their 20s, 45 percent are already saving for retirement.

"While people are less inclined these days to think that

all Blacks are the same, they really do not understand the diversity within the African-American community," Catherine Hughes, founder and chairperson of the Board, said.

"Blacks share many commonalities regardless of age, income and geography, but there are also differences — that suggest a new understanding of the past and a more optimistic sense of the future. We're confident that Black Americans — and all Americans — will find the results of the survey useful and in some cases surprising, given perceptions about Black life that are still pervasive in our country."

Alfred C. Liggins, CEO and president, explained that Radio One commissioned Yankelovich to conduct the study to learn more about

\$25,000 (20 percent of whom are retired), and one-third more than \$50,000.

The digital divide has faded. Sixty-eight percent of those surveyed are online (compared to 71 percent of all Americans), and two-thirds of them shop online.

Among Black teens, over 90 percent are online. Blacks who live in the south are least likely to be online (63 percent).

Black identity remains strong across all age and economic groups.

While 56 percent of those surveyed have "all" or "almost" all Black friends, only 30 percent said they prefer being around people of the same race.

Black solidarity too is strong across all groups, with 88 percent saying they have enormous respect for the

*"Blacks share many commonalities regardless of age, income and geography, but there are also differences."*

— Catherine Hughes



what Black Americans are thinking today about all aspects of their lives, including their hopes for the future, their fears, the institutions they love and hate, how they get information, whether they are plugged into the Internet, and what they want for themselves and their children.

"We wanted to know in detail who we are, what we want and where we are going," Liggins said.

What is Black America today? The average household of those surveyed has three people in it; half live in a single-family home; one-third live in apartments; one-third live in the suburbs, and live half in cities. Among 29- to 74-year-olds, one-third are married.

Sixty-one percent of Black Americans are parents, five percent of 13- to 17-year-olds are parents, and half of all parents are single parents.

From an educational and economic standpoint, 34 percent of those surveyed who are 18 or older have some college or a two-year degree, 21 percent have a BA or higher, 40 percent have an annual income under

opinions of their elders (84 percent among teens).

While 71 percent overall said they believe Blacks need to stick together to achieve gains for their community, only 54 percent of teens concurred.

Discrimination remains a very real part of Black life in America. While 24 percent said they had been personally discriminated against in the past three months, 82 percent said they believe it is "important for parents to prepare their children for prejudice."

Sixty-seven percent overall said they believe the history of slavery is a key way in which Blacks are different from other groups, but one-third also say that too much emphasis is put on the oppression of Blacks.

While 72 percent of Blacks say they know how to have fun and 60 percent think things are getting better for them, many often feel stressed (33 percent).

Money is the greatest cause of stress (53 percent) followed by the well-being of kids (49 percent) and health (40 percent). While only three in 10 feel financially secure, eight in 10 pay their bills each month.

Among other findings in the report:

- 83 percent of those surveyed have health insurance, a majority (66 percent of women and 52 percent of men) has family doctors, and 40 percent of Blacks who go online search the Internet for health and medical information.

- 83 percent of those surveyed describe themselves as Christian, though only 41 percent go to church at least once a week. 70 percent of women and 59 percent of men believe that faith in God is more likely to help them recover from a serious illness.

- 72 percent want to learn more about how to invest. 50 percent believe banks and other financial institutions do not understand their needs; and only eight percent trust credit card companies.

- 21 percent shop for fun frequently and 19 percent said they have to have what they like even if it costs more than they would like to spend.

- Blacks are wary of many American institutions. They have the highest level of trust in the education system and Black media to treat them and their families fairly (30 percent) compared to 24 percent for the healthcare system, 12 to 16 percent for police, government, and mainstream media and 8 percent for credit card companies.

- Other media highlights include: 84 percent of households have cable, 81 percent of those surveyed watch Black TV channels weekly, 87 percent listen to radio in a typical week (only 16 percent listen to Satellite radio), 64 percent watch news or news magazines and 50 percent watch Court shows (compared to 41 percent for sports and 46 percent for entertainment)

- Blacks are not satisfied with how they are portrayed by the media. Only 29 percent agree that the mainstream media portrays Blacks in a positive light — compared to 50 percent who do not relate to the way Blacks are portrayed on most Black TV shows. Two-thirds believe there should be more television shows that focus on Blacks. Forty percent think Black TV is reinforcing a negative stereotype of Blacks.

For more information about the Black America Today study, please visit <http://www.BlackAmericaStudy.com>.