



HERS OPINION HIS



Why Date White When You Plan To Marry Black?

by Vickie Hughes

Many Black women choose to date white men because there is a shortage of Black men in our society. A large percentage of Black men are behind bars, strung out on drugs, or without a permanent job. Nevertheless, there are some decent Black men out there who are still single. Don't use the fact that there is a shortage of good Black men as an excuse to date white men.

Several Black men date white women. What's their excuse? I've heard many white women have money, are stupid, and will give them anything they want. Black men—would you marry someone that you perceive to be this way? Why take advantage of someone you plan to dump when you get tired of them? It sounds to me like Black men have no respect for white women so why date them if you want to spend the rest of your life with a Black woman.

In many cities across the country, including Portland, the ratio of Black women to Black men is 9:1, 13:1, and even 20:1. My advice to you, Black men, is to find one of these Black women. Many of us are searching for and just waiting patiently for a good Black man to come along.

Since I've lived in Portland, I've seen many Black men walk right past a group of Black women in social situations, only to walk straight to white women. Brothers, there is no reason for this. We outnumber you. You never hear anyone say that there is a shortage of Black women. Surely you find some of us to be attractive, intelligent, and friendly. Or, do you?

Whenever I see a Black woman with a white man, the Black woman is

usually very attractive as is the white man and the white man usually has an excellent job. If I see a Black man with a white woman, the Black man looks like a decent person and the white woman is usually unattractive, overweight, or dressed inappropriately; in other words "tacky". I feel that many Black men settle for any white woman just because she is "white". Something is wrong with this picture!

A few weeks ago, I was approached by a white male at a social event that attracted a predominantly white, middle-class crowd. My first reaction was to ask this man why he chose me over a white woman attending the event. He said that he found me attractive and I wondered in what way. This man knew nothing about me, I was not dressed promiscuously, and he had never dated a Black woman. Hmm...I had to ask myself, "Why date a white man when I plan to marry a Black man?" Needless to say, I did not get involved with this man.

While living in Chicago a few years ago, I watched an Oprah Winfrey show that focused on interracial couples. The question raised was, "Why date someone outside of your race?" Some of the responses were unbelievable. One person even said that he/she does it for fun. But what happens if that fun turns into love. Are you going to be able to break off your relationship with your partner just because it has gotten too serious and you don't plan to marry outside of your race? You are playing with someone else's emotions, even your own.

Interracial dating is becoming more and more popular these days. I often wonder why. Don't get me wrong!

I am not totally against interracial dating for those who can accept the other person for who he/she really is, while at the same time, can maintain his/her own true identity. However, if these interracial relationships become interracial marriages, we must consider the products of these marriages--the children. I have friends who are products of these marriages who have adjusted just fine. I have friends in interracial marriages whose children have turned out just fine. But what about those children who are not accepted by their white or Black peers because they don't fit totally into either group. Some of these children never know who they really are. What do you plan to tell your children when they come home from school crying because they have no friends? What do you plan to tell your child when he/she comes to you and asks, "Who am I?" You may be strong enough and have enough self-esteem and pride to talk about your own race but could you explain the other half of your child's heritage. You did not grow up with that heritage, you only dated or married into it. How can you explain it?

Before we enter into an interracial relationship, let's think about the consequences of and reasons behind this involvement. Our motives may not be the best reasons to begin this relationship. There will always be single people in every race that exists. If you plan to marry someone in your own race, look within your own race. Don't date someone of another race and then decide to back out because it has gone too far and you never intended to marry someone who does not share your same heritage. At that point, it may already be too late.

By Ulysses Tucker, Jr.

"...I love you because you're white, not because you're charming or bright. Your whiteness is a silky thread snaking through my thoughts in redhot patterns of lust and desire. I hate you because you're white. Your white meat is nightmare food. White is the skin of evil. You're my Moby Dick. white Witch, symbol of the rope and hanging tree, of the burning cross. Loving you thus and hating you so, my heart is torn in two. Crucified..." *To a White Girl*, By Eldridge Cleaver, *Soul On Ice*.

This is a very strong poem from a very difficult period for black people and the United States. Vietnam, black leadership dying in the streets, the riots and extreme hatred for white America. This poem indicates some strong inner conflict and love by the black man for the white woman. How can a black man love a woman so much and hate her at the same time? Before I address the topic of why someone would date white when they are going to marry black, I will attempt to explain the historical relationship between black men and white women. Though my observations do not speak for all black men, hopefully, I can shine some light on a situation that some might not be aware of or never considered.

During slavery, the self-esteem of the black man was trampled in the mud by the slave owners with public humiliation, death, and other acts of violence. Furthermore, the slave owners abused black women psychologically, physically, and emotionally. Frankly put, the black man was helpless when it came to defending his black woman. The slave owner could rape black women, father half-breed children, and destroy a black family with a bill of sale. He operated above the law because he wrote the law. Some black men attempted to protect their women and many were humbled by the crack of a whip. Yes, the slave owner had a free run through the slave quarters, but let Ms. Sally (the white women) come up pregnant by Mandingo and all hell broke loose on the plantation. The white woman was the forbidden fruit, pure, the standard of beauty established by the system, and placed on the pedestal by the white man.

In many ways, Ms. Sally (or the white woman) was in AWE by the endurance or ability of the black man to tolerate the pain/punishment inflicted

by the slave owner, his sexual powers, and his will to survive. By the same token, the black man developed an intense desire for "an object" (the white woman) that could actually cost him his life. In the process, the slave owner would probably hurt other innocent people (or slaves) trying to find out who slept with his woman. Remember the scene is Robert Townsends' Hollywood Shuffle, when "Mandingo" ran away from the plantation? Right behind him struggled "two sisters" and Ms. Sally (the white woman). All begged "Mandingo" to save them from the dogs and slave hunters hot on their trail. After a split second of contemplation, "Mandingo" pulled Ms. Sally up the hill and left the "sisters" behind to be captured. Why not grab one or both of the "sisters"? Did the attraction between black men and white women developed because they were encouraged to stay away from each other? Was this a dysfunctional sexual attraction?

For whatever reasons for the attraction, it still exists today and the issue of inter-racial dating/marriages has divided many families. Some black men contend that black women are too angry and aggressive for them, often labeled as non-supportive and insensitive to his struggle with the white system. On the other hand, the white woman is supposed to be more loving, supportive, and understanding. Some even contend that the white system would have never progressed this far without the white woman playing such a submissive role. Whether it is wrong or not, it is easy to see how passive-aggressive behavior patterns can hit it off and vice versa. The oppressed black man, hooking up with a loving and supportive woman, sounds like a natural if you understand my premise. It's also easy how a sister might not have the time to stroke the "black mans ego" simply because she was busy trying to hold down the fort or keep the family together. Now that we both can stand up and speak, we should do it together. You can not understand where you are today unless you understand your history. When you reflect for a moment, slavery was not really that long ago and I still think black people are carrying emotional scars/baggage that affect relationships and own some of those slave values/morals.

Why a person dates white knowing full well that they will marry black is beyond my comprehension or intellect, that's if it is on a conscious level. Some black men can do it out of frustration,

bitterness, anger at the white system, or because he sees the white woman as more supportive than black women. Perhaps, black women could be more supportive if 43% of the male prison population was not black men, or if 98% of all blacks killed last year were not killed by other blacks. If black males want support, not sympathy, they must at least be around to give and get the same thing, especially when there are kids involved.

Though there is still plenty of racism in America, to be honest, I thought that marrying someone or dating someone outside of your race would be a non-issue, one of those elements in society you just learn to accept. There are just too many other problems to worry about beside who someone decides to marry or why. I'm talking about unemployment, crime, the drop-out-rate, drug abuse, and a host of other evils that exist today. I have no idea what color the person I decide to marry will be. I would prefer a black woman. Love is a wonderful thing that no one is suppose to have control over when it happens. To say what color I am going to marry would be limiting my chances (consciously) or choices of whom I could fall in love with. Love is deeper than that or is it? For political and other reasons that go hand in hand with my sense of social responsibility, there is nothing greater than my desire to build a strong black family and be a positive role model for my black children in the future. If it does not happen, am I less than a man for marrying someone outside of my race? I can still be a good father and role model. When you decide to make a marriage choice outside of your race, just be prepared to deal with the drama or adversity associated with that choice.

Black people will continue to date whites knowing full well that they will not marry them. So will other races. Italians, Jews, Asians, Mexicans, and a host of other races date outside of their own kind knowing full well that it is dead end. Be it for sex, money, to buy time, or curiosity, all races are guilty of this lifestyle. If you love someone, match up spiritually and intellectually with them, then for go for it. I could care less who you date or marry. All I ask is that you be sincere and not consciously abuse someone. All races have feelings. It is my opinion that if you do not care for the other person, regardless of their color, don't waste your time or theirs in a meaningless encounter.

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This Week In History

By Angelique Sanders



At long last, here is the twenty-year block from 1971-1990.

July 22, 1971: In response to Vice President Agnew's derogatory remarks on Black leaders (which were made five days earlier), Representative Clay says that Agnew is "seriously ill" and has "symptoms of intellectual misfit".

July 20, 1972: Census Bureau reports that its statistics show that the Black family is becoming poorer.

July 19, 1973: The Canadian squash racquet team announces its withdrawal from the South African championships because of South Africa's segregation policies.

July 20, 1974: James E. Baker, the first U.S. Black diplomat to serve in South Africa, announces his plans to take up duties as a member of the U.S. United Nations delegation.

July 19, 1975: The government in South Africa announces its plans to establish "rehabilitation institutes" in Black homelands for those who violate laws governing black employment and migration...these camps can lock up a Black African for up to three years without a trial. an article in Rand Daily Mail likens the institutes to Soviet concentration camps.

July 21, 1976: South Africa's government accedes to pressure from the Black community and agrees to immediately reopen its Johannesburg and Pretoria schools (350,000 Black students had been temporarily barred from their education).

July 24, 1977: National Urban League executive director Vernon Jordan accuses the Carter administration of falling short on Black issues. (A poll held soon after by CBS showed that 21% of Black citizens were dissatisfied with his

performance.)

July 22, 1978: NAACP announces its campaign to lobby Congress and Carter's Cabinet to push the importance of Affirmative Action programs...little did they know their efforts would be undone a few years later when Reagan quashed many of the remaining AA programs.

July 23, 1979: Senator Edward Kennedy speaks at the NUL's annual convention in Chicago, stressing a variety of Black issues.

July 23, 1980: Community activists and Black policemen meet from across the U.S. meet to develop their own recommendations for heading off civil disorders in the nation's slums.

July 21, 1981: Mrs. Eula McClanay, former sharecropper in Alabama who had since become a wealthy businesswoman, announces she will present a collection of her memorabilia to the New York Public Library's Schomburg Collection for Research in Black Culture.

July 18, 1982: Charles Robberts Swart, South Africa's first State President and participant in drafting in some of the nation's apartheid laws, dies.

July 18, 1983: U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar weighs visiting southern Africa to try to break deadlock on independence for South-West Africa; he would meet with South African Prime Minister Botha and with leaders of other factions.

July 18, 1984: An article on S.C. Hemingway appears in the New York Times. **July 24, 1985:** Black economists Professor Glenn Loury and Bernard Andersen debate during NUL conference, on the topic of, whether preferential treatment helps or hinders Blacks.

July 21, 1986: Analysis of new Census

Bureau report shows a dramatic disparity in assets between whites and Blacks in U.S. (and I'm betting they spent more time arriving at that conclusion than the government spent on trying to eliminate the problem).

July 19, 1987: Randall Alan Norton and his brother Roger Dale Norton are charged with assaulting a civil rights marcher in Cummings, Georgia, half of a year after the fact.

July 18, 1988: Pro-government African newspaper Beeld boldly calls for the release of Nelson Mandela.

July 23, 1989: This is the 25th anniversary if the murder of civil rights workers Schwerner, Chaney, and Goodman in Mississippi.

July 18-25, 1990: What happens this week to make it memorable in African American history has yet to be seen. It may be something small, such as a rally; it may be something tremendous, such as Mandela making headway toward South African desegregation. Maybe we can make this the week...

If any of those summaries piqued your interest, the full stories can be found in the New York Times microfilm in the main library. (Don't forget to look in the paper for the day after the event.) Oh, Tuesday--in case you didn't hear--was Nelson Mandela's 72nd birthday. Did you know that while he was jailed, the government deemed it illegal for Africa's citizens to celebrate his birthday? ...but we live in America, so if you didn't do anything in recognition yesterday, take a minute to mentally thank your African brother that is fighting for equality, not solely on his local turf, but earth-wide. He has paid a high price for justice, and keeps fighting...even in his seventh decade of life.