

For And About You

By Harriett Muhammad

DEAR HARRIETT: Before I gained the knowledge of self, names didn't have much meaning to me. But now my mind has been turned toward Africa and, being an Afro-American, I want to name my children African names—not European ones. Could you suggest some to me?

I had been told that some names were religious and some non-religious—what is the difference between the two types? — MR. DO-IT-RIGHT, Watts, Calif.

DEAR MR. DO-IT-RIGHT: When you ask about AFRICAN names, you are asking about a CONTINENT with many countries, hundreds of cultures and hundreds of languages. If I gave you a few names here, I really would be doing you an injustice.

Why? Because you MAY select a name without knowing much about it other than you like the way it sounds or spells, and because the names I could give in this column would not be representative of Africa as a continent. These names usually mean something concerning the person or his ancestors. Religious names pertain to the Supreme Being (Allah), whereas, non-religious names do not.

If you want an African name, I suggest that you think about what part of Africa you are most interested in—go to the library and get some history or language books in order to find numerous names from which to choose. There are, for example, books written in Eng-

lish that list and define Arabic names. You can also find information about names in Swahili; Hausa; several of the famous Bantu languages; Kolsan; Cushitic; Amharic; Neo Saharan; Neo Sudanic; and several of the Niger Congo languages—a FEW of the HUNDREDS of Languages of Africa.

DEAR HARRIETT: I think I have gotten myself into a situation where I need professional help. I have been living with a man for four years. We were going to get married but circumstances forced us to live together first. I have two children, which I had when we met, and he had two. We have never married up to this point.

I have just found out that I am going to have another baby and I don't know what to do. All of our children think that we are both their parents. I do not want to have another child out of wedlock. You see, my two

children have two different fathers. My common-law husband still wants to marry me but I'm not sure I still want to marry him. Could you please give me some advice?—SINCERELY.

DEAR MISS SINCERELY: When it comes to making a decision as to who should be given consideration under circumstances, such as those outlined in your letter, I usually side with the unborn person who, of course, had nothing to say or do with things.

It can never be known in advance whether or not a person stigmatized with illegitimacy will be affected mildly, drastically or not at all. So, it is very selfish to think only of your immediate situation and aim only at securing your own satisfaction.

You are very blessed—how many unmarried expectant women actually have a man who is all for getting married? I suggest you cash in while you are ahead. You've been together for four years with nothing separating you, so you stand a good chance of having a stable, sound marriage.

Something on your mind? Write and tell me about it.

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