

METRO



Keys and Beatz jump the broom
See page B3



Florida concerts to include reggae by Marley
See page B2

SHARING BLACK LIFE, STATEWIDE

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TOJ

President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama dance at the Neighborhood Ball in Washington on Jan. 20, 2009. Want a relationship like the Obamas? It takes work.

CHUCK KENNEDY/MCT



Be a woman all day, everywhere
Have respect, pride and dignity for yourself. If you let your friends take advantage of you, so will your man. If you come home crying about your job every day without being proactive about getting a new one, your man is not going to find that attractive. Be sexy, sweet, sassy, feminine and most of all, be womanly.

Be independent
Not just financially, but be an independent thinker overall. Take the time to learn you and what works best for you instead of taking someone else's advice and forcing yourself into a box. Your core person should not change simply because you are in a relationship. Be independent of your man and have your own life.

Stay on your tippy toes
Don't get comfortable and lazy on your man. Don't just think that he is going to marry you because you have been together for a few years. Get fine-ER, get smart-ER, be bett-ER. A man wants to see growth in you and wants to be excited about who you will be in the future.

Turn his house into a home
As a single brother, my crib had the bare necessities. A woman came by one day and slowly started to upgrade my stuff in a very subtle but profound way because no woman had ever done it before. First it was a couple nice decorative candles; then she replaced my picture frames and artwork. She helped me paint a couple of rooms in my house. I was like "She knows what she doing, I am going to marry her."

Be a Godly woman
There is just something sexy to me about a Godly woman. You want a Godly man, don't you? The Bible is a relationship handbook. Read it. Follow it. Live by it. When your man is weak, you need to be able to refer to that word. When the devil attacks, he needs to know that you know God.

Watch his Momma, do what she do
You don't have to be his Momma, but you should try to be in her likeness. Here is an example: During the holidays when you were at your man's family home, if his grandma, momma and auntie were all in the kitchen and you were in the den watching the game with him, y'all probably had the best time ever, right? But guess what, he's probably going to break up with you. You should be in that kitchen with his female relatives or else go and find yourself a man whose mother can't cook.

Challenge him
If a man doesn't have to respect you, he won't. I tell people all the time, if my wife would allow me to have a girlfriend I would, and I go to church every Sunday. A man is not going to do the right thing unless he knows that if he does the wrong thing it will be met with repercussions and consequences.

Be his biggest fan
Women need love. Men need their egos stroked. We need your support, your encouragement, and we need to know that you believe in us. Tell him that he is a good man, that you are lucky to have him, that he is special and better than you thought. If he doesn't feel like a man, he is not going to be a good man to you.

Nurture him
The art of nurturing a man has been lost. Talk sweet to your man and whisper sweet nothings in his ear. Hug him, hold him, squeeze him too. Being a Black man is hard but with the nurturing of a good Black woman, it's that much easier.

Be the freakiest person he knows
Men talk and our number one conversation is about sex. So when a man is rapping with his friend he needs a good story to tell. At least twice a year he needs to have something that will make his boys say "Dang man, I wish my woman would do that!" Shoot, just the other day me and my wife were making this video right and...wait, let me clear this with the wife first before I tell y'all. Basically, a man has to know and believe that there is not a woman out there that is going to try harder to please him than you.

RELATIONSHIPS *and romance*

Ex 'player' writes book about relationships and how to fix them

BY JENISE G. MORGAN
FLORIDA COURIER

When it comes to relationships, Steven James Dixon pulls no punches and just calls it like he sees it and how he has lived it. The married Dallas resident has been talking up a storm lately about what makes relationships work and what doesn't.

In the last six months, he has been featured in segments on "The Tom Joyner Morning Show," "The Ricky Smiley Morning Show" and on CNN, just to name a few. And for months, he has been writing for Essence.com. And he has a blog, "The Relationship Report," that launched this week on the Web site.

On most days, he's chatting it up on a radio station around the country, answering controversial questions from women about men who have done them wrong or from men grappling with the C word - Commitment.

Principle based on leadership of men

In October, Dixon released "Men Don't Heal, We HO - A Book About the Emotional Instability of Men." In the 216-page paperback, Dixon gives a humorous account of his "transformation from a 'HO' to a successful husband and father."

"My title is aggressive, but let's not lose sight of the goal of transforming men and saving marriages," he told the Florida Courier. "I have developed a



Steven James Dixon

principle that can save all marriages. That principle is that all marriages are either successful or they fail based on the leadership of men."

'Something for everyone'

"Men Don't Heal" also addresses issues for men and women who are struggling in their relationships and shows them how to be successful in them.

"This book has something for everyone. I speak directly to single women, single men, wives and husbands," said Dixon, a college graduate who calls himself a relationship expert. "The book is about men because the emotional stability of the 'man' is the key element to having a successful relationship. If we get the men right, the women will fall in line."

In the book, Dixon tells women why their boyfriend won't

make them a wife, how to get a man and keep a husband, and how to be the best wife that they can be.

Dixon's commentary may not set well with some women because he gets biblical at times - admonishing sisters to be submissive to their men.

On the other hand, he challenges men too - telling what is expected of them as a husband, how to be emotional and still maintain their manhood.

Dixon: Stability of 'man' is key

"My purpose in writing this nonfiction book is to help men become emotionally stable because the emotional stability of the 'man' is the key element to having a successful relationship," he explained.

"If we don't start talking to men about relationships, our relationships will never get better and our families and communities will continue to suffer. I speak directly to and challenge all of the relationship statuses - single women, single men, wives and husbands."

Nationally syndicated film and book critic Kam Williams named "Men Don't Heal, We HO" the 21st Best Black Book of 2009. Dixon says his goal is to be the consummate relationship expert - he has even pitched a reality show that helps couples to Oprah Winfrey for her new television network.

At right are Dixon's 10 tips for women who want to go from girlfriend to wife. The list previously appeared on www.Essence.com.

For more information about the book and more commentaries from Dixon, log on to www.relationshipbeast.com.

Orlando woman to release seventh Harlequin novel



SPECIAL TO THE COURIER

Harlequin/Kimani Press romance novelist Yahrah St. John will debut her seventh novel on Sept. 1 with the release of "If You So Desire."

The book is the third installment in her Orphan Series. St. John is known internationally for crafting entertaining stories about true-to-life characters filled with romance, passion and drama.

She has been awarded four and five stars from book reviewers, in-

cluding Romantic Times, Rawsistaz Reviewers, Romance in Color, and various book clubs.

"If You So Desire," unfolds a story about a successful and driven lawyer named Sage Anderson. Burned by love, she is determined to not mix business with pleasure. But her client, media mogul Ian Lawrence, has other ideas. As the story unfolds, his intrigue and seduction leads to steamy irresistible passion.

"I believe my readers appreciate my contemporary style. I try to keep

them turning the pages with content that is interesting, informative, and relatable," St. John said.

Passion for writing started at age 12

She was featured last month at the Writers of America 30th Annual Conference "Readers for Life" charity book signing held in Orlando.

St. John, a native of Chicago, is a graduate of Hyde Park Career Academy and received a Bachelor of Arts

Degree in English from Northwestern University.

She lives in Orlando, where she is employed as a property manager for a commercial real estate company.

St. John developed a passion for writing at age 12 and has written more than 20 short stories and plays. She first published with Harlequin in 2004.

To read an excerpt and for more information about her books, log on to www.yahrahstjohn.com.