

# **The BLACK C o m m e n t a t o r**

An independent weekly internet magazine  
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[Contents of Issue](#)

[Click here](#)

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[Home](#)

**When the Brothers Blast You and the...  
Black Married Momma  
The Anti-Statistic  
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As much as I am proud and thankful to be married to a beautiful black man, I cannot help but look at many of today's headlines on the state of black marriage and relationships with a bit of déjà vu.

In this recent Washington Post story, "[Wedded to the Idea of Promoting Black Marriages,](#)" we learn that Eleanor Holmes Norton recently held a symposium at the Congressional Black Caucus Conference titled "Single Women, Unmarried Men: What Has Happened to Marriage in the Black Community?" At the packed, standing room only event, Norton recited some sobering, saddening and simply indefensible statistics, among them, the one I reference frequently and find utterly reprehensible:

Today, 70 percent of black children are born out of wedlock.

Norton goes on to state that "For the first time, young black women cannot necessarily look forward to marriage as the next natural state of life. . . They are finding themselves without comparable mates."

Do I hear crickets chirping or an amen chorus?

As a solution, couples counselor Audrey Chapman posited that black women need to deprogram themselves from an ideal and image that many of us have downloaded and reinvented since we first became interested in boys – that whatever preferred characteristics we want him to possess (money, education, interests, etc.), he must be

black at all costs.

"We're the only group of people who are devoted to a group of people who aren't devoted to us," Chapman said in the Washington Post story.

A look at leading players in Hollywood, on the courts and fields of professional sports and even in our own communities supports the truth that many black men, who are at least desirable on paper and by appearances, are choosing to couple with non-black women. Most sisters know that million-dollar actors and globe-trotting athletes are out of our league and, whatever our idyllic fantasies may be, accept that they will be unrequited. But it's different when a good number of black men who are educated, gainfully employed, financially stable, Baby Momma-less, reasonably attractive and presumably healthy want nothing – or little, outside a late-night romp – to do with a woman who looks like them.

A woman who resembles the daughter he is apt to have, no matter the race of the mother. A woman who looks like his sisters, cousins and aunts.  
A woman who reminds him of the one who birthed him into this world.

To be rendered invisible and unworthy of consideration by men who look like our fathers, brothers, cousins, uncles and the best of who we are – heroes like El Hajj Malik El Shabazz, Marcus Garvey and Martin Luther King, Jr. – is beyond offensive. It is deadening to the spirit and esteem of many sisters, though most might be too proud or too hardened to put it that way.

As a result, more sisters seem to be following Chapman's advice. They are going on blind dates with white men; they are joining dating services exclusively for the interracial-minded; there are even some who refuse to date black men at all now (Check out [Black Girls Rock It](#) for more on that!). White men are now putting out books, like [The White Man's Guide to Dating Black Women](#). White men can be seen at social events embracing or walking hand-in-hand with sisters who were the rejects of black men. Talk about chickens coming home to roost.

Even if sisters are overcoming many of the issues that prevent them from dating white men – such as a sense of racial loyalty and pride, feeling that they are not attracted to European features, and the seldom discussed history of sexual assault by white men against black women – some of this openness or openness to become more open rubs me the wrong way. Why? Because it's reactionary, circumstantial and, as a result, insincere in many cases.

What white man wants to be a black woman's sloppy seconds that she settled for because she couldn't find her own Morris Chestnut or Tariq-from-down-the-street-with-a-J.O.B.? What do sisters think they sound like when they say, "I couldn't find X and Y left me high and dry, so I chose Z?" That's essentially what they're doing when they preface their choice to date "out" with statements such as these. And it gives sadistically inclined black men who date and marry interracially for all the wrong reasons even more of a sense of sick satisfaction.

I say this as a black woman who, for years, really felt like I would end up marrying a white man. The first male who told me I was beautiful was white. He had waist-long hair, lips that belied his Irish ancestry, an ear for the jazz stylings of John Patitucci, and a knack for saying the right things at the right times with just enough edge to get me interested.

This occurrence is etched in my memory like reliefs on ancient stone walls because it was a huge happening. It was a polar shift of personal proportions. Before then, all I had heard was how strange I looked, how ugly I was, how nappy and unwieldy my hair was, how fine I would be if I got a perm, how white I acted and how white I thought I really was – my dreadlocks, caramel-colored skin, full lips, narrow eyes, and shapely black physique notwithstanding.

Who populated my mind with such caustic comments? Who perpetuated this pain? Black men and boys who knew not what to make of my then-counter cultural self between the ages of 15-21. (I say “then-counter cultural” because the look I had then is now cool and, for the most part, accepted.)

This experience was followed with a succession of approaches and exposures that collectively made me feel as if any suitor I made it solid with would be white. As attractive as I once found certain white men of the “dark,” swarthy variety, I still felt deeply, palpably, that I would feel most comfortable, at peace among and at home with a black man who would understand why I sometimes wrap my hair in a silk scarf at night, what shea butter is and why I use it, and why I occasionally drop my “-ings” when I’m yapping at home and off the clock. This man would need no context or back story about why certain occurrences made me mad, why a particular look was held a little too long or too suspiciously, or even why a discussion of the “what ifs” just isn’t worth entertaining some time.

This man, too, would be able to break out into a Kid-N-Play kick step with me, on beat, without provocation in a totally impromptu way.

My black husband came to me sooner and in a different way than I ever expected. As much as he was just what I wanted, I was what he had in mind, too: a sister who works out, doesn’t eat pork, wears her hair natural, shares like philosophies and more.

Just like me, black girls weren’t giving him the time of day in high school or college. He was seen as too nerdy, unthuggish, uber-skinny and just not cool, you know, in the way that those brothers who ended up dead or in prison were.

He easily could have decided to leave black women alone and date white exclusively, just like I could have. Instead, we waited, knowing we couldn’t force what wasn’t organically there.

Now, this is not to say that black women shouldn’t date white men. Many people deserve to find happiness, love and reciprocity. People want to feel appreciated and feel needed. Our biological clocks only tick for so long. Statistics prove that some American sisters will be left out to dry if they await their own vision of their African-American prince.

However, sisters need not explore white men only as a “because,” “since” and “as a result of.” It does no one any favors.


*BLACK MARRIED MOMMA are musings from **BlackCommentator.com** Columnist K. Danielle Edwards - a Black full-time working mother and wife, with a penchant for prose, a heart for poetry, a love of books and culture, a liking of fashion and style, a knack for news and an obsession with facts - beating the odds, defying the statistics. Sister Edwards is a Nashville-based writer, poet and communications professional, seeking to make the world a better place, one decision and one action at a time. To her, parenting is a protest against the odds, and marriage is a living mantra for*


forward movement. Her work has appeared in *MotherVerse Literary Journal*, *ParentingExpress*, *Mamazine*, *The Black World Today*, [Africana.com](http://Africana.com), *The Tennessean* and other publications. She is the author of [Stacey Jones: Memoirs of Girl & Woman, Body & Spirit, Life & Death](#) (2005) and is the founder and creative director of [The Pen: An Exercise in the Cathartic Potential of the Creative Act](#), a nonprofit creative writing project designed for incarcerated and disadvantaged populations. [Click here](#) to contact Ms. Edwards.



[Contents of Issue](#)  
[Click here](#)

[Home](#)

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