

Would You Date a Single Parent?



By SMF Marcus Osborne for GalTime.com

There are so many roadblocks to lasting, loving, relationships in our lives that I can't help but to cringe when I hear some of the dealbreakers that people throw up on those cockamamie love lists they construct.

Can't be black, can't be divorced, can't be under 6'1", can't make less than one-hundred grand a year, can't drive a hooptie (if you're unfamiliar with the term "hooptie" consult your urban dictionary) blah, blah, blah.

Why do we do it? What's worse, we often fail to acknowledge our own shortcomings as we judge the next person. Boy, we can be self-centered. But that's another story to be told another time. Some of these "can't be's" appear on these lists with rather alarming regularity. Can't be divorced?? Are you kidding? Good luck with that one after age 30.

And there's such an overt bias against single parents or adults with kids from a previous relationship – wow! When you think about the debris of judgment these folks have to swim through in the dating pool on a regular basis, it boggles the mind. Why are they so persecuted? Why are they filtered out so quickly?

Yes, there's plenty of baby-mama/baby-daddy drama to spare in many a single mom/dad's world. But I'd submit that it's not always a nightmare. As a matter of fact, I'd say it's not nearly as awful a situation as we trick ourselves into believing it'll be. But since we only hear about the disastrous outcomes of single-parent dating, we assume it's the rule and not the exception. No one's more averse to drama than yours truly, but I'd at least take a chance before taking the blanket approach to all single moms.

Ok, so if the guy has 9 kids by 8 women or if she's got 5 kids by 4 guys, there may be some issues. I cede the point. But if you're really into a guy who has children from a previous relationship, why would you cut yourself off from him for that reason alone?

"Marcus, he was soooo great, but he's got a kid." I've heard this a million times, yet I still don't completely get it. And I'm uncertain which gender draws a harder line on kids. From my own, unscientific poll, it seems that guys are a little more willing to date a woman who has kids from a prior marriage or relationship – but I could be wrong.

Mark this day on your calendar. Marcus Osborne said, "I could

be wrong."

I do notice a dramatic difference in the dating attitude of the men I know who have kids, whether their kids live with them or their exes. The single moms are quite often paralyzed by the fear of rejection: "What guy is going to want to date a woman with kids?"

Should I even get into the whole "mother's guilt" thing? You know, the idea that as a single mom the only thing you should be worried about is *being a mom*. The notion that the only way you can be a good mom is to forego a love life or social life until the kids are all grown up and out of the home.

Personally, I think that idea is great – in theory. In practice I think it often results in lives that feel incomplete. And how can your kids be happy if they see that *you're* unhappy? Worse yet, they quite possibly could blame themselves for your unhappiness or loneliness. But hey, you're a single mom, you don't deserve to a partner, right?

On the other hand, the guys, though they may experience some trepidation about stepping into the dating world, seem far more willing to take their swings at love again.

I'm certainly not an advocate of having a bedroom with a rotating door. I think we've all seen and heard and learned enough to know that a single parent with a carousel of bed buddies probably isn't good for the children's emotional health and well-being. But tell me please, what's wrong with a responsible single parent going out on responsible dates with respectable people?

How on earth is this a bad thing?