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THIS may be the last remaining taboo in our supposedly colorblind society. A New York City woman — beautiful, educated, successful and single — accepted a challenge presented by an online dating service that aimed to fix her up with available men.

"I'm not desperate to get married," said Jacque Reid, who co-hosts the "New York Live" lifestyle show on WNBC-TV/Channel 4, serves as a correspondent for the nationally syndicated "Tom Joyner Morning Show" on the radio, and is the editor in chief of SingleandLivingFab.com.

"I've met some good men. I've met some bad men and dated very bad men," laughed Reid, a fitness enthusiast and never-married Atlanta, Ga., native who lives in Manhattan with her pet Shih Tzus — a boy named Sugar-Shane and a girl named Zoe.

"I'm happy being single," said Reid, who declined to give her age.

She said, "I'm excited about" the Web-based match-up service. "It will be fun — and I'll get some dates."

But two days after we spoke last week, a WNBC spokeswoman informed me that Reid (near right, attending a fashion show with the model Shaun Ross) no longer planned to accept the dating service's challenge because she was busy.

A friend told me that she'd changed her mind about it. Why?

The answer may be found in the dating service's name: InterracialDatingCentral.com.

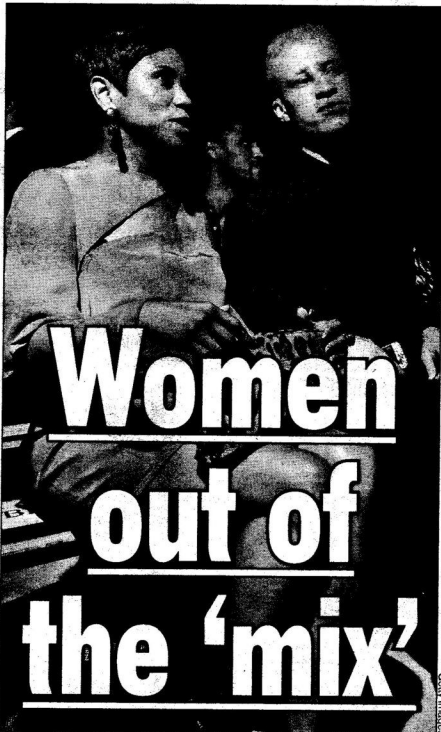
Reid, who is African-American, had opened herself up to the possibility of going out with men who were not.

Except for one white guy, she was dated only within her race.

Reid had talked about the challenge on the radio and publicly accepted the service's offer.

She agreed to be featured in a news release announcing that she would go on a series of blind dates with four New York-area bachelors of all races, including African-Americans.

Then the pushback began. In this day and age, some people are vehemently against the idea of



a woman of color going out with men of other backgrounds.

And the opposition comes from within the black community.

How can this be? Mayor de Blasio, who is white, has been married to a black woman, Chirlane McCray, for more than two decades, and race matters to no one.

But the black character Olivia Pope (played by Kerry Washington), a Washington, DC, crisis manager on the ABC show

"Scandal," is routinely savaged online for having a fictional affair with the show's married, white president of the United States.

"People don't understand. They think it's no big deal, but it is," said Christelyn Karazin, co-author with Janice Roshalle Littlejohn of the book "Swirling: How to Date, Mate, and Relate Mixing Race, Culture and Creed."

Karazin also writes the blog Beyond Black & White, runs an on-

line forum of the same name and is brand ambassador to the interracial-dating site.

She was set to help Reid find new men.

"Why do you have to be brave to date whomever the hell you want to? This is 2014, not 1814!" she told me.

More than 12 years ago, Karazin, 41, who is African-American, married a white insurance executive, Michael, 42.

The pair lives happily in California with their three kids and Christelyn Karazin's daughter from a previous relationship.

Yet criticism — some of it hurled online, some of it in Karazin's face — for "marrying out" can be cruel.

Most of it comes from black men, she told me.

"Black men date or marry interracially at more than double the level women do," she said.

"They are given a pass. They can date anyone they want — black women, white women."

The purpose of the dating challenge, she said, was to expand a woman's choices.

Black women are up to 50 percent more likely than their male counterparts to graduate from high school, reports the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and The Schott Foundation for Public Education.

About twice the number of black women attend college as black men, according to the National Coalition of Black Civic Participation.

And the Pew Research Center determined that black men were more than six times as likely as white men to be serving time in prisons and jails in 2010.

Meanwhile, said Karazin, the rate of out-of-wedlock births to black women is 72 to 80 percent — up to 100 percent in some communities.

Some of the ills facing black men, particularly high incarceration rates for relatively minor crimes, are unfair to them.

But Karazin does not believe that black women should be limited by race when choosing partners.

She's right. Skin color should not matter when it comes to love.

Women out of the 'mix'

I SMELL A BRAT IN THIS LATEST LAWSUIT

A judge has ordered the divorced parents of Caitlyn Ricci,

Temple University — although she moved into her paternal

financed her lawsuit. This is like the case of Rachel

shake them down for tuition money and other expenses.