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One third of women in their 40's vote yes to the younger man

One third of women over 40 say they are now looking to date a younger man, according to a new survey, but these women are no longer looking for a quick fling to boost their confidence: they want romance, lasting love and even marriage, just like celebrity role models Demi More, Amanda Redman and Joan Collins

A new study of 4,500 British singles by PARSHIP – the online dating service founded on a scientific compatibility test – indicates that, since 2005, women in their 40's and 50's have become significantly readier to date a man who is their junior by five years or more. The so-called 'urban cougar' has moved from marginal to mainstream.

In 2005 PARSHIP reported that just 8% of women in their 40's and 50's would consider dating a younger man. This figure has risen dramatically in just four years. In 2009, a massive one third (34%) of women in their 40's (31%) and 50's (38%) say they would date a man who is five years or more their junior.

The allure of dating a younger man is no longer the reserve of the over 40's brigade: the thirtysomethings who stereotypically looked to an older man for a marriage proposal are now embracing this new trend. Like Martine McCutcheon, 17% of women in their 30's are looking for commitment from a younger love.

Of women in the survey who said they'd date a younger man, four out of ten were looking for a partner for a lifelong relationship, while 44% were looking for something steady, safe and secure; just 13% were looking for a new start following a break-up.

Dr Victoria Lukats, psychiatrist and PARSHIP's dating expert, commented:

"Dating a much younger man has now become mainstream and acceptable – perhaps this is down to the media reporting of celebrity age gap relationships, or more likely it's due to the growth of internet dating where people realise that if they are more flexible in their search criteria, including age, they will have more potential matches. Internet dating also encourages people to focus on what's really important in a relationship and for many women, their priority becomes finding a partner with whom they are compatible, irrespective of age."

These 40-plus women, who form approximately 20% of the six million single Britons visiting dating sites each month, are proving irresistible to younger men: 18% of single males under 40 openly

admitted they were actively looking to meet an attractive older woman, compared to just 5% five years ago.

When it comes to men over 50, however, just 8% would consider dating a woman five or more years older than they are, while 40% would like to date a younger woman.

Age	Women who would date a younger man	Men who would date an older woman
20's	2%	20%
30's	17%	22%
40's	31%	13%
50's	38%	13%
60's	36%	8%

- Ends -

For more information, a copy of the report or case studies, please contact.

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About PARSHIP

PARSHIP.com, the largest premium online matchmaking service in the UK, is specifically for people who are serious about forming a lasting relationship and is built on a rigorous personality profiling test that determines compatibility. It is the British subsidiary of Europe's most successful serious online dating service, now with millions of members, predominantly affluent, educated men and women between 28 and 55 years old.

Since its launch in 2001, PARSHIP has successfully matched tens of thousands of couples, and it now operates in 14 countries of Western Europe and also in Mexico

PARSHIP GmbH is headquartered in Hamburg and is 87%-owned by Holtzbrinck networXs AG, part of the Georg von Holtzbrinck publishing group, one of Germany's largest publishing companies with financial interests in more than 80 companies, including the Macmillan Group.

About the PARSHIP AGE GAP RELATIONSHIP Survey

To establish the number of women who would date a younger man, PARSHIP surveyed a random sample of 4,500 of its members in July 2009. The respondents were aged between 18 and 70, split equally between male and female, and based in the UK & Ireland

About Dr Victoria Lukats, MBBS MRCPsych MSc

As well as working as a dating expert for PARSHIP, Dr Victoria Lukats is a specialist registrar within the NHS. She graduated with a medicine degree from King's College London in 1998, is a member of the Royal College of Psychiatrists and has a Masters Degree in Mental health from King's College London. In addition, she writes an agony aunt column on relationships and dating. Dr Lukats is regularly asked to comment and provide advice on large range of relationship topics in the media and her expert opinion often draws on her medical background and therefore combines both science and psychology to provide clarity and greater understanding to the audience.