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Singled Out: How Singles Are Stereotyped,
Stigmatized, and Ignored, and Still Live Happily Ever After
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PW Annex

DePaulo fastidiously defines the various categories of singlehood-divorced, widowed or just plain never been married-and gives their struggle a voice in this intriguing cultural study.

According to DePaulo, "singlism" is the pervasive discrimination single people face in politics and everyday life, though DePaulo makes it clear he isn't equating it with racism or sexism. Rather, DePaulo uncovers society's immediate associations-conscious and otherwise-with the word "single," including the implication of loneliness, homosexuality and/or a personal defect that prevents a single person from achieving the dubiously enshrined goal of marriage. In addition, this exhaustive study reveals how marriage has come to represent the foundation of both American society and politics, and how the resulting system of discrimination pervades even in this modern age of financial freedom-including increased tax burdens, decreased social security benefits, and real-world wage disparity. In identifying the stigmas of being single and debunking myths like "marrieds know best," DePaulo has given this complicated subject the attention and respect it deserves, opening a dialogue without offering any pat solutions.

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[Author's note: I'm a she, not a he.]