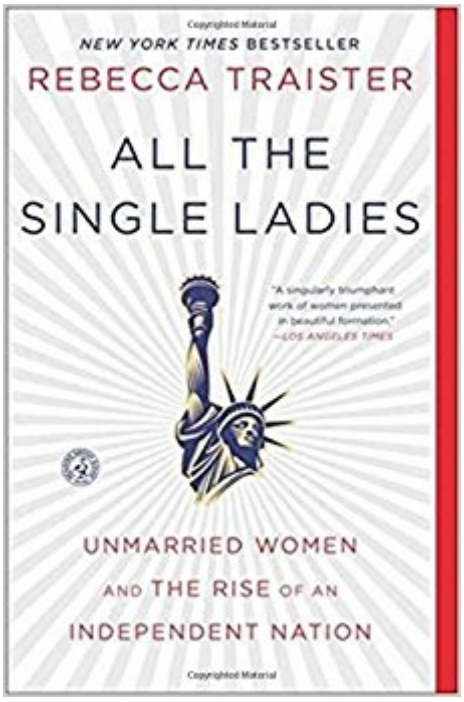
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All The Single Ladies: Unmarried Women And The Rise Of An Independent Nation



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Synopsis

* NEW YORK TIMES NOTABLE BOOKS OF 2016 SELECTION * BEST BOOKS OF 2016 SELECTION BY THE BOSTON GLOBE * ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY * NPR * CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY * The New York Times bestselling investigation into the sexual, economic, and emotional lives of women is Ã¢â ¬Å“an informative and thought-provoking book for anyoneÃ¢â ¬â •not just the single ladiesÃ¢â ¬â •who want to gain a greater understanding of this pivotal moment in the history of the United StatesÃ¢â ¬Â• (The New York Times Book Review).In 2009, award-winning journalist Rebecca Traister started All the Single Ladies about the twenty-first century phenomenon of the American single woman. It was the year the proportion of American women who were married dropped below fifty percent; and the median age of first marriages, which had remained between twenty and twenty-two years old for nearly a century (1890Ã¢â ¬â œ1980), had risen dramatically to twenty-seven. But over the course of her vast research and more than a hundred interviews with academics and social scientists and prominent single women, Traister discovered a startling truth: the phenomenon of the single woman in America is not a new one. And historically, when women were given options beyond early heterosexual marriage, the results were massive social changeÃ¢â ¬â •temperance, abolition, secondary education, and more. Today, only twenty percent of Americans are married by age twenty-nine, compared to nearly sixty percent in 1960. Ã¢â ¬Å“An informative and thought-provoking book for anyoneÃ¢â ¬â •not just single ladiesÃ¢â ¬Â• (The New York Times Book Review), All the Single Ladies is a remarkable portrait of contemporary American life and how we got here, through the lens of the unmarried American woman. Covering class, race, sexual orientation, and filled with vivid anecdotes from fascinating contemporary and historical figures, Ã¢â ¬Å“weÃ¢â ¬â„¢re better off reading Rebecca Traister on women, politics, and America than pretty much anyone elseÃ¢â ¬Â• (The Boston Globe).

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In 1960, more than half of Americans were married to heterosexual partners before reaching the age of 30. That statistic has dramatically reversed in the years that followed, with only 20 percent reaching that same milestone in the present decade. Traister traces the roots of this phenomenon much further back, from 1960, and demonstrates how single women have typically made the decision to marry later or not marry at all when given advantages such as education and career options. The understanding of how single women affect politics and social change is startling to say the least, and young women will find clarification and confirmation in this read. Being single is not a failure, nor is it a death sentence. Media outlets and politicians are often the source of urging women toward heterosexual marriage. Even though this push is typically intended to subjugate women, the book does not condemn the institution of marriage; in fact, the author makes the opposite case. Marriage should be an informed choice, Traister argues, and it should not mean giving up on dreams or aspirations. By weaving anecdotes with detailed research (source information as well as updates on the profiled women are provided), this volume will draw in young adults and help them comprehend the quiet and steady evolution that women have been spearheading for quite some time. VERDICT A stand-out, empowering selection providing substantive research; for general readers as well as those with an interest in feminism and social justice issues.Ã¢â ¬â •April Sanders, Spring Hill College, Mobile, AL

PRAISE FOR ALL THE SINGLE LADIES *Ã Â NEW YORK TIMESÃ Â NOTABLE BOOKS OF 2016 SELECTION *Ã Â BEST BOOKS OF 2016 SELECTION BY BOSTON GLOBEÃ Â * ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY * NPR * CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY *Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“Fascinating, entertaining, surprisingÃ¢â ¬â •and heartening. A brilliant book that is also warm, funny, and a pleasure to read.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Katha Pollitt "Traister is a triple threat--essayist, journalist, and polemicist--bringing a seismic shift to light, hunting down its implications, and showing how it changes politics, and how policy needs to change to reflect it. Her book demands not just reading but discussion and debate.Ã Â Ã¢â ¬â •Boris Kachka,Ã Â Vulture Ã¢â ¬Å“A singularly triumphant work of women presented in beautiful formation... Keenly mindful of race, ethnicity and socioeconomic statusÃ¢â ¬Â¦[Traister] is both deliberate and conversant in her language of

inclusionÃ¢â ¬Â|As impressively well researched as All the Single LadiesÃ Â is...it's the personal narratives drawn from more than 100 interviews she conducted with all manner of women that make the book not just an informative read but also an entirely engaging one.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Los Angeles Times Ã¢â ¬Å“A well-researched, deeply informative examination of womenÃ¢â ¬â„¢s bids for independence, spanning centuriesÃ¢â ¬Â|Traister provides a thoughtful culling of history to help bridge the gap between, on the one hand, glib depictions of single womanhood largely focused on sexual escapades and, on the other, grave warnings that female independence will unravel the very fabric of the countryÃ¢â ¬Â|[she] brings a welcome balance of critique and personal reflection to a conversation that is often characterized more by advocacy and moral policing than honest discoveryÃ¢â ¬Â|All The Single Ladies is arriving just in time. This is an informative and thought-provoking book for anyone Ã¢â ¬â œ not just the single ladies Ã¢â ¬â œ who wants to gain a great understanding of this pivotal moment in the history of the United States.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •New York Times Book Review (EditorÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Choice) Ã¢â ¬Å“Powerful and convincingÃ¢â ¬Â|weÃ¢â ¬â„¢re better off reading Rebecca Traister on women, politics, and America than pretty much anyone else. [Traister is] one of the nationÃ¢â ¬â„¢s smartest and most provocative feminist voices.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •The Boston GlobeÃ Â Ã¢â ¬Å“The enormous accomplishment of TraisterÃ¢â ¬â„¢s book is to show that the ranks of women electing for nontraditional livesÃ¢â ¬Â|have also improved the lots of women who make traditional choices, blowing open the institutions of marriage and parenthoodÃ¢â ¬Â|This rich portrait of our most quietly explosive social force makes it clear that the ladies still have plenty of work to do.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã Â Ã¢â ¬â •Slate Ã¢â ¬Å“A monumental study of the political, economic, social, and sexual consequences of the rise of unmarried women.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •New Republic Ã¢â ¬Å“Lucid and well-researchedÃ¢â ¬Â|[Traister] vividly illustrates the collective power of single women in guiding legal, economic, and social progress and in Ã¢â ¬Ëœasserting themselves as citizensÃ¢â ¬â •full citizensÃ¢â ¬â •in ways that American men have for generations.Ã¢â ¬â„¢ A chapter on female friendships satisfyingly conveys the complexity of a significant, and often dismissed, relationship.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •The New Yorker Ã¢â ¬Å“Personal and relatableÃ¢â ¬Â|[TraisterÃ¢â ¬â„¢s] assessment of single womenÃ¢â ¬â„¢s sex livesÃ Â is so balanced and ordinary-sounding that it becomes extraordinary in a world whereÃ Â Tinder is supposedly bringing a datingÃ Â apocalypseÃ¢â ¬Â|lÃ¢â ¬â„¢ll swipe right on that message any day.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Washington Post Ã¢â ¬Å“Though Traister is no longer one of us, she retains her memories and her empathy, as well as her feminist commitmentsÃ¢â ¬Â|Drawing on, historical and contemporary sources, as well as her own reporting, she has produced a wide-ranging,

insistently optimistic analysis of the role of single women in American society.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Chicago Tribune Ã¢â ¬Å“I canÃ¢â ¬â„¢t begin to count the number of conversations IÃ¢â ¬â„¢ve had in my adult life about my lack of enthusiasm to marryÃ¢â ¬Â| Thankfully, with the publication ofÃ Â Rebecca TraisterÃ¢â ¬â„¢s All the Single Ladies: Unmarried Women and the Rise of an Independent Nation, I can stop explaining and buy her book for all the busybodies in my happily unmarried life. Traister blends history, reportage and personal memoir to propose that the notion of marriage in American life has been and will be written by unmarried women.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •The Guardian (US) Ã¢â ¬Å“TraisterÃ¢â ¬â„¢s illuminating history of women who havenÃ¢â ¬â„¢t put a ring on it, whether by choice or by chance, is smartly placed in a larger historical context and enriched by compelling personal narratives.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Entertainment Weekly, Best Books of 2016 So Far select Ã¢â ¬Å“Traister is one of the sharpest journalists writing about feminism today, and her look into the link between eras with large numbers of unmarried women and periods of drastic social change is absolutely rivetingÃ¢â ¬Â| It turns out the historyÃ Â of unmarried women inÃ Â this country is a fascinatingÃ Â one, whichÃ Â Traister recounts inÃ Â compulsively readableÃ Â detail, combining factsÃ Â with personal storiesÃ Â from single ladiesÃ Â across racial and financialÃ Â spectrums. WhatÃ¢â ¬â„¢sÃ Â left after she joyfullyÃ Â dismantles conservativeÃ Â arguments aboutÃ Â the death of wifely servitudeÃ Â is hope: Ã¢â ¬ËœRing onÃ Â itÃ¢â ¬â„¢ or not, the pathsÃ Â open to women todayÃ Â are varied and bright.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Entertainment Weekly "It takes a gifted writer to conjure an addictive, fascinating read out of centures of dense facts and census data, but that's exactly what journalist Traister does in this illuminating history of unmarried women. Using wide-ranging research as well as interviews, she delves into the different ways singlehood affects women of varying races, socioeconomic brackets, and sexual orientations--and explains how surges in the numbers of single women throughout history have coincided with social change.Ã Â Ã¢â ¬â •Isabella Biedenharn,Ã Â Entertainment Weekly "In this intelligent book, Traister looks at the many reasons for choosing a patch that would have been cultural and economic suicide 50 years ago. She wants single women to recognize themselves as a political force and to celebrate unmarried life for what it can be: an excellent option.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •People Magazine Ã¢â ¬Å“Wonderfully inclusive, examining single women from all walks of lifeÃ¢â ¬â •working-, middle-, and upper-class women; women of color and white women; queer and straight onesÃ¢â ¬Â|With All the Single Ladies, [Traister] brings her trademark intelligence and wit to bear, interspersing her own experiences and observations with dozens of interviews with women all over the country, plus historical context, from so-called Boston marriages (the nineteenth-century name for women who lived together) and the

BrontÃƒÂ« sisters to Murphy Brown and Sex and the City.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Elle Magazine Ã¢â ¬Å“No husband, NPÃ¢â ¬Â¦In All The Single Ladies, an exhaustive examination of independent women and how they shaped the world we live (and date) in today, Rebecca Traister explodes the centuries-old notion that mirage is compulsory to living a happy, fulfilled life and reveals the inestimable power of being blissfully unattached.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Cosmopolitan Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“All The Single Ladies is essential, careful, bold, and rigorous; itÃ¢â ¬â„¢s a warning and a celebration, and I loved it.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Jezebel Ã¢â ¬Å“[All The Single Ladies] has the potential to become a seminal text on female identity in the WestÃ¢â ¬Â¦Traister expertly paints a modern portrait of American life and how we got here, with an intersectional approach that accounts for class, race, and sexual orientation. Even more impressive is how Traister pushes a feminist agenda without the book ever feeling like it has an agenda, or that it's pointing the finger at the reader to make him or her feel guilty.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •VICE Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“A well-written and unabashedly feminist analysis of the history and current situation of single women in America.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Newsday Ã¢â ¬Å“Exploring all aspects of single lifeÃ¢â ¬â •social, economic, racial, and sexualÃ¢â ¬â •TraisterÃ¢â ¬â„¢s comprehensive volume, sure to be vigorously discussed, is truly impressive in scope and depth while always managing to be eminently readable and thoughtful.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Booklist (starred review) Ã¢â ¬Å“[Traister is] a thoughtful journalistÃ¢â ¬Â¦This fast-paced, fascinating book will draw in fans of feminism, social sciences, and U.S. history, similar to Gail Ã Â- CollinsÃ¢â ¬â„¢sÃ Â When Everything Changed.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Library Journal Ã¢â ¬Å“Incorporating a lively slew of perspectives of single ladies past and present, Traister conducts a nuanced investigation into the sexual, economic, and emotional lives of women in America and the opportunities available when marriage is no longer Ã¢â ¬Å“the measure of female existence.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬Â¦Traister is funny and fair in how she deals with the prevalent stereotypes and remaining stigmas attached to being an unmarried woman in societyÃ¢â ¬Â¦an invigorating study of single women in America with refreshing insight into the real life of the so-called spinster.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Publishers Weekly Ã¢â ¬Å“Cogent and provocativeÃ¢â ¬Â¦a persuasive case for why unmarried women have grown into a potent political and social forceÃ¢â ¬Â¦Readers will also appreciate Traister's willingness to recount, with candor and humor, experiences in her own life that fit into the larger national story. This is a fascinating bookÃ¢â ¬â •and an important one.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Bookmark/Politics & Prose Blog Ã¢â ¬Å“Part social and cultural history, part anthropological and journalistic investigation, part memoir, and total investigation into the phenomenon and political power of single womanhood.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Flavorwire Ã¢â ¬Å“Timely and importantÃ¢â ¬Â¦a significant

addition to the literature of sociology and womenÃ¢â ¬â„¢s studiesÃ¢â ¬Â¦Clearly this book belongs right up there with those by Gloria Steinem, Gail Collins, and other feminist writers who shine a light on contemporary life as few others can.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •New York Journal of BooksPRAISE FOR REBECCA TRAISTER "Visionary." --The New York Times Book Review "One of the most powerful voices in a new generation of American feminist writers." --Walter Russell Mead, Foreign Affairs "The most brilliant voice on feminism in this country." --Anne Lamott, author of Bird by Bird "A clear-eyed, whip-smart observer of the political scene." --Daphne Merkin, author of The Fame Lunches "Brilliant." --Maureen Corrigan, NPR's Fresh Air "Clever, caustic, [and] wickedly funny." --Slate.com "The heir to the tradition of Mary McCarthy and Joan Didion." --Eric Alterman, author of The Cause "Provocative and insightful." --Curtis Sittenfeld, author of American Wife

There is so much to love in this book. In many ways it serves as a validation of single life. There are stories of women with careers, friendships, hobbies, and children that fulfill them, all without a spouse. Unmarried women have helped to usher in major social change, including abolition and the labor movement. Traister illustrates that single women are multi-faceted and have full lives beyond trying to find a man. All women who spent some portion of their adult life single will see themselves in this book.Just to be clear, Traister doesn’t disparage marriage. In fact, she is married with two children herself, although she was in her mid-30s before that happened. This book is about women who spend at least some portion of their adults lives unmarried. Most of the time that’s due to marrying later, but there are divorced women and women who live with serious partners as well. The point is that this demographic has been growing steadily larger, and is becoming a political, social, and economic force.The best part of this book is the history, which focuses on the late 1800s to the present. It’s always refreshing when someone acknowledges that the "traditional" 1950s model of a house in the suburbs with the husband working and the wife keeping the house was a historical anomaly and only applied to a relatively small section of society. Traister recognizes that poor, minority women usually had to have jobs outside the home. Feminism has frequently celebrated white, middle-class women for doing much the same thing that these women have always had to do. Traister not only acknowledges they exist, but fits them into the broader framework of society and how demographics and history have affected them.There is a practicality running through the book that I really appreciated. It’s easy to condemn women for having children while single/poor/young, but Traister looks at the economic and social choices that lead women to it. She also looks at some of the more pragmatic downsides of being single. Who will take care of us

when we're old? Who will help us haul furniture home from Ikea? What if we just get tired of both earning our own wages and keeping our own homes?The only quibbles I have are that Traister didn't acknowledge the dark side of female friendship. The chapter about the bonds of friendship between women was positively glowing, and there are many wonderful things to be said. However, mean girls and frenemies are a widely acknowledged phenomenon among young women, and it seemed odd to only cover the positive sides of female friendships.I would also have liked a little more depth on child-free women. It's mentioned briefly, but the emphasis is certainly on single mothers, women who have children later in life, and fertility treatments. The number of women who choose to forgo having children entirely is also growing, and should have gotten a little more coverage.

I picked up this book based on the recommendations of a friend as well as the positive reviews below. After reading the introduction, I expected the book to be an intertwining of interviews with single women from various backgrounds along with a somewhat linear history of the author's own life. This wasn't quite accurate. The first fifth of the book is a whirlwind tour of the history of single women in America. While it is brisk and doesn't go into as much detail as I might have liked, this portion of the book was really interesting. The author makes the case that the groundwork for the phenomenon of a large demographic of single women in our society today (and their acceptance into the mainstream) was laid as early as the late 19th century, and gives examples of the contributions of various women.However, the book seemed to lose its focus after this point. Each chapter is based on a different aspect of the life of a single woman, but there isn't much structure beyond this. It is typical for the author to spend a paragraph or two discussing the experience of some particular woman she interviewed, then use a quote from a historian or historical figure (completely without context) in the next paragraph to imply that this situation is an old one, and then describe a somewhat relevant experience in her own life, before making some broad generalization about how this is a common phenomenon. Much of the content is interesting, but I can't help but wish she would have fleshed more of the material out instead of skimming the surface, generalizing, and moving on. It is dizzying.Overall, I think the book is worth a read, especially for young women, on the merits of its subject matter and the breadth of the topics and events it touches upon. All the single ladies is a good launching place for learning more about feminism and the evolving roll of women in our society.

I don't usually read non-fiction, but I really enjoyed this book. I've been married almost 33 years, but

I was almost 35 when I got married, so I could remember and relate to the experience of being single. Ms. Traister examines this trend from so many perspectives. Very interesting and thought provoking. Well researched. Should be read by every young woman before reaching an age to consider marriage, just so she understands the benefits and drawbacks.

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