

Living Single

The word "single" can be confusing: it can include anyone who isn't married, but most unmarried people who are in long-term relationships don't think of themselves as single. Defining single as not being in a significant sexual/romantic relationship has problems, too -- check out some of our resources on committed friendship.

Over half of all unmarried people live with family, friends or roommates – they may be single, but they are not without relationships!

People who live alone make up over one third of all unmarried people, and over a quarter of all U.S. households. For some, living alone is ideal -- no one to steal the covers, put things away in the wrong place, or say you shouldn't eat lasagna for breakfast. (Only 13% of unmarried adults tell the Census they are cohabiting with their unmarried partner.)

Images of single people in books, movies, and television tend to portray one of two stereotypes: either lonely and leading a miserable existence, or hip and stylish leading the perfect urban life. In reality, of course, singlehood can encompass both realities, and neither. Public figures who are single are subjected to two related stereotypes: either the "Janet Napolitano blessing" (perfect for a big job because she "has no life") or the "Condoleezza Rice curse" (not up to a big job because she "has no family").

If you're not married or in a romantic relationship, people may assume there's something wrong with you, that your life is incomplete. It may feel incomplete to you, too -- or you may feel entirely whole and fulfilled. It can be hard to be single in a "couplist" world. Most of the books, billboards, and ads targeting single people are focused only on how to help them find partners, as if that were the only subject of interest to single people.

These stereotypes infect people's world view and become a harmful prejudice. Dr. Bella DePaulo coined the term *singlism* to describe it. Like any other prejudice, it hurts both the people who believe it and the people who are the target of the beliefs.

In our Living Single section, you'll find:

Living Single Books & Links

Including organizations for single people, resources on committed friendship, asexuality, and links to personal ad sites (for those of you who really are trying to meet someone).

Singles by the Numbers

Statistics about singles that might surprise you - coming soon!