

MarriageFree Books & Links

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- MarriageFree Books

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Books

* *Cutting Loose: Why Women Who End Their Marriages Do So Well* by Ashton Applewhite (1998).

Contrary to the image of the financially-strapped, emotionally-exhausted divorcee, this book tells the stories of women who thrived after leaving unhappy relationships and offers encouragement and advice on surviving divorce. Written by an AtMP board member.

* *Here Comes the Bride: Women, Weddings, and the Marriage Mystique*, by Jaclyn Geller (2001).

A scathing critique of the institution by a feminist who argues that it's not OK to get married. Geller focuses particular attention on how marriage proposals, engagement announcements, wedding invitations, brides, wedding dresses, and weddings themselves are represented in popular culture. To read our full review of this book, check out our July 2001 Update.

* *Heterosexual Women Changing the Family: Refusing to be a 'Wife'!* by Jo Van Every (1995).

About women in a variety of "anti-sexist living arrangements," both married and unmarried.

Marriage Shock: The Transformation of Women into Wives by Dalma Heyn (1997).

Based on interviews and surveys with married women, Heyn chronicles how women change -- often for the worse -- after they get married. Although Heyn concludes that more "conscious" marriages could prevent what she calls "marriage shock," some of us might find her data another good reason not to get married. We found this book to be a fascinating read.

* Unmarried to Each Other: The Essential Guide to Living Together as an Unmarried Couple, by Dorian Solot and Marshall Miller (2002).

Not everyone interviewed for this book is childfree, but many are, and it contains lots of stories and advice on choosing life without wedding rings. Written by AtMP's founders. You can also support AtMP by buying this book from us online.

* The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap by Stephanie Coontz (1992) and

* The Way We Really Are: Coming To Terms With America's Changing Families by Stephanie Coontz (1997)

This pair of books by historian Stephanie Coontz offer clarifying insights into how families have and have not changed -- based on actual information, instead of alarmist "family values" hand-wringing. These are not anti-marriage books, but they do offer a more realistic look at contemporary families.

White Weddings: Romancing Heterosexuality in Popular Culture by Chrys Ingraham (1999).

In this book, Chrys Ingraham provides a much-needed critique of the \$35 billion dollar a year wedding industry. Just as Coca-Cola sells soft drinks, the wedding industry's product is marriage, and its magazines, advertising, and billboards are yet another source of the pressure to marry. To read our full review of this book, check out our May 1999 Update.

Lifework: What Marriage Really Means for Women, by Susan Maushart (2001).

The role of "wife" is one feminists critiqued harshly in the '60s and '70s, but since that time the assumption seems to be that gender roles in marriage have changed. In Lifework, Susan Maushart shows that they have not -- or not nearly enough.

To read our full review of this book, check out our February/March 2002 Update .

* *Women Who May Never Marry: The Reasons, Realities, and Opportunities* by Leanna Wolfe (1993).

This fascinating book, written by a feminist anthropologist, explores the multitudes of reasons women might not be married, focusing mostly on women who are not in relationships (as opposed to women in unmarried relationships).

MarriageFree Links

Alternatives to Marriage Live Journal

Messageboards about alternatives to marriage. This site is independent of the Alternatives to Marriage Project, despite the similarity in name.

Alternatives to Marriage Project Store

Buy t-shirts and mugs with slogans like, "Don't marry, be happy" and "I'd get married but I don't approve of the lifestyle." All profits support AtMP's work for unmarried people!

Anti-Marriage Shop

T-shirts, sweatshirts, mugs, and more with slogans like "Friends don't let friends get married" and "Marriage is like a roll of toilet paper...".

Books Critical of Traditional Marriage

This annotated bibliography by James Park lists twelve books on the subject, most printed in the 1970s and 80s.

The Case Against Matrimony

This Salon.com article by Larissa Phillips, a woman raising a child in a long-term unmarried relationship, asks, "If marriage is risky, doomed and expensive, why bother?"

Legitimize Bastardy!

This article from a 1996 issue of the *Secular Humanist Bulletin* argues why humanists should oppose marriage, calling it "a corrupt, misogynistic, and outmoded institution."

Lucy Stone League

An organization that advocates for "name choice freedom," protesting that 3 million women each year abandon their names when they get married.

Marriage and Love, by Emma Goldman (1911)

This article from nearly a century ago shows that those of us who prefer not to marry have a long and respectable history. In her essay, radical activist Emma Goldman argues that marriage is a failure and a poor investment, especially for women. Amusingly, she cites the 8% divorce rate as one of her items of proof, even though in comparison to today's numbers 8% would be a rate many would celebrate!

Marriage Traditions in Various Times and Cultures

This page counters the idea that there is one form of "traditional marriage" by tracing the many forms marriage has taken in different historical eras and cultures, from the Bible to the British-American colonies.

Straight Marriage Under Protest

This article by Sarah Deer explores options for male-female couples who are concerned about how to use their privilege responsibly, since the option of getting married is not available to same-sex couples anywhere in the country.