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ARE WOMEN SEVERING THE LINK BETWEEN MARRIAGE AND MOTHERHOOD?

“The women I interviewed looked toward marriage and found themselves depressed by the dwindling odds of finding love that would lead to children. . . As the believed marriage to be slipping further and further out of their reach, motherhood, on the other hand, moved closer, drawn in by their desire for children...Women shed the burden of marriage, determined to win the race to motherhood alone. Taking stock of the road ahead [the women I interviewed] saw a course very different from that of women in generations before.”

*--Rosanna Hertz, author of *Single by Chance, Mothers by Choice**

SINGLE BY CHANCE, MOTHERS BY CHOICE

*How Women Are Choosing Parenthood Without Marriage
And Creating the New American Family*

by Rosanna Hertz

October 1, 2006 | ISBN10: 019-5179900 / ISBN13: 978019-5179903 | \$26.00 | 264 pages

Like most of us, when you think of the American family, your mind probably conjures up the iconic image of kids playing in the yard, the proverbial white picket fence, and, of course, Mom and Dad standing side-by-side. In reality, that version of the American family is not the norm anymore; instead single mothers make up the fastest growing category of family in the country today. These single mothers are not unwed, teenager mothers, and they aren't the famous actresses -- Jodie Foster, Rosie O'Donnell, and Sharon Stone to name a few -- who have made single-motherhood look fashionable. Instead, they are well-educated, middle-class, everyday women who have consciously made the decision to become mothers without a man alongside them.

In **SINGLE BY CHANCE, MOTHERS BY CHOICE: How Women Are Choosing Parenthood Without Marriage and Creating the New American Family** family and women's issues expert Rosanna Hertz gives us the first in-depth look at America's fastest growing parenting trend, mothers who have opted, by their choice, to be single moms.

For her research, Hertz interviewed 65 women, ranging from physicians and financial analysts to social workers, teachers, and secretaries, and from gay to straight. These women all spoke candidly to Hertz about topics such as:

- How they came about the decision to become single mothers – which, for many, meant pursuing the dream they had always had of motherhood
- How they broke the news to parents, siblings, friends, and co-workers,
- How they went about becoming pregnant, with paths ranging from buying sperm from fertility banks to adopting children of different races to chancing pregnancy (such as actively seeking to become pregnant from a one-night stand)
- How their personal and social histories intersect to enable them to pursue their dream of motherhood, and how they navigate daily life.
- How they combine being single (and looking for romance) with parenting
- How they juggle earning a paycheck with parenting
- How they incorporate men into their child-centered families
- How their lives have changed since becoming mothers and where they are now

SINGLE BY CHANCE, MOTHERS BY CHOICE is a unique window on the future of the family, and Hertz's book is a gold mine of insight and reassurance for any woman contemplating this rewarding if unconventional step.

About the author:

Rosanna Hertz is Luella LaMer Professor of Sociology and Women's Studies and Chair of the Women's Studies Department at Wellesley College. The author of the widely acclaimed *More Equal Than Others*, she is frequently interviewed by national print media on issues related to women, work, and the family. She is available for interviews.

To schedule an interview, please contact Sara Leopold at sarapold@gmail.com, or by phone at 917-860-9014.

Advanced praise for SINGLE BY CHANCE, MOTHERS BY CHOICE:

“Single by Chance, Mothers by Choice takes us on a thought-provoking journey with several single women facing the challenge of how to become a mother without a spouse. This is required reading for any single woman in her thirties who is concerned about the ticking of her biological clock.”

-- Jane Mattes, C.S.W., Founder and Director, Single Mothers by Choice

“In this important book, Rosanna Hertz examines the lives of adult women who have chosen to become single mothers. Too often studies of this kind offer a snapshot of a moment in time, but here Dr. Hertz gives us a movie-a sifting, changing and evolving portrait that takes us from the difficult moment of decision to the present, from anxious new mothers from wondering whether they could do it, to women and their children who have written a different kind of family narrative.”

--Lillian B. Rubin, Ph.D, author of *The Man With the Beautiful Voice and Worlds of Pain*

“In this page-turner of a book Rosanna Hertz follows the lives of middle-class single women who choose to become mothers without husbands or partners. Through vivid portraits and interviews, the romantic ideals and day-to-day complexities of single parenting come alive--all carefully portrayed within an historical and sociological context. This is a notable contribution to our understanding of how changing norms, changing technology, and changing laws are creating new family dynamics in modern America.”

-- Cynthia Fuchs Epstein, President, American Sociological Association

“Single mothers have been in the cross-hairs ever since Dan Quayle attacked TV's "Murphy Brown" for "mocking fatherhood" by having a child without being married. But Rosanna Hertz's fascinating in-depth study shows that the former Vice President was wrong. Today's Murphy Browns-middle class, self-supporting single mothers by choice-are not trying to score ideological points. Rather, their commitment to motherhood survives the fading of their hopes for marriage. This is an important book that debunks the myths and stereotypes of a family type that is here to stay.”

--Arlene Skolnick, Ph.D., co-author of *Family in Transition*