

Contents

Introduction	7
1. Single life as social phenomenon in Poland and worldwide	11
1.1. Single life in pre-modern society	11
1.2. Living without a partner in modern society	12
1.3. Singles in postmodern society	16
1.4. The popularization of singles as a social category in contemporary Poland	24
1.5. Conclusions	36
2. Review of the studies of the subject	37
2.1. Problems with the definition	37
2.2. Being single in international studies	39
2.3. Polish research on living alone as a social phenomenon	48
2.4. Conclusions	52
3. Being single as a result of the realization of individualistic values	53
3.1. Single life as a result of postmodern trends	53
3.2. High involvement in work	54
3.3. The idealization of love and waiting for the right partner	59
3.4. New expectations of a relationship model	64
3.5. Conclusions	68
4. Being single as a result of experience from their family of origin and circles of friends	69
4.1. Parents' unsuccessful marriage	69
4.2. Negative image of friends' formal and informal relationships	71
4.3. The perfect relationship of parents as an unrealistic standard	74
4.4. Too strong bonds with the family of origin	75
4.5. Living alone as a habit of only-children	77
4.6. Other reasons for being single associated with family conditions	78
4.7. Conclusions	79
5. Being single as a result of failures in building a nest	81
5.1. Unequal involvement in building a relationship	81
5.2. Infidelity and abandonment	83
5.3. High expectations of potential partners	86
5.4. Not ready to set up home	87
5.5. A rest after living together as a couple	89
5.6. Unfulfilled love	90
5.7. Difficulties in relationships with the opposite sex	91
5.8. Conclusions	93



6. Work as a main determinant of the single lifestyle	95
6.1. Self-realization and passion – work as an autotelic value	95
6.2. Earning money – work as an instrumental value	99
6.3. Having two jobs as a combination of instrumental and autotelic values of work	101
6.4. Conclusions	104
7. How singles spend their free time	105
7.1. Social life	105
7.2. Shopping	108
7.3. Entertainment at home	112
7.4. Participation in cultural life	117
7.5. Time for education and unique passions	118
7.6. Housework	120
7.7. Beauty treatments	122
7.8. Sport and other physical activities	124
7.9. Spending vacations and public holidays	126
7.10. Conclusion	132
8. The importance of social network in being single	133
8.1. Friends and family network	133
8.2. The support of family and friends in living alone	138
8.3. The attitude of friends and family to singlehood	141
8.4. Intimate relationships	146
8.5. The threats of growing old alone	148
8.6. Conclusions	152
9. Single's attitude to singlehood	153
9.1. What makes you single?	153
9.2. Why is it good to be in a relationship?	158
9.3. Level of satisfaction with life without a partner	161
9.4. Conclusions	164
Summary – typology of singles	165
English versions of Polish names	169
Literature	171