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Commentary on "'Women Without Men' versus 'Men Without Women': The Contrast Between Unmarried Men and Unmarried Women in Cold War American Society"

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Commentary

In her paper, “Women Without Men” versus “Men Without Women”: The Contrast Between Unmarried Men and Unmarried Women in Cold War American Society,” Rachael Barrett addresses the complex issue of the gender-based double standard surrounding the role of marriage in an individual’s life with remarkably clarity and poise. Her introduction and thesis make clear through what lens she intends to approach this multifaceted topic, and she proceeds to analyze the two magazine articles to which she directs her primary focus while simultaneously placing them in conversation with other relevant contemporary sources, such as Betty Freidan’s *The Feminine Mystique*. Rachael avoids overgeneralizations and categorical statements by grounding her analysis in the articles themselves, and she deftly accounts for shifting attitudes surround marriage and gender roles throughout the Cold War Era. Rachael’s argument that Eleanor Harris’s articles are historically significant is extremely convincing and well-reasoned. She is also adept at identifying the elements of Harris’s articles which both espouse and challenge cultural norms. Ultimately, this essay is an excellent example of tackling a broad topic through the use of a specific lens, and it is incredibly successful in fulfilling this objective.

-Emily Smith, Writing Center Consultant