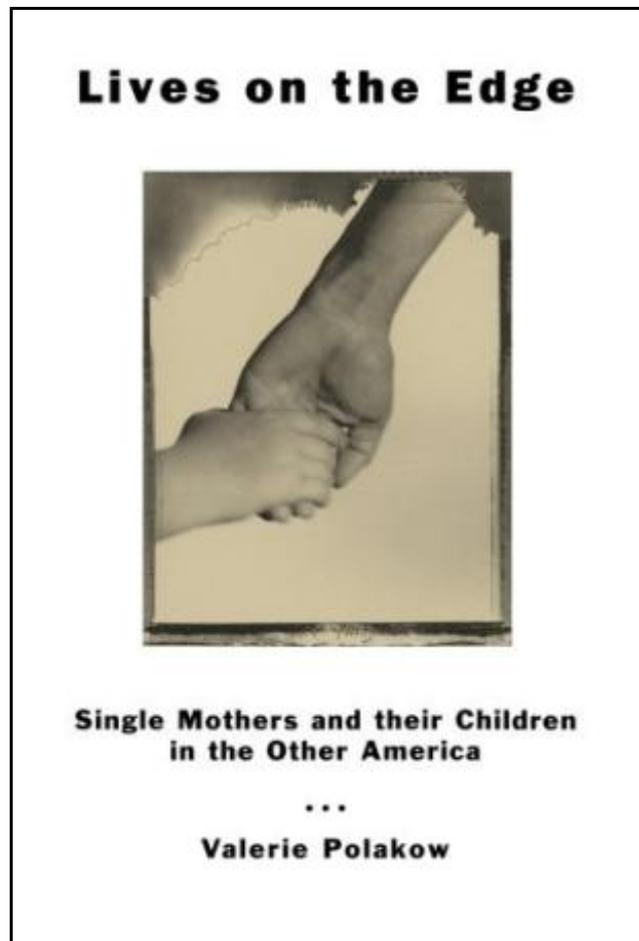


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LIVES ON THE EDGE: SINGLE MOTHERS AND THEIR CHILDREN IN THE OTHER AMERICA (NEW EDITION)



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The University of Chicago Press. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Lives on the Edge: Single Mothers and Their Children in the Other America (New edition), Valerie Polakow, Lives on the Edge offers a penetrating, deeply disturbing look into the other America inhabited by single mothers and their children. Its powerful and moving portraits force us to confront the poverty, destitution, and struggle for survival that await single mothers in one of the richest nations in the world. One in five children and one in two single mothers live in destitution today. The feminization and "infantilization" of poverty have made the United States one of the most dangerous democracies for poor mothers and their children to inhabit. Why then, Valerie Polakow asks, is poverty seen as a private affair - "their problem, not ours" - and how can public policy fail to take responsibility for the consequences of our politics of distribution? Searching for an answer, Polakow considers the historical and ideological sources for society's attitudes toward single mothers and their children, and shows how our dominant images of "normal" families and motherhood have shaped our perceptions, practices, and public policies. Polakow's account traces the historical legacy of discrimination against the "dangerous classes" and the "undeserving poor" - a legacy that culminates in the current public hostility towards welfare recipients. Polakow moves beyond the cold voice of statistics to take us into the daily lives of single mothers and their children. The stories of young black teenage mothers, of white single mothers, of homeless mothers are presented with clarity and quiet power. In a detailed look inside the classroom worlds of their children, Polakow explores what life is like if one is very young and poor, and consigned to otherness in the landscape of school. School is a place that matters...



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