

It's time to split the scene

Rebecca Whitfield-Baker

More women want to call quits on marriage

New analysis shows females are increasingly sowing the seeds of separation, with women across the state now more likely to be dissatisfied in their relationship than their male counterparts.

The study, by national platform The Separation Guide, found 73 per cent of South Australian women who accessed the online guide to separation and divorce in 2023 wanted to go their own way compared to just 59.2 per cent of men.

The statistics are drawn from surveys taken from visitors to the site, with the SA data derived from almost 600 respondents.

"Of the (SA) women completing the survey, 53.9 per cent told us they instigated their separation, 19.1 per cent said the separation was mutual and 27 per cent told us their partner instigated it ... 73 per cent of women wanted to separate," The Separation Guide chief executive Angela Harbinson said.

"Of the men completing the survey, 28.2 per cent told us they instigated their separation, 31 per cent said the separation was mutual and 40.8 per cent told us their partner instigated it.

"Men are less likely to want to separate and far less likely to

instigate separation than their female partners."

The statistics have been released a month out from what is typically the site's busiest day in terms of visits – January 2.

"What we see at this time of year is people either rushing to finalise a separation ahead of Christmas Day or deciding to put it on hold to have one last Christmas together," Ms Harbinson said.

"Typically, our highest day of traffic, in terms of people researching separation and divorce, is January 2."

According to the 2023 State of Separation Impact Report, acrimony between separating

couples nationally is also on the rise.

"Fewer people reported being on reasonable terms with their former partner in 2022 compared to 2020 and 2021," Ms Harbinson said.

"We have also seen a 17.4 per cent increase from 2021 to 2022 in the percentage of people who have separated from their partner telling us that they need information about family violence."

Ms Harbinson pointed also to the role financial stress played in creating pressure in relationships.

"We are experiencing some of the toughest financial condi-

tions for a generation at the moment," she said.

Leading SA collaborative lawyer Bev Clark, who has worked in family law for 35 years, said the reasons women sought divorce varied but infidelity, family violence and boredom were commonplace.

"We see lots of reasons. Infidelity remains rife as does family violence, while long-term relationships can be a struggle for some, with people growing bored or apart," the director at Clark Panagakos Family Law said. "It all becomes a bit ho-hum."

PAGE 59: LAWYER LIFTS LID ON DIVORCE

WHY THEY LEAVE

■ MANY women persist in their role as primary caregiver at home despite juggling a rising workload and stress at work. This can lead to strain.

■ AN increasing number of women earn the same as, or out-earn, their husbands and can take care of themselves.

■ WOMEN considering separation are often concerned about money whereas men are more worried about losing access to their children.

• Source: *The Separation Guide*



Four influential SA women, from left, Mary Hamilton, Cynthia Sajkunovic, Hitaf Rasheed and Nikki Govan. Picture: Roy VanDerVegt

Over 50 and just loving life

Anna Vlach

Inspiring and never shy and retiring, these four high-flyers are proof that women should not be seen as invisible after 50.

Mary Hamilton, Cynthia Sajkunovic, Hitaf Rasheed and Nikki Govan are all leaders in their fields and profiled in the Sunday Mail's 50 over 50 feature, highlighting prominent South Australian women in their 50s.

Ms Hamilton, 52, who describes herself as the "black sheep" of her family business, Hamilton Wines, said women could become invisible as they aged due to "all of the societal constructs that don't actually favour women".

As a jill of all trades, who is "stomping vineyard rows in McLaren Vale one day to pouring Hugh Hamilton wines in New York the next", she considers herself lucky.

"I have built my own little paddock to roam around in," she said.

"Build your own paddock where you can be somebody who has relevance.

"Being relevant is great for your self-esteem and your career prospects as well because when they thin

the herd, you don't want to be the one (to go). If you keep yourself relevant, that's less likely."

Ms Sajkunovic, a real estate agent at Ouwens Casserly, in Eastwood, is "fresh into 50", having celebrated her milestone birthday with a group of friends at this year's Monaco Grand Prix.

"It was on my bucket list," she said, adding she was loving life. "I have a greater knowledge of the world and people, and career-wise it's more enjoyable than ever."

For Ms Govan, co-owner of hospitality hotspots the Star of Greece and the Victory Hotel, being in her 50s "is liberating".

She was now at the "most exciting" time in her career, thanks to her roles across various boards, including the Adelaide Economic Development Agency.

For South Australian Tourism Commission executive director of events Hitaf Rasheed, age is just a number. At 53, she felt as though she was still in her 20s and "contemporary", she said, adding she had been lucky to work in "very supportive" environments.

PAGES 54-57: OUR 50 INSPIRING WOMEN

Plan to protect women

The Federal Government is splashing \$12.1 million on a new program targeting forced marriages across the country.

The funding, over five years, will go towards support for those experiencing or at risk of being forced into marriage with things like counselling and accommodation.

A further \$2.2 million is going to Anti-Slavery Australia's Speak Now project.

"Modern slavery, including forced marriage, is an abhorrent abuse of power, and the government is doing everything we can to eliminate it from our society," Social Services Minister Amanda Rishworth said.

This week the government released a defence strategy aimed at preventing and responding to family and domestic violence, underpinned by action plans.



A teaser for the game.

Rockstar teases new GTA game

Rockstar Games says it will release a trailer on Wednesday for the first instalment in a decade of Grand Theft Auto.

In a minimalist post on social media, the company said that "Trailer 1" would be released on December 5 at 1400GMT (1am Wednesday), in an image showing a sunset sky and palm trees.

While the post did not mention GTA, this seemed to substantiate media reports that

the sixth instalment would be set in the fictionalised version of Miami.

Rockstar Games is known for keeping a tight veil of secrecy around its releases, never giving a date in advance – contrary to general industry protocol.

Last year the studio was the victim of a hack, with more than 90 images and videos appearing on social media, in what is considered to be one of

the biggest leaks in video-game history.

It remains unclear whether GTA VI will be released next year or in 2025, as Rockstar has a history of announcing games more than a year before their release.

GTA V has sold about 190 million copies, according to Rockstar parent Take-Two Interactive, making it one of the world's best-selling games for the past decade.