

## Hey, Hun: Sales, Sisterhood, Supremacy, and the Other Lies Behind Multilevel Marketing

**Emily Lynn Paulson**

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Emily Lynn Paulson's eye-opening memoir *Hey, Hun* exposes the underbelly of the multilevel marketing industry.

As a stay-at-home mother who abandoned her career for her husband and children, Paulson was disillusioned, lonely, and lost. Then an old high school acquaintance, Becky, asked if she would like to meet up over drinks. Desperate to get out of the house, Paulson jumped at the opportunity, only to discover that Becky was a recruiter for a multilevel marketing company.

Though she was skeptical, Paulson's defenses crumbled as the alcohol kept flowing and Becky played on her insecurities, discussing pressures to have it all; weak support systems; the loneliness of modern motherhood; the isolation of suburban life; and a lack of financial independence. By the time their meeting had ended, Paulson had signed up to be a recruiter herself. She went to work on her best friend, Vanessa, first.

The book exposes the next six years as a tornado of financial exploitation, toxic positivity, internalized misogyny, and alcohol. Paulson immersed herself in the world of multilevel marketing and rose in its ranks. But after she was arrested for driving under the influence and became sober, she had to assume a new perspective. She left the MLM—a choice that came at a cost.

*Hey, Hun* is a blunt, illuminating peek inside the multilevel marketing industry's exploitation of people's vulnerabilities—in particular, those of women who have been told that they can have it all. With some names fictionalized to protect people's identities, it identifies multilevel marketing companies as pyramid schemes and cults and shows how they rope their victims in, using tools like white privilege, evangelical Christianity, and gaslighting.

ERIKA HARLITZ KERN (May / June 2023)

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