



# Family Transformed: Religion, Values, and Society in American Life

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Statistics on the American family are sobering. From 1975 to 2000, one-third of all children were born to single mothers, and one-half of all marriages ended in divorce. While children from broken homes are two to three times more likely to develop behavioral and learning difficulties, two-parent families are not immune to problems. The cost of raising children has increased dramatically, and married couples with children are now twice as likely as childless couples to file for bankruptcy. Clearly, the American family is in trouble. But how this trouble started, and what should be done about it, remain hotly contested.

In a multifaceted analysis of the current state of a complex institution, *Family Transformed* brings together outstanding scholars from the fields of anthropology, demography, ethics, history, law, philosophy, primatology, psychology, sociology, and theology. Demonstrating that the family is both distinctive in its own right and deeply interwoven with other institutions, the authors examine the roles of education, work, leisure, consumption, legal regulation, public administration, and biology in shaping the ways we court and marry, bear and raise children, and make and break family bonds.

International in approach, this wide-ranging volume situates current American debates over sex, marriage, and family within a global framework. Weighing mounting social science evidence that supports a continued need for the nuclear family while assessing the challenges posed by new advocacy for same-sex marriage, and delegalized coupling, the authors argue that only by reintegrating the family into a just moral order of the larger community and society can we genuinely strengthen it. This means not simply upholding traditional family values but truly grasping the family's growing diversity, sustaining its coherence, and protecting its fragility for our own sake and for the common good of society.

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