

John Witte Jr. | Michael Welker | Stephen Pickard (Eds.)

The Impact of the Family

On Character Formation, Ethical Education,
and the Communication of Values
in Late Modern Pluralistic Societies



EVANGELISCHE VERLAGSANSTALT
Leipzig

The project and the publication were supported by the Karl-Schlecht Stiftung and the University of Heidelberg.

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek
 The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliographie;
 detailed bibliographic data are available on the Internet at <http://dnb.dnb.de>.

© 2022 by Evangelische Verlagsanstalt GmbH · Leipzig
 Printed in Germany

This work, including all of its parts, is protected by copyright. Any use beyond the strict limits of copyright law without the permission of the publishing house is strictly prohibited and punishable by law. This applies in particular to reproductions, translations, microfilming, and storage or processing of the entire content or parts thereof in electronic systems.

This book is printed on ageing resistant paper.

Cover: Kai-Michael Gustmann, Leipzig
 Cover picture: © persephone34 / www.fotosearch.com
 Typesetting: 3w+pp, Rimpf
 Printing and Binding: Hubert & Co., Göttingen

ISBN 978-3-374-07052-7 // eISBN (PDF) 978-3-374-07053-4
www.eva-leipzig.de

Contents

Acknowledgments	9
Preface to the Series	11
Part One: The Place of the Family in Modern Society	
<i>John Witte Jr.</i>	
“It Takes a Society to Raise a Family”: The Multidimensional Family Sphere	17
<i>Robert N. Bellah</i>	
The Family in the Matrix of Habit and History	43
Part Two: The Role of the Family in Child Development and Moral Character Formation	
<i>Sabina Pauen</i>	
The Beginnings of Norm and Value Formation in Human Ontogeny and the Role of the Family	59
<i>Robyn Fivush</i>	
Family Storytelling and the Communication of Values	75
<i>Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore</i>	
Children, Chores, and Character Formation: A Child-Centered Perspective	89
<i>Marcia J. Bunge</i>	
Communicating Values by Honoring Families and the Full Humanity of Children: Lessons from Robust Theologies and Detrimental Developments among Protestants	105
<i>Stephen G. Post</i>	
Love Begets Love, and It Starts in the Family	127

<i>Margaret F. Brinig</i>	Imitation and Value Formation within the Family	139
<i>Eugene C. Roehlkepartain</i>	Empty Vessels or Active Agents? Amplifying Young People's Agency in Character Development in their Families	147
<i>Andreas Kruse</i>	Old Age within the Polyphony of Sensations, Experiences, and Commitments in Favor of the Neighbor	163
<i>Michael J. Brody</i>	"Hearts Will Never Be Practical until They Can Be Made Unbreakable": What Does Parental Love Really Mean in Hard Cases in the Jewish Tradition?	179
	Part Three: Family Changes and Challenges and Their Impact on Character Formation	
<i>Jean Bethke Elshstain</i>	The Heart of the Matter: The Family as the Site of Fundamental Ethical Struggle	197
<i>Patrick Parkinson</i>	The Role of Public Policy in Supporting Safe, Stable, and Nurturing Families in Late Modern Societies	211
<i>Gordon S. Mikoski</i>	"The Times They Are A-Changin'": Shifting Patterns of Partnering and Parenting in the United States and Implications for Religious Transmission and Theology	223
<i>Enola G. Aird</i>	Toward a Renaissance for the African American Family: Confronting the Lie of Black Inferiority	233
<i>Stephen L. Carter</i>	Religion, Education, and the Primacy of the Family	247
<i>Patrick Hornbeck</i>	Religious Liberty and Family Diversity: The Legal and Theological Disputes	255
<i>Helen Alvaré</i>	Equality Alongside Diversity to Build a Stronger Union: The Role of the Family in the Melting Pot	275
<i>Katja Patzel-Mattern and Sabina Pauen</i>	Family Structures and Values in Postwar German Society	291
<i>Nadia Marais</i>	"A Most Sacred Covenant"? John Calvin's Rhetoric of Marriage and Its Implications for Transmitting Values in South Africa	313
<i>Thomas Xutong Qu</i>	A Renaissance of the Confucian Family? A Preliminary Observation upon Current Discourses about Family in Contemporary China	333
	Contributors	345

<i>Patrick Hornbeck</i>	Religious Liberty and Family Diversity: The Legal and Theological Disputes	255
<i>Helen Alvaré</i>	Equality Alongside Diversity to Build a Stronger Union: The Role of the Family in the Melting Pot	275
<i>Katja Patzel-Mattern and Sabina Pauen</i>	Family Structures and Values in Postwar German Society	291
<i>Nadia Marais</i>	"A Most Sacred Covenant"? John Calvin's Rhetoric of Marriage and Its Implications for Transmitting Values in South Africa	313
<i>Thomas Xutong Qu</i>	A Renaissance of the Confucian Family? A Preliminary Observation upon Current Discourses about Family in Contemporary China	333
	Contributors	345

Preface to the Series

Five hundred years ago, Protestant reformer Martin Luther argued that "three estates" (*drei Stände*) lie at the foundation of a just and orderly society - marital families, religious communities, and political authorities. Parents in the home; pastors in the church; magistrates in the state - these, said Luther, are the three authorities whom God appointed to represent divine justice and mercy in the world, to protect peace and liberty in earthly life. Household, church, and state - these are the three institutional pillars on which to build social systems of education and schooling, charity and social welfare, economy and architecture, art and publication. Family, faith, and freedom - these are the three things that people will die for.

In the half millennium since Luther, historians have uncovered various classical and Christian antecedents to these early Protestant views. Numerous later theorists have propounded all manner of variations and applications of this three-estates theory, many increasingly abstracted from Luther's overtly Christian worldview. Early modern covenant theologians, both Christian and Jewish, described the marital, confessional, and political covenants that God calls human beings to form, each directed to interrelated personal and public ends. Social-contract theorists differentiated the three contracts that humans enter as they move from the state of nature to an organized society protective of their natural rights - the marital contract of husband and wife; the government contract of rulers and citizens; and, for some, the religious contracts of preachers and parishioners. Early anthropologists posited three stages of development of civilization - from family-based tribes and clans, to priest-run theocracies, to fully organized states that embraced all three institutions. Sociologists distinguished three main forms of authority in an organized community - "traditional" authority that begins in the home, "charismatic" authority that is exemplified in the church, and "legal" authority that is rooted in the state. Legal historians outlined three stages of development of legal norms - from the habits and rules of the family, to the customs and canons of religion, to the statutes and codes of the state.

Already a century ago, however, scholars in different fields began to flatten out this hierarchical theory of social institutions and to emphasize the foundational role of other social institutions alongside the family, church, and state in shaping private and public life and character. Sociologists like Max Weber and Talcott Parsons emphasized the shaping powers of "technical rationality" exemplified especially in new industry, scientific education, and market economies. Legal scholars like Otto von Gierke and F. W. Maitland emphasized the critical roles of nonstate legal associations (*Genossenschaften*) in maintaining a just social, political, and legal order historically and today. Catholic subsidiarity theories of Popes Leo XIII and Pius XI emphasized the essential task of mediating social units between the individual and the state to cater to the full range of needs, interests, rights, and duties of individuals. Protestant theories of sphere sovereignty, inspired by Abraham Kuyper, argued that not only churches, states, and families but also the social spheres of art, labor, education, economics, agriculture, recreation, and more should enjoy a level of independence from others, especially an overreaching church or state. Various theories of social or structural pluralism, civil society, voluntary associations, the independent sector, multiculturalism, multinormativity, and other such labels have now come to the fore in the ensuing decades – both liberal and conservative, religious and secular, and featuring all manner of methods and logics.

Pluralism of all sorts is now a commonplace of late modern societies. At minimum, this means a multitude of free and equal individuals and a multitude of groups and institutions, each with very different political, moral, religious, and professional interests and orientations. It includes the sundry associations, interest groups, parties, lobbies, and social movements that often rapidly flourish and fade around a common cause, especially when aided by modern technology and various social media. Some see in this texture of plurality an enormous potential for colorful and creative development and a robust expression of human and cultural freedom. Others see a chaotic individualism and radical relativism that endanger normative education, moral character formation, and effective cultivation of enduring values or virtues.

Pluralism viewed as vague plurality, however, focuses on only one aspect of late modern societies – the equality of individuals, and their almost unlimited freedom to participate peaceably at any time as a respected voice in the moral reasoning and civil interactions of a society. But this view does not adequately recognize that, beneath the shifting cacophony of social forms and norms that constitute modernity, pluralistic societies have heavy normative codes that shape their individual and collective values, morals, preferences, and prejudices.

The sources of much of this normative coding and moral education in late modern pluralistic societies are the deep and powerful social systems that are the pillars of every advanced culture. The most powerful and pervasive of these are the social systems of law, religion, politics, science/academy, market, media, family, education, medicine, and national defense. The actual empirical forms of each

of these powerful social systems can and do vary greatly, even in the relatively homogeneous societies of the late modern West. But these deeper social systems in one form or another are structurally essential and often normatively decisive in individual and communal lives.

Every advanced society has a comprehensive legal system of justice and order, religious systems of ritual and doctrine, a family system of procreation and love, an economic system of trade and value, a media system of communication and dissemination of news and information, and an educational system of preservation, application, and creation of knowledge and scientific advance. Many advanced societies also have massive systems of science, technology, health care, and national defense with vast influence over and through all of these other social systems. These pervasive social systems lie at the foundation of modern advanced societies, and they anchor the vast pluralities of associations and social interactions that might happen to exist at any given time.

Each of these social systems has internal value systems, institutionalized rationalities, and normative expectations that together help to shape each individual's morality and character. Each of these social spheres, moreover, has its own professionals and experts who shape and implement its internal structures and processes. The normative network created by these social spheres is often harder to grasp today, since late modern pluralistic societies usually do not bring these different value systems to light under the dominance of just one organization, institution, and power. This normative network has also become more shifting and fragile, especially since traditional social systems like religion and the family have eroded in their durability and power, and other social systems like science, the market, health care, defense, and the media have become more powerful.

The aim of this project on "Character Formation and Moral Education in Late Modern Pluralistic Societies" is to identify the realities and potentials of these core social systems to provide moral orientation and character formation in our day. What can and should these social spheres, separately and together, do in shaping the moral character of late modern individuals who, by nature, culture, and constitutional norms, are free and equal in dignity and rights? What are and should be the core educational functions and moral responsibilities of each of these social spheres? How can we better understand and better influence the complex interactions among individualism, the normative binding powers of these social systems, and the creativity of civil groups and institutions? How can we map and measure the different hierarchies of values that govern each of these social systems, and that are also interwoven and interconnected in various ways in shaping late modern understandings of the common good? How do we negotiate the boundaries and conflicts between and among these social systems when one encroaches on the other, or imposes its values and rationalities on individuals at the cost of the other social spheres or of the common good? What and where are

Part One: The Place of the Family in Modern Society

the intrinsic strengths of each social sphere that should be made more overt in character formation, public education, and the shaping of minds and mentalities? These are some of the guiding questions at work in this project and in this volume. Our project aims to provide a systematic account of the role of these powerful normative codes operating in the social spheres of law, religion, the family, the market, the media, science and technology, the academy, health care, and defense in the late modern liberal West. Our focus is on selected examples and case studies drawn from Western Europe, North America, South Africa, and Australia, which together provide just enough diversity to test out broader theories of character formation and moral education. Our scholars are drawn from across the academy, with representative voices from the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences as well as the professions of theology, law, business, medicine, and more. While most of our scholars come from the Protestant and Catholic worlds, our endeavor is to offer comparative insights that will help scholars from any profession or confession. While our laboratory is principally Western liberal societies, the modern forces of globalization will soon make these issues of moral character formation a concern for every culture and region of the world - given the power of global social media, entertainment, and sports; the pervasiveness of global finance, business, trade, and law; and the perennial global worries over food, health care, environmental degradation, and natural disasters.

This volume focuses on the impact of the *family* on character formation, ethical education, and the communication of values in late modern pluralistic societies. The family is humanity's oldest and most basic social institution, but today it is fragile, fractured, and fraught in many liberal lands. In this volume scholars from sociology, psychology, history, religion, ethics, law, and medicine analyze the complex nature and place of the family in character formation and human flourishing. The chapters study the impact of catechesis, schooling, work, and discipline on the development of individual moral agency and responsibility. They document the critical roles of family love, trust, fidelity, and storytelling in shaping the moral character of all family members from infancy to old age. They describe effective strategies of resistance, resilience, and renewal for family members who face abuse, divorce, death, chauvinism, racism, and homophobia. And several chapters challenge modern arguments and policies that flatten or abolish the marital family, even while several authors call for family law reforms in their home countries of the United States, Germany, South Africa, Australia, and China. While the marital household may no longer be the "cornerstone of the polis," or the "cornerstone of civilization," it remains a unique and essential institution for character formation that church, state, economy, and society alike should support and strengthen.

John Witte Jr., Emory University
Michael Welker, University of Heidelberg
Stephen Pickard, Charles Sturt University