



The Unfinished Revolution: How a New Generation is Reshaping Family, Work, and Gender in America

Kathleen Gerson

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In the controversial public debate over modern American families, the vast changes in family life--the rise of single, two-paycheck , and same-sex parents--have often been blamed for declining morality and unhappy children. Drawing upon pioneering research with the children of the gender revolution, Kathleen Gerson reveals that it is not a lack of "family values," but rigid social and economic forces that make it difficult to have a vibrant and committed family and work life.

Despite the entrance of women into the workforce and the blurring of once clearly defined gender boundaries, men and women live in a world where the demands of balancing parenting and work, autonomy and commitment, time and money are left largely unresolved. Gerson finds that while an overwhelming majority of young men and women see an egalitarian balance within committed relationships as the ideal, today's social and economic realities remain based on conventional--and now obsolete--distinctions between breadwinning and caretaking. In this equity vacuum, men and women develop conflicting strategies, with women stressing self-reliance and men seeking a new traditionalism.

With compassion for all perspectives, Gerson argues that whether one decides to give in to traditionally imbalanced relationships or to avoid marriage altogether, these approaches are second-best responses, not personal preferences or inherent attributes, and they will shift if new options can be created to help people achieve their egalitarian aspirations. The Unfinished Revolution offers clear recommendations for the kinds of workplace and community changes that would best bring about a more egalitarian family life--a new flexibility at work and at home that benefits families, encourages a thriving economy, and helps women and men integrate love and work.

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