

*The Family in the New Millennium: World Voices Supporting the "Natural" Clan*, 3 vols., edited by A. Scott Lovell and Thomas B. Holman (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2007). Vol. 1, *The Place of Family in Human Society*; vol. 2, *Marriage and Human Dignity*; vol. 3, *Strengthening the Family*.

The 2004 Doha International Conference for the Family yielded this collection of papers presented at venues around the world. If for no other reason, these volumes are valuable as proof that the family is a concern that unifies nations regardless of politics, religion, culture, and economic standing. And that proof gives hope to those of us who might otherwise despair at the rapid onslaught of antifamily forces.

The preface by Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned, Consort of His Highness the Emir of Qatar and President of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs of Qatar, establishes some of this collection's basic themes. First, the family, as a school, plays an irreplaceable part in safeguarding "social stability and security" (1:ix). It is therefore critical that the family be recognized "as part of the solution rather than part of the problem" (1:x). For example, the family can prepare people who can dialog respectfully and rationally to forestall social disintegration and establish peace. Her Highness challenges the global society to cooperate in researching and adopting "references and standards that will safeguard the rights of the family and ensure its integration as an effective and constructive factor in all national, regional, and international development programs" (1.x).

This is high-minded rhetoric; however, it stems not from naïve optimism but from the urgency expressed in almost every article—that the natural

family must be actively safeguarded. To that end, the global community is called upon to create policies and practices that will buttress and enhance the family.

Based on some of "the finest available scholarship" (1:xiii), these papers detail the many trends weakening the family, from aging populations to family-punitive taxes to the below-replacement fertility rates of sixty-one countries. But the research does not stop there. The causal factors for these trends are explored, as are—and this is even more eye-opening—the ways these trends interact.

Where other books present only the problems (often in less depth), these volumes also present solutions and showcase countries that recognize the crisis and are establishing policies to counter threats to the family. It is heartening to learn that Latvians, for example, faced "the grim realities" of their "demographic catastrophe" (3:341–42). They have developed a sixty-step plan to increase the chances of family survival, including special tax incentives, housing credits, changes in the adoption policies, aid to dysfunctional families, and various subsidies.

Although scholarly, the papers are readable and interesting. They are organized so that each complements the papers around it, yet a person can dip in anywhere for an enlightening read.

—Doris R. Dant

*A Twenty-Something's Guide to Spirituality: Questions You Hesitate to Ask, Answers You Rarely Hear*, compiled by Jacob Werrett and David Read (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2007)

*A Twenty-Something's Guide to Spirituality* is a collection of ten essays by various Latter-day Saint authors