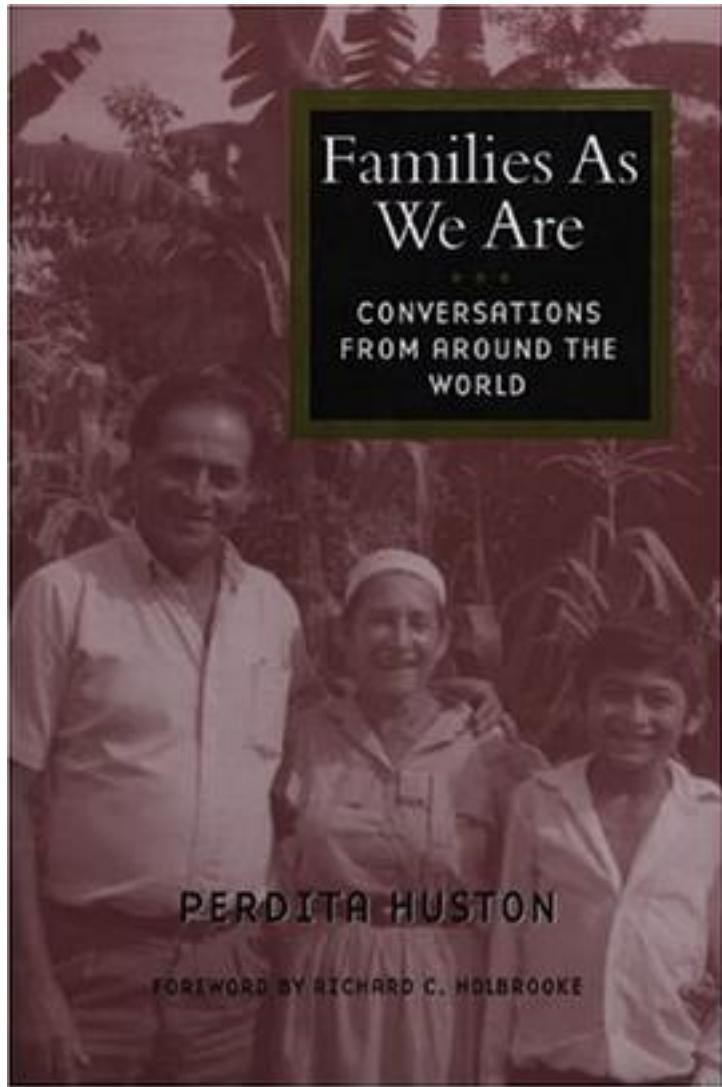


Families as We Are



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A recent speech by Gary Bauer from the conservative Family Research Council decried the decline of traditional family values as "a moral earthquake in our society." But what are "traditional family values?" How are family values and the realities that shape them-really changing? Are all the changes really for the worse? Seasoned journalist Perdita Huston spent four years responding to these questions by going to the primary source: families themselves. "Families As We Are" includes interviews with and photographs of families from Brazil to Jordan, Sweden to Thailand. Huston's conversations, often with several family members of different generations, lead her to conclude that while the changes in families "may look like breakdown to those facing backwards, it looks like renovation to those facing the future." In an increasingly complex world, family structures have become more diverse, and often more democratic, but no less strong. In Egypt, Huston finds an extended family striving to stay together and balance modern and traditional ways as the dire need for jobs threatens to pull them apart. In Bangladesh she discovers a new form of family amid the brothels where poverty and forced urbanization encourage the prostitution of women, who join together to support each other financially and emotionally, creating a safe space where they can raise their children. "The families herein have been dislocated or exploited by a variety of factors," writes Huston, "their attempts to rebuild, to return to the haven of family, or create another, tell us that the bonds of family-a caring supportive group-are far from weak, or disappearing." Perdita Huston is a journalist and author of several previous books, including "Motherhood by Choice" and "Third World Women Speak Out." Huston has also worked for a number of international organizations, most recently as director of the Peace Corps program in Bulgaria. With interviews from: BrazilBulgariaChinaEl SalvadorJordanMaliSwedenThailandUgandaUnited Statesand more.

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