



Bishops, Wives and Children: Spiritual Capital Across the Generations

Douglas J. Davies, Mathew Guest

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Christianity as a cultural force, whether rising or falling, has seldom been analysed through the actual processes by which tradition is transmitted, modified, embraced or rejected. This book achieves that end through a study of bishops of the Church of England, their wives and their children, to show how values fostered in the vicarage and palace shape family, work and civic life in a supposedly secular age. Davies and Guest integrate, for the first time, sociological concepts of spiritual capital with anthropological ideas of gift-theory and, alongside theological themes, use these to illuminate how the religious professional functions in mediating tradition and fostering change. Motifs of distant prelates, managerially-minded fathers in God and rebellious clergy children are reconsidered in a critical light as new empirical evidence offers unique insights into how the clergy family functions as an axis of social power in an age incredulous to ecclesiastical hierarchy. *Bishops, Wives and Children* marks an important advance in the analysis of the spirituality of Catholic, Evangelical and Liberal leaders and their social significance within a distinctive Christian tradition and all it represents in wider British society.

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