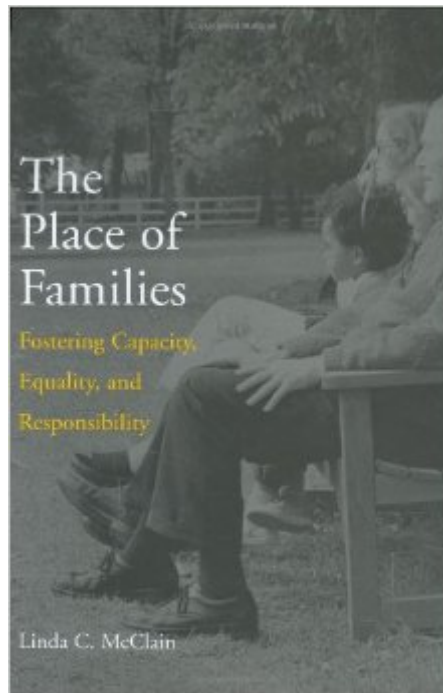


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# The Place Of Families: Fostering Capacity, Equality, And Responsibility



## Synopsis

In this bold new book, Linda McClain offers a liberal and feminist theory of the relationships between family life and politics--a topic dominated by conservative thinkers. McClain agrees that stable family lives are vital to forming persons into capable, responsible, self-governing citizens. But what are the public values at stake when we think about families, and what sorts of families should government recognize and promote? Arguing that family life helps create the virtues and character required for citizenship, McClain shows that the connection between family self-government and democratic self-government does not require the deep-laid gender inequality that has historically accompanied it. Examining controversial issues in family law and policy--among them, the governmental promotion of heterosexual marriage and the denial of marriage to same-sex couples, the regulation of family life through welfare policy, and constitutional rights to reproductive freedom--McClain argues for a political theory of the family that embraces equality, defends rights as facilitating responsibility, and supports families in ways that respect men's and women's capacities for self-government.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

McClain's illuminating book offers a rich vision of family for the twenty-first century: one that is inclusive of many types of loving and critical family bonds, including same-sex relationships, traditional marriages, and grandparent guardians; one that makes us more responsible citizens; and one that earns the respect of government and in turn would give so much back to their communities.

With so much political soundbites about family and marriage swirling about these days, this book joins the debate and offers a vision that shows how embarrassingly silly, and shortsighted, current debate is about marriage, sex education, and family. The book is philosophical and at the same time beautifully written and accessible. It really touched me and showed me how critically important our vision of family is to our democracy and society in this increasingly disconnected information age. I loved this book -- as a working mother, as a teacher, and as someone who wants to contribute more to those around me. Now, if I only could ensure that our country's leaders read it, we would be in much better shape!

Well-written, though-provoking survey of the social, legal and political terrain of "family" policy, and the competing theories and practices thereto. Hopefully this will lead to a more intellectually honest discussion of "the place of families" in American law.

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