



# Perfect Children: Growing Up on the Religious Fringe

*Amanda van Eck Duymaer van Twist*

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Children born and raised on the religious fringe are a distinctive yet largely unstudied social phenomenon. They are irreversibly shaped by the experience, having been thrust into radical religious cultures that often believe children to be endowed with heightened spiritual capabilities. The religious group is all encompassing: it accounts for their family, their school, social networks, and everything that prepares them for their adult life.

Using research gathered from over fifty in-depth interviews, Amanda van Eck Duymaer van Twist explores the lives of individuals born into new religious groups, some of whom have stayed in these groups, and some of whom have left. The groups she considers include the Bruderhof, Scientology, the Family International, the Unification Church, and the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. The book draws on the author's visits to these groups, their schools and homes, and support websites maintained by those who left the religious groups that raised them. It also details her experiences at conferences held by NGOs concerned with the welfare of children in "cults."

The arrival of a second generation of participants in new religious movements raises new concerns and legal issues. Whether they stay or leave, children raised on the religious fringe experience a unique form of segregation in adulthood. *Perfect Children* examines the ways these movements adapt to a second generation, how children are socialized, what happens to these children as they mature, and how their childhoods have affected them.

Amanda van Eck Duymaer van Twist is the deputy director of Inform, a non-profit information center specializing in minority religious movements, spiritualities, and fringe political movements, based at the London School of Economics and Political Science in London. As part of her work, she has encountered and researched a range of topics and issues dealing with minority and/or new religions.

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#### **Dwight Richardson:**

Playing with family in a park, coming to see the sea world or hanging out with pals is thing that usually you might have done when you have spare time, in that case why you don't try thing that really opposite from that. One activity that make you not feeling tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you are ride on and with addition associated with. Even you love Perfect Children: Growing Up on the Religious Fringe, you may enjoy both. It is great combination right, you still wish to miss it? What kind of hangout type is it? Oh can occur its mind hangout guys. What? Still don't obtain it, oh come on its called reading friends.

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