

Massachusetts Family Ways:

The Puritan Idea of the Covenanted Family

The builders of the Bay Colony also created special forms of family life which were as distinctive as their speech and architecture. The Puritans were deeply self-conscious in their familial acts. They wrote at length about the family, in a literature of prescription which was remarkably consistent with actual conditions in their households.

The people of Massachusetts thought of the family not as an end in itself, but as an instrument of their highest religious purposes.

The Puritan writer Jonathan Mitchell declared, "a Christian may and ought to desire many things as means, but God alone as his end." This was their way of thinking about the family in particular, which was also described as "the root whence church and commonwealth cometh."

Concern for the family in this culture was also given a special intensity by an attitude which historian Edmund Morgan calls "Puritan tribalism," that is, the Hebraic idea that the founders of New England were God's chosen people. The Puritans were encouraged by their ministers to think of themselves as "the saints," and to believe that grace descended to their children. John Cotton explained this process in explicitly genealogical terms: "The Covenant of God is, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed after thee,*" he wrote. The Puritan minister William Stoughton went even farther. He prophesied, "...the books that shall be opened at the last day will contain *Genealogies* among them. There shall be brought forth a *Register of the Genealogies of New-England's sons and daughters.*"

This obsession with family and genealogy became an enduring part of New England's culture. Two centuries after the great migration, Harriet Beecher Stowe observed:

among the peculiarly English ideas which the Colonists brought to Massachusetts, which all the wear and tear of democracy have not been able to obliterate, was that of *family*. Family feeling, family pride, family hope and fear and desire, were, in my early day, strongly-marked traits. Genealogy was a thing at the tip of every person's tongue, and in every person's mind.... "Of a very respectable family," was a sentence so often repeated at the old fireside that its influence went in part to make up my character.

New England's interest in genealogy was not the same as that of high-born families in England or Virginia. It was not a pride in rank and quarterings, but a moral and religious idea that developed directly from the Puritan principles of the founders.

Puritan ideas also had an impact on New England's family ways in yet another way. The builders of the Bay Colony cast their idea

On this subject we have two classics of American historiography: Edmund Morgan, *The Puritan Family*, and John Demos, *A Little Commonwealth: Family Life in Plymouth Colony* (New York, 1970). Morgan's work is strong on ideas of the family; Demos gives more attention to actual conditions as revealed in probate and court records.

of the family in terms of the covenant theology which was so central to their faith. They believed that God's covenant with each individual Christian was enlarged into another sort of contract which they called the family covenant. John Cotton explained, "God bath made a covenant with parents and householders," which bound them not only on their own account, but also in regard to "wives, and children, and servants, and kindred, and acquaintances, and all that are under our reach, either by way of subordination, or coordination."

Thus, the covenanted family became a complex web of mutual obligations between husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants. The clarity of this contractual idea, the rigor of its enforcement and especially the urgency of its spiritual purpose, set New England Puritans apart from other people---even from other Calvinists--in the Western world.

Like most of their contemporaries, the Puritans thought of the family as a concentric set of nuclear and extended rings. But within that conventional idea, they gave special importance to the innermost nuclear ring. Strong quantitative evidence of this attitude appeared in their uniquely nuclear naming customs. As we shall see below, the Puritans of Massachusetts gave high priority to the descent of names from parents to children within the nuclear family. This naming strategy was unique to the Puritans, and very different from other cultures in British America.

Similar tendencies also appeared in customs of inheritance, which were more nuclear in New England than in other American colonies during the seventeenth century. One study of 168 wills in Newbury, Massachusetts, for example, found that only 6.5 percent left bequests to a niece or nephew, and 3.0 percent to other kin. None whatever bequeathed property to a cousin---a pattern different from the Chesapeake colonies."

The same nuclear pattern also appeared in the composition of households. By comparison with other colonies, households throughout Massachusetts and Connecticut included large numbers of children, small numbers of servants and high proportions of intact marital unions. In Waltham, Massachusetts, for example, completed marriages formed in the 1730s produced 9.7 children on the average. These Waltham families were the largest that demographic historians have found anywhere in the Western world, except for a few Christian communes which regarded reproduction as a form of worship. But they were not unique. In many other New England towns fertility rates rose nearly as high, and the number of children was larger than French demographer Louis Henry defined as the biological maximum in a normal population.

Total numbers of children known to have been born to completed families and all families in New England were as follows:

| Town | Marriage Cohort | Comp. | All | Town | Marriage Cohort | Comp. | All |
|---------------|-----------------|-------|-------|------------------|-----------------|-------|-------|
| Plymouth | 1st gen. | 8.3 | n.a. | | 1710-40 | 7.4 | n.a. |
| | 2nd gen. | 8.7 | n.a. | | 1740-50 | 7.4 | n.a. |
| | 3rd gen. | 9.3 | n.a. | | 1750-60 | 7.8 | n.a. |
| Andover Mass. | 1st gen. | 8.3 | 8.3 | | 1760-70 | 8.3 | n.a. |
| | 2nd gen. | 8.7 | 8.1 | Concord Mass. | 1750-70 | 7.1 | 5.4 |
| | 3rd gen. | 7.6 | 7.2 | Sturbridge Mass. | 1730-59 | 8.8 | n.a. |
| Waltham Mass. | 1671-80 | 9.0 | n. a. | Brookline Mass. | 1710-1810 | 7.2 | 6.5 |
| | 1691-1700 | 8.3 | n. a. | Windsor Conn. | 1640-59 | 7.7 | n.a. |
| | 1701-10 | 8.4 | n.a. | | 1660-79 | 8.0 | n.a. |
| | 1711-20 | 8.5 | n.a. | | 1680-99 | 7.2 | n.a. |
| | 1721-30 | 9.0 | n.a. | | 1700-19 | 6.2 | n.a. |
| | 1731-40 | 9.7 | n.a. | | 1720-39 | 7.6 | n. a. |
| Hingham Mass. | pre-1660 | 7.5 | 6.4 | | 1740-59 | 6.6 | n.a. |
| | 1661-80 | 7.9 | 7.7 | | 1760-79 | 7.1 | n.a. |
| | 1681-1700 | 6.0 | 5.5 | Hampton N.H. | 1638-74 | 8.6 | 7.5 |
| | 1701-20 | 5.6 | 4.8 | | 1675-99 | 7.3 | 6.7 |
| | 1721-40 | 6.8 | 5.7 | | 1700-24 | 7.7 | 6.4 |
| | 1741-60 | 7.2 | 6.3 | | 1725-49 | 7.2 | 6.9 |
| Milford Mass. | 1660-1710 | 8.4 | | n.a. Nantucket | 1680-1739 | 7.2 | n.a. |

Compiled from Demos, *A Little Commonwealth*, 192; Philip]. Greven, jr., *Four Generations: Population, Land, and Family in Colonial Andover, Massachusetts* (Ithaca, 1970); D. S. Smith, "Population, Family, and Society in Hingham, Massachusetts, 1635-1880" (unpubl. thesis, Berkeley, 1975); unpublished family reconstitution projects conducted under the direction of the author at Brandeis on Milford, Mass., by Sally Barrett; on Hampton, N.H., by Lawrence Kilbourne; on Nantucket by Carol Shuchman and Edward Byers; on Waltham by Susan Simmons; on Concord by Marc Harris, Susan Kurland, James Kimenker, Richard Weintraub and Joanne Early Levin; and on Brookline by Beth Linzner, Kenneth A. Dreyfuss, Alisa Belinkoff Katz and Bethamy Dubitzky Weintraub, and on Windsor, Conn., by Linda Auwers. Results have been partly published by Marc Harris, "The People of Concord: A Demographic History, 1750-1850," in D. H. Fischer, ed., *Concord, The Social History of a New England Town, 1750-1850* (Waltham, 1983); Beth Linzner, "Population and Society: A Demographic History of Brookline," in D. H. Fischer, ed., *Brookline the Social History of a Suburban Town* (Waltham, 1986), 7-48; Lawrence, l.

The number of servants in New England, however, was very small---less than one per family. At any given time, most households in this region had no servants at all--a pattern very different from the Chesapeake and Delaware colonies. In short, the New England household more closely coincided with the nuclear unit, and the nuclear family was larger and stronger than elsewhere in the Western world.

The strength of the nuclear unit was merely one of many special features of New England families. Another was a strong sense of collective responsibility for maintaining its individual integrity. The people of the Bay Colony worked through many institutions to preserve what they called "family order" and "family government" within each nuclear unit. Other cultures also shared these concerns, but once again Puritan New England did things in its own way, with a special intensity of purpose. The selectmen and constables of each town were required by law to inspect families on a regular basis. Where "good order" broke down within a household, their task was to restore it. In nuclear families that were persistently "disorderly"---a word that covered a multitude of misdeeds---the selectmen were required to remove the children and servants and place them in other homes. Thus, in 1675, Robert Styles of Dorchester was presented for many sins, and ordered to "put forth his children, or otherwise the selectmen are hereby empowered to do it, according to law."

In the second generation, responsibility for inspecting families passed from selectmen to special town officers called tithingmen. A statute in 1675 ordered that each tithingman "shall take charge of ten or Twelve families of his Neighborhood, and shall diligently inspect them." This office did not exist in Anglican Virginia or Quaker Pennsylvania. But it was not a New England innovation. Tithingmen had long existed as

parish functionaries in East Anglia and other parts of England. Here again an old English custom was taken over by the Puritans and given a new intensity of purpose."

Family order was an hierarchical idea to the people of the Bay Colony. In that belief they were typical of their age. But the structure of that hierarchy had a special cast in their thinking. In Puritan New England, the family hierarchy had more to do with age, and less with gender and rank, than in other English-speaking cultures. The evidence appears not only in prescriptive literature, but also in the ordering of daily functions such as eating and sleeping. Families in Massachusetts did not dine together. Laurel Thatcher Ulrich discovered that in New England "servants and children ... sat down to eat after their master and mistress." This, as we shall discover, differed from table customs in other Anglo-American cultures.

The same hierarchy of ages also appeared in sleeping arrangements. Adults and heads of families slept on the ground floor in rooms called the parlor or principal chamber. Children commonly slept in upstairs, in lofts or low rooms. Architectural historians find that this arrangement was typical of East Anglia, but not of other regions in England. "In East Anglia," writes Abbott Cummings, "the sleeping arrangements for adults were confined almost entirely to the ground floor." Cummings discovered that in the west of England, adults and children slept in upstairs chambers, but "by the early seventeenth century, in southeastern England at least, the parlor had become the principal ground floor sleeping room and this continues to be its chief function in Massachusetts as reflected in inventories for houses with a plan of two or more rooms ... the ground floor parlor remained the master bedroom for the head of the family into the eighteenth and even in some cases into the nineteenth century in some rural areas. "

This hierarchy of age within the family was written into the laws of Massachusetts, which in 1648 required the death penalty as a punishment for stubborn or rebellious sons over the age of sixteen who refused to obey either their father or mother. The same punishment was also provided for children who struck or cursed their parents. No child was ever executed under this law, but several were fined or whipped by the courts for being rude or abusive to their parents. Some of these errant "children" were in their forties, and their parents were of advanced age.

At the same time, other laws ordered that younger children who were "rude, stubborn and unruly" and could not be kept in subjection by their parents, should be removed and placed under a master who would "force them to submit to government."

The intensity of these Puritan beliefs in the covenanted family as an instrument of larger purposes, and in the instrumental family as primarily a nuclear unit, and also in the nuclear family as a hierarchy of age all distinguished the family customs of New England from other cultures in British America. The Puritans also developed these ideas in elaborate detail, with regard to relations between husband and wife, children and elders, marriage and divorce, sex and death.

If a man have a stubborn or rebellious son, of sufficient years and understanding (*viz*) sixteen years of age, which will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and that when they have chastened him will not harken unto them ... such a son shall be put to death." This law followed the text of Deuteronomy 21:18-21 (King James version). Massachusetts Laws of 1648, 6; Connecticut Laws of 1673, 78; *The Compact with the Charter and Laws of the Colony of New Plymouth*, 100. Instances of actual punishment appear in the *Plymouth Colony Records*, III, 201; VI, 20; *Mass. Bay Records*, I, 155; *Essex Records*, I, 19; *Assistants Records*, III, 13839, 144-45.

Virginia Family Ways

The Anglican Idea of the Patriarchal Family

The family customs of the Virginians were as distinctive as their architecture and speech ways. The gentry of southern and western England brought to this colony a sense of family which was as strong as that of Puritan Massachusetts. The political theory of Robert Filmer, for example, has been described as "above all things an exaltation of the family. It made the rules of domestic society into the principles of political science."² The same attitude routinely appeared among the English gentry. An example was Sir John Oglander, a Royalist gentleman with Virginia connections who lived on the English Isle of Wight. It was observed of him that "family pride indeed was the ruling passion of his life."

Among Virginians and New Englanders, ideas of the family were similar in strength, but different in substance. Virginians gave more importance to the extended family and less to the nuclear family than did New Englanders. Clear differences of that sort appeared in quantitative evidence of naming practices and inheritance patterns. The language of familial relationships differed too. The word "family" tended to be a more comprehensive term in Virginia than in Massachusetts. Virginians addressed relatives of all sort as "coz" or "cousin," in expressions that were heavy with affective meaning; but the term "brother" was used more loosely as a salutation for friends, neighbors, political allies, and even business acquaintances. It is interesting to observe that an extended kin-term tended to be more intimate than the language of a nuclear relationship. The reverse tended to be the case in Massachusetts.⁵

Individuals in Virginia were stereotyped by traits that were thought to be hereditary in their extended families. Anglican clergyman Jonathan Boucher believed that "family character both of body and mind may be traced thro' many generations; as for instance every Fitzhugh has bad eyes; every Thornton hears badly; Winslows and Lees talk well; Carters are proud and imperious; and Taliaferros mean and avaricious; and Fowkeses cruel." Virginians often pronounced these judgments upon one another. The result was a set of family reputations which acquired the social status of self-fulfilling prophecies.

For most Virginians the unit of residence tended to be a more or less nuclear household, but the unit of association was the extended family, which often flocked together in the same rural neighborhoods. Jonathan Boucher noted that "certain districts are there known and spoken of ... by there being inhabited by the Fitzhughs, the Randolphs, Washingtons, Carys, Grimeses or Thorntons." These kin-neighborhoods developed gradually during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century by continuing subdivision of estates.

From an early date in the seventeenth century, extended families were also buried together in Virginia---a custom that was uncommon in Massachusetts. Hugh Jones noted, " . . . it is customary to bury in gardens or orchards, where whole families lye interred together in a spot generally handsomely enclosed, planted with evergreens." This had also been the practice of country gentry in England for many centuries. In New England, extended family cemeteries rarely existed; people of every rank were normally interred in a common burying ground near the meetinghouse-and were not grouped by family until the late eighteenth century.

Relations within Virginia's extended families were not always harmonious. John Randolph, for example, looked with contempt upon many of his uncles and cousins. He wrote:

It was not necessary or even desirable that the descendants of these families should be learned or shining men, but they might have been better than mere Will Wimbles. Ah! I wish they were no worse than humble Will. But some are what I will not stain my paper with.

The actual unit of residence in Virginia was not the extended family, but a more or less nuclear unit. Its physical constitution differed very much from those of Massachusetts. Many of these households (more than in New England) included servants, lodgers, and visitors, sometimes on a scale that did not exist in New England. The northern tutor Philip Fithian was astonished to learn from the wife of his employer, Mrs. Robert Carter of Nomini Hall, that "this family one year with another consumes 27,000 pounds of pork and twenty beeves, 550 bushels of wheat, besides corn, four hogsheads of rum, and 150 gallons of brandy." In winter, 28 large fires were kept burning constantly at Nomini Hall, and six oxen were needed every day to haul in the wood. The pattern of consumption was very similar to great country houses in the south and west of England. No household in Massachusetts operated on such a scale.

Chesapeake households also tended to include more step-relatives and wards, fewer children in the primary unit and also many more servants than in New England. This was largely because the southern colonies had higher rates of illness and death. Children died young, and marriages were cruelly shattered at an early age.

In tidewater Virginia during the seventeenth century, most children---more than three-quarters in fact---lost at least one parent before reaching the age of eighteen. One consequence was to enlarge the importance of other kin; for when a nuclear family was broken in Virginia the extended family picked up the pieces. Another consequence was to change the structure of the household in a fundamental way. Historians Darrett and Anita Rutman observe that in "just about any" household one might find "orphans, half-brothers, stepbrothers and stepsisters, and wards running a gamut of ages. The father figure in the house might well be an uncle or a brother, the mother figure an aunt, elder sister, or simply the father's 'now-wife,' to use the word frequently found in conveyances and wills."

Family size (mean numbers of children) in the Chesapeake colonies was as follows for all families, and for completed families (which remained intact through the wife's child-bearing years):

| Place | Population | Cohort | All Fams. | Compl. Fams. |
|---------------------------|------------------|----------|--------------|--------------|
| Somerset Co. (Md.) | immigrant whites | 1665-95m | 3.9 | 6.1 |
| | native whites | 1665-95m | 6.1 | 9.4 |
| Prince George's Co. (Md.) | all whites | 1700-24m | n.a. | 7.5 |
| | | 1725-49m | n.a. | 7.6 |
| Middlesex Co., Virginia | all whites | 1650-54b | n.a. | 7.0 |
| | | 1655-59b | n.a. | 8.1 |
| | | 1660-64b | n.a. | 9.6 |
| | | 1665-69b | n.a. | 6.2 |
| | | 1670-74b | n.a. | 6.2 |
| | | 1675-79b | n.a. | 5.9 |
| | | 1680-84b | n.a. | 7.3 |
| | | 1685-89b | n.a. | 7.3 |
| | | 1690-94b | n.a. | 7.4 |
| | | 1695-99b | n.a. | 7.2 |
| | | 1700-04b | n.a. | 7.3 |
| | | 1705-09b | n.a. | 6.2 |
| | | 1710-14b | n.a. | 4.7 |
| | | Virginia | elite whites | pre-1700m |
| 1701-20m | n.a. | | | 6.7 |

Note: Cohorts are defined by date of marriage (m), or by date of the wife's birth (b); sources include Rutman and Rutman, *A Place in Time*, 73; Allan Kulikoff, "Tobacco and Slaves: Population, Economy and Society in Eighteenth-Century Prince George's County, Maryland" (thesis, Brandeis, 1976), chap. 12; Russell R. Menard and Lorena S. Walsh, "The Demography of Somerset County, Maryland: A Progress Report," *Newbeny Papers in Family and Community History* 81-2 (1981), 33; Susan Simmons, unpublished research on Virginia elites.

Yet another consequence was to increase the emotional complexity of domestic life. The courts of the Chesapeake colonies heard many complaints of cruel step-parents, who often lived up to their reputation. The courts also dealt with bitter conflicts over step-

children. In 1696, for example, one Thomas Price was presented to a county court "by the information of Hannah Price his wife for selling a child of the said Hannah which she had by another husband in the colony of Virginia.

There were also large numbers of servants in these households. Throughout tidewater Maryland, Virginia and the Carolinas, the number of servants in an average household was always much greater than in New England. As early as 1667, in Middlesex County, Virginia, male heads of households held as many as five servants and slaves on the average.

On both sides of the Atlantic, these large households were very complex in their internal structure. Masters and house servants lived close together---often sleeping in the same room. "I called up my man, who lay in my room with me," one English gentleman noted in his diary." Things were the same in Virginia, where masters, servants and visitors often shared the same room and sometimes even the same bed.

The doors of these houses were rarely closed to strangers. A bed and a meal were offered to visitors of every rank, from the governor of the colony who was received as a royal personage to the most wretched beggar who was given a mat before the kitchen fire. There was a class of impoverished gentlemen in England and America who made "visiting" their profession.

William Byrd liked to compare himself with the biblical patriarchs. He wrote, "Like one of the Patriarchs, I have my flocks and my herds, my bondsmen & bond women and every sort of trade amongst my own servants so that I live in a kind of Independence of every one but Providence. On another occasion, Byrd wrote, "Our comforts, like those of the good patriarchs are mostly domestique. . . ." Patriarchy was a word that came to be much used in Virginia, as it had been by English Royalists such as Filmer. It was rarely employed by the Puritans, and sometimes actually condemned.

This patriarchal idea also appeared in the law of the family. The courts of Virginia regarded the slaying of a father by his son, or the killing of a husband by his wife, or the murder of a master by his servant not as homicide but treason. The penalty was to be burnt to death---a sentence which was actually inflicted upon a woman who murdered her common-law husband in Maryland. Even these laws were thought to be insufficiently severe by Robert Filmer, who wished to extend the law of petty treason to include adultery by the wife.

The laws of Virginia added a material base to the patriarchal idea by requiring the "masters of the several families" to "detain and keep within their hands and custody the crops and shares of all freemen within their families," so as to ensure the payment of taxes.²⁴ The hard realities of life in the Chesapeake colonies tended to reinforce these ideals in unexpected ways, and to make the family ways of Virginia more extended and patriarchal than they might otherwise have become. Altogether, the family ways of Massachusetts and Virginia were two distinct cultural systems. Even as they shared important qualities in common, they rose from different English roots, and responded to different American environments.

Field slaves were forbidden to enter the house; entering the house after dark was a capital offense. Col. Robert Carter announced that "if anyone be caught in the House, after the family are at rest, on any pretence what ever, that person he will cause to be hanged." But house slaves slept in the same chamber with the Carters. Fithian, *Journal and Letters*, 242 (5 Sept. 1774).

Delaware Family Ways: The Quaker Idea of the Family of Love

Ideas of the family among the Quakers were as distinctive as their language and architecture---and deeply interesting to historians of domestic life. Some scholars believe that the origins of the "modern American family" are to be found in the folkways of the Delaware Valley. Historian Barry Levy argues that the Quaker settlements were "the first scene of a major, widespread, obviously successful assertion of the child-centered, fond-fostering, nuclear family in early America and most likely in the Anglo-American world."

There is an important element of truth in this thesis. But the Quaker family must be understood in its own terms, not those of a later era. It is important to note that Quakers used the word "family" in ways that differed fundamentally from modern meanings. They spoke of the Society of Friends itself as their "family." George Fox characterized a Quaker meeting as "a Family of God," and a "household of faith." Meetings both in England and America routinely addressed each other as "brethren of one family." These were more than mere metaphors. Quakers considered all Friends as their "near relations" and welcomed them to hearth and home. In this respect, Quaker ideas of the family were not more nuclear than those of other English colonists, but actually less so.

In every Anglo-American culture, the nuclear family was the normal unit of residence, and the extended family was the conventional unit of thought. The Quakers were no exception to this rule. They commonly lived in nuclear households, but thought of grandparents, cousins, uncles, aunts, nephews and nieces as members of their family. Relatives by marriage were not "in-laws," but were called simply "father," "brother" or "sister." In these respects, the family ways of the Quakers were similar to most other English-speaking people in their own time. But the Quakers submerged the nuclear and the extended family in a larger sphere which was their "family of God."

Quaker family customs were also distinctive in other ways. Tests such as the descent of names show that the intensity of nuclear consciousness in Quaker families was stronger than in Anglican Virginia, but weaker than in Puritan New England. The physical composition of households in the Delaware Valley also showed a similar pattern, which was intermediate between the northern and southern colonies. An average Quaker household had smaller numbers of children than in New England, and larger numbers of servants. But by comparison with Virginia, it had more children and fewer servants.

Quaker ideas of the family were less hierarchical than those of New England Puritans or Virginia Anglicans. Even as many Friends continued to insist that children should obey their parents, and that the young should honor their elders, they tended to think of the family and the household as a union of individuals who were equal in the sight of God. A European visitor in the Quaker household of John Bartram was astonished to find that everybody dined together at the same table---parents, children, hired men, servants and slaves:

There was a long table full of victuals: at the lowest part sat his Negroes; his hired men were next, then the family and myself; and at the head the venerable father and his wife presided. Each reclined his head and said his prayers.

This not a system of strict equality, but it was more egalitarian than attitudes in other Western cultures.

Also, Quakers gave special emphasis to the ideal of love as the spiritual cement of the family. One first-generation Pennsylvanian wrote to his children, "There is so much beauty in beholding brothers and sisters living in Love, endeavoring to help one another, as occasion may require." Their family correspondence was commonly a testimony of love between parents and children, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives.

Six family reconstitution studies also show that completed family size (except among Philadelphia elites) tended to be a little smaller in the Delaware Valley than in New England, but much larger than in the Chesapeake during the 17th and early 18th century. Calvinist groups in the middle colonies had fertility levels similar to New England Puritans.

| Group | Cohort | All | Complete | Incomplete | n |
|----------------------|----------------|-----|----------|------------|-----|
| Philadelphia Elites | m. 1700-75 | 7.5 | 9.2 | 6.0 | 42 |
| | m. 1776-1825 | 7.9 | 9.1 | 5.8 | 46 |
| N.J. and Pa. Quakers | b. before 1730 | 6.7 | 7.5 | 5.4 | |
| | b. 1731-55 | 5.7 | 6.2 | 4.4 | |
| | b. 1756-85 | 5.0 | 5.1 | 4.8 | |
| | all cohorts | 5.7 | 6.0 | 4.9 | 276 |
| Germantown Quakers | first settlers | 5.8 | | | 14 |
| Pa. Schwenkfelders | m. 1735-64 | | 5.3 | | 28 |
| | m. 1765-89 | | 6.1 | | 39 |
| N.J. and N.Y. Dutch | m. 1685-89 | | 8.9 | | 34 |
| | m. 1760-89 | | 7.0 | | 46 |
| New Paltz Huguenots | m. 1750-74 | | 7.3 | | 28 |
| | m. 1775-79 | | 8.9 | | 34 |

Sources: Louise Kantrow, "The Demographic History of a Colonial Aristocracy: A Philadelphia Case Study" (thesis, Univ. of Pa., 1976), 103-8; Robert V. Wells, "Family Size and Fertility Control in Eighteenth Century America: A Study of Quaker Families," *PS 25 (1971)*, 73-82; Stephanie Wolf, *Urban Village* (Princeton, 1976), 269; unpublished family reconstitution studies of Schwenkfelder, Dutch and Huguenot families prepared for the author by Lawrence J. Kilbourne.

Quakers repudiated the principle of fear as the cement of family relations. Puritans and Anglicans both regarded fear as a healthy emotion, and urged that it should be cultivated in relations between parents and children, and even husbands and wives. Members of the Society of Friends, however, actively condemned fear as an organizing principle of human relationships, except fear of God. They built their ideas of the family upon a radically different base.

In the words of founder George Fox, the Quakers, believed that the family should "outstrip and exceed the world, in virtue, in purity, in chastity, in godliness and in holiness; and in modesty, civility, and in righteousness and in love." They tended to think of the family as a spiritual communion which was a sanctuary of goodness and love in a world of sin and hatred. Here was another belief that flowed from the sectarian thrust of their faith, with its idea of "gathering out" from a sinful world.

Moreover, Quakers believed that the members of a household should hold themselves apart from others who were not of their kin and faith. Meetings repeatedly urged Friends to insulate the family from other non-related people in the world. In 1682, for example, one Quaker meeting strongly advised "those who do not require them to guard against the admission of servants into their houses," if those servants were not Quakers themselves. They were especially concerned about admitting elements of spiritual discord to the household. Further, Quakers tended to believe that the primary role of the family was to raise its children and to promote the spiritual health of its various members. The special intensity of the Quaker family as a child-centered institution arose directly from a religious imperative. In many ways, these Quaker beliefs seemed very close to that shimmering ideal of a "child-centered, fond-fostering, nuclear family" which would dominate thinking about familial relations in our own time. But it is important to recognize the vast distance that separated their values and purposes from those of secular American families three centuries later. The importance that Quakers gave to the ideal of familial love, to the

primacy of child rearing, and to the idea of the family as a spiritual sanctuary, all derived from a system of Christian belief that belonged to the seventeenth century and not to the twentieth. The Quaker family was never thought to be an end in itself, but an instrument of God's holy purposes in the world.