

**Crime Against the Family and Care: A Theoretical and Empirical Approach (Przestępczość przeciwko rodzinie i opiece w ujęciu teoretyczno-empirycznym), ed. Barbara Małgorzata Kałdon, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University Press, Warszawa 2023, ISBN: 978-83-8281-234-3.**

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A family undoubtedly plays a primary role in human development. It is the best place for a person to live and grow. In a properly functioning family, people realise their plans and have their needs met. Family community influences the well-being and sense of security of young people. “The family, as the basic unit of social life, is widely recognised as a natural institution with a transcultural and timeless value” (p. 7).

The issue of crime against the family and care is a significant area of research in contemporary criminology and criminal law. In an era of dynamic social and cultural changes, and in the context of redefining the concept of family, this issue is gaining particular importance, both theoretically and practically. The book *Crime against the Family and Care in a Theoretical and Empirical Approach* contributes to the interdisciplinary research on the protection of the family as the fundamental unit of society and the legal and criminal mechanisms used to safeguard it.

Edited by Barbara Małgorzata Kałdon, *Crime Against the Family and Care in a Theoretical and Empirical Approach*, published by the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University Press, explores the family from various perspectives. The book’s substantive structure is divided into three parts: the first, “The Family Environment as a Place of Development and Protection from Abuse” (two chapters); the second, “Selected Phenomena Causing Family Disintegration” (six chapters); and the third, “Domestic Violence: a Still-Today Problem” (two chapters). The publication also includes an introduction and information about the authors.

The book opens with an Introduction, which notes that “the family exerts the greatest influence on the process of shaping a child’s personality and is the best and irreplaceable place for a child’s socialisation” (p. 8). The authors emphasise that contemporary issues, along



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with the current needs and problems of the family, were their main inspiration in working on the monograph.

The volume opens with the chapter *The Family Environment: The Best Form of Crime Prevention. The Educational Influence of the Family*, developed by Jan Niewęglowski. The researcher introduces the family as a social group that plays a significant role in crime prevention. The author writes that the family is the most important group when it comes to the socialisation and upbringing of young adults. It is within the family that young people acquire truthful knowledge of reality and become familiar with the principles and norms of social life. A shared world of values is passed on to them, which helps prevent the commission of criminal offences. However, the absence of a family or its breakdown threatens individuals with committing illegal acts. Therefore, he concludes that “caring for the family and providing assistance in fulfilling its responsibilities is the most effective way to avoid educational problems” (p. 28).

The second chapter, authored by Natalia Wójcik-Krokowska, is titled *Family Ties and Personal Rights in the Judgments of the Supreme Court*. The author examines the relationship between family ties and personal rights. She analyses Supreme Court case law. The author also describes “the issue of awarding compensation for the violation of family ties” (p. 31). She considers the concepts of personal rights, family ties, and compensation for severing family ties. She concludes that in her analysis of Supreme Court case law, family ties have the status of a personal right.

The second part of the monograph, introduced by Edyta Bielak-Jomaa and Stanisław Dziekoński, is entitled *Phenomena that Infringe on Children’s Privacy Online as Factors Violating Family Integrity – Selected Aspects*. The authors present and analyse online phenomena that threaten children’s safety and privacy. These include cyberbullying, sexting, grooming, sharenting, parental trolling, and online challenges. These phenomena violate children’s rights to privacy and security, which relate to a broader right, namely, family integrity. The researchers agree that the state should systematically protect children from these digital crimes.

In her study *Crimes Against the Natural Environment of the Family as a Natural Community: Historical and Ecological Implications*, Edyta Wolter introduces the reader to the issue of crimes that threaten the natural environment, which is the best environment for raising children. She analyses the latest normative acts, the social thought of the Catholic Church, and environmental protection laws in Poland. Wolter concludes that properly implemented environmental education and a well-functioning family are crucial for shaping ecological attitudes.

In the next chapter of his monograph, *The Crime of Offending Religious Sensitivity Against Children and Youth*, Eugeniusz Sakowicz points out that the religious worldview adopted by a child’s parents or legal guardians is inviolable, as “parents are the first and most important educators of their children” (p. 114). The author discusses actions that should be taken to protect children from offences against religious feelings. The theologian emphatically states that individuals who commit offences against religious feelings violate the state’s constitutional order.

He points out that the state should impose consequences on those who attack the religious freedom of children and youth.

In the chapter *Children Left Behind, Not Abandoned in the Windows of Life*, Beata Krajewska considers the issue of the so-called baby hatch, where leaving a child behind is not considered a crime of abandonment. Krajewska emphasises that a baby hatch is an important institution for caring for children when parents are unwilling or unable to care for the child and meet their needs. It provides a human being with the opportunity to survive. The researcher emphasises that her argument about the lack of criminal liability for leaving a child in the baby hatch is based on knowledge and analysis of the views of criminal law representatives.

In the next chapter of the monograph, *General Characteristics of Illegal Adoption*, Justyna Gózdź and Barbara M. Kałdon describe illegal adoption as a crime. The authors provide a detailed description of the phenomenon of illegal adoption. Gózdź and Kałdon refer to the grey area of illegal adoption as child trafficking, which has nothing to do with the child's well-being. At the same time, they note, based on statistical data, that this crime is rarely committed in Poland and its frequency has significantly decreased.

Next, Barbara M. Kałdon, in the chapter *The Crime of Bigamy in Polish Law – Article 206 of the Penal Code*, reflects on the phenomenon of bigamy as a criminal offence. In this study, the author discusses the origins of the crime of bigamy and identifies the legal regulations governing this offence. It is crucial to emphasise the subject of protection for the crime of bigamy: the family and monogamous marriage. She discussion is supplemented by a statistical presentation of the incidence of this criminal offence in Poland between 1999 and 2020.

The third part of the book opens with a chapter by Aleksandra Magdalena Pręgoszka, entitled *The Phenomenon of Domestic Violence*, based on data from the Warsaw VI District Police Headquarters and interviews with police officers in Warsaw and Ciechanów. Pręgoszka offers a compelling analysis of the issue of domestic violence in Poland. Primarily, she explores the widespread social phenomenon of violence, including domestic violence, and the concepts associated with it: perpetrator and victim. To illustrate the scale of the phenomenon, Pręgoszka analyses statistical data collected through the Blue Card process. The initial sections of the chapter present data from the Blue Card issued by the Warsaw IV District Police Headquarters for the years 2012-2017. The author characterises the perpetrators of violence, the victims of violence, the forms of violence, and the effects of violence on victims. In the following sections, Pręgoszka presents the results of research conducted based on interviews with police officers from the Warsaw VI District Police Headquarters and the Ciechanów County Police Headquarters regarding domestic violence interventions. She describes, among other things, the perpetrators and victims of violence, as well as the types of violence. Finally, the author comprehensively summarises her considerations, considering the theoretical and empirical aspects of the phenomenon.

The final chapter of the book, written by Wiktoria Wiśniewska, is titled *Domestic Violence in the Opinion of Parents of School-Age Children Based on Her*

*Own Research.* Wiśniewska devotes her article to a discussion of intrafamily violence, which can affect various individuals within a family relationship. The author emphasises that domestic violence is a punishable offence under Polish law. She begins with a theoretical presentation of the phenomenon of domestic violence in Polish law. She then presents the results of her own empirical research conducted among a selected group of parents of school-age children in Włocławek. The researcher demonstrates that attitudes toward domestic violence among parents of school-age children vary. Wiśniewska states that domestic violence is a significant contemporary social problem and appeals to society for a willingness to help victims of domestic violence.

In this review, the authors of individual chapters introduce readers to crimes against the family and caregiving from a theoretical and empirical perspective. They present various activities that threaten the proper functioning of the family. The chapters of the monograph are based on thoroughly researched literature on the subject, as well as the results of their own research. The book is inspiring due to the multifaceted nature of the issues it addresses. It discusses not only the dangers threatening the family but also identifies specific ways to support this fundamental social unit. The authors have comprehensively presented and analysed criminal phenomena related to the family.

This publication stands out for its original approach to the topic. It combines in-depth theoretical analysis with empirical research findings, providing a multifaceted and innovative perspective on the issue of crime against the family. This book makes a significant and original contribution to the development of research on crime against the family, expanding existing knowledge with new theoretical findings and empirical analyses. While the book offers a thorough overview of phenomena threatening the family, a comparative international perspective could have enriched the analysis.

Anyone concerned with the well-being of the family and its proper development should familiarise themselves with this book. The monograph is also worth the attention of professionals working with families, such as family assistants, family coaching specialists, and family pastors. The book's intended audience includes students of family studies and pedagogy.

While the book offers a thorough overview of phenomena threatening the family, a comparative international perspective could have enriched the analysis. The empirical parts are particularly valuable for practitioners and researchers alike. The volume makes a valuable contribution to the literature on family protection and criminal law, combining theoretical reflection with empirical findings. Its interdisciplinary character will make it a useful resource for both academics and practitioners.