

**“Preachers’ kids are the worst”**  
**Results of a Survey among Dutch clergy children**  
(Uncorrected draft)

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“It is said preachers’ kids  
Are the worst  
It must have been a preacher’s  
kid  
Who said this first”  
Gary E. Brownlee<sup>1</sup>

*Introduction*

Painter Vincent Van Gogh, philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, Boy Scouts’ founder Baden Powell, psychologist Carl Gustav Jung, Democratic nominee for President of the United States in 1972 George McGovern, glam-rock star Alice Cooper, actor Denzel Washington, Red Army terrorist Gudrun Ensslin (RAF), ‘rebel with a cause’ Franklin Graham, and US National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice have at least one thing in common: they are all preachers’ kids. Their father was a minister in one of the Protestant denominations. Do they have more in common than just their origins? Are clergy children a unique breed? How were they raised? What are their experiences and memories when they are grown adults? Do they have a common perspective on life? Are church and faith important to them? And why do some clergy children feel the need to share their experiences in more or less formal self-help groups?<sup>2</sup>

Some of these and other questions were investigated in a massive survey amongst Dutch clergy children, held in 2002 as a joint effort of the Free University of Amsterdam, *Trouw*, a Christian newspaper, and *NCRV*, a Christian Broadcasting Company. Initiative was taken by the Dutch artist and comedian *Freek de Jonge*, himself being a preacher’s son, who had a vision of bringing together thousands of clergy children in order to share memories and experiences and – if possible - to reflect upon their moral responsibilities in modern Dutch society. A Day of the Clergy Children (Domineeskinderendag) was organized in the New Church in Amsterdam on October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2002.<sup>3</sup> This meeting, attended by more than 1.000 clergy children, was characterized by a peculiar mix of the sacred and the profane, seriousness and laughter, entertainment and discussion.<sup>4</sup> Although most of the participants had never met before, the meeting had a strong ‘reunion’ character. Recognition was great when famous clergy children told their stories. Amongst many other activities, the results of the Dutch clergy children survey were presented.

During the past decades, several (auto-)biographical and therapeutical books on clergy children were published in Germany (Riess, 1979; Greiffenhagen, 1982 and 1984); the Netherlands; (Dresselhuys & De Leeuw, 1985), and the United States (Lee, 1992; Franklin, 1995; Sanford, 1998). Clergy children have been the subject of several scientific research projects in various countries (Moy & Malony, 1987; McGown & Sharma, 1992; Anderson, 1998; Campbell, 1998; Hardy, 2001; Strange & Sheppard, 2001), but as far as we know, never as extensive as in the Dutch research project of 2002. The mass media attention for the Clergy Children Project was also quite unusual, including reports in German, Belgian, and Austrian media.

### *A little bit of history*

The Protestant Reformation abolished celibacy and allowed for the married minister. A unique social entity developed, already lasting for more than four centuries: the clergy family, living in the parsonage. The minister was a man of God and his family had to be a model of piety and virtue. The minister's wife had a special task in the congregation and their children acted as a role-model for other children. A minister unable to manage his own family was to be pitied and was not worth of bearing the name of 'pastor'. In this context sometimes 1 Timothy 3:5 was cited: "If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?" Fear of being disgraced publicly by the supposed bad behavior of the children could lead to rigorous norms in the parsonage, or - when the clergy family itself cherished more liberal norms - to a combination of outward accommodation and inner detachment, showing striking differences between 'front-stage' and 'back-stage' behavior (Goffman). In many villages the parsonage was built right next to the church and every villager could freely observe who went in and out and what was happening inside. All kind of persons seeking for help visited the parsonage. Often, the inhabitants experienced the parsonage as a "glass house".<sup>5</sup> The clergy children played an important role. Imagine the congregation member who is going to the parsonage to announce the death of her husband, and the clergy child who has to take care of this woman, because the father is paying his pastoral visits.

The idea of being observed all of the time must have frustrated generations of clergy children. One of the respondents in our survey adequately described this condition as one of 'public property'. Rebellion against the imposed role-model and the struggle for a personal identity have led many clergy children astray/far from home, both geographically and mentally. "Preachers' kids are the worst" it is said in America. A similarly negative Dutch expression runs as follows: "Clergy children are devil's children." Rebellious behavior in the teenage years often was a cry for attention. The father was both present and absent. More than other working fathers the minister had the opportunity to work at home, but the door to his study often was impenetrable for his children. The more he was available for his congregation, the less he was there for his own offspring.

At the same time, the parsonage was an important institution of cultural transmission. Members of the family made music, read books, and had discussions on all kinds of interesting topics. In past centuries, the mayor, the notary, and the Protestant minister built the local intellectual and social elite in many Dutch villages. At a very early stage, clergy children learned how to deal with different persons and different situations. Secretly, many clergy children were proud of their father's profession and status. The family was well-respected and the children enjoyed a certain reflected glory. Many sons chose for a clergy career themselves. Some Dutch families existed of six or seven generations of clergymen. Many other clergy children found a career in arts, science, and politics.

Until now, this paper is written in the past tense. In the Netherlands, the traditional ideal-typical clergy family seems to be fading away. The parsonage no longer is a house right next to the church, where the local church members meet. The pastor's wife has her own job and is no longer willing to act as an extension piece of the ministry. A growing number of female pastors have entered the churches.<sup>6</sup> Sometimes, husband and wife share a part-time appointment as pastors. In some of the more liberal Dutch Protestant

congregations gay pastors are allowed. No longer the pastor's spouse always shares the same faith. Increasingly, the pastor defines his profession as a 'normal' job, abandoning the idea of religious calling and total availability. Retrenchments in the congregation force ministers to look for a combination of different jobs. The status ladder of Dutch society shows a slow but steady decrease of the minister's status since 1945. Massive church abandonment has taken place during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, especially from the 1960's onward. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a majority of the Dutch belonged to one of the Protestant denominations (60%). At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, this percentage was reduced to 22% (SCP, 2000).

If it is true to describe the traditional clergy family as a vanishing cultural phenomenon, research among those who grew up in these families could provide us with valuable information about what was going on in the parsonage. At least, this was one of the most important reasons to start a survey among Dutch clergy children of all ages. These were the specific research questions:

- How do clergy children evaluate their youth and upbringing?
- What are the effects – both positive and negative – of growing up in the parsonage?
- How have clergy children developed?
- What stands do they take in matters of religion, morals, politics?
- Which norms and values do they hold important?
- Are there significant differences between generations of clergy children?

#### *Data and Methods*

A lengthy questionnaire, containing both closed and open questions, was developed and tested. In order to trace the addresses of Dutch clergy children, advertisements were placed in five national newspapers and two weekly magazines in the Spring of 2002. The message invited clergy children of age 16 and older to cooperate in the survey. Those who reacted received a written or electronic version of the questionnaire. At the end of the questionnaire, respondents were invited to mention the names and addresses of brothers and sisters and other clergy children they knew. Responses to this request were overwhelming. We expected 300 or 400 respondents, but no less than 2.300 persons reacted. Obviously, the project had a strong appeal on those who spent their youth in the parsonage. After two months the decision was taken to stop sending out questionnaires. In the end, 2.086 valid questionnaires could be processed. Reactions not only came from the Netherlands, but also from other countries where Dutch clergy children had moved: Belgium, Germany, the United Kingdom, Norway, the United States, Brazil, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand.

The total number of Dutch clergy children is difficult to assess. The number of ministers of Protestant denominations in the Netherlands during the past century is an estimated 12.500. Suppose that the average number of children in clergy families is four (unmarried ministers and childless couples included), the total number of clergy children born between 1900 and 2000 would be 50.000. Many of those who were born before 1920 will have passed away and those born after 1985 were too young to participate in the survey, which leaves the total population of Dutch adult clergy offspring an estimated 32.500. Perhaps it is safer to say that the actual number of adult clergy children probably lies somewhere between 25.000 and 40.000.

We have divided the respondents in five generations, following a distinction made by the Dutch sociologist Becker (Becker, 1992). The 'Pre-War Generation' was born before 1930 and grew up in a time of economic crisis and World War II. This generation is visible but relatively weak in our survey.<sup>7</sup> The 'Quiet Generation' was born between 1930 and 1940. They witnessed World War II and the post-war Reconstruction era in their youth. The 'Protest Generation' was born between 1941 and 1955. Members of this generation grew up in the Reconstruction era and the 'roaring' 1960's. The 'Lost Generation' was born between 1961 and 1975 and witnessed the 1960's as well as the period of economic recession in the 1970's and 1980's. Youth unemployment was high during these years. The 'Pragmatic Generation' is the last one of interest to our survey. Members of this generation were born between 1971 and 1985. They witnessed the 'no-

nonsense' years of the 1980's and the end of the Cold War during their formative period (see Table 1). If it is true that the traditional Dutch clergy family is vanishing, this should be visible in differences between these generations.

*Table 1. Generations of Dutch clergy children in the 2002 survey (N=2.083)*

Born before 1930 (Pre-War Generation)	4.6%
Born between 1930 and 1940 (Quiet Generation)	13.6%
Born between 1941 and 1955 (Protest Generation)	30.2%
Born between 1956 and 1970 (Lost Generation)	28.3%
Born between 1971 and 1985 (Pragmatic Generation)	23.3%

### *Childhood*

A vast majority of the respondents (88.6%) grew up in the *Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk* (Dutch Reformed Church), the *Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland* (Reformed Churches in the Netherlands), and the *Evangelisch-Lutherse Kerk* (Evangelical Lutheran Church), three churches which have merged into the *Protestantse Kerk in Nederland* (Protestant Church in the Netherlands) in 2004. Others came from a variety of Liberal, Orthodox Calvinist, and Baptist churches. In most of the cases the father was the minister. In only 1% of the cases the respondent's mother was the minister and in 2% of the cases both parents were minister. Most clergy children moved to other places one or more times during their youth. The average number of moves is 3.3, but some have moved six or more times. Only 11.9% spent their youth in one place. The average number of children in clergy families drops from 5.3 children in the two older generations (born before 1941) to 4.2 (still relatively high) in the three younger generations. No more than 1.6% of the respondents was only child.

Respondents were asked to characterize their parental family on a five-point scale of thirteen pairs of contrasts, such as warm-cold, open-closed etc. In Table 2 the results are summarized. A majority of the respondents characterize their parental family as warm, open, close, genuinely pious, and outward directed, but at the same time many respondents experienced a heavy interference of work and private life, they always had the feeling that they were observed, the parent-minister was the center of interest, money-troubles often prevailed (especially among the older generations), and there were strict rules in the house.

*Table 2. Evaluations of the family in which respondents were raised*

	<i>% (strongly agree)</i>
Warm (as opposed to cold)	69.0%
Genuinely pious (vs. faith was just a façade)	62.9%
Heavy interference of work and private life (vs. strict separation of work and private life)	58.9%
Always people about the place (vs. never)	53.3%
Open (vs. closed)	52.7%
Always the feeling that the outside world was watching us (vs. never)	52.5%
Outward directed (vs. inward directed)	52.0%
We could talk about everything (vs. no possibility to talk at all)	51.8%
Close, strongly involved in each other (vs. Everybody went his/her own way)	42.6%
The parent-minister was the center of interest (vs. equal attention for all family members)	40.4%
Liberal (vs. orthodox)	40.0%
No money-troubles (vs. always money-troubles)	37.6%
Strict rules (vs. freedom)	31.8%

It is evident that church and faith occupied a special place in the clergy family. Most families had daily table prayers (92%) and daily Bible reading (71%). Church was very important in 92% of the families, more than faith (81%). At the same time this implies that in some clergy families church and faith did not have an important place. A majority of the clergy children attended church weekly when they were fifteen years old (70%). At this age, however, belief in God was not always without doubts (see Table 3).

*Table 3. Belief in God at the age of fifteen.*

I believed in God	41%
I believed in God, but I had my doubts	28%
I was seeking; sometimes I believed, sometimes I didn't	16%
I did not know if there was a God	7%
I did not believe in God	8%

### *Public property*

Most respondents confirmed that it gave them a special feeling to be a clergy child when they were young (84%). They could elaborate on these feelings in an open question.

Positive and negative answers which were given:

- I felt observed, glass house.
- Proud, clergy family was the royal family of the village.
- I felt like an outsider, at school I was a 'plaster saint'
- Funny: the prince royal; embarrassing: the spotlights.
- It took many years to free myself from the sermons of my youth, to discover who I really was and in which god I wanted to believe.
- Role model.
- Alone in the church. Funny to see your father in front of the church.
- Actor. Always had to be an example. Attitude: pretending; avoiding public conflicts.
- People looked up at me.
- Clergy children were not allowed to do mischief; if you did, people said: We did not expect this from a minister's daughter.
- Loneliness amidst friends; I was treated differently.

As youngsters, clergy children had an exceptional position and they were aware of it. The attention paid to them was ambivalent: both positive and negative. They felt flattered by all attention, the glory of the well-known father was reflected upon them, but attention could also be oppressive, feeling observed and judged against a very high moral standard, different from their peers. They were public property whether they liked it or not. The mobility of the minister (after four years a minister could receive a call from another congregation) meant that the family had to settle down in a new environment every now and then.

To assess if these feelings were stronger in older generations than in the younger ones, we look at the scores on three items:

- As a clergy child you live in a 'glass house'
- They kept an eye on you as a clergy child more than on other children
- As a clergy child you had to set an example for other children

*Table 4. Agreement with items per generation*

	<i>'Glass house'</i>	<i>Kept an eye</i>	<i>Set an example</i>
<i>Born before 1930</i>	70.0%	78.5%	58.0%
<i>1930 - 1940</i>	72.4%	81.2%	63.1%
<i>1941 - 1955</i>	73.6%	84.3%	65.3%
<i>1956 - 1970</i>	60.2%	73.9%	49.9%
<i>1971 - 1985</i>	41.5%	62.4%	33.7%

It is clear that the older generations, including the 'Protest Generation' felt these pressures stronger than the generations born after 1955. The data, however, show no steady decline per generation, but rather suggest a split taking place in the 1960's and 1970's, when the typical Dutch phenomenon of 'pillarization' (organization of social life on confessional basis) was crumbling down. Nevertheless, also the younger generations are not unfamiliar with the feelings of living in a 'glass house', being watched, and having to set an example.

If we look at possible differences between those who were raised in a rural environment and those who were raised in an urban environment, it appears that the 'rurals' have the described feelings somewhat stronger than the 'urbans'. Gender differences are almost negligible, but female clergy children felt even stronger than male clergy children that people kept an eye on them. The data of this survey seem to portray two (ideal-typical) types: the orthodox, strict, rural clergy family of the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the more liberal, urban clergy family of the last decades.

For some clergy children it was too embarrassing to have a look into 'God's little kitchen'. A minority (23%) had rather seen that their father (or mother) would have had another job and 11% has lost all respect for the ministry as a clergy child. A 62 year old woman wrote: "...at the one hand the famous man, at the other hand the manic-depressive man which I had to call my father." About three quarter of the respondents (76.0%) tend to evaluate their youth and upbringing in a clergy family as (very) positive, whereas a quarter (24%) has a (very) negative evaluation. Although a minority, this percentage is rather impressive. The more orthodox the respondents characterize their parental family, the more negative they evaluate their upbringing. Of those raised in very orthodox families 37% has a negative judgment, whereas only 17% of those raised in very liberal families have a negative judgment. The more negative their evaluation, the smaller the chance that they presently have an affiliation with church and Christian belief. 71% of the very positive evaluators is a church member and 78% believes in God; but only 36% of the very negative evaluators is a church member and 35% believes in God.

One out of every three clergy children has ever thought of studying theology (males 40%; females 26%). The group that actually has studied theology for some time is 12% and eventually only 3% of the respondents have become a minister themselves.

#### *Social, religious, moral, and cultural capital*

To what extent was the 20<sup>th</sup> century Dutch clergy family a breeding-place of social, religious, moral, and cultural capital? Potentially, clergy children grew up in a stimulating and interesting setting, where they could meet people of different backgrounds, where church, theology, and morals were present, and where they could get acquainted with art and culture. We asked the respondents whether they had the feeling that their home had provided them with these matters. Table 5 shows how respondents think about the capital they received.

*Table 5. Social, religious, moral, and cultural capital (in order of popularity)*

	<i>% (very important)</i>
A sense of justice	94%
A strong sense of responsibility	93%
Interest in people	92%
Empathy with the weak in society	88%
Conviction that you always have to be quick to help other people	84%
A sensibility for ethical questions	83%
Conviction that you have to do something with your talents	83%
Interest in verbal communication	80%
Interest in church and faith	76%
Interest in music	75%
Interest in literature	74%
Conviction that you should not waste your time	71%

Interest in theological questions	66%
Interest in political questions	66%
Enjoying life	61%
Interest in science	57%
Interest in spirituality	47%
Interest in visual arts	42%

If we look at the most often mentioned forms of 'received capital', it is remarkable that these items almost all belong to the *moral* domain. The parsonage (still) is an outstanding place to learn morality, whether a person likes it or not. The image of the Protestant parsonage as an institution of cultural transmission is confirmed, especially with regards to literature and music, more than the visual arts. Theology, politics, and science score higher among male clergy children, whereas verbal communication, literature, and people score higher among females. Expressively, the vast majority of respondents (92.1%) state that their youth experiences have an important effect upon their contemporary life, their outlooks, and their choice of a profession. Generally, no significant differences between the generations were found, which indicates that the parsonage in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century still functioned as an important transmitter of social, religious, moral, and cultural capital. The only item which somehow shows significant differences per generation is "The conviction that you should do something with your talents" (Pearson's R = .17). See Table 6.

*Table 6. Importance of doing something with your talents per generation.*

	% (very) important
<i>Born before 1930</i>	79.6%
<i>1930 - 1940</i>	79.8%
<i>1941 - 1955</i>	75.7%
<i>1956 - 1970</i>	69.9%
<i>1971 - 1985</i>	58.9%

#### *Grown-up clergy children*

Clergy children claim that their experiences in the parsonage clearly have effected their choices in life, such as the choice of profession. They are a very high educated category. The majority of the respondents (79.7%) have followed or are following forms of higher education (university, colleges). Table 7 shows the most popular professions among clergy children.

*Table 7. Popular professions among Dutch clergy children (times mentioned).*

1	Teacher	327
2	Nurse	109
3	Consultant	78
4	Minister	68
5	Manager	56
6	Secretary	40
7	Doctor	39
8	Social worker	37
9	Psychologist	35
10	Civil servant	29
11	Journalist	25

Education and health care score high among clergy children. Most jobs have a strong emphasis on helping people, teaching people, and serving people. Few clergy children chose for jobs in the financial world, trade or industry. The agrarian sector and fishery are beyond their horizon. All in all, we found one banker, one postman, one crane-driver, one cabinet-maker, one female bartender, and two taxi drivers.

Regarding church and faith, we can conclude that a slight majority (58.9%) are member of one of the Christian churches. About one third says no (31.4%) and 9.8% is uncertain. About half of the respondents feels a commitment to the church (52.0%). Only 27.0% attends church every week, and another 22.3% at least once a month. Church membership, commitment, and attendance rates are declining per generation, but the youngest generation shows deviant patterns. Of course, it is possible that many of this young generation will take a decision to leave the church in the future, - some of them still live with their parents - but perhaps the contours of a generation 'beyond secularization' become visible here.

*Table 8. Church membership, commitment, and weekly attendance per generation.*

	<i>Membership</i>	<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Weekly attendance</i>
<i>Born before 1930</i>	75.5%	72.1%	38.7%
<i>1930 - 1940</i>	69.4%	63.4%	34.4%
<i>1941 - 1955</i>	55.3%	47.8%	24.4%
<i>1956 - 1970</i>	50.9%	42.6%	19.6%
<i>1971 - 1985</i>	63.4%	52.0%	32.8%

Although a substantial percentage of clergy children have switched to another church than the church of their parents, Evangelical and Pentecostal churches seem to have hardly any appeal. Only five respondents switched to one of these churches. Seven respondents turned Roman Catholic. Switches usually are made to the church of the partner, or, in the case of emigration, to a church similar to the church of origin in the Netherlands.

Clergy children do not seem to be very susceptible for the appeal of New Age groups (0.4%). Humanism is popular among 2.7%, Buddhism has an appeal on 1.9%. Another group (3.8%) mentions a combination of various inspirational sources. If Christianity no longer is the source of their inspiration, most respondents mention no concrete substitute world view (36.5%, although they often use catchwords such as 'individualist', 'seeker', 'agnostic tending to Buddhism, without practicing it', 'don't want to be put in a box', 'believer without a church'.

We can compare the actual belief in God of the respondents with their belief at the age of fifteen (See Table 9). Only the percentages of those who chose for the option "I believe(d) in God" (without doubts) are mentioned. A remarkable pattern becomes visible. Unconditional belief in God has diminished in the older generations, has remained stable in the 'Lost Generation' (1956-1970), but has *increased* among the members of the youngest generation.

*Table 9. Agreement with the statement "I believe(d) in God" now and at the age of fifteen per generation.*

	<i>Now</i>	<i>At the age of fifteen</i>
<i>Born before 1930</i>	49.5%	60.6%
<i>1930 - 1940</i>	33.0%	57.4%
<i>1941 - 1955</i>	35.6%	40.7%
<i>1956 - 1970</i>	36.6%	36.5%
<i>1971 - 1985</i>	43.6%	32.8%
<i>Total</i>	38.0%	40.9%

When asked in an open question what clergy children themselves want to transmit to the next generation, answers with a moral content prevailed, inspired by faith or otherwise. Be quick to help other people, show respect, stand up for the weak, material things are unimportant. Just an anthology:

- Individual man is not on earth for himself alone
- Making responsible choices
- Justice and humanity
- Knowledge and appreciation of faith and religion
- World peace



- Respect for mankind, animals, nature.
- Norms and values. Enjoying life, without forgetting other people.
- Be ready for everybody, stand up for the weak, money is unimportant.
- Personal relation with God. Live for others, not only for yourself. Use your capacities.

The Netherlands has a multi-party system, with parties ranging from the (extreme) left to the (extreme) right. In parliament the leftist Green Party is relatively small, but among clergy children even more popular than the much bigger Christian Democrats and Social Democrats. Conservative, right wing parties draw almost no voters among clergy children. The majority would favor a center-left government, whereas in reality a center-right coalition government was formed in the Summer of 2002.

Finally, clergy children love listening to music, watching TV, talking with friends, drinking a glass of good wine, reading novels, and walking in the countryside. They prefer classical music above pop and jazz – the Matthew's Passion of Bach is favorite, followed by Handel's Messiah. They prefer Citroen above Volvo and Volkswagen, and wine above beer and whisky. The cultural capital transmitted to them seems to be in safe hands.

### *Conclusions*

We have to keep in mind that the survey is a snapshot, taken in 2002 and in many cases referring back to an education received several decades ago, sometimes even before World War II. Long ago or not, the impression given is always subjective and cannot be controlled for. We did not aim at making comparisons with other children to assess or reject the idea of uniqueness. However, the overwhelming response of Dutch clergy children to this survey was a proof of the high levels of self-consciousness among this group. If they define their situation as unique, the situation is unique in its consequences. A similar survey among – let's say – children of grocers, policemen, lawyers, or trash men would probably not get such a massive response. Clergy children have various traits and experiences in common with others, but the *combination* of traits and experiences makes them a unique breed:

- They grew up in a very religious setting
- Their father was looked upon as a 'man of God'
- They had to cope with possible discrepancies between 'front-stage' and 'back-stage' behavior of their father
- They were public property, whether they liked it or not; they were watched (or at least they had the impression that they were watched) and they had to set an example for other kids (or at least ...). This feeling could lead to rebellion or over-adjustment.
- As an unpaid extension piece of the ministry, they had to bear responsibility at a very young age
- In many cases the family belonged to the local (intellectual and cultural) elite
- Social, religious, moral, and cultural capital was abundant in the parsonage and was generously transmitted to them
- Moving to another place every now and then forced clergy children to conquer their place under the sun again among peers
- Developing an identity of their own was often a difficult and sometimes a very painful process. In their own view they remained the minister's son or daughter too long.
- In spite of or thanks to their youth and education most clergy children are doing quite well in society.

The feeling of living in a 'glass house' is less strong among the youngest generations. However, it would be premature to say that the traditional clergy family has disappeared in the Netherlands. We can only conclude that next to the traditional type, which still is prevalent in Orthodox Protestant congregations, a more modern type of clergy family has developed: a little bit more anonymous, but still functioning as an important institution of sociability, religion, morals, and culture. Comedian *Freek de Jonge* was overstating the case at the Clergy Children Day just a tiny little bit, when he concluded that clergy children are the moral backbone of the nation.



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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Found on <http://www.reflectionsofacontender.com/personal/preacherskidx.html>.

<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.preacherskids.com/pages/about.html>. Preacher's Kids International.

“The purpose of PKI is to provide ministry and support to the families of preachers, missionaries, evangelists and other Christian professional ministers. Our immediate focus is the adult children of those families -- offering celebrations and recovery through counseling, group interaction, retreats, and seminars.”

<sup>3</sup> See <http://members.lycos.nl/domineeskinderen/index.html>.

<sup>4</sup> The capacity of the *Nieuwe Kerk* (New Church) in Amsterdam did not allow for more than 1.100 visitors, although more than 3.000 PK's applied for entrance to the meeting. Media attention for this day and the survey was also high.

<sup>5</sup> See Balswick & Lee (1989) and also <http://higherfaith.org/preacherskids/glasshouse.html>. In German and Dutch the same expression is used in reference to living and growing up in the parsonage: 'Glasshaus' and 'glazen huis'. See also the titles of two publications: Steck (1984); Dresselhuys and De Leeuw (1985).

<sup>6</sup> The first female pastor in the Netherlands was Mennonite Annie Mankes-Zernike (Heitink, 2001: 193)

<sup>7</sup> The oldest respondent in the survey was 96 years old.