



Distant Love

By Ulrich Beck, Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim

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Love and family life in the global age: grandparents in Salonika and their grandson in London speak together every evening via Skype. A U.S. citizen and her Swiss husband fret over large telephone bills and high travel costs. A European couple can finally have a baby with the help of an Indian surrogate mother.

In their new book, Ulrich Beck and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim investigate all types of long-distance relationships, marriages and families that stretch across countries, continents and cultures. These long-distance relationships comprise so many different forms of what they call 'world families', by which they mean love and intimate relationships between individuals living in, or coming from, different countries or continents. In all their various forms these world families share one feature in common: they are the focal point in which different aspects of the globalized world become embodied in the personal lives of individuals. Whether they like it or not, lovers and relatives in these families find themselves confronting the world in the inner space of their own lives. The conflicts between the developed and developing worlds come to the surface in world families- they acquire faces and names, creating confusion, surprise, anger, joy, pleasure and pain at the heart of everyday life.

This path-breaking book will appeal to a wide readership interested in the changing character of love in our times.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Rich and wide-ranging... will rightly provoke further theorizing and extend the nature of research conducted in the future."

Sociology

"*Distant Love* is a rich and provocative book, and continues the unique contributions made by its authors to the analysis of globalisation and the culture of late modernity. There are some very big ideas here, and the huge themes and issues are brought on from the wings to take a bow - this is from beginning to end an invitation to open up research into the plethora of issues and areas it brings into the light."

Les Gofton, Times Higher Education Supplement

"The intimate and personal dimensions of globalization have not received as much attention as finance, environment, and conflict. They are also important, however, and exert a shaping influence on both individual lives and sociocultural change. It is a pleasure to see full-length attention from Beck and Beck-Gernsheim who bring both sociological insight and personal sensitivity to this timely account of Love at a Distance."

Craig Calhoun, Director, London School of Economics and Political Science

"Just as there are global firms, so there are global families, the authors observe. A German man marries a Chinese woman. An American couple adopts a Guatemalan baby. A Korean farmer takes a Filipina mail order bride. A child is born of a Spanish ovum, a Danish sperm and an Indian womb. Do such families bring home conflicts between East and West, rich and poor nations, or are they pioneers in cosmopolitanism? In this wide-ranging book and original book, the authors explore a key truth Ð increasingly unfolding in our own living rooms."

Arlie Russell Hochschild, University of California at Berkely and author of *The Outsourced Self* and *So How's the Family?* and other essays

"This path-breaking overview of 'distant love' traces the ways globalization is embodied and interiorized within the domains of personal affect and desire. Beck and Beck-Gernsheim demonstrate that contemporary marriage, family, kinship and reproduction are not contained by national systems of law, state borders, or inequalities of wealth, power, gender, and racialization."

Nina Glick Schiller, University of Manchester

About the Author

Ulrich Beck is one of the world's leading sociologists and social thinkers, well-known for his bestselling book *Risk Society*. He is Emeritus Professor at the University of Munich and Professor of Sociology at the LSE.

Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim is Visiting Professor at the University of Trondheim. Her previous books include *The Normal Chaos of Love* (co-authored with Ulrich Beck).

Users Review

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