

We Are All the Duggars

Leo Tolstoy famously wrote, “All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.” The problem is that I’ve yet to meet a family that fits into Tolstoy’s tidy categories of “happy” and “unhappy.” The reality is far messier. Put tears and laughter, love and betrayal, fights and hugs into a blender and out will come a family. Even in homes where the walls are decorated with portraits of grinning moms and dads and kids, there’s usually a closet door that’s kept shut. Last week we were reminded of that, when the media flung open that door in the Duggar family home. And the skeletons came spilling out.

Josh Duggar, now 27, the oldest son in TLC’s hit show, *19 Kids and Counting*, sexually abused five underage girls—four of them his sisters—when he was in his early teens. On the family’s Facebook page, Josh, his wife, and his parents have acknowledged this, as well as described how they addressed the abuse a dozen years ago when it occurred. Josh, who had been a lobbyist in Washington, D.C., for the Family Research Council, has since resigned his position. And TLC will not be airing any episodes of *19 Kids and Counting* for the foreseeable future.

What happened within this family is many things—tragic and abusive, shameful and selfish, destructive and deceptive. It is all manner of evil, no matter how you look at it. But there is one thing that it is surely not: It is not surprising. Not in the least. The only ones stunned by this revelation of abuse are most likely those who assume that the Duggar family image on their reality show does, in fact, accurately reflect reality.

For the rest of the story, please [click here](#).