

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
Departments of Educational Policy Studies and History
Fall 2002

EPS 906/History 906
Proseminar on the History of Education
Topic: History of Childhood and Adolescence
1-3 Credits

Tuesdays, 4:00-7:00
Education 242

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Course Description

Studying children and youth in the past offers a unique and fascinating way to view historical development. For centuries, philosophers, educators, political and religious leaders—as well as ordinary parents—have asked basic questions about the nature of young people and how to raise them. Concerning children, they have asked: “What is a child and what are the best ways to care for it?” “How are children best prepared for adulthood?” “What determines the limits and capacity of children to learn?” “Who should make decisions about the care and rearing of children?” Every society has answered these questions differently. And children and adolescents have often confounded the efforts of adults to answer these questions and implement policies accordingly.

Since the early 1960s, scholars in numerous academic disciplines have tried to understand the nature of childhood and youth in the past. They have drawn upon many kinds of historical sources: art, literature, religious tracts, memoirs, movies, biographies, and so on. The same is true of this course. Most of the class will focus on childhood and adolescence in Western European and then American history, starting with the medieval period and ending in the recent past.

The core of the class will be discussion of common readings, plus the occasional use of slides, films, music, and dramatic readings. So it is important for you to keep up with the reading to maximize informed participation.

Required Books

Nearly all of the following books are available in paperback; in addition to copies found in area bookstores, check local used bookstores in the area or perhaps the Internet. A copy of each book should be available on reserve at Helen C. White, and some may be available elsewhere in the UW library system.

Required readings

1. Philippe Aries, Centuries of Childhood
2. Nicholas Orme, Medieval Children
3. John Boswell, The Kindness of Strangers
4. Steven Ozment, When Fathers Ruled: Family Life in Reformation Europe
5. William Boyd, ed., Emile of Jean Jacques Rousseau
6. William Blake, Songs of Innocence and Experience
7. Elliot West, Growing Up With the Country
8. David Nasaw, Children of the City
9. Howard Chudacoff, How Old Are You?
10. Beth Baily, From Front Porch to Back Seat: Courtship in Twentieth-Century America

Course Outline and Assignments:

Week # 1 September 3	Introduction to the Course
Week #2 September 10	Aries, <u>Centuries of Childhood</u>
Week #3 September 17	Orme, <u>Medieval Children</u> , Introduction and Chapters 1-5.
Week #4 September 24	Orme, <u>Medieval Children</u> , Chapters 6-9. ***1-2 page prospectus due on research paper***
Week #5 October 1	Boswell, <u>Kindness of Strangers</u>
Week #6 October 8	Ozment, <u>When Fathers Ruled</u>

Week #7 October 15	Rousseau, <u>Emile</u>
Week #8 October 22	Blake, <u>Songs of Innocence and Experience</u>
Week #9 October 29	West, <u>Growing Up With the Country</u>
Week #10 November 5	Nasaw, <u>Children of the City</u>
Week #11 November 12	Chudacoff, <u>How Old Are You?</u>
Week #12 November 19	Bailey, <u>From Front Porch to Back Seat</u>
Week #13 November 26	Research
Week #14 December 3	The Orphan Trains [no reading]
Week #15 December 10	Wine and Cheese and Student Reports

***** Research paper due, EPS mailbox, Noon, Friday, December 13*****

Student Responsibilities and Course Requirements

The formal course requirements include class attendance, weekly preparation for class discussions, and the completion of one paper based on original research. On the last day of class, students will also make a brief presentation on their paper. There are no examinations in the course.

The quality of your class participation will account for 75% of your final grade. As part of this grade, each student will be responsible for reading as many book reviews as possible for one of the books discussed during the semester. Your task will be (a) to provide a list of each review, with full citation, (b) to provide a short summary of each review with brief quotations where appropriate, and (c) to identify the review that in your opinion was the most insightful. Try to locate as many reviews as possible, but the entire written assignment should not exceed two typed pages. Please provide each member of the class with a copy of your review summaries as well as a copy of the exemplary review. I'll provide more information on this assignment in class.

The research paper will be worth 25% of your final grade. A one-two page typed prospectus, which will not be graded, is due on September 24. This prospectus will provide a rationale for your paper, the main question you are trying to answer, and a list of relevant sources, both primary (original) and secondary. If you were writing an analysis of Rousseau's main educational ideas, for example, *Emile* would be an example of a primary or original source, while books and articles written by scholars about *Emile* would be examples of secondary sources.

The paper is due by noon on Friday, December 13 in my EPS mailbox and is limited to 15-20 double-spaced typed pages, plus endnotes and bibliography. The list of topics suitable for this assignment are almost limitless, but the paper must be on some aspect of the history of childhood and adolescence, not on its contemporary expression. It can focus on informal or formal education, examine various aspects of childhood or adolescence, and draw upon printed or visual or other materials. Please stop by my office hours, or schedule an appointment if that is not possible, to discuss your paper. I'll be happy to help you frame your research question and offer some guidance.

Each paper will be evaluated on its scholarly strengths: the clarity of the thesis, depth of analysis, use of sources, and persuasiveness. There are many different style guides; historians tend to use the University of Chicago's A Manual of Style. A shortened version of the Chicago Manual can be found at the back of each issue of the History of Education Quarterly.

Except for illness or other reasons recognized by the UW, extensions will not be granted either for the prospectus or the paper. In fairness to everyone, late papers will lose one-half grade for every day late.