

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
Departments of Educational Policy Studies and History
Fall 2010

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

Mondays 2:25-5:25
Education 145

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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?” “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 class will focus on discussions of common readings; we'll also draw upon visual sources, films, music, and dramatic readings. So it is important to keep up with the reading to maximize informed participation.

Required Books

The following books are available in paperback at the UW bookstore; a copy of each book is also on reserve at Helen C. White and additional copies may be available in the UW library system. Articles may be accessed through JSTOR via MADCAT.

Required readings

1. Philippe Ariès, Centuries of Childhood
2. John Boswell, The Kindness of Strangers
3. Nicholas Orme, Medieval Children
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. David Kertzer, The Kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara
8. Steven Mintz, Huck's Raft
9. Wilma King, Stolen Childhood: Slave Youth in Nineteenth Century America
10. Elliot West, Growing Up With the Country
11. David Nasaw, Children of the City
12. Beth Baily, From Front Porch to Back Seat: Courtship in Twentieth-Century America

Course Outline and Assignments:

Week # 1 September 13	Introduction to the Course
Week #2 September 20	Ariès, <u>Centuries of Childhood</u> & Hugh Cunningham, "Histories of Childhood," <i>American Historical Review</i> 103 (October 1998): 1195-1208. (JSTOR)
Week #3 September 27	Boswell, <u>The Kindness of Strangers</u>
Week #4	Orme, <u>Medieval Children</u>

October 4

Week #5
October 11 Ozment, When Fathers Ruled
& Gerald Strauss, "The Social Function of Schools in
Reformation Germany," *History of Education Quarterly* 28
(Summer 1988): 191-206. (JSTOR)

*****1-2 page prospectus due on research paper*****

Week #6
October 18 Rousseau, Emile
& William J. Reese, "The Origins of Progressive Education,"
History of Education Quarterly 41 (Spring 2001): 1-24. (JSTOR)

Week #7
October 25 Blake, Songs of Innocence and Experience

Week #8
November 1 Kertzer, The Kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara

Week #9
November 8 Mintz, Huck's Raft

Week #10
November 15 King, Stolen Childhood: Slave Youth in
Nineteenth Century America

Week #11
November 22 West, Growing Up With the Country

Week #12
November 29 Research

Week #13
December 6 Nasaw, Children of the City

Week #14
December 13

Bailey, From Front Porch to Back Seat

***** Research paper due, EPS or History mailbox, Noon, Friday, December 17*****

Student Responsibilities and Course Requirements

The formal course requirements include class attendance, weekly preparation for class discussions, a short presentation, and the completion of one paper based on original research. There are no examinations in the course.

If you miss class, you are required to turn in a 3 page, double-spaced, critical assessment of the readings for that class.

The quality of your class participation will account for 70% 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. You'll find reviews through a variety of electronic sources: see "Book Review Digest Plus" and the other electronic resources listed when you click on "Book Reviews in the Humanities and Social Sciences." You'll find these guides at the "A-Z" listing under DATABASES for electronic resources on MadCat.

For this assignment, please provide each member of the class with a hard copy of your review summaries as well as a copy of the exemplary review. Your presentation will be limited to ten minutes and occur at the end of class. Given the size of the class, most presentations will involve more than one person, so you'll need to meet with fellow students to coordinate your effort and plan your presentation. You should not read your summaries, review-by-review, to the class. In your own words, highlight the key points of criticism and praise found in the reviews and explain why you found one especially insightful.

The research paper will be worth 30% of your final grade. A one to two-page typed prospectus, which will not be graded, is due on October 11. 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. This paper should rest upon primary sources. 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 list of topics suitable for this assignment is 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. As you begin to consider a prospective topic, feel free to initiate a conversation with me through email.

Access to primary and secondary sources available on the Internet and through MadCat has increased at lightning speed. It's impossible to provide a foolproof guide to sources on an expansive topic such as the "history of childhood and adolescence." Google Books and Internet Archives are especially helpful, but it's best to talk to research librarians to stay apprised of the latest digital collections. Don't be shy about asking me as well as our excellent UW librarians for advice.

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 most issues of the History of Education Quarterly.

The paper is due by noon on Friday, December 17 in my EPS or History mailbox and is limited to 15-20 double-spaced typed pages, plus endnotes and bibliography. 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.