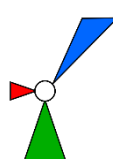


1496 AE2

bncdoc.id	EEK
bncdoc.year	1988
bncdoc.title	Family, work and education: a reader.
bncdoc.info	Family, work and education. Sample containing about 28698 words from a book (domain: social science)
Text availability	Worldwide rights cleared
Publication date	1975-1984
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David Lee's classification	W_ac_soc_science

<p><1496/c></p>  <p>Key: Footprint ConEn1 Footprint ConEn2 Footprint ConEn3</p>	<p>a society appear to 'hang together'. 1.2 The New World of Children in Eighteenth-Century England J. H. Plumb The history of children remains obscure - a happy speculative field for psychoanalysts, demographers and historical anthropologists, but attention, largely through the pioneer work of Philippe Aries, is steadily growing among conventional historians.¹ And so it should. We have too long neglected some of the most vital fields of human experience, as if unworthy of a professional historian's attention. For eighteenth-century England there is no good history of sex, none of prostitution; not even a good history of attitudes to women. Death has been ignored, and so has food. Animals, except as a part of husbandry or the meat market, have no history. And children are little better served. There is some good antiquarian work on the history of individual schools. There is a considerable volume of commentary stemming from Locke's <i>Some Thoughts Concerning Education</i> (1693), and from the reception of Rousseau's <i>Emile</i>, first translated in 1763, but this is mainly ideological, although there has been discussion of Locke's attitude to what should be taught in straightforward histories of education. And yet comparatively simple problems remain to be solved. For example, were there fewer schools and schoolmasters, or more? There is little solid evidence, as yet, to answer such a question with confidence. Nevertheless, from what we do know, there can be no doubt that the children's world of the eighteenth century - at least for those born higher up the social scale than the labouring poor - changed dramatically. In the late seventeenth century a new social attitude towards children began to strengthen, and it was this attitude which John Locke gave literary force and substance in what was to prove as influential as any work that he produced, his <i>Some Thoughts Concerning Education</i>, published in 1693. The dominant attitude towards children in the seventeenth century had been autocratic, indeed ferocious. 'The new borne babe', wrote Richard Allestree in 1658, 'is full of the stains and pollutions of sin which it inherits from our first parents through ourloins'. From birth English children were constrained. They spent their first months, sometimes a year, bound tightly in swaddling bands. Their common lot was fierce parental discipline, even a man of a warm and kindly nature such as Samuel Pepys thought nothing of beating his 15-year-old maid with a broomstick, and locking her up for the night in his cellar, or whipping his boy-servant, or even boxing his clerk's ears. Samuel Byrd, of Virginia, who rebuked his wife for severity towards a servant, could make</p> <p>a young dependant of his</p> <p>, Eugene, drink, according to Byrd's diary, 'a pint of piss' as a punishment for bed-wetting. A fortnight later the same punishment was inflicted, apparently with success, because some weeks later Eugene, according to the diary, was flogged just 'for nothing'. Lloyd de Mause reports that 'the earliest lives I have found of children who may not have been beaten at all date from 1690'. And of two hundred counsels of advice on child-rearing prior to 1700, only three, Plutarch, Palmieri and Sadoletto, failed to recommend that fathers beat their children. Subservience was expected from children, and sometimes the autocratic power of the father was enforced by law. It was a crime in New England, punishable by death, for a child of 16 to curse</p>
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	<p>or strike a parent. Harsh discipline was the child's lot, and they were often terrorized deliberately and, not infrequently, sexually abused. Their toys were few, often home-made, and, except for the very rich, their pets were usually purposeful - a pony for riding, a dog for shooting and hunting. Much of their education was devoted to religion and to the catechism. Naturally, there were many exceptions to this dark picture - parents who doted on their children, and who played with them; they were a minority, for most of the upper and middle classes rarely had their children at home. If they had children in the house, they were more often than not other people's, and therefore more likely to be ill-treated. The typical childhood of an upper-class English boy of the late seventeenth century was Sir Robert Walpole's, who was born in 1676. Almost immediately after birth he was sent out to a wet-nurse at the nearby village of Syderstone, where he remained until he was weaned, at about 18 months. At 6 he was dispatched to a school at Great Dunham kept by the rector, Richard Ransome, where he remained, enjoying only very brief holidays, until he went to Eton; nor did he go home for all of his holidays. Often he stayed with Townshend relations nearby. Indeed, until he was summoned home from King's College, Cambridge, in 1698, after the death of his elder brother, Walpole had rarely spent more than a few weeks at his Norfolk home in any year since he was 6.¹⁷ Not all families, however, sent their children away from home so early, or for so long. The Ishams were kept at home by Sir Justinian, their father, and taught by a tutor who lived at Lamport. Some others, however, like the</p>
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