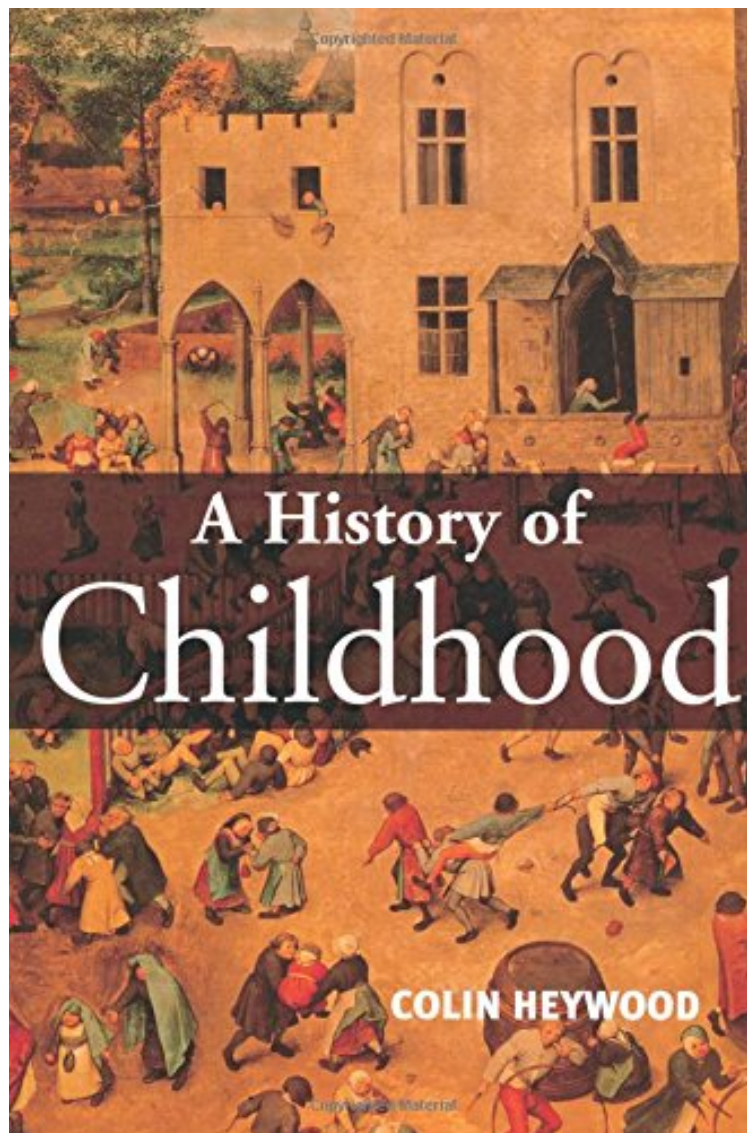


(Mobile book) A History of Childhood: Children and Childhood in the West from Medieval to Modern Times

# A History of Childhood: Children and Childhood in the West from Medieval to Modern Times

*Colin Heywood*

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**Colin Heywood : A History of Childhood: Children and Childhood in the West from Medieval to Modern Times** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A History of Childhood: Children and Childhood in the West from Medieval to Modern Times:

12 of 12 people found the following review helpful. brief overview of the fieldBy hmf22Colin Heywood's History of

Childhood is a brief overview of the state of the field as of 2001. In under 200 pages, Heywood traces the origins of scholarly interest in the history of childhood, summarizes Philippe Aries's classic work and the major critiques of it, and outlines current thinking on several major topics, including infancy, early childhood, the "third stage" (from age 7 through adolescence), children's labor, and education. Heywood's treatment of each topic is inevitably very brief, and while he cites numerous primary sources, he sometimes uses them uncritically. I did not learn much history from this book; if you're looking for an engaging overview of childhood in early modern and modern times, I would recommend Steven Mintz's *Huck's Raft: A History of American Childhood* or something similar. The merit of Heywood's *History of Childhood* lies in Heywood's extremely clear and succinct laying out of the major themes and research questions in the field. It would be useful to a graduate student preparing for comps or to someone who is just beginning a research project on some aspect of the history of childhood.<sup>4</sup> of 4 people found the following review helpful. Good, but plenty of other books are more helpful. By DEN This book is a good general start for studying children's history. I would have to say that it doesn't really seem to present anything new to the field. There are definitely a lot of other great books on children's history, and the discipline is growing. One site I found ([childhistory.org](http://childhistory.org)) has a pretty good list of a variety of books that deal with the history of children and childhood, all of which are linked here to . Anyway, I look forward to more scholarly interest in something so fundamental to our lives as childhood.

In this lively and accessible book, Colin Heywood explores the changing experiences and perceptions of childhood from the early Middle Ages to the beginning of the twentieth century. Heywood examines the different ways in which people have thought about childhood as a stage of life, the relationships of children with their families and peers, and the experiences of young people at work, in school and at the hands of various welfare institutions. The aim is to place the history of children and childhood firmly in its social and cultural context, without losing sight of the many individual experiences that have come down to us in diaries, autobiographies and oral testimonies. Heywood argues that there is a cruel paradox at the heart of childhood in the past. On the one hand, material conditions for children have generally improved in the West, however belatedly and unevenly, and they are now more valued than in the past. On the other hand, the business of preparing for adulthood has become more complicated in urban and industrial societies, as the young face a bewildering array of choices and expectations. *A History of Childhood* will be an essential introduction to the subject for students of history, the social sciences and cultural studies.

'...Colin Heywood's *A History of Childhood* is an interesting addition to the growing literature on children.' *Children's Geographies* '...*A History of Childhood* represents a fine achievement and undoubtedly deserves a wide audience. It is an accessible text that is far more than the sum of its parts. This book is to be strongly recommended to anyone with an interest in the history of childhood.' *Children's Geographies* 'Even-handed, accurate and well-crafted, this admirable survey strikes the right balance: simple enough for a first-year student, sophisticated enough to do justice to the material.' Roy Porter, Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine 'A rich and timely account of a subject too long over-simplified by artificial chronologies and generalizations neglectful of economic and cultural diversities. The infinite diversity of experience from the birthing process to the grave, the trials and joys of parenting, changing concepts of what is appropriate and morally fitting are here set in context. The child at school, the child at work, the child as target of parental, church and state concern as well as the child at play and the child making sense of the world about him are all present in these pages.' Professor Olwen Hufton, Merton College, Oxford "This book is an invaluable addition to students on childhood studies, play, youth work and early years courses who wish to ground their concept of childhood in an historical analysis of the topic." Keith Cranwell, Thurrock College From the Back Cover In this lively and accessible book, Colin Heywood explores the changing experiences and perceptions of childhood from the early Middle Ages to the beginning of the twentieth century. Heywood examines the different ways in which people have thought about childhood as a stage of life, the relationships of children with their families and peers, and the experiences of young people at work, in school and at the hands of various welfare institutions. The aim is to place the history of children and childhood firmly in its social and cultural context, without losing sight of the many individual experiences that have come down to us in diaries, autobiographies and oral testimonies. Heywood argues that there is a cruel paradox at the heart of childhood in the past. On the one hand, material conditions for children have generally improved in the West, however belatedly and unevenly, and they are now more valued than in the past. On the other hand, the business of preparing for adulthood has become more complicated in urban and industrial societies, as the young face a bewildering array of choices and expectations. *A History of Childhood* will be an essential introduction to the subject for students of history, the social sciences and cultural studies. About the Author Colin Heywood is Senior Lecturer in Economic and Social History, University of Nottingham.