Raising Citizens in the 'Century of the Child'

The United States and German Central Europe in Comparative Perspective

The 20th century, declared at its start to be the "Century of the Child" by Swedish author Ellen Key, saw an unprecedented expansion of state activity in and expert knowledge on child-rearing on both sides of the Atlantic. Children were seen as a crucial national resource whose care could not be left to families alone. However, the exact scope and degree of state intervention and expert influence as well as the rights and roles of mothers and fathers remained subjects of heated debates throughout the century. While there is a growing scholarly interest in the history of childhood, research in the field remains focused on national narratives. This volume compares the impact of state intervention and expert influence on theories and practices of raising children in the U.S. and German Central Europe. In particular, the contributors focus on institutions such as kindergartens and schools where the private and the public spheres intersected, on notions of "race" and "ethnicity," "normality" and "deviance," and on the impact of wars and changes in political regimes.





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