

does not always read smoothly; its style is somewhat cumbersome as the writers endeavour to build their scattered findings into a coherent whole. But nevertheless the beginning of a story has been laid, with the child of the past invariably given the spotlight, as one ponders the findings and statements of these historians who have undoubtedly made a significant contribution to the history of childhood. It is to be hoped that they will continue on course, follow through their projected plans, and make their pioneer volume the beginning of a whole new series.

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Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy. *The Rise and Fall of the British Nanny*. London: Arrow Books Ltd., 1974. Pp. 350. \$7.60.

This is a book whose contribution in the final analysis lies not so much with what it has to say, but that it has attempted to say anything at all about that very British institution — the nanny. It is a book which leaves many questions unanswered, indeed even unasked, but the reader remains with the distinct feeling that the Nanny is a legitimate area, not only of social history, but also of educational research. Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy does not apologize for what must amount to a study of a wealthy minority in a population—those influenced by nannies — and rightfully so for this same elite has had major social, political, and economic significance in a society which still remains essentially class conscious. To examine the influence of the nanny on this elite's child-rearing practices, character training, and personality development also seems to have significance.

Using as his data some 250 letters from correspondence based on a sample of 296 nannies, as well as interviews with surviving nannies or their "children," Gathorne-Hardy's research tends toward the imaginative and speculative but is as often psychologically interpretive and incisive. Though he sometimes seems to stretch some points and belabour others, especially in that hazy domain of psycho-sexuality, the author acknowledges "all my conclusions, therefore, are inherently tentative; it is arguable that I am not justified in drawing some at all" (p. 6). If we accept this caveat, we will often be provoked, but never bored, and might even agree with him that "a particular type of individual upbringing, because it causes a certain individual to behave in a certain way, is the cause of more general social behaviour" (p. 6). For those of us who still insist that "class" does exist and that particular values and social conduct can be attributed to particular classes (although often emulated and assimilated by other classes) this is a book that unabashedly looks at class attitudes and given the influence of the upper and middle classes on English history, his assumption does not appear to incongruous.

The author compassionately recreates the worlds of sadistic nannies, loving nannies, frustrated nannies, gin-drinking nannies, and much-beloved nannies. He provides insights into the contributions of nannies to prudery and to pornotopia. He noses his way into the fringes of the Freudian libido and sniffs out nannies whose amatory skills might exceed even those of Miss Xaviera Hollander's. However his stress on the *male* child's response to having been "nannied" often to the exclusion of equal attention to the *female* child's response is bothersome. He attempts to trace that purported Victorian phenomenon of the upper class adult male's preference for sexual encounter with lower class females and relates it to the nursery and the close relations between the nanny and the child. For those interested in the Victorian roots of reverence for the upper class female, his discussion of her romanticization provides a fascinating detour. For those of us who might see economic explanations as equally viable the detour may prove frustrating as it seems general that even in "un-nannied" societies the upper class female was there to wed and her lower class sisters to bed.

Nevertheless, Victorian social history and Victorian literature seem to provide us with sufficient evidence that mothers who employed nannies rarely saw their children as anything but scrubbed, polite, charming, little creatures and children saw their mothers as pure and

beautiful idealizations in the civilized world of the drawing room, or from the staircases as she slipped by in her evening gown, or as she glided gracefully into their nurseries to gently kiss them goodnight. This romanticization of the upper class female by sons and husbands and the relationship of child to nanny is similarly traced in Magdalen King-Hall's *The Story of the Nursery*, and of course delightfully elaborated in that children's classic of Nana and the nursery, *Peter Pan*. Indeed the reader recalls the scene when little Michael asks,

"Can anything harm us mother, after the nights are lit?" "Nothing precious", she said, "they are the eyes a mother leaves behind to guard her children." She went from bed to bed singing enchantments over them, and little Michael flung his arm around her. "Mother", he cried, "I'm glad of you."

But enough of mothers and back to nannies.

It was the ubiquitous presence of the nanny with whom children had their more intimate and earthy relations. It was she who endured their tantrums, kissed their tears, wiped their noses, spanked their bottoms, washed their grubby faces, scolded their bedwetting, introduced them to regulation and routine, and gave them their first stern lessons in manners and morals. "In her sphere, the nanny's power was absolute" (p. 74). Given the lower class origins of most nannies it was astonishing that upper class parents would entrust their children to nannies, but then the author argues that those same parents knew well that lower class permissiveness in discipline was a myth and willingly delegated the "naughty" aspects of child rearing to nannies, such as potty training, table manners, and cleanliness. Being lower class was equated with being eminently practical and never decorative!

The Rise and Fall of the British Nanny describes nanny's historical evolution from Wet-nurse, to Rocker, to Nanny—a servant who held a prime position in her social world of domestics and underlings. She ruled supreme in her kingdom of cribs, diapers, and children's "naughty little passions." The author discusses (rather too cursorily) the conditions of her employment, training, recruitment, service and retirement. With the growth of wealth and population and the extended Victorian household came an extension of domestic specialization. With reductions in infant mortality, like carpets the children were constantly underfoot. "These teeming hordes of children on their own would very rapidly have produced some regularised method of looking after and controlling them" (p. 65). By the 1860s, *The Times* virtually ceased advertising for nannies and Employment Agencies took over the provision of their services which flourished well into the first quarter of the twentieth century.

The nanny received her training primarily through apprenticeship and although nursery training colleges increased, Gathorne-Hardy concludes the effect of the college trained nanny was negligible, despite figures such as the 3,832 who entered (but did not always finish) Norland Nursery Training College between 1892-1939. It seems clear that by the mid-nineteenth century, the nanny was no longer an upper class possession. She had also become a middle class prerogative.

Using nannies such as "Nanny Everest" as evidence, the author points out how a nanny chose Winston Churchill's "clothes, his books, his food, his companions; she regulated his life from the largest item to the smallest particulars" (p. 74).

In his attempts to find correlations between cultural behaviour patterns and child rearing practices, the author is not merely descriptive but also uses a comparative approach. In a Jesuitical belief that "all the studies of the subject show that the shape of the personality, the direction our lives will take, the forces which motivate us, are all laid down in the first six or seven years, and cannot be fundamentally changed" (p. 215) he draws implications from his study to such subjects as the raising of Kibbutzniks. In the Kibbutz, mother-substitutes are used in an attempt to change human nature and create "radical new personalities." For those who crudely persist that history be "relevant"—this book has a ring of contemporaneity for those who advocate childcare services today and want to diffuse the responsibilities of motherhood. They may take comfort that nannies were a precedent for their belief in the dispensability of biological mothers to child-rearing and "that as a way of bringing up children, the nanny system, at its best, was very good indeed" (p. 148).

Nevertheless one closes this book with a feeling of sadness, and the words of A.P. Herbert, who wrote "nanny" poems, come to mind:

Other People's babies
That's my life!
Mother to dozens,
And nobody's wife.

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David Wardle. *The Rise of the Schooled Society. The History of Formal Schooling in England.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974. Pp. viii, 182. \$10.40.

If they have succeeded in nothing else the de-schoolers have certainly succeeded in causing much public and professional discussion about their ideas. David Wardle's book contributes to this discussion, not in the way of the traditional 'enrichment programme' (which usually, simply, means just some more of the same thing) which Illich, Goodman, et al, would justifiably execrate but by approaching the whole de-schooling syndrome from an historical perspective.

The book is an attempt "to examine the historical developments which have made it plausible to argue that formal institutional education has outgrown its usefulness and become an obstacle to social reform" (p. vii). As such it is eminently acceptable though I wish Dr. Wardle had refrained from adding as a sub-title "The History of Formal Schooling in England" because this it certainly is not. It is not even a history of formal schooling in England within the period the author has chosen to confine himself to (the end of the 18th century to the present) and one really needs more than the cursory glance permitted by the author at the twelve centuries or so which ended in the advent of Rousseau and which signal the beginning of this study to justify the claim of a history of schooling. It is true that, "until the late eighteenth century formal, organized instruction of any kind was confined to a minority" (p. 1). But when the minority in question is the source, or means of application, of power, it cannot easily be dismissed because of its numerical inferiority. After all, as we used to be reminded, "Top People Take the Times." This notwithstanding Dr. Wardle is right to claim that an historical perspective has an important part to play in a critique of de-schooling. But then an historical perspective is an important element in a critique of practically anything.

The book proceeds by an examination of the changing relationships of home and school and the concepts of 'childhood' and 'youth' to a survey of the educational expansion consequent upon technological change, and it concludes with a critique of the case for 'de-schooling' in the light of these.

There are, of course, a number of assumptions that one can challenge. There always are. "We live in a child-centered society where the importance of allowing children to follow their interests and develop their individual potential—at great loss to the community at large—is taken for granted" (p. 27). Do we? Is it taken for granted even if it is conceded that we do? Similarly, "... many apprentices never did attain membership of a guild, but this is merely an early example of the failure of educational practice to live up to the theories upon which it is based" (p. 28). It could, on the other hand, be just an equally early example of the uneven distribution of individual ability. But these are relatively minor quibbles about what is an excellent section of this book, that part of it that deals with the concepts of 'childhood' and 'youth.' 'Childhood' is no longer new to us, Messrs. Coveny (included in Dr. Wardle's extensive bibliography) and Aries (strangely missing from the same) have seen to that. But it is nice to have the Rousseau-ian/Romantic ideas re-stated so clearly, and linked to the development of Associationist and Developmental psychology. It is in such cases as these that the author's claims on behalf of an historical perspective being of value in a consideration