

A Cultural History of Childhood and Family in the Age of Enlightenment (The Cultural Histories Series)



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The collection of ideas, values, and beliefs known as the Enlightenment fundamentally altered the ways in which the family was understood. During this period, 1650–1800, traditional family roles were rethought, questioning much which had been taken for granted, such as the innate nature of children. At the same time, the Enlightenment also reinforced many long-held notions, applying new ideas to perpetuate assumptions about gender and race.

The commercialization of agriculture, industrialization, and urbanization, as well as the opportunities presented by expanding education and the sale of domestic goods all impacted on the family. Further, the continuing expansion of Western empires, the ownership of slaves within American states, and the political turmoil of the American and French revolutions all helped to shape both the ideals and the experience of family life.

As with all the volumes in the illustrated Cultural History of Childhood and Family set, this volume presents essays on family relationships, community, economy, geography and the environment, education, life cycle, the state, faith and religion, health and science, and world contexts.

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