

Part 3 argues for a sense of community Europeans share in the declining years of the ancien régime. Niels Grüne and Stefan Ehrenpreis (chapter 12) consider how self-fashioned ideals of liberty and participation inform governance from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. Isabella Walser-Bürgler, in “Geopolitical Instruction and the Construction of Europe in Seventeenth-Century Texts” (chapter 13), affirms that geopolitics applies to Cyriacus Lentulus’s *Europa* (1650), a poem of import in a growing field of cultural geography. Beginning with the *Journal des Sçavants* (1665), Enrico Zucchi (chapter 14) studies the impact of newspaper, newsprint, and periodicals establishing “supranational scholars’ networks” and a “European Republic of Letters” (361). Volker Bauer, in “Europe as a Political System, an Ideal and a Selling Point: The Renger Series (1704–23)” (chapter 14), traces the history of forty descriptions of different European states whose sum betrays the idea of a singular political system. Common traits among different nations are registered, and so also “reference to and demarcation from non-European ways of government and rule” (366), the tally picturing Europe as a site worthy of capital investment.

In plan and execution *Contesting Europe* suggests that from 1500 to 1750 Europe developed a sense of identity. Read sequentially, the sixteen chapters become the chronicle of a tortuous evolution. Along the lines of what analysts call projective identification, the editors and contributors displace onto the past contested issues that mark the European Union here and now. The book is at once an extensive history of the idea of Europe and a symptom of concern about its future.

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Early Modern Childhood: An Introduction. Anna French.

Early Modern Themes. London: Routledge, 2020. xii + 310 pp. \$150.

Aimed at upper-level undergraduates and those seeking an introduction to the topic of early modern childhood, this collection of fifteen essays is deliberately interdisciplinary in its examination of what it meant to be a child in Western Christian Europe between 1500 and 1750. History is the dominant methodology, but art history, literary analysis, gender studies, and the history of education are represented too. The collection offers a broad overview of the field, paying particular attention to the influence of religion, as is appropriate for an era defined by confessional identities and frequent conflict between Protestant and Catholic. Many of the chapters focus on England, quoting extensively from its early modern voices that are often rendered with distinctive spelling and phrasing.

The book is divided into five thematic parts with three essays in each section. Part 1 describes historiography, the family, and the household in order to provide a sense of context for the studies that follow. In the sixty years since Phillipe Ariès published

Centuries of Childhood, the history of childhood has developed a significant historiography and has become increasingly integrated into other fields while also drawing insights from other disciplines. For example, the history of emotion, material culture, health, and gender (to name just four) have been crucial, and each are reflected in this collection. Part 2 reverts to the more traditional topics that mark the early stages of a child's life: conception, pregnancy, infancy, and schooling. The latter is examined by Alan Ross, who concludes that schooling, while never compulsory, became increasingly available even as it remained dominated by boys and men. Part 3 examines the religious and gender identity of children; Alec Ryrie offers numerous examples of how English Protestants viewed childhood (often in a negative light), and Lucy Underwood analyzes Catholic perspectives (especially English recusants), while Min Ji Kang considers the enormous impact of gender on boys and girls. Part 4 explores the adversity faced by children (and their families), including illness, death, and illegitimacy. The chapter by Paul Griffiths on childhood crime catalogues an impressive array of examples in gory detail, and reminds us that the fictitious world of *Oliver Twist* was based on a harsh reality. The final section on "Representations" narrates how children were perceived in drama, clothing, and portraiture. Katie Knowles summarizes how children were represented on stage, Maria Haywood questions how fashion shaped (and was shaped by) children, and Jane Eade traces depictions of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English children in miniatures, drawings, and paintings.

Editor Anna French notes early on that much of what we know about the history of childhood invariably comes from adults rather than from children themselves. The authors in this collection draw regularly from school rules, apprenticeship contracts, or catechisms where adults legislated how children should behave, as well as from more autobiographical accounts where parents reflected (usually disparagingly) on their own childhoods. One of the goals of more recent scholarship is to sift through such adult records to identify remnants of children's own experiences and voices. Although early modern Europeans did not necessarily conceive of childhood as an age of innocence, and certainly did not defer to children's wishes to the extent that is often done today, they did understand that this early period of life was distinctly different from adulthood. Despite staggeringly high child mortality rates, it is clear that early modern Europeans cherished their children and wrote extensively about them. A number of essays in this collection reflect the emotional and religious lives of children as they faced multiple challenges, including contributions from Adriana Benzaquén (illness), Katie Barclay (illegitimacy), and the aforementioned Paul Griffiths (crime and disorder). In sum, this collection of essays meets its goal of providing an accessible introduction to early modern childhood while also including sufficient documentation in the notes to be of use to scholars already working in the field.

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