

The Emergence of a Protected Childhood, 18th-19th c.

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Introduction

- The child and the law;
- The protected childhood: a 'proper' childhood or 'infantilization';
- Children incompetent or competent?

Representations of childhood

Otto Runge, *The Hulsbeck Children*, 1805-6



Louis Boilly, *L'Enfance*, 1823



Outline

1. Age and responsibility;
2. Preserving innocence;
3. From school to work.

1. Age and responsibility

- A 'short' childhood ('miniature adults'), or a 'long' one;
- Age of criminal responsibility;
- Voting age.

2. Preserving childhood purity

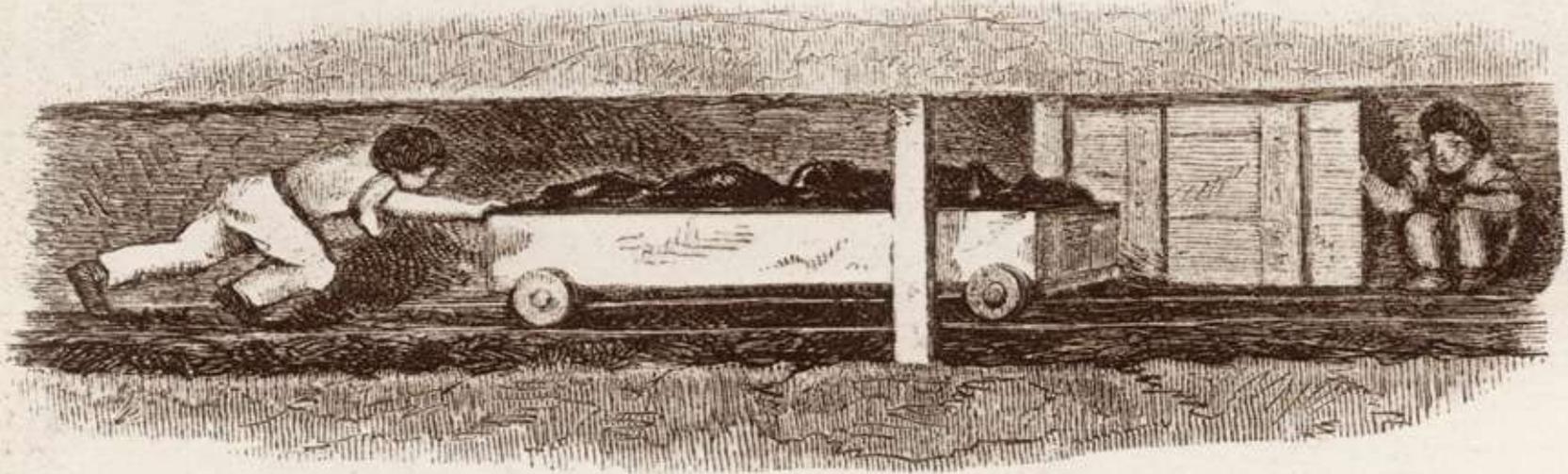
- Canon law and English common law: age of consent for marriage and sexual relations: 12 for a girl, 14 for a boy;
- Nineteenth century, raised 13-16;
- Implications.



Rosa Bonheur, Le Berger des Pyrenees



Parliamentary enquiry 1842



CHILD-LABOUR IN COAL-MINES OF THE 'FORTIES: A LITTLE "TRAPPER" (ON RIGHT) OPENING AN AIR-DOOR FOR A TRUCK TO PASS THROUGH.

"The trappers sit with a string attached to the door, and pull it open the moment they hear the corves (coal-trucks) at hand, and the moment one has passed they let the door fall to. . . . They are in the pit the whole time it is worked, frequently above twelve hours a day. They sit, moreover, in the dark."

All the Illustrations on this page and the extracts accompanying them are reproduced from woodcuts and an article in "The Cyclopædia of Useful Arts" (1840-5).

3. From Work to school

- Child labour reform: minimum ages and the regulation of child labour;
- Reformers vs. apologists for the factory system;
- Middle-class and working-class perspectives.

School

- Compulsory schooling:
- National systems: authoritarian and liberal states;
- Class-based; retreat of private schools

Conclusions

1. 18th c. states start to take an interest in the quality as well as the quantity of their population.
2. Varied influences on age boundaries.
3. Long-running debates: e.g. balance between schools, vocational training (including apprenticeship) and learning on-the-job.