

### key people

Jane Pilcher (1995) Modern idea of childhood is separateness. Childhood is seen as a clear and distinct life stage, separate from adulthood. They are not mature or competent enough to run their own lives and need nurturing/socialisation/protection to prepare them for adulthood

Wagg Childhood is a *socially constructed*. In other words, it is what members of particular societies, at a particular time and particular places. There is no single universal childhood, experienced by all. So childhood isn't "natural" and should be distinguished from mere biological immaturity

Benedict (1934) Children in simpler non industrial societies are treated differently from their non western counterparts

Pilcher - separateness Clear and distinct life stages, childhood is referred to being the **golden age** of happiness and innocence. Children should be protected and 'quarantined' from the dangers of the world

### Different family types

Nuclear family

Beanpole family

Reconstituted family

Extended family

Cohabiting family

Lone parent family

Boomerang family The current generation of young adults in western culture who choose to cohabit with their parents after previously living on their own

Accordion family According families are composed of adult children who will be living off their parents' retirement savings with little means of their own when the older generation is gone - mummy's boy

Child entered family

### key words

Globalisation To include all places around the world into one globally integrated economic system

child a child who is on a confidential list for being at significant risk of harm

age adult domination over children patriarchy

### reasons for childhood to change

laws

education

welfare

rights

family type

type of society

### reasons for childhood to change (cont)

industrialisation

### Benedict's 3 ways children treated differently

non industrial treatment of children

Take responsibility at an early age Firth (1970) studied the Tikopia tribe in the Western Pacific and found that doing what you are told to do by a parent is a decision which is down to the child, not something which should be expected by an adult.

Less value is placed on children showing obedience to adult authority. Malinowski (1975) studied the Trobriand Islanders and found that adults took a tolerant and interested attitude towards the sexual exploration of children.

Children's sexual behaviour often viewed differently Holmes (1974) studied Samoan village and found that children were never 'too young' to complete a task such as handling dangerous tools or carrying heavy loads.

### globalisation of western childhood

western understanding of childhood is being globalised;

### globalisation of western childhood (cont)

where children should be based in a nuclear family, schooled, be innocent, dependent and vulnerable with no economic role

people are campaigning across the world to fit for this ideology of childhood

sociologists now believe that in western ideology of childhood is spreading and becoming the norm

### The conflict view

Conflict sociologists such as *Marxist* and *Feminists* oppose the *March of Progress* view

They argue that the view ignores class inequalities. How can childhood have improved when some children face disadvantages?

Due to inequalities, many children face risk and harm. For example, poor families are more likely to have children on the child protection register.

Gender differences exist within children. Girls are still expected to carry out traditional gender roles.

Within ethnicity, studies on Asian families found that Asian parents were more likely to be more strict towards their children.

### The child liberationist view

Diana Gittin's uses the term *age patriarchy* to describe inequalities between adults and children

She argues that adults, particularly men, use power and control over children and oppress them

As a result, children 'act up' = rebelling and doing adult things like smoking and swearing

Critics argue that some control over children is justifiable to help safeguard them. Also laws are in place to stop the child from being oppressed

### The new sociology of childhood view

This view opposes the idea of children passively being developed through socialisation and norms and values. They campaign for children's rights and priorities

It sees children as active agents of their upbringing- children help to create their own childhood

Carol smart looked at divorce and found that children were involved in that process. It was not just about the parents, children were also emotionally involving themselves to make the situation better

### March of progress view

This whole theory is based on the idea that childhood has improved over time

Children today are more valued, better cared for, protected and educated

As a result, families are now more child centred. Parents invest emotionally and financially into children

It has been estimated that by the time a child turns 21 years old, they're parents will have spent roughly over £230,000 on them!!!

Laws and politics help to protect children from harm