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From the rod to respect: the impact of Enlightenment theories on child discipline

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Abstract

Theories on childhood during the Age of Enlightenment were very influential in transforming the mainstream practice used for maintaining discipline in the eighteenth century. The purpose of this thesis is to assess how enlightened theories altered the trajectory of child discipline and question whether the impact continued to influence current disciplinary strategies. However, as enlightenment literature was dominated by male authors, the mother was often portrayed as an inadequate disciplinarian due to her natural emotionality and attachment to the child. Given the important role the mother had in child-rearing practices of the eighteenth century, it is curious why her voice on the matter of discipline was marginal. Therefore, the mother's opinion on discipline was evaluated to assess whether she followed the strategies proposed by the male authors. Literature from childcare manuals, domestic rule books and personal accounts was investigated and the ideas compared to current methods of discipline. This literature review demonstrates that enlightenment theories called for a softer form of discipline which sparked the contemporary movement towards child-centred and positive discipline. Furthermore, the mother's role in discipline was relegated and essentially written out of eighteenth century history despite her modern-minded approach.

Keywords: discipline, age of enlightenment, child, mother

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Introduction

The phenomenon of instilling self-control and good behaviour in children is deeply rooted in Europe's cultural and religious history. Discipline, which can be defined as "the practice of training people to obey a code of behaviour" (Oxford Dictionary, 2019), is an important framework which assists an individual as they attempt to effectively adapt to society. Perhaps more importantly, it is the foundation for the development of a child's own self-control (O'Leary, 1995). Although the word discipline suggests to actively teach, it is often equated with punitive and controlling tactics (Nieman & Shea, 2004) and thus controversy often surrounds the subject. This is furthered by a swarm of scientific publications in the last few decades detailing the negative effects of physical punishment on child development (see Gershoff & Grogan-Kaylor, 2016 for metanalysis). Due to the controversial nature of harsh disciplinary methods, parents often face a perplexing conundrum as they attempt to negotiate regulations and instil self-control in their children.

Certain traditions throughout history have dictated that when a child behaves inappropriately, it is the responsibility of the parent to physically reprimand the child, regardless of the situation. Conventions change over the course of time however, and disciplinary actions are modified as they are passed from generation to generation (Donnely & Straus, 2005, p. 106). The morals and ethics of discipline have not only been of interest to childcare experts throughout history but also to philosophers, psychologists, doctors and sociologists. Scientific understanding of child development and human behaviour has led modern-day parents to the assumption that corporal punishment and harsh discipline is no longer necessary to raise an obedient child. Instead, parents and theorists alike have developed a common understanding that a child's behaviour can be shaped with positive parenting and sensitive discipline (Juffer et al., 2012, p. 189). This assumption however has only come into fruition within the last century (Durrant & Ensom, 2012) which has lead historians to question the treatment of children prior to the 1900s. A rather unexplored avenue is how societal changes have come to impact the proposed disciplinary practices and whether parents, particularly mothers, adhered to the advice put forward.

The bold statement of Philippe Ariès that in medieval Europe "the idea of childhood did not exist" (1996, p.125) functions as the starting point for much historical discourse on the variability of child rearing practices. In his influential book *Centuries of Childhood,* Ariès stresses that the concept of childhood was ambiguously defined during the medieval period and there was no recognition of particular ages or stages of development before the seventeenth century (p. 27). The medieval period saw the child's individuality disregarded as most children were coerced into facing the adult world aged seven (Aries, 1996, p. 411). Historians believed that childhood was less of a period which was filled with enjoyment, rather a state which had to be endured (Tucker, p.229 in De Mause, 1974). Unsure whether to regard their child as good or evil, parents often viewed their offspring as untrustworthy (Tucker, p. 230 in De Mause 1974) and placed them at the bottom of the social hierarchy. In medieval Europe, obedience was commonly enforced with brutality and children were subjected to harsh discipline (Stone, 1977 p.193).

Despite Ariès' argument being challenged and disputed (e.g. Hunt, 1970; Kroll, 1977 Pollock, 1983), there is still a reasonably large consensus in agreement that childhood as we know it today was largely an invention of the seventeenth century. The belief that children were incompetent 'mini adults' was abandoned at the end of the sixteenth century as theorists gradually began to recognise that children were on a different developmental trajectory than adults (Tucker, p. 252, in De Mause). As the concept of childhood slowly emerged, so too did the child evolve into a subject of inquiry. This opened up a new way of handling youngsters as moralists recognised the child as a weak, innocent individual who required training and behaviour correction if they were to withstand adulthood (Aries, p. 133). While this movement fostered a new attitude towards children, a more dispiriting aspect of modernity was present, whereby children were seen as individuals who required more surveillance, training and discipline. Medieval freedom was no longer tolerated and the Puritan doctrine of breaking the child's will was instilled into parents (Donnely & Straus, 2005, p. 45). While it was true that parents of the seventeenth century remained interested in, and attentive towards their children, they showed this through autonomy dismissal and excessive control (Illick, p.323 in De Mause, 1974). The punishments children faced became even more barbaric as a by-product of greater concern for the moral and scholarly training of children, alongside the influence of the doctrine of original sin (Stone, 1977, p.193). The Augustine Christian doctrine of original sin stated that each human being is born with wickedness. In other words,

Puritan parents believed their infants were born predisposed to disobey God, and it was their duty to correct the child and set them on the right moral path.

The majority of historians agree that in eighteenth century Europe, a modification to the orthodox methods of child rearing became apparent as the literature became more progressive and enlightened. Childhood, for the first time in history, was given the recognition from a substantial number of intellects who were eager to understand the process of child development as opposed to the final product. The eighteenth century introduced the concept of a naturalistic and romanticised approach to child rearing. This is manifested in Rousseau's *Emile* (1762) which writes of the importance of giving a child freedom to develop without the intrusion of adults and for the child to learn self-discipline through natural consequences of their conduct. Many authors of the eighteenth and nineteenth century have criticised Rousseau's naturalistic approach to child rearing and discipline (e.g. Murray, 1899; Voltaire, 1755), which leads one to question, although his advice was very modern-minded and moved away from repressive parenting, was his ideology widely adopted throughout Europe as time progressed?

With literature proposing alternative methods to physical punishment such as reasoning (Locke, 1693) and giving the child consequences (Rousseau, 1762) the family home in the late eighteenth century transformed into a more child-orientated and affectionate environment as parents were urged to find happiness and fulfilment in caregiving, while recognising the uniqueness of each offspring (Pollock, 1983, p.28). Child rearing thus progressed from cruel repressive methods of control to kind behaviour in what could be referred to as a "new world" opening up for children (Plumb in Pollock, 1983, p.18). It is a widely held view that the progressive social attitude towards children was brought about by newly available educational endowments and entertainment including books, games and museum exhibitions especially designed for them (Ariès, 1960; Pinchbeck & Hewitt, 1969). Understandably, this movement first appeared in wealthier families where the upper class could afford "sentimental concern" for their children (Stone, 1977, p.404; Shorter, 1975, p.188). Furthermore, the upper-class had more access to publishers, novels and household advice manuals and therefore were more informed and initially began the gentle approach to maintaining discipline.

The shift in the concept of childhood emulated a new sense of appreciation for children as prospective moral beings (Donnely & Straus, 2005, p.46). The notion of breaking an infant's will, shaming and physically punishing unwanted behaviour began to decline as many parents favoured methods of consciousness instilling and self-reproach. As the eighteenth century progressed, the use of physical punishment to omit childhood transgressions became less frequent both in school and at home as authors of the time romanticised childhood. A permissive mode of child rearing was adopted whereby parents became more affectionate towards their children yet still had tight control over them (Shorter, 1975, p.191). This control however was from a psychological perspective which was used to instil self-discipline, as opposed to the physical methods seventeenth century children were often exposed to (Stone 1977, p.404).

In a growing field of enlightened eighteenth century male philosophers and doctors, the female perspective was often disregarded, and as a result, mothers were by and large excluded from eighteenth century pedological discourse (Nash, 2005). The Puritan tradition of domesticity included the ideal of women as a helpmeet. While this gave the woman a central role within the family, it too insured she would not overturn man's superiority in social affairs (Hall & Davidoff, 1987). While the Age of Enlightenment paved the way for change to the treatment of children and introduced a more liberal world away from religion, the majority of enlightened childcare manuals of the time were written by men, whose original brief was the fundamental one of the child's survival (Hardyment, 1995). Given that the average eighteenth century mother played the most crucial role in the upbringing of her children it is puzzling why her views were less valued in comparison to male authors of the time, some of whom had no experience raising children (e.g. Locke and Rousseau). An unexplored field so far is that of the mother's opinions on disciplinary advice and whether she followed advice put forward by male enlightenment theorists. Given that the mother was the primary caregiver, it is important to discover her methods of disciplining throughout the centuries as opposed to accepting what is written by many historians.

The enlightened, romanticised attitude towards children brought about by the Age of Enlightenment created a space for more theorists to speculate on the best way to raise a child. This resulted in a conflict of opinions in the nineteenth century on the most appropriate way to discipline children. Obedience was still sought after, and the influence of religion was still present with many authors continuing to believe that children should be trained, corrected

and brought up in the eyes of God (e.g. Warren, 1865). The relationship between parents and children was characterized by respect for parental authority and great expectations about children's contribution to the family and their place of work (Magnúson, 1995). Corporal punishment was still used at home (Sears, 1899) in school (Northend, 1860) and at work (Nardinelli, 1982). However, as the century progressed, an overall more permissive mode of disciplining can be seen throughout the literature with parents opting for compassionate, affectionate care (Thomson, 2002).

Since the twentieth century, there has been a global shift in attitudes concerning the discipline of children. The 1990s produced proliferating evidence for the association between physical punishment and negative childhood outcomes (e.g. Bitensky, 1997; Rothbaum & Weisz, 1994) as society became increasingly aware of the treatment and protection of children and the problem of child abuse (Overton, 1993). Governmental concern has since solidified the child's place in society by legislating discipline, which began as a private family matter. In 1989, the United Nations made a historic commitment to protect and fulfil every child's rights by adopting the international legal framework of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). As of 2000, 191 of the world's 195 countries became a signatory to the convention, with ten European countries[1] prohibiting the use of corporal punishment on children both in school and at home (Durrant & Ensom, 2012).

Today, mothers and fathers are considered equal when it comes to disciplining their children. Modern day caregivers no longer faithfully follow the advice put forward by religious or historical examples, instead they seek the advice of parents, friends and childcare experts, many of whom have published theories and parenting manuals (Taylor et al., 2013). This has created a more dynamic and confusing environment for parents who are often caught between conflicting messages of strict discipline and permissiveness. Discipline has therefore progressed from a clear-cut set of rules to a set of strategies specific to the family which is used interchangeably across different situations (Durant & Ensom 2012).

[1] Sweden (1979), Finland (1983), Norway (1987), Austria (1989), Cyprus (1994), Denmark (1997), Latvia (1998), Croatia (1999), Bulgaria (2000) and Germany (2000)

Research Aim

The primary aim of this thesis is to assess how theories during the Age of Enlightenment altered the trajectory of child discipline and question whether the impact continued to influence current disciplinary strategies. With a specific focus on North Western Europe during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, literature on disciplinary practices and gender roles will be gathered and presented in comparison to current discipline strategies. The Age of Enlightenment movement was very influential in introducing the concept of childhood to the western world and changing how caregivers managed children, yet the mother's voice was often lost as the literary and scholarly world was dominated by males. A secondary aim of this thesis therefore is to critically assess why the female's perspective was underappreciated in the eighteenth century and to assess whether mothers of this time period actually followed the disciplinary advice put forward by male enlightenment theorists.

Research Question

In what ways did enlightenment theories come to influence child discipline and the mother's role as an authoritarian?

Method

A search was performed to find articles, books and journals targeting the following sub-questions:

1. What was discipline like in the seventeenth century, prior to the Age of Enlightenment?
2. Which changes in discipline occurred throughout the Age of Enlightenment and how did it affect discipline thereafter?
3. In the patriarchal society of the eighteenth century, where was the mothers voice?
4. How did the Age of Enlightenment spark change for the contemporary disciplinary practices of the last century?

Literature was accessed was by using cross references found in books on the history of childcare. This way secondary information and the opinions of historians could be bypassed

as much as possible once the original source was found. Secondly, by using Internet Archive, literature could be easily gathered in the forms of online PDFs. The main focus was on books containing advice for parents, these often appeared in the form of household rules, conduct books and childrearing manuals as well as personal journals. These were particularly popular in the seventeenth century prior to the child becoming an important subject of inquiry and worthy of advice dedicated to their upbringing . From there it was simple to do a keyword search such as “discipline” “chastise” or “rod” and any information containing the keywords would be highlighted.

Chapter one aims to provide the reader with background information on what discipline was like prior to the Age of Enlightenment. Chapter two will explore influential theories which sparked a softer, more cooperative form of disciplining. Furthermore, the mother’s relegated role in disciplining will be questioned and attempts at understanding her point of view in eighteenth century literature will be made. Finally, chapter three will bring together theories from the enlightened period with contemporary practices of discipline to assess if the Age of Enlightenment’s influence continued to influence discipline practices of the last century.

Methodological limitations

A problematic factor which researchers often face while securing evidence for the history of childhood is that the sources are overwhelmingly secondary (Pollock, 1983, p.22). Historians have had to base their conclusions on literary evidence such as parenting manuals, and personal documents in which individuals recollect their own childhood experiences through diaries or letters. The issue however is although there may be corroborative evidence amongst them, it does not mean the advice was adopted by all parents and there was a consensus among families. Furthermore, it is difficult to judge if the advice on discipline detailed in history books was a general practice or if the author was describing what they believed happened, or thought should happen throughout history. Many books were written by members of wealthy families therefore there is little evidence to suggest whether the lower class had the same experience of childhood discipline. Furthermore, the authors of the personal documents may have chosen to exclude information relating to their discipline and

punishments. Consequently, it is difficult to infer actual actions from a set of parental regulations and personal stories.

Another main concern was the definition of discipline. Definitions vary among authors and throughout history, and discipline can therefore be identified with many disciplinarily tactics such as corporal punishment, control, spanking, using the rod, flogging etc. Therefore, it became difficult to compare and equate each mention of punishment. Furthermore, the importance of discipline changed over time, as a result of this, advice throughout history shows patterns where discipline was heavily discussed (for example in the 1990s with an outburst of papers on the negative developmental effects of spanking) compared to times where it was not. Given the time scale this thesis engages with, and how far back it goes in history, it was difficult to include all relevant information on discipline.

Discipline in the seventeenth century

Throughout the 1600s, most societies in North West Europe permitted the use of harsh physical punishment by parents, teachers, pastors and others acting in loco parentis. Such actions were deemed necessary to establish and maintain discipline, to create an educational atmosphere, to satisfy religious requisite and to purge the soul of evil (Cable, 1975). Several trends emerged in regards to the management of children. First, religion, in particular Puritan values were very influential in regulating methods of discipline. Parents were expected to raise their children to become loyal Christians, and in order to satisfy this achievement, it was considered mandatory to restrain the child's natural propensity towards immoral or sinful behaviour. With the biblical warning of "He spareth his rod, hateth his son, but he that loveth him, chasteneth him betime" (Proverbs 13:24), parents were urged to keep a watchful eye over their children and to discipline appropriately. Whosoever overlooked insubordinate behaviour were ignoring their parental duties and were releasing their child on the path of self-destruction. Edward Rainbowe (1608-1684), the Bishop of Carlisle maintained that

> there is no greater cause of decay to the commonwealth, nor bane to the church, than want of discipline and good order in families, especially as to one branch of them, mis-governing and ill-educating of children… undisciplined and bad children will hardly make good men. (1676, in Clifford, 2006, p.252)

From this quote it is clear that the management of children was a priority for many families who strived for good behaviour by training up their child in the fear of the Lord.

Another trend concerns the influential role of men in childrearing practices, including discipline. Fathers were the head of the household and had complete control over their offspring. As Puritan pastor John Robinson (1576–1625) stated

> fathers by their greater wisdom and authority were better suited than mothers for disciplining children. A mother's role was to bear, suckle, and care for infants but

> after the first few months, fathers should take over and by their severity correct the fruit of their mother's indulgence (Robinson & Waddington, 1851, p. 160)

Men were charged with the moral and spiritual growth of children and were thus responsible for disciplining them. Distant, morally instructive and condescending are words which have been used to describe the early father-child relationship as overly affectionate behaviour was believed to lead to parental indulgence and negative child development (Pleck, 1997). Mothers were to remain diligent and took part responsibility in keeping their children away from ungodly vices and teaching them ideas about morality (Baxter, 1624, p.5).

While the exercise of discipline could take several forms, in all cases, it was considered necessary for the child to understand the motivation behind the punishment (Gouge, 1622). This, in part was to allow the child to recognise their own transgressions, pray for their salvation and to develop their own self-discipline. For those children who displayed signs of obstinacy or wilfulness, the punishment increased in severity. In many cases, the use of disciplinary system was the justification for the use of corporal punishment (Durrant & Ensom, 2012) which was central to many cases of what would be referred to today as child maltreatment.

Changing parental attitudes

Aries influential finding of the emergence of childhood in the seventeenth century has been supported by many (e.g. Demos, 1970; Hoyles, 1979; Shorter, 1975; Stone, 1979) and has created a foundation from which the history of child discipline can be explored. Parents' attitudes towards their youngsters progressed from ambivalence to active participation as they took a more immediate approach in shaping their child's personality development. Due to the increased attention towards children, youngsters were subjected to strict observations, corrections and attempts at behavioural reformation (Stone, 1979, p.193). The dominant influence of the doctrine of original sin led Puritan parents to seek methods of breaking down the child's will and the use of physical punishment, such as a whipping, was often preferred.

Aside from the increased attention towards children, another factor which was influential in determining the way children were treated was childhood mortality rates, which

experienced changes overtime throughout early modern Europe. It was thought that death rates increased towards the end of the seventeenth century (Finlay, 1981) due to the widespread presence of disease, unhygienic waste disposal systems, hunger, abandonment and infanticide (Newton, 2014). As fatality was common amongst children, many authors believed that it was too painful for parents to become emotionally attached to their child and many children were therefore treated with indifference (see Aries, 1996; Pinchbeck & Hewitt, 1970; Pollock, 1983; Stone, 1979). The short life expectancy urged children to grow up faster, and with this, take responsibility for their actions to become self-disciplined.

Admittedly, not all seventeenth century parents were emotionally detached from their children, however a lax and indifferent attitude towards youngster's longevity can be seen in literature of the time. For example, influential barrister Sir Matthew Hale (1609-1679) wrote that common law allowed for the use of physical discipline of children, wives, servants and students, even if this discipline caused death. He wrote

> if a schoolmaster correct his scholar, or a master his servant, or a parent his child, and the child, or scholar, or servant die, this is only per infortunium. But this is to be understood when it happens only upon moderate correction, for if the correction be with an unfit instrument or too outrageous, then it is murder. (Hale, 1736, p.474)

This statement implies a casual approach to accidental homicide as a result of harsh physical punishment.

In the seventeenth century, the use of discipline was the source of several cases of domestic violence and child abuse . In 1623, Richard Turner complained of defamation of character after being referred to as "whip-her-arse Dick" and being compared to a man who was executed for murdering his children. The libel circulated after Turner was witnessed thrashing his daughter whom he referred to as a "young wench" who had given him "just cause of grief and offence". Turner laid upon her "such correction as in his discretion… [which] he conceived to be most fitting" in order to "reform some errors in her" (National Archives, 1625 in Amussen, 1995). In another instance in 1673, a child was reportedly found hanging by her neck after her mother punished her "because she had fouled the bed" (National Archives, 1672-3 in Amussen, 1995). Although the child survived this incident, her death the following year resulted in a lot of suspicion being placed upon her mother. Finally,

in 1670, a man was found guilty of murder after striking his child apprentice so hard with a staff that the child died from injuries (Hale, 1736, p.474). In all cases, the adults offered the excuse of discipline, however the courts saw violence.

Discipline at home

Several historians claim that the Early Modern Period was a very dark, repressive time for children and frequent punishments were to be expected. DeMause (1974) states "it is clear that children were being beaten in the early seventeenth century" (p.313). Plumb (1975) agreed with DeMause by stating "harsh discipline was the child's lot and they were often terrorized deliberately and not infrequently sexually abused (p. 66). Similarly, Shorter (1975) claimed that "children were brutalized by the daily routines of life as much as by savage outbursts of parental rage" (p. 170). It was thought that "whipping was the normal method of disciplining in the sixteenth and seventeenth century home" (Stone, 1979, p.167). Breaking the will of the child was the prime aim and physical punishment the standard method to do so (Stone, 1979, p.170). However, a review of seventeenth century autobiographical literature challenges the positions many historians hold. Although there are some accounts of parental cruelty, many historians have been overzealous in their depictions of what family life was like in the seventeenth century as much of the literature does not support the cruel parenting stereotype. What should be noted is that the following historical literature is mainly written by members of upper class families. It is less easy to propose how lower class parents disciplined their children as there is far less in the way of personal documents available from poorer families as they often did not use journals and could not afford access to publishers.

Many historical figures have specified instances of childhood punishment, but rarely do they explicitly mention severe physical punishment - contrary to what many historians might have one believe. In the diary of Lady Anne Clifford (1616-1619), she recalls her mother maintaining discipline: "my mother being extreme angry with me for riding before with Mr Menerell, where my mother in her anger commanded that I should lie in a chamber alone, which I could not endure" (Clifford, 2006, p.55). Although it is not specified what angered her mother to punishment, it is clear that children who disobeyed their parents' orders experienced a punitive repercussion. In The Life of Adam Martindale (1623-1686), the author recalls "my father acted very wisely, for knowing himself to be over-passionate, he

would seldom or never correct any of us, but leave the work to my mother, who could do it calmly and yet, smartly enough upon just occasion" (p.22). This example suggests that the mother had a collected, level-headed approach to maintaining discipline and could apply it without becoming over-passionate or angry with her children. The Diary of Ralph Josselin (1640-1683) would suggest parents were not totally controlling over their children, and a reciprocal relationship was in place throughout much of the seventeenth century (McFarlane, 1991).

This is not to say physical discipline did not occur in the home. The physician of Louis XIII of France (1601-1643), Jean Héroard kept a diary from Louis' birth in 1601. He noted that the young king was disciplined as soon as he began talking. He was often given a whipping with a birch branch for refusing to eat, and was also disciplined for screaming on the way to his bedroom (in Marvick, 1993). Elias Ashmole (1617-1692) stated that his mother

> was competently read in divinity… and was continually instilling in [his] ears such religious and moral precepts as [his] younger ears were capable of. Nor did she ever fail to correct [his] faults, always adding sharp reproofs and good lectures to boot. (in Josten, 1960, p.12)

To summarise, discipline was present at home, and in general was shared between the mother and father, however the punishments children faced were not to the horrific degree many historians made out.

Discipline in Schools

In the schools of the seventeenth century, the punishments children faced appeared to be significantly worse than at home and beatings happened at the schoolmaster's discretion. The child's emerging autonomy was handled with hostility as adults often felt threatened by any displays of independence, fearing the child would soon dominate his elders (Hunt, 1972). Influential pamphleteer Thomas Becon (1515-1567) wrote that

> the school-master ought gently to entreat, and to rebuke (tender witted children) only with words, or at least if they offend oft, to minister unto them easy punishment. But those children which are negligent, forward, stubborn… the master ought not only with words sharply to reprove them but also with stripes largely to chastise them. (Becon, 1844, p.384).

Schoolmasters were warned against the use of overly harsh punishments and were told "not to beat them like stock-fishes", "to keep a measure in chastising and follow the example of a good father" (Becon, 1844, p.385). Again, the reasoning behind the punishment was to be clearly communicated to the child and after, it was advised that the schoolmaster show "some gentle and loving exhortation, to beware that they fall no more into the same or the like fault" (Becon, 1844, p.383).

Saint Jean-Baptiste de La Salle (1651-1719) who wrote *The Conduct of the Christian School* (originally published 1570), stated that correction should, at most, be inflicted three to four times per month and the ferule (a small flat ruler) was preferred over the rod or birch. According to Saint Jean Baptise, the rod could be used in schools to correct students:

> 1) for not having been willing to obey, 2) when they make a practice of not following the lessons and of not studying, 3) for having scribbled on their paper instead of writing, 4) for having fought in school or on the streets, 5) for not having prayed in church, 6) for not having behaved with decorum at holy Mass, and 7) for having been absent through their own fault (de La Salle, 1996, p. 139)

The rules children had to abide by is an example of not only the physical discipline they would face if said rules were broken, but also shows that strict regulations were enforced in order for the child to establish his own self-discipline. Although Saint Jean-Baptise was against the use of tools for disciplining, it existed in all schools, therefore he advised teachers on the use of the birch stating that "no more than three blows should be given… never more than five should be given without a special permission from the director" (de La Salle, 1996, p. 139).

Despite the early warnings of Becon and Saint Jean Baptise, schools in the seventeenth century were often a place of terrifying, unjust punishments. The discipline

system at the prestigious Eton Academy was described as terrifying and severe by John Evelyn (1620-1706) (1879, p.6). The most common form of punishment at this time was to rebuke misdemeanours by beatings or floggings. Children of Eton were forced to smoke tobacco, which was thought to ward off the plague. Consequently, any boy at Eton found to be avoiding cigarettes, and therefore not keeping the disease at bay, was subjected to severe discipline. Seventeenth century diarist Thomas Hearne (1678-1735) wrote:

> even children were obliged to smoak. And I remember that I heard formerly Tom Rogers, who was a yeoman beadle, say that when he was a schoolboy at Eton that year when the plague raged, all the boys of that school were obliged to smoak in the school every morning, and that he was never whipped so much in his life as he was one morning for not smoaking. (Hearne, 1857, p. 450)

In the diary of Adam Martindale (1623-1686), he recalls a time where his school master who would often "whip boys most unmercifully for small or no faults at all… once bestowed a severe correction on [him] for nothing in the world but defending [himself] from a great sloven who abused [him] intolerably" (p.14).

The influence of Christianity on discipline

Whatever the historical accuracy of the Bible, it does indeed reflect many societal concerns throughout history, and ostensibly provides answers to many of the problems humanity faces. As a result of this, Christian parents have dutifully relied on proverbs as a means of child-rearing advice. While the majority of Biblical advice is targeted towards positive parenting practices, there are several references to harsh physical punishment and infanticide. Given that religion was a vital part of seventeenth century family life, it is no wonder discipline was heavily influenced by the Old Testament as parents aimed to purge their child of evil and bring them up in the eyes of God. A review of secondary literature has shown that many authors believe Puritan parents held the impression that their children were riddled with original sin and corruption and used harsh punitive tactics in order to instil good behaviour, and teach self-discipline (see DeMause 1976; Demos, 1970; Hardyment, 2007; Stannard, 1974; Stone, 1977). While this was true for many families, literature of the time

suggests that an awareness of the dangers of physical punishment was beginning to emerge as the concept of childhood evolved.

Several modern-minded authors of the time felt the need to advise against harsh punitive behaviour. In Domestical Duties (1622), Puritan author William Gouge (1575-1653) emphasised that authoritarian parenting has limits, therefore, within the statements on discipline, Gouge expressed a general disapproval of treating one's children too severely. He warned parents that too much austerity and severity can provoke children to wrath. Children should however be kept under discipline and their good sought out by raising them in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord" (p.78). He suggested many methods of behavioural control which may ignite rage in children: "sourness in countenance, threatening and reviling in words, too hard handling, too severe correction, too much restraint of liberty (and) too small allowance of things needful" (p.77).

Gouge stated that parents must have respect of the matter for which they are correcting and the manner of correcting (p. 271). In light of this, he proposed three rules parents should adhere to (p.271). Firstly, parents were told to be sure that the child had committed a fault. Gouge explained that "many times parents correct after their own pleasure" (p.103), not only is this unjustified, he claimed, but also no good for the child. Secondly, the child has to have an awareness of the fault he is being punished for. Gouge believed that instruction should encompass behavioural correction so children can learn from their errors. Finally, the faults should be those which parents can show to be against God's will, including swearing, lying and stealing. The purpose of this third rule was for children not only to have their behaviour corrected but to instil self-discipline so the child can condemn himself and accept the correction more contentedly.

With regards to the manner of behavioural correction, Gouge proposed several more rules (p.272) which included references to the bible, love and emotional detachment in the act of disciplining. Firstly, he warned that correction must be given in love as God does with all of his children. Correction must be given while parents are in a mild mood and a prayer should be made by parents for both themselves and their child prior to the punishment. Gouge believed that "correction by word must go before correction by the rod" (p.272), however, in many cases corporal punishment by use of the rod was deemed appropriate to use if respect was given to the receiver of the punishment. Above all, Gouge proposed that

sins directly against God's will should be treated with greater severity. Gouge concluded that those who offend their children with extreme or severe punishment are likely to harden the child's heart, make him dull, stupid and increase the likelihood of the child creating further mischief (p. 273).

Advice detailed in Robert Cleaver's book titled *Godlie Form of Household Government* (1600) corroborates the idea that parents were advised to bring children up on the right moral path and to correct strong-willed or disobedient behaviour without the use of overly harsh punishment. He states "The proper dutie of good parents to their children is to nourish them, to keep them under obedience and to teach them good manners" (p. 265). Clever warned parents to be tender in the use of the rod (p. 292) and for parents to lead by example to avoid childhood transgressions. Similarly, in the Catechism of Thomas Becon (1844) parents were advised to bring up children in the grace of God: "it is the duty of parents to train up their children in the knowledge of God and his holy word" (p. 351) and to correct any ungodly behaviour with gentle, favourable tactics while taking into consideration the child's fault and their natural disposition (p. 354). Becon continues that if the fault is small, correction by word is sufficient, however if the fault is large, parents must provide an explanation for the punishment and proceed with caution so not to provoke the child to hatred. It was to Becon's belief that "parents who furiously rage at the children and, without consideration beat them as stock-fish… are rather butchers than fathers" (p. 355).

Arguably, based on the advice proposed, Christianity did influence the way seventeenth century children were disciplined. Believing children were born with an evil spirit, was the bases for much advice on discipline, whereby Puritan theorists proposed "you can't begin with them too soon," (Mather, 1689, p.59) "they are no sooner wean'd but they are to be taught.... the Devil has been with them already… Satan gets them to be proud, profane, reviling and revengeful, as young as they are… why should you not be afore-hand with him?" (Mather, 1689, p.60). In spite of the more gentle approach to discipline proposed by Gouge, Becon and Clever, they were still advising parents to correct their children, in order to eradicate sin. This is strikingly different to writers uninfluenced by the church such as John Earle (1638), who claimed: "his soule is yet a white paper unscribed with observations of the world, wherewith at length it becomes a blurred notebooke. He is purely happy, because he knows no evil, nor hath made meanes by sinne" (p.10). This contrasting statement proposed

by non-Christian John Earle leads one to believe that children were perhaps disciplined differently depending on the religious background of their parents.

Conclusion

The analysis of seventeenth century literature has shown that caregivers took an interest in children's character development and aimed to have control over it by using discipline. The primary method was that of physical punishment such as the use of the rod, birch or ferule, however other methods such as deprivation of privileges, lectures and self-reformation were also explored. The evidence does not fully support the opinions of writers such as Plumb, Shorter and DeMause who believed that children were punished to very abusive levels. Having said that, there were a couple of cases of infanticide where parents used the excuse of discipline to justify their actions. Discipline in school was more brutal than what children usually experienced at home and self-discipline was also enforced through a strict set of rules. Christianity influenced discipline by informing parents that it was their duty to purge the child's soul of evil and many used physical punishment to show their authority. During this time the primary goal of parents was to eradicate the child of evil, therefore advice on which parent was more appropriate to punish was not present throughout the literature. Both mother and father assumed the position of authoritarian and equally punished their children.

What can be noted is the seventeenth century was the starting point for the better treatment of children whereby theorists (e.g. Beacon, 1884; Clever, 1600; Gouge, 1622) were beginning to recognise the child as an individual who was likely to be negatively affected by overly harsh parenting and corporal punishment. This lead the way for the influential theorists to question the rationale behind the use of physical punishment during the Age of Enlightenment period.

The Age of Enlightenment and discipline

The enlightenment period, sometimes referred to as the "Age of Reason", was a cultural and intellectual movement which took place in Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Scientific and philosophical developments reformed society by challenging religious ideologies. Enlightenment philosophies cautioned against the power and excess of organized religion which was thought to be a dangerous vehicle of intolerance. Reasoning was emphasized, and scepticism of traditional approaches to family functioning became widespread. The spotlight was taken off of divinity and instead many theorists adopted a humanistic approach to daily life. Changes occurred in child rearing, specifically regarding the child's place in the family and how they were treated by their parents. The mother's emotions were noticed by many doctors as a dangerous indulgence to the child, therefore the mother's role in training up and disciplining her children lessened in the eighteenth century. As demonstrated in the first chapter of this thesis, the primary goal of many parents in the 1600s was physically chastising the child in an attempt to break their will. However, during the Enlightenment period parents instead were urged to, and endeavoured to instil love, reform the child's mind and most importantly, teach self-discipline.

Enlightened philosophers on discipline

Influential doctor, academic and philosopher John Locke (1632-1704) was a prominent thinker at the beginning of the Age of Enlightenment and was arguably a key voice in promoting a nurture over nature approach to child rearing. Locke developed the theory "Tabula Rasa", also known as "Blank Slate" where he proposed that children enter the world with an empty mind, and they gain knowledge via environmental experiences. He emphasised that respectful, loving parenting was the leading factor in inspiring offspring to replicate good behaviour, and thus he promoted more sensitivity when it came to disciplining children. Locke's (1689) insistence that children should be provided with the best setting to allow them to explore their world freely and to establish mental processing was central to the increase in cultural attentiveness to child development.

In Locke's renowned *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1689) he defended the fundamental idea that the human mind is "white paper void of all characters, without any ideas" (p. 75), a divergent, modernized statement when considering the Puritan emphasis of original sin. This concept lead Locke to argue that young children are unable to think rationally and it is therefore the parents' responsibility to instruct their mind and forge their natural tendencies. In an age where physical punishment was routine, and advocated by many, Locke believed that "the beating of children is but a passionate tyranny over them" (Locke, 1693, p.126) and instead parents were urged to replace beatings with shame and reasoning. He claimed that "better than a beating is shame of the fault and the disgrace that attends it" (1693, p.84). Instead of beatings, Locke recommended parents must not forbid or use force but instead wait for the child to commit a fault and retract in complete horror and disbelief. Self-esteem and disgrace were central elements of his theory as he proposed that parents use "softer ways of shame and commendation" (Locke, 1693, p.98) and guide the child's natural inclinations towards pride and reason.

Locke made an exception when it came to the use of corporal punishment by allowing whippings only in cases of the child unequivocally dismissing the parents' authority. Although Locke argued that parents, for the most part, should avoid physical discipline, in cases of obstinacy, children should receive a severe and unrelenting beating until his will is broken. Locke implored parents to have their child beaten by a servant and for the punishment to take place in private, so not to humiliate the child or cause negative associations with the parents (Locke, 1693, p.95-101).

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), another influential philosopher around the time of the Age of Enlightenment, described an idealistic experience of early childhood in his book *Emile* (first published in 1762). Rousseau desired each child to have only his inclinations as a guide as he was allowed to roam freely in nature. It was to his belief that moral teachings should not begin until the child has reached adolescence where they have a more complete understanding of the distinction between good and evil (Rousseau, 1762, p.61). Unlike Locke, Rousseau's training of children follows a naturalistic approach, as he claimed that reason did not teach the child to supress natural tendencies. He stated "do not give your pupil any sort of lesson verbally: he ought to receive none except from experience. Inflict upon him no kind of punishment, for he does not know what being in fault means" (p. 56). Far from the Puritan views of the seventeenth century, Rousseau advocated a less

restrictive child-rearing environment and believed that a natural upbringing required children to develop at their own pace as opposed to being forced into maturity and adulthood.

When it came to disciplining his fictitious child subject Emile, Rousseau advocated discipline by natural consequences. He stated “punishment, as such, should not be inflicted upon children, but should always happen to them as the natural result of their own wrong-doing” (Rousseau, 1889, p.68). He suggested that there should be no exaggerated precautions, excessive harshness or punishments and parents should love the child and encourage his playing (Rousseau, 1889, p.39). Rousseau’s ideas on discipline emphasized a natural approach to child-rearing whereby Emile was hypothetically trained to lead a simple, ordinary life outside of society. This goal differs from Locke’s emphasis of nurture whereby his ideal child was reasoned with and trained to become an active member of society.

Attitudes towards the treatment and discipline of children advanced in the eighteenth century as society began to explore alternative ideas away from religion. This movement brought abought new views on childrearing in which a couple of key concepts can be identified. Firstly, the Lockean notion which stated that the infants were born as clean slates and required reasoning and negotiation to instil self-discipline. Secondly, the Rousseauian belief that childhood was a special period whereby nature must take the lead in teaching discipline, thus promoting a less invasive form of parenting. No concept replaced its antecedent. In fact, the literature shows that traditional ideas, such as the Puritan conviction, which stated that original sin can only be broken with corporal punishment, remained in circulation despite the introduction of ‘modern theories’. In general however, the parenting advice and implementation of the time became more informed and less strict.

Advice manuals

With enlightened philosophers leading the way for the better treatment of children, advice manuals of the time correspondingly softened their approach towards discipline. In general, there was a trend which progresses through the eighteenth century whereby the recommended disciplinary actions become increasingly permissive and child-centred as scientific understanding triumphed above religious moral advice. Doctors and authors were becoming increasingly aware of the effects of harsh punishment on child development. In his *Essay on the Government of Children* (1761), James Nelson warns parents to be “particularly

careful not to dispirit their children" as it will "undoubtedly have a bad influence on their whole future conduct" (p.196). As for advice on the rod, which was a popular punishment implement prior to the eighteenth century, Nelson stated "he who exercises the rod deserved it more than he who feels it" (p.188). Parents were told to acquaint themselves with their own tempers and mutually consent and agree on the methods of disciplining their child and "above all, never to correct while in passion" (p.166). Nelson was aware of the dangers associated with unjust physical punishment and therefore urged parents to use alternative methods such as Locke's introduction of reasoning.

In a similar vein to Nelson, François Fénelon (1651-1715) in his *Treatise on the Education of Daughters* (first published 1688) warns parents "never rebuke a child in the first moments of passion" (1805, p.52). According to Fénelon

> If the wisest man has recommended parents to hold the rod continually over the heads of their children, if he has said that a father who "spareth his child" will repent it hereafter—it does not follow that he has censured a mild and lenient mode of education. He only condemns those weak and inconsiderate parents who flatter the passions of their children, and who only strive to divert them in their infancy, so that they are guilty of all sorts of excess. The proper conclusion seems to be that parents ought to preserve authority sufficient for correction; for there are some dispositions which require to be subdued by fear alone; but let it be remembered that this should never be enforced unless every other expedient has been previously applied. (Fénelon, 1805, p.50)

Fénelon's suggestion of parents employing fear to maintain authority over children does not stand alone in eighteenth century literature. Thomas Gisborne (1758-1846) equally believed that "in the government of children, the principle of fear as well as that of love is to be employed" (1806, p.371). This indeed shows that authors were beginning to hypothesise alternative methods of disciplining children, such as reasoning, first suggested by Locke (1693), natural consequences as suggested by Rousseau (1762), and finally, Fénelon's (1805) and Gisborne's (1806) suggestion of maintaining authority by using fear. This movement stemmed from the growth of humanitarian ideas during the Age of Enlightenment which consequently transformed child discipline during and thereafter.

Regardless of the positive movement towards sensitive disciplining, the traditional influence of physical discipline was still prevalent given the ease it brought to maintaining authority, not to mention its roots in Christianity (such as the use of the rod to reform the soul). Some authors were still suggesting to chastise the insubordinate child, however the incentive behind this was to bring the child shame and humiliation, not pain. Fénelon stated, "as to chastisement, the pain inflicted ought to be as slight as possible but accompanied with every circumstance which can prick the child with shame and remorse" (p.56). Although used as a last resort, Fénelon suggested parents chastise their child publicly in order to cover them in shame, or privately, to show the child how they have been spared of such mortification (p. 57). Thomspon equally believed that corporal punishment should be used upon children who can't be reasoned with, he claimed "where counsel and advice will take no place, the rod should be applied" (1710, p.6). John Banks informed parents "although you say you loveth thy child; thou hateth him if thou chasten him not betime" (1749, p.5). Despite these authors suggesting the use of the rod, there was more awareness of the harmful effects of corporal punishment, which is why rod-related advice often came with a disclaimer such as Thompson's (1710) statement; "the rod is a very useful instrument, if rightly used; and severity is mixed with gentleness, it is an excellent composition for some tempers" (p.6), and Bank's (1749) side-note of "though correction should be moderate, considering their tender years" (p.5).

The difference between the attitudes towards corporal punishment in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is that in the former, the rod was applied with the intention to cause the child pain, to chastise the fault. However in the eighteenth century, it would seem parents were encouraged to find a balance between tenderness and harshness, they were told to only apply the rod after attempting to reason with the child, when in a mellow temperament, with little force, and some theorists were even recognising that physical punishment was not the panacea for insubordination and stubbornness.

The patriarchal idealization of motherhood

A secondary aim of this thesis is to assess the role and opinion of mothers in eighteenth century child discipline and to compare it with contemporary theories and practice. The subsection of this chapter therefore looks to explore how mothers were

represented in eighteenth century literature concerning discipline and to assess if they followed the advice put forward by male enlightened authors.

The Age of Enlightenment was a period during which philosophers and intellectual writers began to dispute the rights of children and women. The development of ideas such as individualism and reasoning began to challenge women's already relegated roles in the community which made way for the debate known throughout history as *Querelle des Femmes* (or "Women's Question"). In an age where rational thought, expressed through philosophies, science and literacy began to challenge tradition and question religion, the functioning of the nuclear family was altered. Despite philosophers such as Locke and Rousseau creating a space in society for the respect of children's rights, this movement, at the same time, suppressed the rights of women and placed less value on the mothering role. From the literature it emerges that male enlightened authors relegated the mother's role within the family, which in turn did not bring the mother much in the way of prestige or approbation. The role of child rearing, especially disciplining, was thought to be perfect for men, whom during this time, were considered more intelligent, more in control of their emotions and more capable than women. A woman's value was solely dependent on her reproductive ability which became an object of patriarchal ownership. Particularly in the second half of the eighteenth century there was an invasion of male philosophies and doctrines in areas considered conventionally female. Childbirth and childrearing became medicalized and masculinized, which in turn undermined the roles of midwives, mothers and other female carers (Bailey, 2010).

The patriarchal mental pattern of this era, that is, the idea that women were seen as emotionally, academically and physically inferior to men, inched its way into childrearing concepts, with many male authors arguing that fathers should assume responsibility for their children, including the training and disciplining of them (e.g. Cadogan, 1748; Gisborne, 1806; Nelson, 1761). During this era, there was a swarm of patronising advice manuals written by men which detailed the ways women were expected to conduct themselves, run the household and raise their children. In his book titled *Advice to Mothers* (1805), William Buchan (1729-1805) stated

"mothers are too apt to forget this admirable lesson, in nurturing and rearing their children. They do not seem to know the proper medium between cruel neglect or indifference on the one hand, and fatal excess of anxiety and fondness on the other" (Buchan, 1805, p.208).

Buchan suggested that a mother's actions should be kept under the control of reason as opposed to her emotional attachment towards her child. Buchan was so wary of overindulgence and particularly placed the blame upon mothers stating "it is in the female world more especially that maternal fondness spreads its fatal ravages" (p. 221). He continued that as girls often remain longer in the immediate and almost exclusive care of their mothers, they are more often guided by love, and the impulses of a tender heart, as opposed to discipline, reason and the dictates of an enlightened mind, therefore girls are doomed to weakness and misery (p.222). Seeming almost elated that enlightenment increased man's voice in society, British physician and childcare author William Cadogan (1711-1797) opened his *Essay on Nursing* (1748) with a preamble address to the father: "Sir, it is with great pleasure I see at last the preservation of children become the care of men of sense. In my opinion, this business has been too long fatally left to the management of women" (p. 3). Mothers were made out to be emotionally and intellectually weak and their habitual mothering disposition faulted, whereas fathers were made out to be disciplinarians due to their natural harsh conduct (Gisborne, 1806, p.371; Nelson, 1761, p.167).

Authors were quick to point out the gender differences in maintaining authority and discipline over children with many further critiques targeted towards mothers being overly indulgent. Thomas Gisborne, who wrote *An Enquiry into the Duties of the Female Sex* (1806) (originally published 1797) suggested that a mother's naturally tender disposition was not as fit as a father's when it came to disciplining. He stated "the supreme father of the universe sees fit to employ [punishment] in the moral government of mankind" (p.371). Swiss author Guy Miege criticised mothers for being too protective and gratifying their children, he wrote that "the indulgence of mothers is excessive among the English; which proves fatal to their children and contributes much to the corruption of the age" (1743, p.222). In terms of discipline, William Thompson noted; "just a reprehension to those fond mothers, whose foolish indulgence will not suffer them to give their child due correction; which at length terminates in their own sorrow and shame" (1710, p.6). It was common to see that in the literature of this period, blame for a child's mishaps was more often placed upon the mother and their lack of discipline, rather than the father.

Rousseau was aware of the different roles of women in society, particularly as wives and mothers, and insisted that women as the weaker gender, were naturally submissive. Throughout *Emile* (1762) he continually refers to mothers as the polar opposite of fathers in their parenting expertise. He stated, for example, "the mother is the true nurse, the father is the true teacher" (p.22) suggesting the mother's role was concerned with little more than the physical wellbeing of the child. Locke, on the other hand, arguably lived up to his title as the father of liberalism by reasoning against the patriarchal monarchy and suggesting in the *First Treatise* (first published 1689) that the rights of the mother should be taken as seriously as the rights of the father as they are both as capable as each other of raising children.

Many of the childcare authors of this time were thought to be enlightened doctors who provided society with new and exciting discoveries. However, at the same time, the woman's voice and her role in the family was reduced to make way for the fathers of reason. Traditional roles throughout history have placed the father as the provider, head of the household, protector and disciplinarian (Le Gresley, 2001) however this was epitomized in eighteenth century literature with enlightenment authors arguing that a woman's emotionality did not serve as a good basis for maintaining authority (e.g. Buchan, 1804; Gisborne, 1806; Nelson, 1761). Although the average eighteenth century mother arguably played the most crucial role in the upbringing of her children she was often excluded from pedological discourse and her role as an authoritative figure diminished. The torch was instead passed to the fathers who were deemed more appropriate disciplinarians.

Fatherhood

The literature of the seventeenth century shows that many males, such as fathers and schoolmasters, took on the responsibility of disciplining children which in most cases took the form of beatings. The eighteenth century however marked a pivotal point in changing the attitude towards male authority. The demand for an affectionate form of fatherly government was sought and romanticized by writers such as Nelson (1761), Rousseau (1762), Locke (1693) and Fénelon (1805). In order to facilitate his child's good behaviour, the model father would be expected to have reason, negotiation, and kindness in his discipline repertoire while maintaining the firm upper-hand on the situation.

Seeing that parents played such a crucial role in their child's development, in "Some Thoughts Concerning Education" (1693), Locke charged "be sure then to establish the authority of a father as soon as he [the child] is capable of submission and can understand whose power he is [in]" (p. 41). Throughout the essay, Locke emphasises the importance of the father's role when it comes to training up children. Although Locke included the mother in his writings, more so than other authors of this time, it is in fact rare to find any of his advice on discipline specifically tailored towards mothers. To achieve self-discipline, Locke argued that a child must comply with his father's orders and be established as an obedient subject from infancy. Despite his gentler approach to disciplining, much like the Puritan parents of the seventeenth century, Locke advises the father to maintain a "strict hand over children" (1693, p.42) and to treat acts of defiance with the greatest severity.

Mother knows best?

While the majority of child rearing books were written by male authors, who often downgraded the mother's stance in the family and in society, throughout the eighteenth century, many women took advantage of new forms of literacy as a way to voice her opinion and experiences of discipline. Mothers began contributing towards childrearing practices by providing accounts of their own experiences in the forms of autobiographies and journals. While enlightenment arguably granted women more freedom of speech this was typically reserved for middle-upper class families, who were able to access money to participate in education and debates (Taylor & Knott, 2005). Therefore the women described below represent only a small fraction of society during the enlightened period, not the entire female sex.

From autobiographical accounts, one can see that mothers, and other female carers, were not afraid to discipline their children and could maintain authority despite the claims of the above enlightened authors. Hester Piozzi's (formerly Thrale) (1741-1821) methods of disciplining her children have been described as a maternal tyranny over her offspring where she punished harshly and would whip her children when they disobeyed her (Piozzi, 1942, p.719). In the Diary of Joshua Evans (1731-1798), he recalled "my father having several children by a former wife, I was much under the care of my mother… I was early inclined to folly and [was] full of pranks, for which my mother often corrected me" (Evans, 1837, p.5).

After her mother died of milk-fever, Eliza Fletcher (1770-1858) was left in the care of her father and grandmother. Although she described a very loving relationship with her family with little mention of harsh discipline, she stated "my grandmother, was a woman of violent temper and strong affections. She exacted obedience and habitual attention from all her family" (Fletcher, 1875, p.2) suggesting that a woman was the head of her household and in charge of discipline as opposed to a man. Finally, in the absence of her husband, Frances Evelyn Boscawen (1719-1805) explained that her discipline had become slack, therefore when her son showed signs of obscenity, she used the rod to threaten him, however never used it upon him (Boscawen, 1940, p.179). These events, although far and few between, exemplify the use of punishments and discipline by mothers who arguably maintained their duties as parents and disciplinarians despite the patriarchal insistence of the father's natural and greater authority.

Patriarchal ideology did indeed influence some female authors. Margaret Woods (1748-1821) for example, held a similar opinion to the male authors who feared mothers would overindulge their children (e.g. Gisborne, 1797; Miege, 1743 & Thompson, 1710). Woods believed there should be a balance between excessively harsh discipline and indulgence. She stated:

> some parents throw the reins on the necks of their children at a very early period, and hold them with a very slack hand; while others seem scarcely willing to loosen then a little, so long as they are able to keep hold of them. Either extreme, I believe is prejudicial (Woods, 1850, p.164).

Wood's agreed with Locke that a nurture approach to disciplining should be sought, and children should be taught consequences through reason (p.264). Perhaps influenced by the male writings of the time, Woods argued that men were better disciplinarians after taking into account a mother's natural affectionateness towards her children. She stated "an exertion of much discipline seems very little adapt for females… let us exhort one another with all sisterly love… but leave to those, deemed the stronger vessels, the office of chastising" (Woods, 1850, p. 105).

Influential author Maria Edgeworth (1768-1849) was one of the first female authors to write a child rearing book specifically tailored towards educating and training children. In

Practical Education (1798) she stated that a child who is young and unable to reason should be lightly punished directly following their fault, this way the child can associate the fault with pain. She claimed "Before we can govern by reason, we can, by associating pain or pleasure with certain actions, give habits, and these habits will be either beneficial or hurtful to the pupil" (p.201). Much like many of the other writers during this time, Edgeworth believed there should be a balance between indulgence and restraint. Furthermore, she emphasised the importance of explaining the child's fault to them prior to punishment stating:

> whenever punishments are not made intelligible; they are cruel; they give pain without producing any future advantage. To make punishment intelligible to children, it must not be only immediately but repeatedly and uniformly associated with the actions which we wish them to avoid (Edgeworth, 1798, p.202)

When it came to disciplining children who had reached the age of reason comprehension, Edgeworth noted that punishments gain different effects. Older children, she stated, are thus able to distinguish between coincidence and causation (p.203) and should not be physically reprehended. Edgeworth believed that:

> there is but one method; we must early secure reason for our friend, else she will become our unconquerable enemy. As soon as children are able, in any instance, to understand the meaning and nature of punishment, it should, in that instance, be explained to them. Just punishment is pain, inflicted with the reasonable hope of preventing greater pain in future. In a family, where there are several children educated together, or in public schools, punishments may be inflicted with justice for the sake of example, but still the reformation and future good of the sufferer is always a principal object (Edgeworth, 1798, p.204)

Similarly to Locke, Edgeworth believed that a child's implicit submission to a parents authority and the confined ideas of right and wrong are only convenient for the parents themselves. She notes that this is a "dangerous, as well as an unjust, system" (p.203).

In an age where childcare authors were moving away from tools such as the rod and began suggesting alternative forms of punishment such as shame and embarrassment, Edgeworth unconventionally wrote “shame, when it once becomes familiar to the mind, loses its effect; it should not, therefore, be used as a common punishment for slight faults” (p.210). She stated it is important to preserve the child’s conscience and to establish the child as responsible for their own actions and mishaps, and in all cases parents were urged to diminish the quantity of pain, without lessening the efficacy of the punishment (p.207).

Conclusion

Enlightened philosophers and doctors changed the standard disciplinary practices of the eighteenth century by bringing attention to the fact children required education and training from adults if they were to develop successfully. The advice on discipline therefore cautioned parents against the use of harsh punishments and physical force and instead children could expect lectures and lessons teaching self-discipline. In spite of the fact several females were influenced by the patriarchal ideologies of the time, such as Woods (1850) believing that men, as the “stronger vessels” should assume responsibility for disciplining, for the most part women took control of their own children and disciplined how and where they saw fit (e.g. Boscawen, 1940; Piozzi, 1942). When it came to advice from women, as we can see from Edgeworth’s book, she wrote about discipline from a very modern-minded, enlightened stance. She suggested that pain and humiliation should not be used in punishment, and that children, once they reached the age of comprehension should assume responsibility for their own actions to establish self-discipline. This idea represents the movement to a more child-centred approach to disciplining, and mirrors twenty-first century discipline where children are respected and cooperated with. The conclusion one can take away from this, is that while the advice might be old, and the female authors behind it initially criticised for not being able enough, it reflects a very enlightened approach towards child rearing. By introducing gentler and more respectful ways of disciplining, away from corporal punishment, enlightenment theories were very influential in creating an early representation of the modern-day positive discipline.

The movement towards positive discipline

As the literature has shown, prior to the Age of Enlightenment, child discipline was guided by Puritan values which emphasised the need to break the child's will thus insuring they would not overturn authority. This idea of discipline diminished as philosophers and doctors began to propose different, and sometimes contrasting ideas of behavioural management. The conflicting ideas more than likely arose because opinions on how to handle children could vary more than when discipline was anchored by religion. As time progressed, attitudes towards discipline changed. Some authors argue that in the nineteenth century, the level of strictness returned to the same severity as that of medieval times (e.g. DeMause, 1974; Pollock 1983) while others (Cable, 1975) argue that the emphasis of family ties, affection and love permitted an even more permissive form of child discipline. In spite of the debate surrounding discipline in the nineteenth century, it was arguably theories which arose in the eighteenth century Enlightenment period which sparked the movement to a positive, child-centred approach to discipline, which has become popular in the twenty-first century. Therefore, it is important to evaluate the disciplinary advice put forward in the last century (1920-2019) and assess whether enlightened theories were influential in shaping modern-day discipline.

Several trends have emerged in the last century which have changed how children are treated and disciplined. Firstly, the movement of parliamentary concern for children's rights, which has put discipline under more legislative control, has been beneficial in lessening the severity of punishment which the children of our history frequently faced. In 1979, Sweden led the way by banning the use of physical punishment on children with many other Nordic countries following suit (Finland 1983, Norway 1987, Austria 1989). The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) further solidified a child's place within society, for the first time in history, by issuing rights to children and recognising their innocence and need for protection. Not only did it affect discipline in the family but also in education, where in 1986, all forms of corporal punishment were banned in British state schools (Burchell, 2018). A second trend, emerging primarily in the past few decades is the increase in scientific findings which have demonstrated that physical punishment of children may cause a variety of personal and

social afflictions such as increased childhood aggression (Gershoff, 2002) decreased cognitive functioning (Straus & Paschall, 2009) and increased psychological and physical illness (Bitensky, 1997). A final trend concerns the role of mothers in disciplinary practices. Compared to the eighteenth century, where fathers were urged to be the disciplinarians and punish children alone, modern-day practices value a cooperative, inclusive form of behavioural management whereby both parents actively take part in disciplining their children (Goodpasture, 1999) and the mother's sensitivity is valued (Ainsworth, 1969).

The child study movement

The twentieth century deemed the Century of the Child (Key, 1909) represented a time where children were being recognised as qualitatively dissimilar to adults. In what was referred to as the child study movement, the development of theories on education and child psychology from across the globe, alongside increased attention to the mental health of adults were influential in establishing the study of child psychiatry in the early twentieth century (Kanner, 1948). Furthermore, unlike in the eighteenth century, influential female psychologists such as Anna Freud (1928) and Melanie Klein (1932) were permitted a voice, making it easier for them to contribute to the literature on child development where they published ground-breaking discoveries about child development, psychoanalysis and the importance of early experiences for future development.

The evolution of parent-child attachment theories further emphasised the importance of maintaining a positive relationship, and called for a softer form of discipline. William Blatz, who stated security was the primary goal of all humans, argued that children were required to trust and depend on their parents (1933). As the child grows, if they experience the same amount of responsiveness, the parent becomes a secure base from which the child can safely navigate their environment. Around a similar time, John Bowlby introduced his idea of an attachment theory (1940) which maintained that infants require a continual, steady, nurturing relationship with at least one primary caregiver to flourish socially and develop normally. This theory was later reappraised and augmented by Mary Ainsworth who worked with Bowlby and found that children can be classified into one of four attachment styles, namely; secure, anxious-avoidant, anxious-resistant and disorganized (see Ainsworth, 1978 et al. for overview). With the emphasis on attachment, parents were particularly receptive to

new ideas about discipline which emerged in the mid twentieth century and promoted bonding and happiness over strict correction (Sterns, 2010).

Daily routines as the ultimate practice of discipline

In the first half of the twentieth century, in a similar vein to eighteenth century manuals, authors were still hyperaware of the dangers of overindulgence and warned parents against it. Alice Hutchison, a child psychologist, stated that "without the helpful intervention of brothers and sisters" parents would most likely become lax in applying discipline to their only child resulting in the child becoming "nearly always hopelessly spoiled" (1928, p.164). John Watson (1878-1958) warned mothers against kissing and coddling her baby for fear the child will grow up too attached to his parents (Watson, 1928, p. 76). Truby King (1858-1938) alerted parents that a spoiled child is likely to grow up selfish and unable to conform to the temporal laws of society (1913, p.149). In his book titled *Feeding and Care of Baby* (1945), King argued that "obedience in infancy is the foundation of all later powers of self-control" (p.149) and promoted a routine based method of child-rearing. Parents were advised to ignore the infant's wants, not to over-coddle and to stick solely to the set routine which included control over the child's feeding, sleeping, bathing and bowel movements. Similarly, many authors believed in the importance of establishing a daily routine for social order and to condition good behaviour (e.g. Holt, 1909; Watson, 1929). In this respect, the routine itself became the child's discipline.

A major concern of centuries past was that of the child's stubbornness and defiance of authority, therefore advice tailored towards breaking their will and obstinance was prevalent in literature particularly prior to the Age of Enlightenment. In the twentieth century however, this concern was not at the forefront of discipline advice, and authors were providing more examples of specific behaviours to punish and guidance on how to do so. The early twentieth century was a time where good manners and etiquette reached a peak in upper class society (Wouters, 1995) therefore, childcare advice, which was mainly written by and tailored for the upper class, reflected this. In his book *The Care and Feeding of Children* (1909), Luther Emmet Holt (1855-1924) provides parents with a whole section on how to break bad habits including nail biting, dirt eating, thumb sucking and masturbation. Rather than corporal punishment, his methods ranged from restraints to reward systems and he was adamant that bad habits should be broken as early as possible.

Watson's suggested a child can be conditioned to exhibit good behaviour. He suggested that children who throw temper tantrums around mealtimes should be placed in their room to "cry… without an audience" (Watson, 1928, p. 88), if the behaviour continued, the child should be put to bed without a meal. When it came to bed wetting, Watson suggested ignoring the behaviour and rewarding the child on accident free mornings with a piece of chocolate (p. 112). Thumb sucking, condemned in Edwardian society as it was thought to increase the onset of disease and extend the infantile period was to be handled with scolding (Watson, 1928, p.115). Watson however believed this behaviour could be conquered in infancy if the parent maintained discipline by conditioning the baby to keep her hands from her mouth (p.116). Edward Wexberg, author of *Your Nervous Child* (1926, in Beekman 1977), exhibited a Rousseauian viewpoint by saying punishments should come from natural consequences of the action. According to Wexberg, if a child hits his parent, the parent should express hurt. If the child breaks something he must pay for it or he will be deprived of something he would usually receive (p.142).

In the early twentieth century, the child was becoming more understood. The literature shows that during this period, advice on childcare was largely concerned with the physical and mental engineering of the child, therefore, establishing a daily routine was considered the ultimate form of maintaining discipline. Enlightenment theories influenced the advice published as less focus was given to religion-driven corporal punishment and more effort was placed on instilling self-discipline in the child. Childcare experts and doctors were speculating alternatives to physical punishments such as deprivation of privileges, conditioning, reward systems and routines. This provided parents with a more experimental approach to discipline when compared to pre-enlightenment literature.

The movement towards positive discipline

As the child study movement developed, attachment theories (Blatz, 1933; Bowlby; 1940; Ainsworth et al., 1978) were published and emphasised the importance of creating a secure bond with your infant. The idea of spoiling or overindulging your child was left in the first half of the twentieth century and parents aimed to shower love and affection on their offspring. In the enlightened period, many authors (e.g. Cadogan,1748; Gisborne, 1806; Nelson, 1761; Rousseau, 1762) proposed that fathers were the better disciplinarians of the

family given the mothers emotionalism (Buchan, 1805; Gisborne, 1806; Miege; 1743). However in the twentieth century positive attention was given to the mothers emotionality. Ainsworth (1969) introduced the concept of maternal sensitivity which is the mother's capability of appropriately and promptly responding to her infant's behavioural signals. Ainsworth argued that mothers who could infer the meaning behind her infant's signals and were more sensitive in responding to them, had more socially and cognitively developed children than those who were less sensitive. This promoted the mother's role in childrearing and many authors were suggesting they should follow their natural instincts (Brazeldon 1969; Leach, 1977) and discipline sensitively.

Medical professional Dr Benjamin Spock first published his revolutionary parenting manual *The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care* in 1946. It is, even to this day, one of the best-selling childcare manuals of all time with over fifty million copies sold worldwide (Hidalgo, 2011). *The Common Sense Book of Baby and Childcare* challenged the traditional child rearing practice of the early twentieth century which stated that infants should be kept on a tight schedule and little affection laid upon them. Spock instead encouraged parents to follow their natural instincts and advised a more gentle, tender approach to child rearing. When it came to maintaining discipline, Spock suggested using distraction for infants and toddlers whereby parents show interest in what the child is doing to put him in a cooperative mood, then tactfully coerce him into doing what the parent wants (Spock, 1946 p.253). For older children, a 'friendly warning' should be issued followed up with a simple explanation of why the behaviour is inappropriate. Unlike the advice proposed by enlightened Locke, Spock explicitly mentioned that a child should not be given too many reasons as this "leads him out beyond his depths with ideas" (p.254).

Spock also had opinions on alternative punishments such as putting the child in his room which he believed "makes it seem like a prison" (1946, p.259). Threats, Spock believed, weakened the effect of the discipline and turned the command into a dare for the child. In addition, Spock stated that if parents felt the need to punish their child regularly, something must be wrong in his life, or the parents are using the wrong methods. He concluded his thoughts on discipline by reminding parents that when their child behaves, "it is not threat or punishment but a loving for your agreeableness and respecting you for knowing your rights and his. Stay in control as a friendly leader rather than battle with him at his level" (1946, p.260). Spock's overall opinion was that of "when a child is handled in a

favourable way, he wants to do the right thing, the grown-up thing, most of the time" (Spock, 1946, p.258). Rather than the use of physical punishment, parents were told methods of distraction, guidance and physically removing the child were more favourable alternatives. Spock's work was very reflective of the permissive attitude towards discipline which can be seen during the twentieth century. With the increased knowledge of child psychology brought on by the child study movement, advice in the second half of the twentieth century continued to promote gentle discipline.

A prominent child development expert in the 1960s, Berry Brazelton first published his book *Infants and Mothers: differences in development* in 1969. Similarly to the advice Ainsworth detailed regarding maternal sensitivity, he emphasised that parents who know how to read their infant's cues tend to be more successful parents. He aimed to alleviate parents of their supposed childrearing incompetence and encouraged parents to be observant and relaxed. His advice on discipline followed a Rousseauvian permissive route where he noted that sensitive discipline and personal distance was critical in allowing the child to develop their own self-discipline. For toddlers who throw temper tantrums for example, Brazelton recommended "a firm, disciplinary and unrewarding approach to his antics" (Brazelton, 2010 p.277) to allow the child to find their own boundaries.

Penelope Leach similarly believed in the importance of establishing self-discipline. In her book *Your Baby and Child* she stated:

> although every parent has moments when he wishes his children took instant obedience for granted… [however] the only kind of discipline that is really worthwhile is the self-discipline that will one day keep him doing what he should and behaving as he ought when there is nobody to tell him what to do or notice what he's doing. (Leach, 1977, p.524)

Leach criticised Victorian parents for commanding instant and unquestioning obedience from their children as she believed it could not produce children who are able to think for themselves and can be trusted to look after themselves from a young age. Leach believed parents should model good behaviour as discipline is a matter of showing a child how to behave. She urged parents to cooperate and compromise with their children and not to 'rise to the bait' if children are deliberately trying to provoke (p. 528).

In the mid twentieth century, a swarm of scientific articles were released detailing the negative effects spanking had on child development (e.g. Becker, 1964; Korsch et al., 1965; Nakamura, 1959). As a result of this, a shift took place from the traditional attitudes of the past to an experimental viewpoint whereby parents aimed for a democratic and cooperative type of child discipline placing value on the child's autonomy. The literature shows that corporal punishment tactics continued to lose popularity amongst childcare authors. Spock for example, favoured a friendly, cooperative approach to maintaining discipline and in a later edition of his book deplored corporal punishment stating it was a means of teaching "children that the larger, stronger person has the power to get his way whether or not he is in the right" (Spock, 1985, p.607). Spock believed that although in the olden days children were physically punished to make them behave, in the modern-day "as parents and professionals have studied children… they have come to realise that children can be well behaved, cooperative and polite without ever having been punished physically" (Spock, 1985, p.607).

Leach believed that punishment such as "smacks and spankings, yells and insults are not direct results of a child's actions and don't work, although they may seem to have done so at the time" "smacking children can't teach them how to behave… physical punishments are so ineffective that they tend to escalate" (Leach, 1977, p.533). Frank Donovan stated that "all behavioural scientists agree that punishment is an ineffective means of controlling aggression; and punishment, particularly physical punishment is frequently the mark of a dominant parent" (Donovan, 1968, p.73). Furthermore in a study he conducted, Donovan found that "discipline techniques involving a withdrawal of love were more effective for achieving socialization of the child and the development of a conscience than methods involving physical punishment threats" (Donovan, 1968, p.86).

Since the child study movement, child-centred discipline has expanded and there has been an increase in literature promoting positive parenting (also known as active parenting) (Nelsen, Lott & Glenn, 1993; Sanders, 1999). This is when parents take an active role in decision making, conflict resolving and the lives of their child all while promoting autonomy; resulting in a relationship between parent and child built on mutual respect (Popkin, 1993). Literature of this time promoted several new methods, such as positive reinforcement of the child's good behaviour, which was thought to praise the child into obedience (Barkley, 1987). Time-outs -where the child is placed away from interesting activities and ignored for a

short period of time- was thought to quickly teach children to follow parents' directions (Straats, 1971). Improved communication was thought to resolve conflict and minimalize a child's bad behaviour, while promoting a positive relationship with the parent (Gordon, 1980). Evidently, in the latter half of the twentieth century, a child centred approach towards discipline became apparent where parents were less concerned with breaking the will of their strong-minded child and instead tackled more particular and emotive problems as they arose. This was done with regulations and discipline, choice and consequence (Nelsen, Lott & Glenn, 1993) and was evenly shared by mother and father.

The modern practice of discipline

Since the turn of the century, the influence of enlightenment theories and the child study movement is still present in the literature. Although ideas of discipline have constantly evolved over time, the movement away from corporal punishment continues with many European parents recognising the damage it causes. Advice on positive discipline is widespread and parents are drawn to the ease which it brings them in maintaining control over their children, all while being compassionate to the child's individual needs (Nelsen, Erwin & Duffy, 2019). Positive discipline posits that parents can maintain a healthy authoritative relationship with their child by disciplining "in a way which is high on relationship, high on respect and low on drama and conflict" (Nelsen, Erwin & Duffy, 2019, p.9).

Unlike in the enlightened period where the domineering opinions of male doctors and philosophers governed childrearing, today there is no longer a single authority on child discipline advice. Contemporary perspectives come from a variety of self-proclaimed experts in the form of parenting forums, 'mummy blogs' and social media. On the popular UK website Mumsnet.com over 17,000 results are shown when "discipline" is entered into the search tool (Mumsnet, 2019). Many results are from mothers, asking questions to other mothers such as "how do I discipline my suddenly demonic 5-year-old" or "has anyone disciplined their child for wetting their pants?". This has created a sense of community amongst parents where advice can be easily published and shared. As digital media has created a space for personal expression, and more avenues for advice to be put forward, it has

also opened the path for the mother's voice to be heard on her ideas of how discipline should be managed.

In sum, advice put forward in the twenty-first century focuses on teaching and learning, as opposed to punishment and reward. *The Gentle Discipline Book* (Ockwell-Smith, 2017) suggested parents adopt a mindful practice of disciplining whereby parents aimed to understand the child and empower them to behave. *Out of Control why disciplining your child doesn't work.. and what will* (Tsabary, 2014) likewise emphasised the importance of maintaining a good relationship between parent and child, free from threats, deprivation, punishments and timeouts. The major comparison between pre-enlightenment and contemporary advice is that the goal of discipline these days is less about punishing the child for misbehaving and more about guiding them how to behave. This is something which was sparked in the eighteenth century with philosophers during the Age of Enlightenment proposing alternatives away from religious dogma.

Conclusion

The advice detailed in this chapter shows that enlightenment theories were influential in altering the course of discipline methods used throughout Europe. Children were no longer required to give parents their unquestioning obedience as expected in the seventeenth century, and methods away from physical punishment were being proposed. Throughout the twentieth century, the implementation of scientifically informed techniques to manage a child's behaviour became equated with the application of responsible parenting, and nowadays there is a trend which recognises the child as their own individual who requires positive discipline strategies (Nelson, 1996). The positive discipline that we see today can be traced back to the Enlightenment period where it was Rousseau (1762) who was arguably very influential in introducing fewer regulations, less adult intrusion and corporal punishment and instead posited that children have the maximum amount of freedom to allow them to learn from their own actions of misconduct. The mother's role in discipline similarly has experienced a transformation. More females were publishing theories on childhood (e.g. Ainsworth, 1978; Freud, 1928; Leach; 1977; Klein, 1932) and a mother's role in disciplining became equal to the father's. Finally, not only did the matriarchy establish a clear voice in the

literature concerning child discipline, but also in the more informal and communal platforms of digital media.

Thesis Conclusion

The primary aim of this thesis was to review the literature on child discipline from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and assess how the Age of Enlightenment altered the treatment of children thereafter. Furthermore, given that enlightened male authors monopolized the published advice on childcare, a secondary aim was to evaluate the mother's voice in matters of discipline and to assess if she followed the advice put forward, and how her role in disciplining has been altered.

Since the concept of childhood emerged in the seventeenth century, the child was catapulted into the spotlight as increased attention was placed upon their moral upbringing. The literature has shown that strict observation and attempts at behavioural reformation was present throughout this century as parents attempted to gain control over their children. Many Puritan parents believed that a child was born egocentric and predisposed to sin, therefore it was the responsibility of the parent to shape the will of the inherently disobedient child. The literature showed that submission by means of corporal punishment served as a model for the child's future relationship with God. It was therefore important for children to understand the reason behind the punishment in order to promote self-discipline. Several historians suggested the punishments children faced in the seventeenth century were relentless and barbaric (e.g. DeMause, 1974; Shorter, 1975; Stone, 1979; Plumb, 1957) however this was contradictory of what autobiographical literature suggested. This is significant because it calls into question the validity of child history books and whether the discipline mentioned in them was standard practice. What we do know however is that discipline, prior to the Age of Enlightenment, was grounded by religion.

In the eighteenth century, the literature showed that enlightened philosophers such as Locke (1689) and Rousseau (1762) had a modern-minded approach to child development and conclusively created the early blue-prints of child-centred discipline. While this was a positive step in creating changes for children, women during the Age of Enlightenment were not represented fairly in literature surrounding discipline. Furthermore, their ability was downplayed and their opinions essentially written out of history to make way for the fathers of reason. Despite male authors repressing the mothers role, literature from personal accounts has shown women did indeed maintain discipline in the household. Although the theories and

conduct books written by women were scarce, female authors proposed ideas regarded as modern for their time. Arguably, it was ideas such as these which were influential in beginning the mainstream positive discipline strategies focused on mutual respect. Had the mother's voice been more influential in the childrearing discourse perhaps the movement towards positive discipline would have surfaced earlier in history.

When compared to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, advice from the 1900s was more tailored to specific bad habits which parents were urged to rid their children of, as opposed to commanding unquestioning obedience. Comparable to advice portrayed in the enlightened period, experts were still expressing the importance of reasoning for the child's understanding of the punishment. The Age of Enlightenment sparked change for contemporary disciplinary practices by bringing more attention to the needs and autonomy of the child. The natural progression of interest in childhood lead to the child study movement which promoted an overall gentler approach to discipline and began to see the importance of the child's autonomy for future self-discipline. As the influence of enlightened male authors reduced, a space was created for female childcare experts and non-experts to voice their well-informed opinions on how children should be raised. Today, an equal status exists between mothers and fathers as disciplinarians and the approach, set in motion during the Age of Enlightenment, is far from the harsh punitive methods of the seventeenth century.

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