

**PARENTHOOD AND CIVILISATION:
AN ANALYSIS OF PARENTING DISCOURSES
PRODUCED IN AUSTRALIA
IN THE INTER-WAR YEARS.**

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I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research and contains as its main content work which has not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary education institution.

Research associated with this thesis has been used to produce conference papers and journal articles. Material from this thesis appears in the following publications:

- Kitchens R. (2007) 'The Informalization of the parent-child relationship: an investigation of parenting discourses produced in Australia in the inter-war years', *Journal of Family History*, 32(4), 459-478.
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Abstract

This thesis investigates parent education literature produced in Australia in the inter-war years. This period saw the emergence of various organisations concerned to safeguard and protect the health and well-being of children. For example, infant health clinics were established in most states, kindergarten associations were active in promoting early childhood education, and the mental hygiene movement gained a foothold in Australia. These associations engaged in parent education activities and produced a growing volume of literature. This literature contained instructions relating to various aspects of child care. Initially, advice was directed towards the management of health, but increasingly, information was provided on guiding child behaviour. Although the care of children was the main focus of this literature, it had wider implications. Authors provided comment on the emotional structure of family life and the patterning of parent-child relationships. Importantly, this literature contained advice for parents in relation to the management of their own personal care and conduct. This thesis contends that these discourses can be explained in relation to long-term changes in the history of childhood and the family, which are connected to particular developments in the structuring of social life that Norbert Elias describes as the 'civilizing process'. In particular, it is argued

that the growing distance between children and adults, and the positioning of the family as the primary site for regulating, or 'civilizing' the behaviour of children, can help to explicate the increasing emphasis placed on parent education in the inter-war years. This thesis also demonstrates how an Eliasian analysis, which emphasises long-term unintended processes of change, provides an alternative to Marxist, feminist, and Foucaultian approaches that focus on social control.

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1. Introduction

Modern family life is often criticised by those who hold as their ideal the somewhat rigid discipline and complete agreement to parents' wishes that characterised the family life of earlier days. But it is generally recognised that family life to-day, with its greater freedom and its greater comradeship is finer than it has ever been before.

(Gutteridge 1937: 24).

The above quotation appeared in *The Child Growing Up*, a booklet based on a series of lectures given to parents by Miss M. V. Gutteridge, principal of the Kindergarten Training College of Victoria. In her advice to parents, Gutteridge shared her views on modern family life and described what she considered to be the most appropriate type of parent-child relationship.

Gutteridge was not alone in offering advice to parents. The inter-war years saw the production of a vast amount of parent education literature. This literature was produced by professionals associated with various non-government organisations concerned to promote child health and well-being. For example, infant health associations were established in most Australian states facilitating the

development of child health clinics. These clinics emphasised the importance of parental education providing child rearing advice through consultations and the production of literature. In addition, the Australian Council for Educational Research was established, and the Free Kindergarten Union was active in promoting the benefits of pre-school education. The mental hygiene movement gained a foothold in Australia with the establishment of mental hygiene councils in Victoria and New South Wales. These organisations engaged in parent education activities and produced a growing volume of literature for parents.

This literature contained instructions relating to various aspects of child care. At first, advice was directed towards the management of health, but increasingly, information was provided on guiding child behaviour. Although the main focus was on children, this literature had wider implications. As highlighted by Gutteridge, authors provided comment on the emotional structure of family life and the patterning of parent-child relationships. Importantly, this literature also contained advice for parents in relation to the management of their own personal care and conduct.

This thesis will examine this advice. This will involve an investigation into the various organisations that engaged in parent education activities in the inter-war years, as well as the literature that they

produced. In particular, this thesis will focus on the implications of this advice for parents, specifically in relation to how parents were expected to regulate their behaviour and their relations with children.

It will be argued that these efforts to educate parents can be explained in relation to long-term changes in the history of childhood and the family, which are connected to particular developments in the structuring of social life that Norbert Elias refers to as the 'civilizing process'.

In *The Civilizing Process* (2000) Elias describes the way in which changes in the 'figurational' structure of Western societies led to changes in 'habitus' or the personality structure of human beings. He uses the term 'figuration' (or 'configuration') to refer to the social formations that interdependent individuals create for themselves as they interact with each other. In this regard, Elias describes the development of the industrialised nation state, where social functions became increasingly differentiated and gave rise to the development of lengthening chains of interdependencies.

Elias argues that in societies with such a structure, where individuals are bound together through their interdependencies, they become increasingly reliant upon each other in order to fulfil basic needs. In this way, individuals must learn to exercise a high degree of self-

restraint or emotional control in their relations with others. Elias refers to this particular pattern of affect regulation as a 'civilized' mode of conduct, and argues this emerged over the course of many generations in association with long-term figurational change.

An important consequence of this civilising process, particularly as it relates to this thesis, is the historical transformation of childhood and the changing role and function of the family. Elias argues that Western societies are characterised by a growing psychological and behavioural distance between adults and children. He writes:

The standard which is emerging in our phase of the civilizing process [twentieth century] is characterised by a profound distance between the behaviour of so-called "adults" and children'.

(Elias 2000: 119).

Elias maintains that this occurred as an unintended consequence of long-term figurational change. As chains of interdependence become longer and more complex and as individuals are required to exercise ever stricter patterns of affect regulation, more training is needed for children to develop the emotional competencies that they require to operate in an adult world. In this way, the individual social

civilising process, or the preparatory period between childhood and adulthood, becomes longer and more complex.

Elias is not alone in observing this growing distance. Others, such as Philippe Ariès (1962) and Lloyd de Mause (1974) make a similar point, although Ariès describes this phenomenon as the 'discovery' of childhood, while de Mause refers to it as the 'evolution' of childhood. Elias maintains that the so called 'discovery' of childhood is really the development of an awareness of the differences between adults and children. It 'is ultimately the discovery', he writes, 'that children are not little adults, but only gradually become adult in the course of an individual social civilising process' (Elias 1998: 190).

Elias argues that this growing distance between children and adults has important implications in terms of the role and function of the family. As childhood lengthens and children have more and more to learn to become an adult, particularly in relation to the regulation of emotions, the family has taken on an increasingly important role in preparing children for adulthood. It is in this way, argues Elias, that the modern family has become more focused with regard to its socialising functions, particularly in relation to the civilising of children, or providing children with guidance in the regulation or management of emotions.

It is in this regard that the twentieth century has witnessed an intensification of efforts to educate parents. As the distance between children and adults has increased, and as the individual social civilising process has become longer and more complex, education materials have entered the family in order to guide parents through the increasingly difficult task of child rearing, particularly in relation to guiding the behaviour or the emotional development of children.

This thesis will show how the increasing emphasis placed on parent education in Australia during the inter-war years, particularly as this relates to the way in which parents were provided with advice about the management of their own care and conduct, reflects these long-term changes in the history of childhood and the family. This is highlighted by the fact that parenting literature produced during this time was increasingly directed at managing child behaviour, specifically with regards to the regulation or civilising of emotions. In addition, much of this literature contained advice for parents where they were encouraged to observe similar patterns of affect regulation. Parents were instructed to regulate or control strong emotions in their relations with children. This was seen as being important because of the impact upon child behaviour, where it was thought that the civilised parent would impose a similar standard of behaviour on children. As such, it will be argued that the intensification of efforts to educate parents, can be understood as an unintended consequence

of the growing distance between children and adults, and the positioning of the family as a site for the civilising of children.

An important point to note about the civilising process, and its consequences in terms of the role and function of the family, is the unplanned or unintended nature of its development. This relates to the character of the figuration. Elias defines figurations as structured patterns of social interweaving, highlighting the way in which figurations are made up of individuals. This is not to say, however, that figurational structures are fashioned by individuals with deliberate intent. Rather, they emerge from the unintended consequences of intended action. Individuals, through their interactions with others, engage in acts of deliberate intent, but the formations that develop cannot be said to have not been planned or intended by any single individual (Mennell 1977: 101). As such, figurational change, particularly as this relates to the structuring of family life, is not something that has been brought about purposefully, but rather, has taken a blind or unintended course of development.

It is in this way that this investigation provides an alternative to the many accounts that explicate parent education and parenting discourses in terms of social control. Several studies of this nature have been undertaken. For example, Arnup (1990, 1994), Deacon

(1985), Reiger (1985), and Donzelot (1980). These investigations, to be examined in detail in chapter three, draw from Marxist, feminist and Foucaultian theoretical perspectives, and explain parent education strategies in terms of the way in which certain individuals or groups worked to transform the family in accordance with various ideological or governmental objectives. Arnup, for instance, examines the way in which Canadian public health officials evoked an 'ideology of motherhood' in order to subjugate women to the home and ensure their compliance with scientific programs of child care. Similarly, Deacon and Reiger examine the role played by Australian middleclass professionals in shaping family life and transforming child rearing practices. While Donzelot rejects notions of the ideological state or the ruling class, he nevertheless focuses on the way in which the 'psy' disciplines entered the family, subjecting individuals to the normalising strategies of experts. An Eliasian framework shows the way in which efforts to educate parents in the twentieth century can be explained in relation to long-term changes in the history of childhood and the family, that emerged as an unintended consequence of the civilising process.

These long-term changes will be investigated more fully in chapter two, where accounts of the history of childhood and the Western family will be examined. In particular, this chapter will highlight some of the main developments identified by historians, including the

separation of childhood from adult life, the rise of the nuclear family, the strengthening of emotional bonds, the rebalancing of power relations, and the increasing emphasis placed on the care and education of children.

Chapter three will examine *The Civilizing Process*, particularly as this relates to the long-term changes in the history of childhood and the family, as discussed in chapter two. This chapter will explain how an Eliasian approach can be used as a framework to investigate parent education in the inter-war years, and how this offers an alternative to the social control approaches.

Chapter four will focus on specific developments in Australia, showing the way in which the inter-war years saw an intensification of efforts to educate parents. This will be achieved through an examination of the various organisations that engaged in parent education activities and produced literature for parents. An examination of the history of these organisations will demonstrate that their efforts to educate parents were not part of some all-encompassing program of social control, but can be more usefully understood as an unintended consequence of long-term figurational change.

Chapter five will look more closely at the content of the literature produced by the organisations involved in parent education activities. In particular, this chapter will investigate advice given to parents about the management of children. This will reveal that an increasing amount of information was provided on guiding child behaviour, and in particular, on helping children to regulate or to civilise their emotions.

The next two chapters will investigate what this meant for parents in terms of how they were expected to manage their own care and behaviour. Chapter six will focus on advice directed at mothers in relation to prenatal and neonatal care. It will be demonstrated that an emphasis was placed on the way in which mothers were to regulate or control strong emotions, and that this was thought to be connected to the health and behaviour of children. This shows the way in which the civilised mode of conduct was applied to mothers, and how this was linked to the civilising of children.

As such, this chapter will address the question of gender and the civilising process. Elias is largely silent on this issue. In his examination of the emergence of the civilised mode of conduct (as reflected in early modern etiquette texts), Elias provides little comment on the issue of gender and whether or not standards of *civilité* were applied to women. An examination of inter-war child

rearing literature reveals how women were exposed to the civilising imperatives of modern life, and how this was part of the process of the civilising of children. In taking this approach, however, in demonstrating the way in which the education of mothers is linked to the civilising process, this chapter will challenge feminist interpretations that explicate child rearing discourses in terms of ideological control.

Chapter seven will look at the parent-child relationship, particularly in relation to advice about discipline, where it will be demonstrated that an even stronger emphasis was placed on the way in which parents were expected to exercise self-control and to regulate emotional behaviour. This will be examined in relation to Elias's notion of 'informalization', which refers to the loosening of the hierarchical structure of parent-child relationships, and the way in which children were granted a greater degree of freedom and autonomy. It will be argued that this trend towards informalisation reflects the way in which a greater capacity for self-restraint was exacted on the part of both children and parents.

In considering the data in this way, this chapter will offer an alternative to Marxist and Foucaultian accounts that interpret the liberalisation or democratisation of parent-child relationships in terms of social control. Philipson (1981), for instance, argues that this trend

reflects the way in which the family was shaped to serve the interests of capitalism, while Donzelot (1980) and Tyler (1993) view this as an example of liberal techniques of governance. By using an Eliasian framework, it will be demonstrated that this trend towards informalisation can be more usefully understood as part of a long-term social process that is blind and unintended.

Presenting an argument against the social control approaches, however, does not mean to say that the informalisation of the parent-child relationship represents an emancipatory development. This is a view put forward by Dickinson (1993), who, drawing from Habermas's notion of the rationalisation of the lifeworld, argues that the liberalisation of the family is a positive step towards more equitable and democratic social relationships. It is the contention of this chapter that as part of the civilising process the informalisation of the parent-child relationship has not so much resulted in greater freedoms for individuals, but instead binds individuals to ever more exacting patterns of self-control. This highlights the extent to which the emotional structuring of the family reflects the civilising imperatives of modern life.

2. Histories of childhood and the family

This chapter will investigate long-term changes in the patterning of family life and the transformation of childhood by drawing on several investigations that examine the history of the Western family. While much research has been undertaken on this subject¹, this chapter will focus on what Michael Anderson calls the 'sentiments approach' (Anderson 1995)². Key works within this tradition include Philip Ariès's *Centuries of Childhood* (1962), Jean-Louis Flandrin's *Families in Former Times* (1979), Edward Shorter's *The Making of the Modern Family* (1976) and Lawrence Stone's *Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (1979). Anderson uses the term the 'sentiments approach', because these works focus not so much on changes in family structure, but on changes in ideas about the family, the emotional structure of family life, and the patterning of relationships within the family. Stone, for instance, maintains that the object of his investigation is to 'chart and document, to analyse and explain ... changes in the ways members of the family related to each other ... and how individuals thought about, treated and used each other...' (Stone 1979: 21-22). As such, these works show the way in which the patterning of familial relationships have changed over time, and

¹ See Therborn (2004) for an overview of family history literature.

² For an alternative to the sentiments approach see MacFarlane (1986).

how these changes are related to broader social and cultural changes.

The first section of this chapter will investigate the growing distance between children and adults, or what Ariès calls the 'discovery' of childhood. The second section will examine the changing role and function of the family, looking at the way in which the family became an increasingly isolated unit that came to focus more and more on the care and education of children. The third section will investigate the causal explanations put forth to account for these changes.

The growing distance between children and adults

In his work, *Centuries of Childhood*, Ariès makes the now well-known assertion that childhood was not 'discovered' until the end of the middle-ages. He wrote:

In medieval society the idea of childhood did not exist; this is not to suggest that children were neglected, forsaken or despised. The idea of childhood is not to be confused with affection for children: it corresponds to an awareness of the particular nature of childhood, that particular nature which

distinguishes the child from the adult, even the young adult.

In medieval society this awareness was lacking.

(Ariès 1962: 128).

He maintains that the idea of childhood began to emerge in the thirteenth century, but it was not until the end of the sixteenth century that it approached its modern form:

No doubt the discovery of childhood began in the thirteenth century ... But the evidence of its development became more plentiful and significant from the end of the sixteenth century and throughout the seventeenth.

(Ariès 1962: 47).

Ariès found evidence for this discovery in relation to changes in the way in which children were depicted in art, the development of specific forms of dress for children, the development of children's games and pastimes, and the way in which children were shielded from adult sexual knowledge.

In relation to art, Ariès argues that 'until about the twelfth century', medieval art 'did not know childhood or did not attempt to portray it' (Ariès 1962: 33). Where children appeared they were depicted as small scale adults without 'any other difference in expression or

features' (Ariès 1962: 33). He makes reference to several works of the eleventh and twelfth centuries where children were portrayed with adult characteristics. For example, in a 'Psalter dating from the late twelfth or early thirteenth century, Ishmael, shortly after birth, has the abdominal and pectoral muscles of a man' (Ariès 1962: 33). This shows, argues Ariès, that children were not considered important enough to be portrayed in art, and that there was no awareness of childhood or of the differences between adults and children.

Ariès also comments on the lay iconography of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries where, for the first time, children were depicted in everyday scenes with adults. This was significant, argues Ariès, not only because children appeared in these works, but because it shows that 'children mingled with adults in everyday life, and any gathering for the purpose of work, relaxation or sport brought together both children and adults' (Ariès 1962: 37). This, maintains Ariès, 'foreshadows the modern idea of childhood' as children were considered to be a worthy subject of art, but it also reflects the pre-modern idea of childhood, where children were not separated from the world of adults (Ariès 1962: 38).

Ariès also points to the way in which children came to be separated from adults in relation to dress. In medieval society, he writes, 'nothing in ... dress distinguished the child from the adult' (Ariès

1962: 50). Children were dressed like adults as soon their swaddling clothes were discarded. He argues that this changed in the seventeenth century where 'the child, or at least the child of quality, whether noble or middle-class, ceased to be dressed like the grown-up' (Ariès 1962: 50). He points out that during this time an ornamental ribbon was introduced to children's dress, which served as a 'sartorial indication of childhood' (Ariès 1962: 54). In pictures of the seventeenth century, he writes, children were depicted wearing 'two broad ribbons fastened to the robe behind each shoulder and hanging down the back' (Ariès 1962: 54). Ariès maintains that this custom of wearing ribbons lasted until the 'middle of the eighteenth century' (Ariès 1962: 55), after which time more specific forms of children's dress developed. Ariès argues that 'these customs distinguishing between children's clothing and adult clothing revealed a new desire to put children on one side, to separate them by a sort of uniform' (Ariès 1962: 55).

Ariès also points to the way in which these developments in children's dress were related to class and gender. He explains that boys were 'the first specialised children' with regard to dress and that girls were 'dressed like little women as soon as they came out of their swaddling-clothes' (Ariès 1962: 53). He also maintains that this difference, at first, applied to the upper and middle classes. The children of lower classes, 'were never depicted in robes or false

sleeves. They kept up the old way of life which made no distinction between children and adults, in dress or in work or in play' (Ariès 1962: 61).

Ariès also comments on the development of children's games and pastimes. He maintains that in the early modern period children's games became more specialised, and that prior to this time adults and children played the same games. He writes: 'in the early seventeenth century there was not such a strict division as there is today between children's games and those played by adults. Young and old played the same games' (Ariès 1962: 67). He maintains, for instance, that puppets and dolls which today are considered to be children's toys were once objects that were utilised by adults. He gives the example of the way in which, from the sixteenth century until the beginning of the nineteenth century, dolls were used by upper class women as fashion models (Ariès 1962: 70).

Another way in which children were separated from adults was in relation to sexual knowledge. This refers mainly to the emergence of the concept of childhood innocence. Ariès cites many examples that demonstrate changing attitudes towards children and sex. For example, he refers to the diary of Henri IV's physician, Heroard, who recorded the early years of the life of Louis XIII. Ariès maintains that 'No other document can give us a better idea of the non-existence of

the modern idea of childhood' (Ariès 1962: 100). This is because of the many references that indicate that children were not shielded from sexual concepts or knowledge. Ariès argues that the modern reader of this text 'is astonished by the liberties which people took with children, by the coarseness of jokes they made, and by the indecency of gestures made in public which shocked nobody and which were regarded as perfectly natural' (Ariès 1962: 100). In addition, he highlights how educators of the late sixteenth century became concerned about the content of children's books and took steps to ensure the removal of inappropriate material. Certain pedagogues 'whose ideas were to carry the weight and who would succeed in imposing their concepts and scruples on others, refused to allow children to be given indecent books any longer' (Ariès 1962: 109).

As such, Ariès describes the way in which, over a period of time, childhood became separated from adulthood in relation to various aspects of social life. Children were excluded from participating with adults in work, sport and leisure activities, and were removed from the adult world of sexual knowledge. This was reflected, he argues, in the way in which children were represented in art and distinguished from adults in relation to dress.

There have, of course, been many criticisms of Ariès's thesis, for example Pollock (1983), Wilson (1980), Burton (1989), and Jordanova (1990). These relate mainly to the evidential basis of his claim, as well as to what has been described as his 'value-laden' approach (Archard 1993: 18). In relation to the first, Pollock 'criticises the sources used, the researchers' misreading of their source materials, and the generalisations drawn' (Abernethie 1998: 85). Archard points to problems in using art to demonstrate changing ideas about childhood. He maintains that Ariès 'iconographic argument presumes that art is straightforwardly realistic in its representation of social facts. It ignores the extent to which the changes in paintings are due to general developments in art rather than simply altered attitudes to the subjects of the pictures' (Archard 1993: 18). He also points to problems in using Herodotus's diary, as this document does not necessarily reflect general attitudes or assumptions. This diary, Archard points out, 'is a single document telling the story of an exceptional child ... [and] there is no reason to think that the upbringing of Louis XIII representative' (Archard 1993: 18).

In relation to the second criticism, Archard maintains that Ariès is guilty of 'presentism', or a 'predisposition to interpret the past in light of present-day attitudes, assumptions and concerns' (Archard 1993: 18). This presentism is expressed in the key claim that medieval

society lacked an awareness or concept of childhood (Archard 1993: 23). What previous societies lacked, argues Archard, was 'not a concept of childhood, but our modern conception of childhood. Here, Archard distinguishes between the notion of a 'concept' of childhood and that of a 'conception' of childhood. To have a '*concept*' of childhood, writes Archard, 'requires that children be distinguishable from adults in respect of some unspecified set of attributes', while [a] *conception* of childhood is a specification of those attributes' (original emphasis, Archard 1993: 22). Archard maintains that 'there are good reasons for thinking that all societies at all times have had the concept of childhood ... [but] there have been different conceptions of childhood'. As such, Archard disagrees with Ariès' assertion that the past lacked a concept of childhood, but believes that he may have been right to suggest that there is a 'distinctively modern conception of the "particular nature of the child"' (Archard 1993: 29). In this way, he agrees with Ariès in that the 'most important feature of the way in which the modern age conceives of children is as meriting separation from the world of adults' (Archard 1993: 29). He writes:

The particular nature of children is separate; it clearly and distinctly sets them apart from adults. Children neither work nor play alongside adults; they do not participate in the adults world of law and politics. Their world is innocent where the adult one is knowing; and so on. We now insist upon a sharp

distinction between the behaviour demanded of children and that expected of adults; what is thought appropriate treatment of children is distinct from that of adults. There is a marked division of roles and responsibilities.

(Archard 1993: 29).

In this way, despite the many criticisms of Ariès's work, his most important contribution has been to highlight the way in which ideas about childhood have changed over time. This has helped to dislodge a-historical or universal notions of childhood³.

The changing role and function of the family

In describing changing ideas about childhood Ariès also provides comment on changes in the organisation and structure of family life. This task has also been undertaken by the historians of the sentiments approach. Several common themes emerge from these accounts, which include: the separation of the conjugal unit, the strengthening of emotional bonds, the loosening of the hierarchical structure, and the increasing emphasis placed on the care and education of children.

³ The universal notion of childhood refers to the way in which the idea of childhood is fixed or unchangeable, or has the same meaning irrespective of historical or cultural context. See for example, James and Prout (1997).

The separation of the conjugal unit

This term refers to the rise of the nuclear family, or the way in which the family, defined as a small conjugal unit, became increasingly isolated from the outside world. In this regard, when discussing the nuclear family, the historians of the sentiments approach do not so much refer to the demographic structure of the family, but to the idea of the family as being a separate and private space⁴. Shorter, for instance, maintains that:

The nuclear family is a state of mind rather than a particular kind of structure or set of household arrangements What really distinguishes the nuclear family – mother, father, and children – from other patterns of family life in Western society is a special sense of solidarity that separates the domestic unit from the surrounding community.

(Shorter 1979: 205).

And Stone maintains that:

⁴ The exception is Flandrin (1979) who also commented on family structure incorporating a demographic analysis. He maintained that there has been significant changes in relation to family structure, whereby during the eighteenth century large complex households came to be replaced by small conjugal units. In this regard, he argued against Peter Laslett and the Cambridge group who maintained that, in England, at least, 'large and complex households had never been common', and that 'a nuclear familial form may have been one of the enduring and fundamental characteristics of the Western family system' (Anderson 1995: 10-11).

Between about 1500 and 1700 the English family structure at the upper levels began a slow process of evolution ... the importance of the nuclear core increased, not as a unit of habitation but as a state of mind:

(Stone 1979: 93).

As such, these authors describe how the family became isolated from the wider community.

Flandrin, for instance, discusses the way in which the family withdrew from the outside world. He describes how, before the 18th century, individuals participated in social evenings. In the case of upper-class rural families, this consisted of sharing the evening meal with household members (including servants). He argues that 'from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century social evenings in the winter were, together with the evening meal and family prayers, one of the principal rituals of family life in the rural area' (Flandrin 1979: 106). Ariès makes a similar point in regard to the social activities of the large households. He maintains that the pre-eighteenth century family was characterised 'by the enormous mass of sociability which it retained. Where the family existed, that is to say in the big houses, it was a centre of social relations, the capital of a little complex and graduated society under the command of the pater-families' (Ariès 1962: 403-404).

Flandrin also discusses this in relation to the activities of peasant families. He maintains that social evenings for peasants involved gatherings of people from different families, meeting either within a particular family home, or in purpose built communal establishments such as *écreignes*. These gatherings, he argues:

... had a characteristic which is disappearing today: that of assembling in the same place men and women, young and old. They offered unmarried young people an opportunity of associating together, under the watchful eye of their parents. However, precisely because they were meeting-places for young men and girls who could marry one another, these gatherings must normally have consisted of individuals living in different houses and often even in different villages.

(Flandrin 1979: 107).

Flandrin maintains that under the influence of the church this tradition began to change. He argues that religious reformers, both Catholic and Protestant, waged a struggle against social evenings spent outside the home, encouraging individuals to spend more time within the private confines of the family. He writes:

Because it detected the odour of paganism and the grave risks of lapses from chastity in the old popular festivals and societies of young people, the Church seems to have preferred to abolish them, and to place the children more continuously than before under the watchful eye of their parents.

(Flandrin 1979: 110-111).

Flandrin also discusses the way in which more emphasis was placed on privacy within the family home. He points out that houses of the seventeenth century were designed with little regard for privacy:

... there were still large rooms, with no precisely defined functions, opening onto each other; people slept, ate and lived in them amid the coming and going of servants, children and visitors ...

(Flandrin 1979: 93).

This, however, changed in the eighteenth century when:

... corridors were introduced and had the effect of giving autonomy to the rooms, which became specialized, more numerous and individual.

(Flandrin 1979: 93)

He also maintains that servants were removed from the private space of the family:

... servants were driven back to the kitchen, the servant's hall and antechambers, and attempts were made to prevent the children from being too familiar with them. Within the confines of the great households, the modern 'family' began to achieve its independence.

(Flandrin 1979: 93).

Shorter makes a similar point, maintaining that the family of pre-modern times was open to the comings and goings of various intrusions. He writes:

... the family's shell was pierced full of holes, permitting people from outside to flow freely through the household, observing and monitoring. The traffic flowed the other way, too, as members of the family felt that they had more in common emotionally with their various peer groups than with one another.

(Shorter 1976: 5).

Another important point to note, is that, as the family withdrew from the outside world, children increasingly became the centre of attention. As Flandrin notes, children were subjected, more continuously than before, to the watchful eye of their parents (Flandrin 1979: 111). And Ariès maintains that as the modern family 'cuts itself off from the world and opposes to society the isolated group of parents and children ... All the energy of the group is expended on helping the children to rise in the world ...' (Ariès 1962: 404).

The strengthening of emotional bonds

These writers also emphasise the way in which, as the family became increasingly isolated from the outside world, emotional bonds within the family strengthened. Shorter, for instance, maintains that 'ties to the outside world were weakened, and ties binding members of the family to one another reinforced' (Shorter 1976: 5). And Stone writes:

... as its boundAriès became more clearly defined, so the influence of the kin and clientage correspondingly declined. Secondly, the importance of the affective bonds to tie the conjugal unit together began to increase.

(Stone 1979: 93).

The strengthening of emotional bonds applied to the husband-wife relationship, as well as the parent-child relationship. In relation to the former, Stone argues that during the eighteenth century there was a change in marriage arrangements, whereby marriage came to be based on love and companionship, rather than on economic or political factors. He argues that after 1780 a new emphasis was placed on romantic love, and that 'for the first time in history romantic love became a respectable motive for marriage among the propertied classes ...' (Stone 1979: 190). This was not to say, Stone points out, that the concept of romantic love was new, rather there was a different attitude towards it as the basis for marriage. He describes this particular type of conjugal relationship as the 'companionate marriage', where 'emotional satisfaction' is placed 'before the ambition for increased income or status' (Stone 1979: 217). Shorter makes a similar argument. He describes how romantic love and personal happiness became the dominant reasons for marriage, replacing property and lineage as the criteria for choosing a marriage partner (Shorter 1976: 5).

These authors note similar changes in regard to the parent-child relationship. Ariès, for example, discusses the emergence of a concept or attitude which he describes as 'coddling', or the way 'in which the child, on account of his sweetness, simplicity and drollery,

became a source of amusement and relaxation for the adult' (Ariès 1962: 129). He cites numerous sources which demonstrate this feeling. For example, B. de Glanville in 1556 described a nanny who 'rejoices when the child is happy, and feels sorry for the child when he is ill; she picks him up when he falls, she binds him when he tosses about, and she washes and cleans him when he is dirty' (cited by Ariès 1962: 129). He also quotes the letters of Mme de Sévigné (1671/72), who wrote of her time spent with her granddaughter: 'I am reading the story of Christopher Columbus's discovery of the Indies, which is entertaining me greatly; but your daughter entertains me even more. I do so love her ... she strokes your portrait and caresses it in such an amusing way that I have to kiss her straight away' (cited by Ariès 1962: 130). She then went on to say, writes Ariès, 'with a levity which surprises us, for the death of a child is something serious for us and nothing to joke about: "I do not want her to die"' (cited by Ariès 1962: 130).

Ariès compares this to an attitude of indifference that characterised parent-child relationships in medieval society. He cites Molère, in his play *Le malade imaginaire*, who 'bears witness to the survival in the seventeenth century of a very old attitude of mind' (Ariès 1962: 128). One of the characters has two daughters: one of marriageable age whom he is threatening to put into a convent, and the other a small child. His brother asks: 'How is it, Brother, that rich as you are

and having only one daughter, *for I don't count the little one*, you can talk of putting her in a convent?' (original italics, Molèire cited by Ariès 1962: 128). Ariès comments that 'the little one did not count because she could disappear' (Ariès 1962: 128), and draws attention to the way in which this contrasts to the attitude of Mme de Sèvigné who expressed sadness at the thought of a child dying.

Flandrin also reports on this new attitude or sentiment. In an examination of manuals for confessors he shows that an increasing emphasis was placed on love in relation to familial relationships. He writes:

... of nine manuals for confessors written in the period between 1388 and 1713, four explicitly mention love, and sometimes also friendship and affection; and, of eighteen catechisms published between 1563 and 1815, fifteen use the noun or verb 'love and one prescribes friendship, finding too violent the concept of love, which it nevertheless mentions once, though pejoratively.

(Flandrin 1979: 158).

He also notes the way in which notions of love, as presented in these manuals, changed. In the seventeenth century, he suggests:

... love was confined to the absence of hatred and the fulfilment of one's duties towards one's parents. However, the five catechisms published between 1765 and 1815 explain the nature of filial love in terms that we might use today. Children must 'love their father and mother', 'having for them a heartfelt affection, giving them proof of it on the appropriate occasions, declared the Catéchisme de Mâcon in 1765 ...

(Flandrin 1979: 159).

Flandrin, however, cautions against over-emphasising the sudden emergence of parental love in the eighteenth century. He writes:

Rather than teaching parents and children to love one another, the moralists of the end of the eighteenth century perhaps only left them free to do so, whereas those of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries sought ways to restrain that affection, which was suspect because it was natural and profane.

(Flandrin 1979: 160).

Shorter comments on this new emphasis placed on sentiment in relation to the mother-child relationship. Shorter maintains that modern mother-child relations are characterised by a greater concern

for the welfare of children and a surge in sentiment or maternal affection. In traditional society, he argues, 'mothers viewed the development and happiness of infants younger than two with indifference. In modern society, they place the welfare of their small children above all else (Shorter 1976: 168). In providing evidence for this, he refers to incidents of marital separations in the diocese of Cambria during the eighteenth century where 'there were almost no squabbles over the custody of children: women were quite happy to surrender them to the husband' (Shorter 1976: 173). He also argues that this emphasis on love for infants provided a new grounding for the security of the family, as it was a factor that held the family together long after romantic love ceased to provide a bond for husband and wife. This emphasis, he maintains, 'gave the entire family a new emotional base and introduced a rationale, independent of romantic love (which after all, didn't survive the wedding ceremony all that long), for withdrawing from community life' (Shorter 1978: 168).

Re-balancing of power relations

These authors point to the way in which this strengthening of emotional bonds was accompanied by a rebalancing of power relations within the family, which applied to the husband-wife

relationship as well as the parent-child relationship. Stone, for instance, maintains that the greater emphasis placed on love and a mutually satisfying emotional relationship had an 'equalising' effect. He cites Daniel Defoe, who, in 1727 wrote: 'I don't take the state of matrimony to be designed ... that the wife is to be used as an upper servant in the house ... Love knows no superior or inferior, no imperious command on the one hand, no reluctant subjection on the other' (Defoe, cited by Stone 1979: 217). While Stone acknowledges that this re-balancing of the power relationship did not extend to economic factors (the economic dependence of women on their husbands increased), women 'were granted greater status and decision-making power within the family, and they became increasingly preoccupied with the nurturing and raising of children' (Stone 1979: 412).

Flandrin also discusses the loosening of the hierarchical structure of the marriage relationship. He argues that during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the power of the husband was absolute. This began to change in the eighteenth century, when:

... in the daily life of the household, the wife became gradually and partially emancipated from the tutelage of her husband. Her subordination to her husband, which was most explicitly emphasized at the end of the sixteenth

century and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries ... is no longer stressed at the beginning of the eighteenth century ...

(Flandrin 1979:126).

These authors note a similar re-balancing of the power dynamics in the parent-child relationship. Flandrin, for instance, maintains that in 'accordance with the mentality of former times the father had full powers over his children, as did the master over his slaves ...' (Flandrin 1979: 136). This is evident in the area of choosing marriage partners, where, up until the eighteenth century parents controlled the choice of marriage partners. This began to change however, with the influence of the church, where Christian doctrine stressed the importance of free-will in entering into the marriage bond. As such, maintains Flandrin, 'from the seventeenth century onwards, the rights of the child in this sphere began to develop, in the shadow of the rights of God (Flandrin 1979: 135).

Stone also comments on this issue. He argues that between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there was a shift in customary practices whereby children were given more freedom to choose marriage partners. Stone outlines four basic types of mating arrangements available in a society. The first 'is that the choice is made entirely by parents, kin, and family "friends", without the advice

or consent of the bride or groom'; the second is that the 'choice is made as before, but the children are granted a right of veto' (which may only be exercised once or twice); the third is that 'the choice will be made by the children themselves, on the understanding that it will be made from a family of more or less equal financial and status position, with the parents retaining the right of veto'; and the 'fourth is where children make their own choice and merely inform their parents' (Stone 1979: 181-182). Stone maintains that by '1660 the shift from the first to the second option in the distribution of power over decision-making had already taken place', and that 'between 1660 and 1800 there took place a far more radical shift from the second to the third option' (Stone 1979: 183).

Stone also argued that during this time parents adopted a more permissive approach to childrearing, where they granted children a greater degree of freedom and used less severe methods of discipline. He writes:

... in some high professional and landed circles in England by the late eighteenth century, there had developed an astonishingly permissive style of child rearing. As a result, some parents were obliged humbly to cajole their adolescent children instead of ordering them about, and adult social occasions were often marred by those twin scourges of civilised conversation, the presence of

undisciplined, noisy and talkative children demanding to be the centre of attention, and the habit of doting parents of “repeating *bon mots* of babies among people of wit and understanding”.

(Stone 1979: 277).

Stone points out that this contrasts to the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, which were characterised by harsh disciplinary methods and a psychological coolness. During the period from 1540 to 1680, he argues, ‘there is a great deal of evidence, especially from Puritans, of a fierce determination to break the will of the child, and to enforce his utter subjection to the authority of his elders and superiors, and most especially of his parents’ (Stone 1979: 116).

The increasing emphasis on the care and education of children

In line with these developments these authors also comment on the way in which more attention was paid to the care and education of children. This applies to the treatment of children within the family, but also to the increasing emphasis placed on education outside the home.

Stone argues that this began in the late sixteenth century where a strong emphasis was placed on the training of children. He points out, however, that this was accompanied by the adoption of strict disciplinary methods to ensure subordination to parental authority. He suggests that this can be explained, paradoxically, in terms of the 'first result of a greater interest in children' (Stone 1979: 124). He writes:

In the seventeenth century the early training of children was directly equated with the bating of hawks or the breaking-in of young horses or hunting dogs. These were all animals which were highly valued and cherished in the society of that period, and it was only natural that exactly the same principle should be applied to the education of children, especially now that parents began to care more about them.

(Stone 1979: 16).

Flandrin also comments on this issue. He maintains that the granting of rights to children meant increased responsibilities for parents. This refers to the way in which parents were expected to attend to the well-being of children. In his examination of manuals for confessors, Flandrin points out that the later texts contain more information about the duties of parents:

... of the eleven manuals for confessors that we have examined, the four written between the middle of the fourteenth century and the middle of the sixteenth contain no reference to the duties of parents or of superiors, whereas the seven published between 1574 and 1748 all discuss, at varying degrees of length, these duties.

(Flandrin 1979: 137).

He also argues that the duties became more numerous, and extended beyond material or physical care:

In the sixteenth century and at the beginning of the seventeenth century, moralists insisted only on the obligations of material assistance and of religious and moral education. In the second half of the seventeenth century and in the eighteenth century, Catholic writers – more than a century after the English Puritans – emphasized the duties of giving professional education and of settling one's children: "Have you taken care to make them learn the occupation suitable for them according to your station?" ...

(Flandrin 1979: 138).

Similarly, Ariès argues that parents paid more attention to the care of children. He examines letters written by General de Martange to his

wife in the mid eighteenth century in which he expresses concern for the health of his children. de Martange writes:

I should be so unhappy if I had no news about your health and that of my little girls. Although what you tell me about the poor health which you and my poor little girls are enjoying is not as comforting as a father's heart might wish ... I am not very happy about what you tell me about our little boy's pain and loss of appetite. I cannot recommend you too earnestly, dear child, to procure some Narbonne honey for both him and Xaviere, and to rub their gums with it when they are in pain.

(Martange, cited by Ariès 1962: 401).

Ariès maintains that previously, 'people had worried about serious illness, but they had not shown this constant solicitude, they had not bothered about a cold, a minor ailment' (Ariès 1962: 401). He also suggests that anxiety over teething troubles may have 'interested a few old women in Mme de Sévigné's time [a century earlier], but had not hitherto been given the honours of a place in a staff officer's correspondence' (Ariès 1962: 401).

Ariès also argues that the education of children became a major concern for parents. This relates mainly to the emergence of the

notion of childhood innocence. Ariès maintains that this had two important consequences in terms of attitude and behaviour towards children. Firstly, childhood was associated with moral weakness which meant that it had to be safeguarded 'against pollution by life, and particularly by the sexuality tolerated if not approved of among adults; and secondly, strengthening it by developing character and reason' (Ariès 1962: 119). This last point relates mainly to education, and the way in which this came to be 'placed ... in the front rank of man's obligations' (Ariès 1962: 114). Ariès argues that this new focus on education was made manifest in the family where parents gave more attention to their children's education. He cites another of Martange's letters in which he wrote: 'Above all I urge you not to waste a minute that can be given to the children's education; double or treble their lessons every day, especially to teach them how to stand, walk and eat' (Martange, cited by Ariès 1962: 402). Ariès also points out that this family engaged the services of a tutor. As Martange wrote: 'Let the three children profit by his tuition and let the two girls in particular learn how to stand and walk. If M. H. can give them grace, he can consider himself a clever master' (Martange, cited by Ariès 1962: 402). When Martange ran into financial difficulties, he dreaded the consequences because he feared he would not be able to provide the children with an adequate education: 'The sorrow of being unable to give them the education I

would have wished has given me some bitter moments of reflection’ (Martange, cited by Ariès 1962: 402).

Ariès also comments on education outside the home. He describes the development of colleges and boarding schools in France, showing how education became commonplace. Parents, he argues, ‘were no longer content with setting up only a few of their children, and not just the eldest – and in the late seventeenth century even the girls – a training for life. It was understood that this training would be provided by the school’ (Ariès 1962: 413). Ariès argues that one of the most important features of the modern college was the introduction of discipline. This ‘originated in ecclesiastical or religious discipline, and ‘was not so much an instrument of coercion as an instrument of moral and spiritual improvement’ (Ariès 1962: 333). This differs from the medieval Latin school, which was not predisposed to this function of moral and social education (Ariès 1962: 330). This reflects the way in which, Ariès suggests, there was a greater emphasis placed on ‘mould[ing] bodies and souls’ (Ariès 1962: 412), which took place in the family as well as in the school.

As can be seen, there are many similarities in these accounts of long-term changes in the history of childhood and the family. The works examined highlight the way in which childhood has become separated from adult life, and how the family has become

increasingly focused on the care and education of children. These authors differ, however, in the explanations put forth to account for these changes.

Causal explanations

Flandrin and Ariès emphasise the role played by the church in bringing about the changes they describe⁵. As we have seen, Flandrin maintains that it was the Catholic and Protestant reformers who campaigned against the *écreignes* or social evenings. He also comments on the way in which religious views about the rights of God influenced changes in attitudes about the duties and responsibilities of fathers.

Similarly, Ariès maintains that the emphasis placed on shaping the child's personality was influenced by Christianity. 'There can be no doubt', he contends, 'that the importance accorded to the child's personality was linked with the growing influence of Christianity on life and manners' (Ariès 1962: 43). In this regard, he argues against materialist explanations, which posit that changes in the material conditions of life account for changes in attitudes and feelings. For example, he refutes the view, that in times of high infant mortality

⁵ See also Goody (1983) for an examination of the role of the church in transforming family life.

parents 'could not allow themselves to become too attached to something that was regarded as a probable loss' (Ariès: 1962: 38). Ariès argues that this fails to adequately explain changes in feelings towards children because 'interest shown in the child preceded by more than a century the change in demographic conditions which can be roughly dated from Jenner's great discovery' (Ariès 1962: 43). He asserts that it was a change in mentality that led to changes in health practices:

Correspondences such as that of General de Martange show that certain families insisted at that time on having their children vaccinated; this precaution against the smallpox reveals a state of mind which must have favoured other hygienic practices at the same time, producing a reduction in the death-rate which was counterbalanced to some extent by an increasing widespread control of the birth-rate.

(Ariès 1962: 43).

Shorter makes a similar point. He writes:

Historians are inclined to account for the lack of parental love for children in traditional times on the basis of high infant mortality; you couldn't permit yourself to become too attached to an infant that you knew death might whisk away.

(Shorter 1976: 203).

And:

Data on early modern infant mortality suggest that this issue has another dimension. The high rate of infant loss is not a sufficient explanation for the traditional lack of maternal love *because precisely this lack of care was responsible for the high mortality* [original emphasis].

(Shorter 1976: 203).

On this point, Stone disagrees. He maintains that the declining infant mortality rate and the compulsion of the middle classes to restrict family size meant that parents could lavish more attention on the few children that they did have and cultivate stronger emotional bonds. In times of high infant mortality, in order to:

... preserve their mental stability, parents were obliged to limit the degree of their psychological involvement with their infant children. Even when children were genuinely wanted and not regarded as economically crippling nuisances, it was very rash for parents to get too emotionally concerned about creatures whose expectation of life was so very low

(Stone 1979: 57).

Stone also suggests that the economic circumstances of the upper-middle classes, can in part, explain changing views and attitudes towards the care and education of children. These classes were 'neither so very poor that economic circumstances ... compel[led] them to neglect, exploit or abandon their children; nor so very rich that their social and political life-style [was] too time-consuming to allow them to devote much time or trouble to child-rearing ...' (Stone 1979: 285).

Although Stone acknowledges material or economic determinants of change, he also emphasises cultural factors. He maintains, for instance, that the harsh disciplinary methods which characterised child rearing in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries in England can be explained in terms of the Reformation and the intellectual and political chaos it caused. He argues that this induced:

... moral theologians, who were the most articulate leaders of educated opinion, to agree that the only hope of preserving social order was to concentrate on the right disciplining and education of children. This accounts in large measure for the sudden access of interest in pedagogy in the second and third decades of the sixteenth century, and the swamping of the more gentle and affectionate ideas of the Humanists.

(Stone 1979: 125).

He also argues that the movement towards affective individualism (or more affective familial relationships) that occurred in the eighteenth century can be explained in terms of ideational change. For example, he maintains that the 'rejection of the Puritan concept of original sin and the substitution of Locke's theory of *tabula rasa* ... did a lot to stimulate a show of love and affection in the home, and to reduce physical brutality in schools (Stone 1979: 177-78). He also argues that the spread of two eighteenth century ideas helped to stimulate this change: a new confidence in the pursuit of happiness, best achieved by domestic affection; and the 'idea of the "Man of Sentiment" who was easily moved to outbursts of indignation by cruelty and tears of sympathy by benevolence' (Stone 1979: 180).

In pointing to a multitude of contingent factors to explain changes in family life, Stone is careful to point that this rise in affective individualism cannot be understood as a linear progression. He maintains that the nineteenth century saw a reversal of the liberalising trend that occurred in the eighteenth century, where 'the interests of the family, the patriarch, the school, the religion and the state all reasserted themselves for a while, before the final thrust of affective individualism in the twentieth century' (Stone 1979: 425). In this way he traces not a linear development but an 'erratic course of ... evolution' (Stone 1979: 425), where a period of strict patriarchal

oppression in the 16th century was followed by a period of liberal affective individualism in the 18th century, which was followed by a period of repression in the Victorian era, and a renewed move towards affective individualism in the 20th century. Interestingly, however, he does find linear progression in one aspect of the historical transformation of family life - attitudes towards children. He writes: 'the only steady linear change over the last four hundred years seems to have been a growing concern for children, although their actual treatment has oscillated cyclically between the permissive and the repressive' (Stone 1979: 425).

In contrast to Stone's eclectic approach to providing causal explanations, Shorter identifies 'market capitalism' as being the main causal factor. This refers not only to the way in which capitalism brought about changes to the economic or material conditions of life, but also to the 'ethos' of capitalism which spread from the workplace to the domestic sphere.

Shorter argues that the 'logic' or 'mentality' of the marketplace can explain the new emphasis placed on romantic love as the basis for marriage. The 'logic of capitalism', he maintains, 'positively demands individualism', where success is dependent upon each individual 'ruthlessly pursu[ing] his own self-interest, buying cheap, selling dear, and enhancing his own interests at the cost of his competitors'

(Shorter 1976: 259). Shorter argues that this mentality gradually spread from the marketplace to non-economic domains of life, where private gratification was placed before familial or community obligation. Economic individualism, he argues, gave way to 'cultural egotism', where 'private gratification be[came] more important than fitting into the common weal' (Shorter 1976: 260). In this way, he maintains, that for 'young people in late eighteenth-century Europe, the sexual and emotional wish to be free came from the capitalist marketplace' (Shorter 1976: 259).

Shorter also argues that capitalism provided the economic conditions that enabled young people to break away from familial obligation, and that this occurred first among the working classes. The free contract system of labour relations, he notes, gave the working classes, and women in particular, a degree of economic freedom which reduced dependency upon the family:

Not only did paid work give young women an inclination to escape the sexual restrictions of their parents and the town fathers, it also gave the possibility of doing so. Economically independent women have greater liberty than economically dependent ones, for paid work makes it possible to ignore parental admonitions and to shrug off the parsons' scolding.

(Shorter 1976: 260-261).

This contrasts with the middle and upper classes where young people were dependent upon their families for land and wealth and so remained subject to parental control. He writes:

... the capitalists themselves escaped being caught in the sexual revolution because for them family values overrode everything else. The lower classes who laboured in the laundries and sweatshops of the bourgeoisie, on the other hand, didn't have any property to preserve. They owned no great patrimonies to be transmitted, and so they were free to pursue individual rather than family objectives once the idea of doing so had occurred to them...

(Shorter 1976: 261).

This is not to say that the middle classes were not also influenced by the 'wish to be free' brought about by the ethos of capitalism, but that they were constrained by their economic dependence upon the family, and not as free as the working classes to pursue personal gratification.

Shorter also points to the economic effects of capitalism to account for changes in feelings and attitudes towards children. He argues however, that in relation to this particular aspect of family life, the

middle classes were the first to experience this change. In this, he refers to the way in which “capitalism” carried the material standard of living upward’ (Shorter 1976: 257). Shorter argues that the ‘traditional mother’ was not able to provide adequate infant care because economic circumstances demanded that she contribute to household production, thereby being unable to devote much time to the rearing of children. In this way mothers ‘failed the “sacrifice” test (refusing to sacrifice other objectives to infant welfare) because the stakes were too high to risk on the life of a single child; and in any event there were plenty more where that child came from’ (Shorter 1976: 264). As family incomes increased, however, ‘women could exchange the grim pressures of production for the work of infant care – which would be no less pressing and no less tedious, for washing and swabbing and infant-food preparation in the pre-Similac days was taxing drudgery. But in the end their children would live’ (Shorter 1976: 265). As the middle classes ‘profited sooner than the proletarians from the higher personal incomes’ brought about by capitalism, they ‘were the first to modify their infant-care practices’ (Shorter 1976: 265).

Conclusion

This chapter has examined some of the key works on the history of the Western family, particularly in relation to changing ideas about childhood and the patterning of familial relations. While there are many similarities in the works examined, there are also many differences. The similarities relate to the way in which common developments have been identified. For example, the rise of the nuclear family, the strengthening of emotional bonds, the re-balancing of power relationships, and the increasing emphasis placed on the care and education of children. These authors differ, however, in relation to the causal explanations put forth to account for these changes. While Flandrin and Ariès point to the influence of the church, Stone highlights a combination of economic, political and cultural factors, while Shorter identifies capitalism as being the main causal factor.

These works serve two important purposes. Firstly, they challenge ahistorical or universal notions of childhood and the family, and secondly, they show how changes in family life are related to broader social, historical and cultural changes.

The next chapter will investigate how these long-term changes in family life are dealt with by Norbert Elias. This will involve a

consideration of his argument that these are related to certain social changes, or changes in 'conditions of life', which he describes as the 'civilising process'. This chapter will also examine the way in which these long-term changes can help to explain specific developments in Australia in the inter-war years, particularly in relation to the increasing emphasis placed on parent education.

3. Parenting discourses and the civilising process

The previous chapter examined long-term changes in the history of childhood and the family. This chapter will examine long-term changes of another kind: changes in the figurational structure of Western societies and associated changes in habits or personality structure. Elias describes these developments in terms of what he refers to as the 'civilizing process'.

This chapter will explore Elias's work in detail, particularly in relation to the way in which the civilising process is connected to long-term changes in the history of childhood and the family. Specifically, this chapter will investigate how these developments can be used as a framework to examine parent education and parenting discourses in Australia in the inter-war years. It will be argued that this framework provides an alternative approach to the many accounts that explicate parent education in terms of social control.

The first section of this chapter will investigate the social control approaches through an examination of key texts that utilise Marxist, Feminist or Foucaultian theoretical perspectives. The second section will examine Elias's work on the civilising process, showing the way in which this can be used to investigate parenting discourses in the

inter-war years and how this differs from the social control approaches.

Social Control Approaches

Robert van Krieken, in his examination of approaches to the study of child welfare, identifies what he describes as the 'social control' perspective. He maintains that the concept of 'social control' was popularised by Ross (1901) and early American sociologists including Thomas and Znaniecki (1927) and Mead (1925), and has been used in many different ways (van Krieken 1991: 18). More recently however, and particularly in relation to how it is used in child welfare analysis, the main theoretical 'impetus has come from a desire to apply both feminism and Marxism to areas other than production and workplace, to include the state, social reproduction, culture, ideology and all the social practices occurring beyond the sphere of production' (van Krieken 1991: 16).

Van Krieken cites two texts as examples that epitomise the social control approach: *The Child Savers* (2009) by Anthony Platt, and *Heaven in a Heartless World* (1977) by Christopher Lasch. Platt argues that the child welfare movement was 'part of a much larger movement to readjust institutions to conform to the requirements of

the emerging systems of corporate capitalism', and that its 'impetus came primarily from the middle and upper classes who were instrumental in devising new forms of social control to protect their power and privilege' (Platt, cited by van Krieken 1991a: 17). In a similar vein, Lasch argues that twentieth century efforts to transform and supervise the family can be explained in terms of a capitalist attempt to infiltrate the private lives of workers and exert a more pervasive form of control (Lasch 1977: xv).

In this way, these authors position the family as an object that is deliberately shaped or fashioned by outside forces. These forces can take the form of specific groups such as the upper class, the bourgeoisies, medical professionals, teachers, social workers, or public authorities, or are sometimes more simply described in abstract terms such as 'capitalism or 'market society'. As van Krieken maintains, the story of social control often takes the following form:

The subject of this controlling process can ... either be 'society' in general, or more specific groups like 'the middle class' or the 'ruling class', and its object is generally something like 'the working class'.

(van Krieken 1991a: 18).

Interestingly, van Krieken includes within this tradition the theoretical approach inspired by Foucault, which some may argue moves beyond notions of social control (Rose 1987)⁶. Jacques Donzelot's *The Policing of Families* (1980) provides an example of the way in which this perspective is applied to the study of the family. Van Krieken maintains that like Lasch, 'Donzelot sees the family as having been "colonised" and "policed" by outside forces' (van Krieken 1991a: 19), but following Foucault 'rejects the notion of an agent of power, particularly that of a capitalist class or bourgeois state dominating power relations in society' (p. 20). Rather, Donzelot writes of the normalising activities of experts who draw their power from the 'psy' disciplines and the truth claims of science. These experts are not so much concerned to bolster the power of the state or the ruling class, but nevertheless seek to shape the family in specific directions. As such, while notions of 'state' or 'class' as controlling agents are dismissed, Donzelot brings into the picture other agents of control such as 'organisers of charities, teachers, social workers, doctors, bureaucrats and so on' (van Krieken 1991: 20).

In this way, the social control approaches can be divided into two categories: Marxist/Feminist approaches that focus on the way in which the family, and individuals within it, are shaped by the state or

⁶ See also van Krieken (1986) & (1991b) for a discussion of this issue.

the ruling class, and the Foucaultian approaches that describe the way in which the family is subjected to the normalising strategies of experts and scientific discourses. The following analysis will examine how these approaches have been used to investigate parent education and parenting discourses in the inter-war years.

State, Class and Gender

Examples of Marxist/ feminist approaches are works that explain parent education and parenting discourses in terms of ideological control, or as an attempt to transform the family in accordance with the goals and objectives of the capitalist system, the state, or the middle class. These works also focus on gender and emphasise the way in which ideologies of motherhood are utilised to ensure the compliance of women, and to re-enforce the privileged position of white middle class males.

Jane Lewis (1980), for instance, in her investigation of the infant welfare movement and mothercraft education in England focuses on the 'ideology of motherhood'. She contends that this ideology, 'rooted in the nineteenth-century doctrine of spheres, which made women's proper place the home' (Lewis 1980: 68) played a significant role in the development of infant welfare services in

England. Lewis argues that the infant welfare movement developed in response to the problem of high infant mortality rates, as well as concerns about the health of the population that arose as a consequence of World War I (Lewis 1980: 29). These concerns relate to the way in which the war effort created an 'overwhelming desire to increase [the] population' (Lewis 1980: 29). Lewis maintains that in order to improve the health of the population and to stem the high rates of infant mortality, public officials turned their attention to infant health and welfare. In this regard, policy makers blamed mothers for their lack of responsibility, and placed emphasis on maternal education rather than on alleviating poverty and improving public health services. Infant mortality rates, she points out, were 'adversely affected by frequent pregnancies, poor living conditions, poor nutrition and overwork, but these broader aspects of child and maternal welfare were not tackled (Lewis 1980: 27). Instead, emphasis was placed on 'mothercraft education' which 'carried with it a powerful ideology of motherhood', stressing 'the duties and responsibilities of mothers' (Lewis 1980: 108). In this way, argues Lewis, the 'specific form the services took can only be understood in relation to these broadly held beliefs and assumptions of the predominantly male, middle-class policy makers as to the proper role of the female clients they envisioned using the child and maternal welfare services' (Lewis 1980: 15).

Katherine Arnup (1990, 1994) follows a similar line of investigation in her analysis of the infant welfare movement in Canada. She maintains that during the early years of the twentieth century the problem of infant mortality became an issue that attracted much public concern and describes the way in which the state mobilised to address this problem. Arnup acknowledges the role played by voluntary organisations in addressing the issue of infant mortality, but argues that the 'major impetus was provided by the rapidly developing public health bureaucracy' (Arnup 1990: 191). Arnup describes the development of this expanding bureaucracy where experts in public health were employed to staff child and maternal welfare divisions. The Federal Department of Health was formed in 1919 with the Division of Child Welfare established the following year. Dr Helen MacMurchy was appointed chief of this Division.

Like Lewis, Arnup argues that the education of women was the main focus of these newly developed child welfare strategies. She points out that doctors, nurses, reformers and infant welfare workers 'acknowledged that many factors, including poverty, overcrowding, and malnutrition, contributed to the problem of infant mortality', but in looking for solutions 'they focussed almost exclusively upon mothers' (Arnup 1990: 192). They argued that the key to preventing infant deaths was through "'scientific" child care' (Arnup 1990: 196) which was to be carefully implemented by mothers. Mothers needed to be

instructed in the scientific method and persuaded of the importance of their role as child carers.

In this regard, through the use of 'films, radio talks, lectures, and advice clinics, and especially through the production of pamphlets at a staggering rate, officials at all levels of government sought to teach women the skills of "mothercraft"' (Arnup 1990: 193). In addition, in order to encourage women to follow their instructions and commit themselves to the important activity of caring for children, 'authors of government advice literature articulated a version of the ideology of motherhood' (Arnup 1990: 200). Public health officials did not create this ideology of motherhood, but utilised an already existing ideology to promote their specific ends. Public health authorities, contends Arnup:

... relied upon, and reinforced, the notion of separate spheres for men and women in order to ensure that women would take up and study the task of motherhood for which they were believed to be so perfectly inclined.

(Arnup 1990: 201).

But this was not the only ideological strategy implemented by the public health authorities. Arnup argues that although the authors of government advice literature emphasised the naturalness of

motherhood, they also, paradoxically, warned women against relying upon their 'maternal instincts'. Instead they insisted that women needed to learn the scientific principles of child rearing, which put them under the control of the medical profession. Arnup suggests, in agreement with Veronica Strong-Boag, that child care experts attacked 'women's competence as nurturers of infants and small children', which resulted in the undermining of 'one customary basis for public and self-esteem' for women (Strong-Boag, cited by Arnup 1990: 203). While the application of scientific principles may have resulted in better health for children, 'In exchange ... women had to surrender power over themselves and their offspring" (Strong-Boag, cited by Arnup 1990: 203). In this way, 'While MacMurchy and the other authors of government literature may have exalted motherhood in its ideal state, they may also have reduced women to slavish followers of their detailed advice' (Arnup 1990: 203).

A similar argument is pursued by Desley Deacon (1985) in her investigation of the infant welfare movement in Australia. Like Arnup, Deacon emphasises the impact that this movement had on women, maintaining that women's skills were undermined which resulted in their subjugation to the domestic sphere. Her focus however, is not so much on the role played by the state in this process, but on the role of middle class professionals.

Deacon describes how during the early years of the twentieth century, the medical profession in Australia worked to capitalise upon newly developed state initiatives to provide infant welfare services. 'Energetic public health officials', she maintains, 'backed by the tradition of a strong and confident public service, were able to turn to the benefit of the medical profession the Labor Party's ambitious scheme for the provision of medical services by the state' (Deacon 1985: 163). Deacon argues that from 1915 the 'infant welfare movement gradually became a mass movement controlled by doctors' (Deacon 1985: 165), and that the career aspirations and labour market situation of this group largely influenced the direction of this movement (Deacon 1985: 66). She maintains that the 'period between 1895 and 1933 saw the successful culmination of a long struggle by the medical profession for labour market security and status', and that 'this period of improved status and power was accompanied by anxiety about over-crowding in the profession' (Deacon 1985: 166-167). Doctors were concerned about labour market opportunities and responded to this by 'consolidating and extending their dominance over other health workers, and by seeking to extend their dominance over potential clients' (Deacon 1985: 167). The field of infant care was one area where doctors were able to do this, which resulted in the 'emergence of two new specialities, paediatrics and obstetrics' (Deacon 1985: 167).

In order to enter this sphere however (a sphere where women traditionally held sway), doctors had to persuade 'the public, and women in particular', that 'medical knowledge was superior and that its carefully supervised application would result in more efficient mothering' (Deacon 1985: 167). This resulted in an undermining of the skills and competence of women, as women were portrayed as lacking knowledge and requiring supervision. In promoting the superior efficiency of the 'scientific way', argues Deacon, 'the infant welfare movement had to denigrate the knowledge and efficiency of mothers' (Deacon 1985: 169). This led to the deskilling of women, not in terms of their ability as mothers, but in terms of them being able to participate and contribute to working life outside the home. As Deacon maintains, 'the infant welfare movement, the constant denigration of women's skills, contributed to a stereotype of women as incompetent and capable of working only under supervision. This stereotype is very likely to have adversely affected their equality of opportunity in the workforce, strengthening as it did the arguments of personnel officers that women were fit only for secondary labour market positions' (Deacon 1985: 170).

This emphasis on class is also pursued by Kerreen Reiger (1985) in her analysis of the rationalisation of the Australian family. In undertaking this investigation she draws from German critical theory maintaining that this tradition 'alerts us to the connection between

family forms and class structure insofar as the 'modern family', characterized by nuclear structure, privatization and intense internal relationships, was largely the creature of the bourgeoisie, a class which rose to power with the growth of industrial and finance capitalism in Western Europe' (Reiger 1985: 14). In using this framework to investigate developments in Australia at the turn of the twentieth century Reiger points to the emergence of a new middle class: the 'professional-managerial class' or the 'experts' (Reiger 1985: 15). Reiger maintains that the task of this new group, consisting of medical professionals, teachers, public health officials and psychologists, was essentially 'ideological': to manipulate 'societal consensus in the interests of the dominant class' (Reiger 1985: 22). Reiger provides an example from her analysis of child rearing literature. She suggests that the emphasis placed on regularity in child training can be interpreted as 'laying the foundation in the individual for adjustment to the various demands of modern, industrial capitalist society' (Reiger 1985: 143).

Like Arnup, Lewis and Deacon, Reiger also explores the implications of this ideology in terms of gender. She maintains, however, that the consequences for women were contradictory and not necessarily detrimental. The technical rationality promoted by the professional middle class worked to undermine certain myths about motherhood. Experts in child rearing, for instance, emphasised that mothering was

not natural and that women needed to be trained in order to be able to perform this duty. Reiger argues that this 'ran counter to the bourgeois interpretation of femininity which stressed the naturalness of women's performance of domestic labour and of childbearing and rearing' (Reiger 1985: 28). As such, Reiger points to the possibility of emancipation:

Distinctions which had been fundamental to class and gender oppression and reflected domination of the natural world were implicitly threatened; if the realm of spirit, the mind and will, can be extended to familial and gender relations – supposedly the epitome of the body, the natural sphere – the model of domination collapses. Does this mean that domination is complete, or that emancipation becomes possible?

(Reiger 1985: 221).

In highlighting the way in which the 'technocratic consciousness' of the professional middle class ran counter to traditional bourgeois beliefs, Reiger highlights the pervasive ideological intentions of this group. Not only were they concerned to transform working class families, but traditional bourgeois families as well. She maintains that 'in spite of many strategies directed at working-class domestic life, the broad thrust of the reform programme was towards all social strata', and that the 'home management and child care experts,

along with reformers of sexual and reproductive practices, were engaged in a broader missionary endeavour' (Reiger 1985: 213).

In this way, Reiger places emphasis on the way in which a particular social group worked to deliberately transform the family. The professional middle class, armed with 'an ideology of technical rationality' attempted to 'represent the family as governed by the same principles of means-end relationship, calculation and rational control which are essential features of commercial and industrial activity' (Reiger 1985: 210). Although the consequences of these reform efforts may have had contradictory effects for women, the main theme in Reiger's work is the way in which the professional middle class worked to transform family life in accordance with the interests of capitalism.

In fact, this tendency to explicate social change in terms of the interests of a particular class or group is evident in all of the accounts outlined above. Deacon, as we have seen, focuses on the way in which medical professionals sought to promote scientific child management in order to secure a labour market position, and Arnup emphasises the role played by government officials in transforming child rearing practices. In a similar vein, Lewis argues that infant welfare reform was influenced by the ideological beliefs of middle class policy makers. Underlying most of these accounts is the way in

which attempts to transform family life were driven by patriarchal objectives, or the way in which an 'ideology of motherhood' was utilised to subjugate women to the domestic sphere.

We move now to an examination of another perspective, that, while rejecting the view that changes in family life can be attributed to the ideological manipulations of the state or a ruling class, nevertheless emphasises the way in which the family is made subject to forces of social control. This is the knowledge/power approach inspired by Foucault.

Knowledge/Power

One of the main works utilising this approach is Jacques Donzelot's *The Policing of Families* (1980). Donzelot investigates the way in which the modern family has been increasingly made subject to the normalising gaze of experts. In this respect, he focuses not so much on the role played by the state or a particular class, but on the deployment of scientific knowledge. Donzelot investigates the emergence of the discipline of psychology during the early twentieth century and describes how experts in this field worked to discipline or 'police' the family.

In particular Donzelot investigates the link between the emergence of the 'psy' disciplines and the juvenile court system in the early twentieth century in France. He describes how experts such as social workers, educators and psychologists came to be involved in the assessment and rehabilitation of juvenile offenders. He maintains that as part of the process of the 'social inquiry' which 'came into general application at the same time as the juvenile law' (Donzelot 1980: 119), the child offender was subjected to psychological and medical assessments. In this way, argues Donzelot, the 'Juvenile court puts one more in mind of a psychiatric synopsis, or of a presentation of patients ... than of proceedings leading to a judicial decision' (Donzelot 1980: 106).

In expanding on this theme, Donzelot describes the way in which minors were sentenced in the juvenile court. He points out that the child did not usually receive corporal punishment, but was subjected to a series of educative or corrective measures. In the range of sanctions at the juvenile court's command, he maintains, 'incarceration constitutes the exception' (Donzelot 1980: 109). When a child is punished in this way, he or she more often receives a suspended sentence in which time educative measures and interventions can be put in place. In this sense, argues Donzelot, 'the system allows the guilty minor "his chance" by sentencing him only to measures of control', but in another sense, 'by obliterating the

separation between the assistencial and the penal, *it widens the orbit of the judicial to include all measures of correction* [original emphasis] (Donzelot 1980: 109). As such, the juvenile court system acted essentially as a site of correction and reform, utilising educational and psychological techniques rather than coercive measures of control.

In examining the development of the juvenile justice system and its utilisation of psychological and medical knowledges, Donzelot places the emergence of the 'psy' disciplines in the context of modern technologies of power. The 'psy' disciplines take the place of coercive measures of control, working to reform and educate rather than to punish, repress or isolate. The founding of the juvenile court, he argues, 'corresponded to a reorganisation of the market of children' (Donzelot 1980: 104). The 'old market ... was organised around monastic and military techniques, linked to familial and religious, police and judicial authority. The new looked to medicine, psychiatry, and pedagogy for its methods' (Donzelot 1980: 105). In this way, the 'psy' knowledges, particularly child psychology, are linked to disciplinary practices: *'The place of child psychiatry emerged in the space hollowed out by the search for a convergence between the prophylactic cravings of psychiatrists and the disciplinary requirements of the social apparatuses* [original emphasis] (Donzelot 1980: 131).

Donzelot argues that the 'psy' disciplines, particularly psychoanalysis, spread to other areas of social life. The deployment of 'psy' knowledges, he contends, soon came to be found in schools, 'in a discrete room of the divorce courts, in the services for the protection of mothers and children, in the birth-planning centres, and in the sex-education organizations' (Donzelot 1980: 169). He is particularly interested, of course, in the way in which these knowledges infiltrated the family. He discusses, for instance, the operations of the medico-psycho-pedagogical centre (C.M.P.P) which provided counselling services for parents and children, and the emergence of parent associations such as the Parents School. This organisation was founded in 1929 by 'some ladies of the best society' with the view of implementing 'a program of mutual improvement for parents' (Donzelot 1980: 200). They published brochures, invited psychiatrists and educators to deliver lectures for parents, organised speaking tours and trained family educators. These strategies subjected families to the normalising technologies of the 'psy' disciplines. The application of psychoanalysis, maintains Donzelot, 'made the family *amenable to social requirements, a good conductor of relational norms*' [original emphasis] (Donzelot 1980: 209).

Others have followed Donzelot's lead in analysing the relationship between the 'psy' disciplines and the regulation of children. Bell

(1993) and McCallum (1993), for instance, have investigated the link between judicial processes and the utilisation of expert knowledges. Bell describes the way in which children are subjected to the normalising activities of experts through the family court system, and McCallum looks at the development of child welfare in Australia, tracing its emergence from the penal system. He argues that the twentieth century saw a radical shift in the way in which delinquent children were dealt with, in that undisciplined children were removed from the police, the courts of law and the state, and made subject to the 'new "brigades of counsellors and guidance officers"'. The problem child is thus formed within the matrix of social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists, child guidance experts and family counsellors overseeing the child, as well as within the vast assemblage of professional knowledges which makes claims to truth about the child' (McCallum 1993: 138).

Rose (1988, 1990) and Miller and Rose (1988) investigate the history of psychology and the way in which this is linked to liberal rationalities and techniques of governance. Rose (1990), for instance, describes childhood as the most 'intensively governed sector of personal existence', meaning that during nineteenth and twentieth centuries children and their families have become increasingly subjected to the normalising strategies of 'psy' experts in the form of welfare officials, social workers, psychologists and health

professionals. He argues that these experts have infiltrated the so called 'private' realm of the family to protect children from neglect and abuse, secure their health and well-being and ensure 'normal' development (Rose 1990: 121-22). And, further, with the introduction of compulsory education children have entered into a 'pedagogical machine that operates not only to impart knowledge but to instruct in conduct and to supervise, evaluate, and rectify childhood pathologies' (Rose 1990: 122). Tyler (1993) and Dahlberg and Moss (2005) have also examined normalising strategies embedded within education systems. Tyler investigates the way in which expert knowledges and other technologies of subjectivity were deployed in the 1930s kindergarten, while Dahlberg and Moss discuss more generally developments in early childhood education.

It is important to note, that in focusing on the role of experts and the deployment of scientific knowledges, these writers make the point that they are moving beyond notions of social control. Donzelot, for instance, insists that 'we need to understand how juridical power and psychiatric knowledge were connected to one another, while trying to avoid facile notions regarding the development of the state apparatuses', (although interestingly, he does not shy away from the term 'social apparatus') (Donzelot 1980: 151). He also rejects the notion that the modern family is a bourgeois creation and subjected to bourgeois control. He writes: 'If today's family were simply an

agent for transmitting bourgeois power, and consequently entirely under the control of the “bourgeois” state, why would individuals, and particularly those who are not members of the ruling classes, invest so much in family life?’ (Donzelot 1980: 52).

In answering this question Donzelot argues that the ‘psy’ disciplines and the spread of normalising technologies need to be understood in the context of strategies that conform to the specific requirements of liberal rationalities of government. In other words, he contends, we need to ‘regard the family and its transformation as a positive form of solution to the problems posed by a liberal definition of the state’ (Donzelot 1980: 53). By this he means that the ‘psy’ disciplines provide a way of managing private life without transgressing liberalist notions of the minimal state or destroying the autonomy of the family. Agents of normalisation, such as philanthropists, social workers, educators and psychologists, enter the family not as representatives of the state to impose coercive measures of control, but to educate and reform in the interests of the health and well-being of the individual and the family unit as a whole. Parents, for example, seek out psychoanalytic services, or willingly attend parenting classes, in order to find solutions to problems or to achieve better life outcomes for themselves and their children. ‘By playing on the educative strategy of the family’, maintains Donzelot, ‘psychoanalysis

introduced a concern with the observance of social norms in the family without colliding head on with it' (Donzelot 1980: 209).

A similar point is made by Rose and Miller (1992). They argue that the emergence of the discipline of psychology is linked to liberal rationalities of government, where government works not by placing constraints on individuals, but by 'making up' individuals or shaping human subjectivity. They write:

Liberal doctrine on the limits of power and the freedom of subjects under the law were thus accompanied by the working out of a range of new technologies of government, not having the form of direct control by authorities, that sought to administer these 'private' realms [such as the family], and to programme and shape them in desired directions.

(Rose and Miller 1992: 180).

As such, the state is not the instigator of these normalising strategies, and what we see, argues Rose and Miller, is not 'a uniform trend of "State intervention"' but rather the emergence, at a multitude of sites in the social body, of health and disease, of crime and punishment, of poverty and pauperism, of madness and family life as problems requiring some measure of collective response, and in relation to which political authorities play a variety of different roles (Rose and Miller 1992: 181). A similar point is made by McCallum.

He maintains that in order to understand new developments in child welfare, we need to move away from 'conventional explanatory frameworks, which have attempted to locate the operation of power, including the regulation of children, as originating in fundamental historical or theoretical objects, such as liberal reformism, a dominant class or a repressive state' (McCallum 1993: 130). Instead, we need to understand the 'new locations and different modalities of power which have emerged in the twentieth century' such as 'the family and the school' which have developed as 'key sites for constituting new relations between men, women and children, and as important domains of governing and self-governing' (McCallum 1993: 130).

In this way, according to these writers, power is not located in the central organs of the state, but in the social body. This is a point made by Foucault. He maintains that 'One must suppose ... that the manifold relations of force that take shape and come into play in the machinery of production, in families, limited groups, and institutions, are the basis for wide-ranging effects of cleavage that run through the social body as a whole' (Foucault 1998: 94). These writers also make the point that the wielders of this power, the experts, are not directly controlled by the state, or part of the 'state apparatus', but act as independent agents who enact 'assorted attempts at the calculated administration of diverse aspects of conduct through countless, often competing, local tactics of education, persuasion,

inducement, management, incitement, motivation and encouragement' (Rose and Miller 1992: 175).

Although notions of state control may be avoided, in that power is not conceptualised as coming from the top, there is still a very strong sense of social control. These writers constantly stress the way in which expert authorities, situated within the 'social body', work to 'programme and shape' personal conduct, relationships, or the family in 'desired directions'. As pointed out by van Krieken:

Even for those who agree ... at a *theoretical* level [that power does not revolve around the state] there is no guarantee against the Phoenix-like persistence of the social control paradigm in the substance of their analysis ... for it is possible to 'de-centre' the operation of power while still seeing the majority of the population as the object of power...

(van Krieken 1991a: 41).

In many ways, this constitutes an even more pervasive notion of social control. Power is not restricted to discrete entities such as the state or a particular class, but is found everywhere, 'in the fine meshes', in places 'that had hitherto remained outside the field of

political analysis' (Foucault 2001a: 117) As such, there is no escape from power. As highlighted by van Krieken:

Michel Foucault ... reasoned that the similarity of the logic structuring social interaction in the different spheres of society, the logic of disciplinary power, has produced a dense web of interrelated power networks which undermine the meaning of the distinction between state and civil society. The latter, for Foucault, has become yet another arena for the operation of disciplinary power relations, which construct a self-disciplined, individualised subjectivity, rather than being a sphere of life in any way autonomous from the state.

(van Krieken 1991a: 32).

In addition, there is also the suggestion in the work of Foucault and others, that 'local tactics' of power are in fact connected or linked up to more all-encompassing strategies. Burkitt points out that although Foucault constantly emphasises the way in which power works at a local level, he also talks of 'global strategies' or how the 'tactics of domination at a more "local" level are bolstered or reshaped' (Burkitt 1993: 65). Foucault maintains, for example, that the:

dispersed, heteromorphous, localized procedures of power are adapted, re-enforced, and transformed by these global strategies, all this being accompanied by numerous phenomena of inertia, displacement and resistance; hence one should not assume a massive and primal condition of domination, a binary structure with 'dominators' on one side and 'dominated' on the other, but rather a multiform production of relations of domination which are partially susceptible of integration into overall strategies.

(Foucault, cited by Burkitt 1993: 65).

And he also writes:

No "local centre," no "pattern of transformation" could function if, through a series of sequences, it did not eventually enter into an over-all strategy. And inversely, no strategy could achieve comprehensive effects if it did not gain support from precise and tenuous relations serving, not as its point of application or final outcome, but as its prop and anchor point ... One must conceive of the double conditioning of a strategy by the specificity of possible tactics, and of tactics by the strategic envelope that makes them work.

(Foucault, cited by Burkitt 1993: 66).

Burkitt describes this as an 'enigma' in Foucault's work, or a 'deep-seated confusion' (Burkitt 1993: 66). The reference to 'global strategies' or the 'strategic envelope' 'risks destroying Foucault's entire project by suggesting, perversely, that power is, after all, some superhuman force that shapes the actions of individuals' (Burkitt 1993: 66).

This tension is evident in the work of others. Rose and Miller (1992), for instance, as mentioned above, refer to the way in which social problems require a 'collective response', and McCallum describes Foucault's notion of 'biopolitics' as "an entire micro-power concerned with the body" matching up with "comprehensive measures, statistical assessments and interventions" aimed at the body politic, the social body' (McCallum 1993: 139). Rose and Miller also point to links between experts and political objectives. They maintain, for instance, that although experts act independently, they form alliances with political authorities on the one hand, and free citizens on the other:

The vital links between socio-political objectives and the minutiae of daily existence in home and factory were to be established by expertise. Experts would enter into a kind of double alliance. On the one hand, they would ally themselves

with political authorities, focusing upon their problems and problematizing new issues, translating political concerns about economic productivity, innovation, industrial unrest, social stability, law and order, normality and pathology and so forth into the vocabulary of management, accounting, medicine, social science and psychology. On the other hand, they would seek to form alliances with individuals themselves, translating their daily worries and decisions over investment, child rearing, factory organization or diet into a language claiming the power of truth, and offering to teach them the techniques by which they might manage better, earn more, bring up healthier or happier children and much more besides.

(Rose and Miller 1992: 188).

In this way Rose and Miller stress the links between experts and 'socio-political objectives'. And they also maintain that through this process the personal goals and aspirations of individuals will align with the objectives of government:

By the means of expertise, self regulatory techniques can be installed in citizens that will align their personal choices with the ends of government. The freedom and subjectivity of citizens can in such ways become an ally, and not a threat, to the orderly government of a polity and a society.

(Rose and Miller 1992: 189).

And, in relation to child rearing, Rose (1990) points out that:

... in different ways, at different times, and by many different routes varying from one section of society to another, the health and welfare, and rearing of children have been linked in thought and practice to the destiny of the nation and the responsibilities of the state.

(Rose 1990: 121).

As such, although writers adopting a Foucaultian perspective reject notions of an all-powerful state or the ruling class, their works can nevertheless be classified as fitting into the social control category. The role of the state or the ruling class is diminished within the Foucaultian framework, but is replaced by a plethora of other 'technologies' or 'mechanisms' of control. These technologies are located at various sites within the social body, and involve a multitude of actors including social workers, philanthropists, educators, doctors, health professionals and psychologists. Whether these agents are acting alone, or are in fact loosely connected or aligned with global political or governmental strategies, they work to shape or transform private life in specific directions. In this way, what emerges is not a perspective that moves beyond social control, but an even more pervasive picture of social control. Foucault himself

points to this. He describes the emergence of 'disciplinary power' at the end of the eighteenth century as the 'age of social control':

Now I would like to place ourselves at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, during the founding of what I will try to analyse in this lecture and the next one under the name 'disciplinary society' ... I would like to show what forms of penal practice characterize that society; what power relations underlie those penal practices; what forms of knowledge ... types of knowledge... and types of knowledge subject ... emerged, appearing on the basis of – and in the space of – the disciplinary society that contemporary society is ... We thus enter the age of what I would call social orthopaedics. I'm talking about a form of power, a type of society that I term 'disciplinary society,' in contrast to the penal societies known hitherto. This is the age of social control.

(Foucault 2001b: 52-58).

In this way, both of the approaches described above, the Marxist/feminist approaches, and the Foucaultian knowledge/power approaches, revolve around notions of social control. They investigate the way in which the family, including individuals and relationships, have been shaped in specific directions in accordance with various ideological or governmental objectives. The

Marxist/feminist approaches emphasise how the state, or the ruling class, work to shape the family in accordance with capitalist or patriarchal interests. The Foucaultian approaches, for their part, focus on the way in which experts, located at various sites within the social body, work to link up the goals and aspirations of individuals with governmental strategies.

It will be argued in this thesis that Elias provides an alternative approach to these perspectives that emphasise social control. In his work *The Civilizing Process* Elias highlights the unplanned or unintended nature of social change. In particular, he draws attention to the unplanned process of the historical transformation of childhood, and the way which this led to changes in family life and the patterning of parent-child relationships. We turn now to an investigation of Elias's approach, demonstrating the way in which it can be used to investigate parent education in the inter-war years, and how it offers an alternative to the social control perspectives.

Elias's Framework

The Civilising Process

In *The Civilizing Process* (2000), first published in 1939, Elias investigates the development of what he describes as a 'civilized' mode of conduct. He undertakes this by examining etiquette manuals produced in Western Europe from the late middle-ages to the beginning of the industrial era. He argues that the etiquette texts show gradual changes in standards of behaviour, where individuals were expected to exercise ever stricter patterns of self-control or self-discipline.

Elias traces the development of this 'civilised' mode of conduct in relation to changing figural patterns. He uses the term 'figuration' to refer to the various types of social formations that individuals create for themselves as they interact with each other, for example, 'groups or societies of different kinds' (Elias 2000: 482). In his historical analysis of changing figural patterns in the West, Elias shows how the 'personality structures of human beings ... change in conjunction with ... figural changes' (Elias 2000: 483).

In this regard, Elias describes the way in which, over the course of many generations, feudal configurations characterised by the

existence of relatively small independent competing social units slowly developed into centralised states. This process, in association with the formation of monopolies of violence, the rise of the bourgeoisie, and the spread of industrial and commercial activity gradually transformed social life. Social functions became increasingly differentiated and gave rise to the formation of complex chains of interdependencies. As Elias maintains:

From the earliest period of the history of the Occident to the present, social functions have become more and more differentiated under the pressure of competition. The more differentiated they become, the larger grows the number of functions and thus of people on whom the individual constantly depends in all his actions ...

(Elias 2000: 367).

This type of social configuration places certain demands upon individuals. As individuals find themselves immersed in ever more complex networks of interdependencies, they become increasingly reliant upon each other in order to fulfil basic needs. In this way, individuals increasingly feel the need to 'attune their conduct to that of others' or are 'compelled to regulate their conduct in an increasingly differentiated, more even and more stable manner' (Elias 2000: 367). In other words, individuals must learn to 'civilise'

their behaviour or to exercise a very high degree of self-restraint or emotional control in their relations with others. As Parsons succinctly put it, societies 'in which a considerable number of individuals are in a complex and delicate state of mutual interdependence tend greatly to limit the scope for 'personal' emotional feelings, or at least its direct expression in action. Any considerable range of affective spontaneity would tend to impinge on the statuses and interests of too many others' (Parsons 1949: 183).

It is important to note that Elias uses the term 'civilized' in a descriptive sense. He is not concerned to make a value judgement as to the state of advancement of Western societies. He maintains: 'I have not been guided in this study by the idea that our civilized mode of behaviour is the most advanced of all humanly possible modes of behaviour, nor by the opinion that 'civilization' is the worst form of life and one that is doomed' (Elias 2000: xiv). He uses the term to refer to the 'self-consciousness of the West', or the way that people in Western societies have come to understand or conceive of themselves. By this term, he argues, 'Western society seeks to describe what constitutes its special character and what it is proud of: the level of its technology, the nature of its manners, the development of its scientific knowledge or view of the world, and much more (Elias 2000: 5). As such, Elias is concerned to simply describe and understand the particular character and 'modes of

behaviour considered typical of people who are civilized in a Western way' (Elias 2000: ix).

In his investigation of the emergence of this civilised mode of conduct, Elias identifies three important stages: *courtoisie*, *civilitié*, and 'civilization'. *Courtoisie* was a concept used in late medieval etiquette manuals to denote appropriate behaviour at Court. Elias associates this with what he described as 'knightly-courtly' society, or a configuration characterised by a polycentric power structure. During this phase, as Breuer explains, a certain moderation of affect was achieved, although very limited and restricted to the interaction centre of the Court (Breuer 1991:403). *Civilitié*, a concept associated with the etiquette manuals produced during the early modern period, is associated with the formation of the absolute monarchy or what Elias refers to as 'courtly-absolutist society'. This period is characterised by the centralisation of power and the 'concentration of physical violence into a monopoly instance' (Breuer 1991: 402). The demilitarisation of the aristocracy 'enabled the development of longer and more complex chains of interdependency at both the social and the economic level (Breuer 1991: 402) resulting in increasing pressure towards self-control. 'Instead of a purely intermittent "courtesy" which only encompassed a small part of knightly existence ... [a] stricter code of behaviour arose, encompassing more and more of the entire habitus' (Breuer 1991: 403).

Although this new pattern of affect regulation was much more pervasive and all-embracing than that of *courtoisie*, it had not yet reached a level of automatic self-control. The compulsion to regulate one's behaviour only existed when one was in the company of a social superior. Elias demonstrates this point with a quotation from an etiquette manual of the mid-sixteenth century. The author, Della Casa, outlined several examples of social indiscretions, for example: one should not 'raise a thigh so high that the members of the human body, which should properly be covered with clothing at all times, might be exposed to view' (Della Casa, cited by Elias 2000: 117). He then went on to explain: 'For this and similar things are not done, except among people before whom one is not ashamed. It is true that a great lord might do so before one of his servants or in the presence of a friend of lower rank; for in this would not show him arrogance but rather a particular affection and friendship (cited by Elias 2000: 117).

As such, this pattern of affect regulation takes the form of a more or less 'conscious self-steering' where standards of courtly behaviour are only observed in the presence of others of the same or higher social rank. In the stage of *civilité*, maintains Elias:

much of what has been made 'second nature' in us had not yet been inculcated in this form, as an automatically functioning self-restraint, a habit that, within certain limits, also functions when a person is alone. Rather, restraint on the drives was at first imposed only in the company of others, i.e., more consciously on social grounds. And both the kind and degree of restraint corresponded to the social position of the person imposing them, relative to the position of those in whose company he or she was. (Elias 2000: 117).

This patterning of affect regulation very much depends upon external constraints, or what Elias refers to as *fremdzwänge* or 'constraints by other people' (Elias 1996: 32).

This external form of regulation, however, was to slowly take the form of automatic habit or self-regulation. This occurred, Elias maintains, during the mid eighteenth century with the development of the industrial bourgeois nation state. Here, as Breuer describes, 'functional differentiation and general interdependence achieve a hitherto unimaginable density' (Breuer 1991: 402) and 'civilization' gradually takes the place of *civilité* as the dominant pattern of affect regulation. This is where the rational refinement of manners already achieved by *civilité* became universal and more stable (Breuer 1991: 403). Universal in the sense that standards of *civilité* spread to

encompass the lower or rising classes, and more stable in that external constraints become internalised, operating without the need for external forms of regulation. The important point here is that this mechanism operates without conscious awareness, or as a 'habit that, within certain limits, also functions when a person is alone' (Elias 2000: 117). In this way, external constraints are transformed into self-constraints, or what Elias calls *selbstzwäng* (Elias 1996: 32).

Elias maintains that while this tendency towards self-constraint is an important feature of the civilising process of the modern West, it is not specific to this type of social configuration. What is specific about modern industrial states, however, is the pattern of the relationship between external-constraints and self-constraints. The hallmark of the civilising process of the West, contends Elias, is a 'change in the relation between external social constraints and individual self-constraints' (Elias 1996: 33), such that the 'self-constraint apparatus becomes stronger relative to external constraints. In addition, it becomes more even and all-embracing' (Elias 1996: 34).

Unintended Consequences

Central to Elias's work is the notion of 'unintended consequences' or the unplanned nature of social change. Elias argues that the civilising process and the development of the civilised mode of

conduct are not the result of deliberate planning or intent. He writes: 'nothing in history indicates that this change was brought about "rationally", through any purposive education of individuals or groups' (Elias 2000: 365). Instead, Elias contends that the figurational changes he describes, and associated changes in personality structure or habits, emerge from the unintended consequences of intended action. As Elias explains:

Out of the interweaving of innumerable individual interests and intentions – be they compatible, or opposed and inimical – something eventually emerges which, as it turns out, has neither been planned nor intended by any single individual. And yet it has been brought about by the intentions and actions of many individuals (Elias, cited by Mennell 1977: 101).

Here, Elias highlights the autonomous character of figurational change. As van Krieken describes, 'Elias saw 'society' [or figurations] as consisting of the structured interweaving of the activity of interdependent human agents, all pursuing their own interests and goals, producing distinct social forms such as what we call "Christianity", "feudalism", "patriarchy", "capitalism", or whatever culture and nation we happen to be part of' (van Krieken 1998: 51-52). These forms then structure future human action, but 'cannot be

said to have been planned or intended by any individual or group' (van Krieken 1998: 52).

As such, the compulsion towards self-constraint can be described as a figurational pressure, rather than as an imperative that is deliberately imposed upon individuals by other individuals or groups. It is the figurational pressure, associated with the development of 'more complex, more strictly organised and to a large degree more pacified societies of our day', that, 'demands a higher degree of differentiated self-control from individuals' (Elias 1998: 207). Such figurational changes are not brought about purposefully, but instead take the form of a blind or unintended course of development.

Elias explains this further when he describes the way in which the civilised mode of conduct 'diffused' through the social strata. Elias argues that it would be wrong to assume that this standard of behaviour was forced upon the lower classes. Rather, the lower classes transformed their behaviour as they became subjected to the same conditions of life that forced changes in the behaviour of the upper classes. In this way, he argues:

... the motive forces of this development come from the social structure, from the way in which people are connected to each other. We see more clearly how relatively small circles first form

the centre of the movement and how the process then gradually passes to broader sections. But this diffusion presupposes very specific contacts, and therefore a quite definite structure of society. Moreover, it could certainly not have taken place had there not been established for larger classes, as well as for the model-forming circles, conditions of life – or, in other words, a social situation – that made both possible and necessary a gradual transformation of the emotions and behaviour ...

(Elias 2000: 99).

Here, Elias refers to how the figural structure, or 'conditions of life', forced changes in standards of behaviour. The middle and upper classes were the first to transform their behaviour, because they participated in the 'courtly functions at the ruling centres of large societies, and commercial functions at the centres of long-distance trade networks' (Elias 2000: 381). They were exposed to the conditions of life that demanded a certain patterning of affect regulation. As the lower classes became increasingly involved in these networks and were subjected to the same conditions of life, they too, began to change their behaviour. In the past, argues Elias, 'the functions of the lower strata of manual workers were generally involved in the web of interdependencies only to the extent that their members felt the effect of remote actions ... their daily tasks made them capable of restraining their immediate desires and affects in

favour of something not tangible in the here and now only to a comparatively small degree' (Elias 2000: 380-381). But, as characteristic of modern life,

the multitude of intertwining chains of interdependence ... run through every single social function that people have to perform, and ... the competitive pressure that permeates this densely populated network [affects] directly or indirectly every single individual act. This may show itself in the case of an official or businessman in the profusion of his appointments or meetings, and in that of a worker by the exact timing and duration of each of his movements ...

(Elias 2000: 379).

In this way, Elias likens this 'diffusion' to the chemical process of crystallisation, 'in which a liquid, the whole of which is subjected to conditions of chemical change ... first takes on crystalline form at a small nucleus, while the rest then gradually crystallized around the core. Nothing would be more erroneous than to take the core of crystallization for the cause of the transformation' (Elias 2000: 99). The compulsion to regulate behaviour arises as a consequence of changing figurational patterns, rather than as a result of the efforts of one class or group to impose a particular mode of conduct upon another.

Childhood and the family

An important consequence of this unintended civilising process relates to the historical transformation of childhood and the changing role and function of the family. This centres around what Elias describes as the growing psychological and behavioural distance between children and adults (Elias 2000: 119). Elias argues that in highly differentiated societies, where a very high degree of self-restraint or emotional control is expected of adults, many years of training are required for children to develop the skills needed to function successfully as an adult. This refers, in particular, to the way in which children must learn to master the emotional complexities of adult life. In this regard, the process of the transition from childhood to adulthood becomes longer and more complex, and the behavioural and psychological distance between adults and children increases. As Elias explains, 'the more complex and differentiated adult society becomes, the longer it takes, the more complex is the process of the civilizatory transformation of the individual' (Elias 2000: 116-117). This contrasts with life in earlier epochs, argues Elias, where 'The degree of restraint and control over drives expected by adults of each other was not much greater than that imposed on children' and where 'The distance between adults and children, measured by that of today, was slight' (Elias 2000: 120).

Elias, of course, is not alone in making this observation about the historical transformation of childhood. As discussed in the previous chapter, historians of childhood characterise the modern conception of childhood as meriting a separation from the adult world. Elias expresses this in 'The Civilizing of Parents' where he states: 'slowly during the early modern period, children were removed from the adult world and their lives isolated on their own island of youth within society. Children's rooms, schools, youth movements and not least student life are among their most salient symbols' (Elias 1998: 197-98). In this essay Elias makes reference to Ariès, noting that he made similar observations about the historical transformation of childhood 'back in the 1930s, in *The Civilizing Process*' (Elias 1998: 197).

This growing distance between adults and children has important implications in terms of parenting and family life. Elias argues that as the length and complexity of the individual social civilising process increases, the family becomes an important site for the regulation or civilising of children (Elias 2000: 116-117). This refers, in particular, to the way in which a stronger emphasis is placed upon the educative or socialising functions of the family, or the role of the family in guiding or shaping behaviour, or the 'affective and emotional' development of children (Elias 1998: 208). This has

important implications for parents, who 'Partly automatically, [and] partly quite consciously through their own conduct and habits' (Elias 2000: 374) become the 'primary agents of conditioning' (Elias 2000: 119).

Elias maintains that the family has not always fulfilled this role, and that it was:

Only comparatively late, when bourgeois classes comprising a large number of social equals have become the upper, ruling class, that the family becomes the only – or, more exactly, the primary and dominant – institution with the function of installing drive control ...

(Elias 2000: 116-117).

He maintains that in 'the state of the feudal courts, and still more in that of the absolute courts, the courts themselves largely fulfilled this function for the upper class' (Elias 2000: 117). Elias points out that the manners texts produced during the early modern period were directed at young men or boys wishing to enter court society, and in this sense the courts acted as nurseries of good manners (Elias 2000: 63). One of the most popular texts during this time was Erasmus's *De civilitate morum puerilium*, which translates as 'On civility in boys' (Elias 2000: 47).

Other writers have noted similar changes in the role and function of the family. The historians discussed in the previous chapter described how the family became an increasingly isolated unit, with more emphasis being placed on the care and education of children.

Elias places these changes in family relations within the context of long-term social changes occurring in Western societies. He views these developments in parent-child relations as being connected with certain changes in personality structure or habitus, where individuals in modern societies are increasingly expected to exercise a very high degree of emotional control in their relations with others. This development, he maintains, has led to a growing distance between children and adults and the family becoming more focused with regard to its socialising and educative activities.

Elias points out that these changes in family life, and in the historical transformation of childhood, have had important consequences not only for children but also for parents. Elias argues that the growing distance between children and adults, or the 'discovery' of childhood has had a civilising impact on parents. This discovery, or the recognition that children are different to adults and cannot be expected to behave like adults, engenders a degree of tolerance on the part of adults. It has currently come to be socially accepted,

suggests Elias, ‘that it is not simply an “evil will”, “disobedience” or “naughtiness” which brings children to do what is forbidden to adults. Parents themselves accordingly curb their initially violent superiority over children. Such a modified authority relation, however, now really demands of parents, as we can see, a relatively very high degree of self control, which as a model and a means of education then rebounds to impose a high degree of self-constraint on children in their turn” (1998: 209). In this way, the discovery of childhood, or the growing distance between children and adults, ‘demands of parents, who have far greater power-chances than children, a degree of caution and restraint, of civilisation, if we may express it so, which far exceeds the degree of self-control and restraint socially required of parents in earlier epochs – if such restraint was ever expected of parents at all’ (1998: 191).

It is important to note, that when describing these changes in parent-child relations Elias emphasises the unplanned nature of these developments. He writes:

Today one constantly encounters a series of stereotypical misunderstandings when one speaks, as is being done here, of long-term social processes, of which the introduction of an ever-longer preparatory period between childhood and adulthood is one example among many. One

of these misunderstandings is the notion that the social change in this direction was brought about in a more or less planned and conscious way ...

(Elias 1998: 204).

Here, Elias refers to how changes in family life and parent-child relations can be explained in terms of figurational changes, where such changes take the form of a blind or unintended course of development. In this way, the growing distance between adults and children, the re-patterning of the parent-child relationship, and the changing role and function of the family, can be understood as an unintended consequence of long-term social processes that are unplanned and unintended.

It is within the context of these long-term unintended changes that parent education in the twentieth century can be examined. It will be argued, that the increasing emphasis placed on parent education in the inter-war years can be explained in terms of the historical transformation of childhood and the changing role and function of the family. As the distance between children and adults has increased, and as the individual social civilising process has become longer and more complex, education materials have entered the family in order to guide parents through the increasingly difficult task of child rearing, particularly in relation to guiding the behaviour or the emotional

development of children. As such, the increasing emphasis placed on parental education in the twentieth century can be understood as a response to changing figurational patterns, of which the growing distance between adults and children is one consequence. 'Only now', wrote Elias in 1939, 'in the age that has been called the "century of the child" is the realisation that ... children cannot behave like adults slowly penetrating the family circle with appropriate educational advice and instructions' (Elias cited by van Krieken 1998: 155).

It is within this regard, that Elias's framework differs from the social control approaches. As discussed above, these approaches focus on the way in which attempts to educate parents can be explained in terms of the actions of certain individuals or groups concerned to shape the family in accordance with specific political or governmental objectives. Marxist/feminist approaches focus on the role played by the ideological state or the ruling class in shaping familial relations, while Foucaultian theorists emphasise the normalising activities of experts. Elias argues that the figurational changes characteristic of the development of Western industrial states, corresponding changes in personality structure or habitus, and changes in the role and function of the family, can be explained in terms of the unintended consequences of intended action. As such, Elias offers an alternative framework of analysis, where the unplanned nature of

social change is emphasised, and where attempts to transform family life in the twentieth century are placed within the context of the 'long-term unplanned processes of development within which they take place' (van Krieken 2002: 267).

At this point, a note on the similarities between Elias and Foucault should be made clear. Although this thesis argues that Elias's approach can be distinguished from Foucaultian approaches in relation to the question of social control, there are also important synergies that can be identified. Both investigate human conduct or what may be described as forms of subjectivity. As Dennis Smith points out, *The History of Sexuality* and *The Civilising Process* examine particular modes of life conduct as revealed through various historical sources:

In *The History of Sexuality* and *The Civilizing Process*, respectively, Foucault and Elias make use of contemporary works giving advice on how to behave in relation to yourself and others, how to manage your body and your feelings, and how to do the best for yourself in potentially risky or troublesome situations.

(Smith 1999: 83).

A similar point is made by van Krieken when he writes that Foucault and Elias share a 'basically similar concern with the social history of subjectivity' (van Krieken 1990: 355). By this he means that both writers are interested in the historical production of particular forms of human subjectivity or personality. In particular, van Krieken maintains that both Foucault and Elias [following Weber] are concerned to describe and investigate a particularly 'modern' subjectivity, characterised by an increasing trend towards 'self-discipline' and a 'regularization and routinization of the psyche' (van Krieken 1990: 355). They differ however, in the way in which they see this transformation as occurring. While Elias places a heavy 'emphasis on [the] requirements emanating from increased competition and social interdependency' (van Krieken 1990: 361), Foucault emphasises 'the coercive imposition of discipline through either human agency or historically specific social institutions: state intervention, religious ideology, bureaucracy, work organization, disciplinary techniques' (van Krieken 1990: 362).

Conclusion

This chapter has established the conceptual framework for this thesis. It was argued that Elias's work on the civilising process can be used to investigate parenting discourses produced in Australia in

the inter-war years. This relates to the way in which long-term changes in the figurational structure of modern Western societies have led to changes in the role and function of the family and the patterning of familial relationships.

Central to this is the growing psychological distance between children and adults, and the family becoming more specialised with regard to its socialising or 'civilising' functions. This has occurred, argues Elias, as an unintended consequence of certain changes in habitus or personality structure, where individuals situated within a social context characterised by increasing complex functional differentiation and lengthening chains of interdependencies, are required to exercise ever stricter patterns of emotional control. This has led to the lengthening of the preparatory period between childhood and adulthood, with more emphasis being placed on the educative capacity of the family particularly in relation to providing children with guidance in the regulation of emotions.

Elias also points out that these changes in the historical transformation of childhood have had important implications for parents. Parents are increasingly required to regulate their behaviour in their dealings with children in order to accommodate the special nature of children or their particular developmental needs.

This in turn, has had a civilising effect on children, where parents, through their actions, become of model of education.

This chapter has also argued that Elias's framework of the civilising process provides an alternative to the many investigations that examine parent education in the inter-war years in terms of social control. This refers to Marxist/feminist approaches that emphasise the way in which attempts to transform the family can be explained in terms of state control or class domination, or Foucaultian approaches that focus on the 'psy' disciplines and the normalising strategies of experts. An Eliasian analysis places the increasing emphasis on parent education within the context of long-term social processes that are unplanned and unintended.

The following chapters will proceed with the empirical investigation to show how parent education and parenting discourses produced in Australia in the inter-war years are part of the civilising process. Chapter four will establish that the inter-war years saw an increasing emphasis placed on parent education and that this is reflected in the fact that there emerged, during this time, a multitude of non-government organisations concerned to promote the health and well-being of children. Chapter five will examine the literature produced by these organisations to show that an increasing emphasis was placed on the management of child behaviour, particularly in relation

to regulating or controlling emotions. The remaining chapters will examine the implications of this in terms of parental behaviour. Chapter six will investigate advice given to mothers during the pre-natal and neo-natal period, where it will be shown that mothers were encouraged to exercise emotional control and that this was linked to the behaviour and well-being of children. Chapter seven will examine the informalisation of the parent-child relationship, where it will be shown that a loosening of strict hierarchical constraints led to a greater capacity for self-control on the part of both children and parents. In this way, it will be demonstrated that the increasing emphasis placed on parent education in the inter-war years, and the way in which this education provided guidance on the regulation of conduct for both children and parents, reflects the unplanned and unintended civilisatory transformation of modern life.

4. Parent education in Australia in the inter-war years

This chapter will examine parent education programs in Australia in the inter-war years. It will be established that this period was characterised by an intensification of efforts to educate parents. This is reflected in the fact that there emerged a number of organisations concerned to promote child health and well-being. These organisations engaged in parent education activities and produced parenting literature.

It will be shown that these developments reflect certain trends described by Elias in his discussions on the civilising process and the development of modern family life. As discussed in chapter three, Elias maintains that as a consequence of the civilising process, and the growing distance between children and adults, the twentieth century has seen education and advice entering the family. This is reflected in Australia in the inter-war years, where we see the production of a growing volume of parent education literature.

This is not the first time that this trend has been noted. As pointed out in the previous chapter, many investigations have described the increasing emphasis placed on parent education in the inter-war

years. These investigations interpret this in terms of social control, where various groups worked to subjugate the family in accordance with specific ideological or governmental objectives. It is the contention of this thesis that efforts to educate parents were not part of some all-encompassing program of social control, but can be more usefully understood as an unintended consequence of long-term figurational change.

This chapter will set the groundwork for the unfolding of this argument. It will be the task of this chapter, through an examination of the activities of various non-government organisations established to improve the health and well-being of children, that the inter-war years saw a flurry of activity centred around the education of parents. It will be the task of subsequent chapters to show how this intensification of efforts to educate parents reflects a civilisatory trend.

Parent education activities

During the inter-war years a number of non-government organisations emerged concerned to promote child health and well-being. These included the infant health associations that were established in most states, as well as organisations that were

focused on education and mental health such as the Victorian Council for Mental Hygiene and the Free Kindergarten Union of Victoria. These organisations, in the course of their activities, undertook parent education programs and produced literature for parents.

There was of course parenting literature produced in Australia prior to World War I. For example, in the late nineteenth century the Australian Health Society published literature for parents⁷, and several child rearing manuals were produced⁸. However during the inter-war years, with the establishment of various child health and welfare organisations, a greater volume of literature appeared and there was more of an effort to produce and disseminate this literature.

This section will investigate the establishment of these organisations and the activities that they pursued. Firstly, the history of the infant health associations will be examined, followed by an investigation of

⁷ The Australian Health Society was formed in Melbourne in 1875 with the objective of educating the public 'with regard to sanitary matters in general' (The Australian Health Society 1900: 5). The Society produced a series of pamphlets that addressed public health, personal hygiene and the prevention of disease. Included were three texts on child health: *General Management of Infants* (1877), *What Kills our Babies* (1878), and *The Infectious and Contagious Diseases of Children* (1881).

⁸ These included: *The Australian Mother's Own Book* (1912) by E. Aitken, *The Australian Baby: A Handbook for Mothers* (1902) by E. Ellis, *The Australian Baby* (1903) by F. E. Ferguson-Stewart, *The Wife's Guide and Friend* (1898) by S. Waren, *The First Few Months of Infancy* (1888) by A. W. Gardner, *Healthy Mothers and Sturdy Children* (1880) [author unknown], *How to Feed Infants: A Manual of Diet and Digestion* (1871) by J. Jamison, *The Health and Diet of Children in Australia* (1889) by P. E. Muskett, and *The Feeding and Management of Australian Infants in Health and Disease* (1906) also by Muskett.

the organisations that focused on early childhood education and mental hygiene.

Infant health services

The second and third decades of the twentieth century saw the establishment of infant health centres in Australia. These centres provided prenatal and neonatal advice to mothers on matters relating to feeding and general health. While the centres received some government funding, they were largely established through philanthropic activities. One of the main functions of these services was to provide education, which resulted in the publication of child rearing literature.

One of the earliest infant health services began in New South Wales in 1904 when Dr W. G. Armstrong, medical officer of health of the Sydney City Council, set up a home visiting scheme. This program involved the employment of a 'trained health visitor to visit personally and instruct mothers of all new born babies in the city who were not under direct medical care' (Armstrong 1939: 643). A daily list of all registered births was obtained from the Registrar's office so the health visitor could identify and have access to new mothers.

An important development in New South Wales occurred in 1908 when a non-government agency, the National Council of Women, established the Alice Rawson School for Mothers. It was funded 'partly by voluntary subscriptions and partly by a Government subsidy of £250 a year' (Armstrong 1939: 644). This school provided a service where mothers could bring their babies to be weighed and receive advice about feeding. Two additional schools were soon opened, and the nurses attached to these institutions visited mothers upon request. These two services, the visiting scheme directed by Armstrong and funded by the Sydney City Council, and the Alice Rawson School for Mothers provided the main impetus for infant welfare work in New South Wales in the early twentieth century.

In 1914 the first infant health clinic was established and in the same year a Baby Clinics Board was formed. As reported by Armstrong, who was one of its first members, the board was initiated by the Minister of Public Health in order to 'establish in suitable districts baby clinics or infant consultation centres on the line of the baby clinics which has been in operation in England and France for several years' (Armstrong 1939: 645). The Board consisted of medical officers from the Departments of Public Health and Public Instruction, as well as representatives from various charitable organisations including the National Council of Women, the Sydney District Nursing Association and the Alice Rawson School for

Mothers (Armstrong 1939: 645; Cohen 1971: 20). The role of the board was to 'advise the Minister as to the necessity of opening new clinics, the appointment of nurses et cetera, and on any other subject which it deemed desirable' (Armstrong 1939: 646).

In 1915 the Baby Clinics Board was affiliated with the National Council for Women, and at this time there were nine clinics operating in the metropolitan districts of Sydney and Newcastle (Armstrong 1939: 646). In 1918 the first regional centre was opened in Broken Hill and the total number of clinics in the State had reached twenty eight (Gandevia 1978: 125).

The Baby Clinics Board was short lived. It continued operations until 1919, at which time its members joined the Royal Society for the Welfare of Mothers and Babies (RSWMB) (Armstrong 1939: 646). The RSWMB was established a year earlier (Cohen 1971: 20-21). It received some funding from the New South Wales Government, however, as Armstrong reported, 'much was hoped from public subscriptions (Armstrong 1939: 646). The RSWMB engaged in an 'active publicity campaign' (Gandevia 1977: 126) and promoted the establishment of new clinics. By 1939 there were over 200 infant welfare centres in New South Wales (Gandevia 1977: 126).

Infant welfare services began in Victoria when Dr Isobel Younger Ross gathered a group of voluntary workers together to establish the first baby health centre in Richmond in 1917 (Reiger 1985; Gandevia 1978). Several other clinics were formed over the next 12 months, including clinics at North Melbourne, Fitzroy and Collingwood. A group of women 'formed a "Welfare Society", members of which walked the streets, carrying scales and equipment from one centre to another, inviting mothers to join' (Reiger 1985: 131).

The Victorian Baby Health Centres Association (VBHCA) was soon established consisting of representatives from the Talbot Milk Institute, the Medical Women's Association and the Australian Health Society (Reiger 1985: 131). The VBHCA also had the support of the Women's and Children's Hospitals that provided lists of new born babies (Reiger 1985: 131). The VBHCA was a charitable organisation that received funding from a variety of sources. It acted as a central organising body to attract state and local government funding, and encouraged the development of new centres that were initiated and run by groups of local enthusiasts (Reiger 1985: 131). By 1926 there were 70 infant welfare centres operating in Victoria.

The 'Society for the Health of Women and Children of Victoria, Plunket System' was also on the scene. This society received generous donations from Melbourne businessman and philanthropist

Mr Joseph Tweddle, and established a training hospital which provided residential care for mothers and babies (Reiger 1985: 133). The 'Plunket System' followed methods advocated by Truby King in New Zealand, and there was much rivalry between the two organisations. There was also a 'Plunket' society in operation in New South Wales, where 'similar rivalry and factionalism existed' (Reiger 1985: 135). The main differences were to do with the protein content of artificial milk (Reiger 1985: 135), and the extent of medical supervision. The Australian services preferred a supervising medical officer, whereas the Plunket system gave autonomy to the Plunket-trained nurse (Reiger 1985: 133).

The establishment of infant health services in Western Australia was based on the Victorian model. The Children's Protection Society (CPS) provided the impetus for the establishment of the Infant Welfare Association of Western Australia. The CPS was a charitable organisation established in 1906 to protect children from parental abuse and neglect (Battye 1913: 113).

In 1922, Edith Cowan, prominent politician and charity campaigner, visited Melbourne Welfare Centres and Baby Clinics and reported to the CPS (Crisp⁹ undated: 1). In June 1922 the CPS organised a conference 'for the purpose of establishing an Association along

⁹ Dr R. H. Crisp was a member of the first committee of the Infant Health Association of Western Australia formed in November 1922.

Melbourne lines' (Crisp undated: 1). In November a committee was formed consisting of medical officers from the Children's Hospital and the Department of Public Health, and representatives from charitable organisations.

The Committee secured funding from the state government and the Perth City Council, as well as the CPS and the Silver Chain Nursing Association¹⁰ (Crisp undated: 2). The state government, however, was reluctant to fulfil its funding obligation. Dr John Dale from the Department of Public Health advised the committee that the state government could not contribute. Edith Cowan appealed to the Premier and was successful in obtaining the funds. It was not until August 1924 that the first government payment was made (Crisp undated: 2).

In 1923 the first child health clinic was established in two rooms at the CPS headquarters in Stirling Street. Other clinics were started soon after by the CPS. These included one in Victoria Park with sub-centres in Carlisle and South Perth, and a centre in Leederville with sub-centres in Inglewood and Maylands. Crisp maintained that within three years of the establishment of the Association, 10 clinics were in operation, usually situated in the rooms of municipal centres (Crisp undated: 3).

¹⁰ Charitable organisation.

The Association functioned as an advisory body and promoted the establishment of clinics, but did not directly run or control local clinics. As Crisp maintained, ‘the establishment, running and finance of regional centres [was] controlled by local agencies and committee’ (Crisp undated: 2). The local clinics received funding from a variety of sources, including charitable associations such as the Red Cross and the Ugly Men’s Association, as well as state government subsidies and contributions from local government authorities. A pamphlet published in the mid 1920s stated that ‘the minimum cost of conducting an Infant Health Centre [was] approximately £250 per annum, £100 of which [was] contributed under certain conditions by the Government (The Infant Health Association of Western Australia: undated¹¹).

As can be seen from the above descriptions, the inter-war years saw the implementation of various efforts to address child and maternal health. These efforts resulted in the establishment of state-based infant health associations. These associations received funding from a number of sources and acted as umbrella bodies to promote and support the establishment of child health centres. The individual centres were coordinated locally, and funded through charitable

¹¹ Although this pamphlet is undated, it appears to have been published in the mid 1920s as it states: ‘the Infant Health Association of Western Australia was formed some three years ago’, and as cited by Crisp above, the first committee of the Association was established in 1922.

donations as well as local and state government subsidies. In New South Wales and Victoria the state-based umbrella bodies existed alongside the 'Plunket' or Truby King associations.

An important point to note about these services is the emphasis placed on education. The Infant Welfare Association of Western Australia, for example, very much emphasised the importance of education. The objectives of the Association were to: 'collect and disseminate knowledge on matters affecting the health of women and children'; 'employ specially qualified nurses whose duty it shall be to give sound and reliable advice ... on matters affecting the health and well-being of children'; and 'endeavour to educate and help parents and others in a practical way in domestic hygiene in general' (Infant Health Association of Western Australia undated).

This education took the form of the provision of advice upon consultation and through home visits, as well as through the production and dissemination of written information. Professionals associated with the infant health associations prepared advice literature for parents. Margaret Harper, for instance, authored the *Parents Book* which was first published in 1926 and went through twenty editions in the space of 29 years. Other popular publications included *The Australian Mothercraft Book* (1938) edited by Dr Helen Mayo who was influential in the establishment of clinics in South

Australia; *ABC of Mothercraft* (1930) by Dr Elma Sandford Morgan, Assistant Director of Maternal and Baby Welfare in NSW; *Your Baby* (1927) and *Preparing for Motherhood* (1935) by Muriel Peck, Principal of the VBHCA; and *The Australian Baby* (1928) by Anne Purcell, Matron of the Training School of the VBHCA. In addition, Peck also contributed a regular column to *Everylady's Journal*, and Sister Maude Primrose of the Infant Welfare Centres of Victoria (Plunket Society) wrote a column for *The Housewife*.

As such, with the establishment of infant health services there was an intensification of efforts to educate parents, which was accompanied by the production of an increasing amount of parent education literature.

Education and Mental Hygiene

In addition, there also emerged other organisations that provided parental education. These focused not so much on child health, but on education and psychological well-being. These included the Free Kindergarten Union of Victoria, the Australian Council for Educational Research, and the Victorian Council for Mental Hygiene. Like the infant welfare associations, these organisations were also philanthropic in nature and had an educative thrust.

The Free Kindergarten Union (FKU) was active in parent education in the 1930s. Originally established in 1908 as a charitable organisation, the role of the Union was to promote and encourage the development of kindergartens in the state of Victoria. Local groups interested in setting up a kindergarten applied to the FKU who provided support and advice. The kindergartens were independent and managed by 'voluntary bodies, known ... as "local committees" (Gardiner 1982: 12).

The Union provided some financial help directly to affiliated kindergartens, but as Gardiner maintains, 'never committed itself to this as a right of affiliation' (Gardiner 1982: 14). The Union would sometimes pay for the Assistant Director's salary if the number of children exceeded 60, and provided for the 'provision of regular medical and, later, dental inspection by professionals to whom the Union paid a small honorarium' (Gardiner 1982: 72). The Union also donated gifts (like a piano) and assisted in 'the distribution among affiliated kindergartens of the government grant and of monies given by the big charitable trusts' (Gardiner 1982: 72).

As with the infant welfare associations, the FKU also had a very strong focus on education. As Gardiner maintains, in 'most kindergartens, mothers meetings were held monthly, where

children's problems could be discussed and advice given on diet, clothing, and ailments' (Gardiner 1982: 17). The Director of the Carlton Free Kindergarten, Mary Lush, explained the educative functions of the kindergartens in her training manual for students, *Progressive Kindergarten Methods* (1926). The kindergartens, she instructed, should provide 'Mother's Meetings, and various Mother's Clubs, and also the regular and systematic visiting of the homes by teachers' (Lush 1926: 149). She went on to say that the meetings should include a programme to 'explain to the mothers the purpose of some of the Kindergarten activities', a discussion of 'problems of child management' and 'the physical care of children' (Lush 1926: 150).

In addition, kindergarteners employed by the Union also lectured and produced literature for parents that addressed issues relating to the psychological development of children and the management of behaviour. For example, Miss M. V. Gutteridge, a graduate of the Froebel Institute in England and the principal of the FKU's Kindergarten Training College produced *The Child at Home* (1934) and *The Child Growing Up* (1937), and the American trained Christine Heinig and succeeding principal authored *The Child in the Nursery School* (1938).

The Victorian Council for Mental Hygiene (VCMH) also undertook parent education activities and produced literature. The Victorian Council was established in 1930, with a similar association forming two years later in New South Wales.

The Mental Hygiene movement in Australia followed similar developments in the United States. In 1908 the Connecticut Society for Mental Hygiene was formed and the following year The National Committee for Mental Hygiene was established (Muhl 1939: 1601). The focus of the National committee was on prevention and early intervention, and the relationship between childhood maladjustment and criminality (Richardson, 1989: 81). Its early projects included an investigation into the psychopathology of crime, the establishment of a mental clinic in the children's court of New York City, and the implementation of a child guidance program in the 1920s (Richardson 1989). The movement soon spread overseas with the first international Congress of Mental Hygiene being held in Washington in 1930 attracting 4,000 participants from 52 countries (Muhl 1939: 1601).

As with the United States associations, the Victorian Council also had a strong focus on early intervention and the importance of childhood in relation to mental well-being. As maintained by Balshaw, the inaugural meeting of the Council defined four priority

areas and established sub-committees to work on them. These included 'education, guidance and prevention of mental ill-health; delinquency and mental deficiency; early treatment, care and after-care of the mentally afflicted; and the establishment of a vocational and child guidance centre' (Balshaw 2007: 19). In addition, the organisation embarked on a public awareness campaign, 'involving public lectures, radio talks and magazine articles centred on the mental well-being of children' (Balshaw 2007: 19).

This public awareness campaign involved two series of five lectures on the management of children that were published in booklet form in 1931 and 1932. The first publication was called *The Young Child*, and the second *The Growing Child*. These booklets were produced in association with the Australian Council for Educational Research¹² (ACER) as part of its Educational Research Series. Interestingly, two kindergarteners were involved in these publications. Gutteridge (1931a) contributed to the first volume, with a paper called 'Should Children Obey?', and Mary Lush (1932) contributed to the second with 'The Child in the Family'. Other contributors to these publications included educationalists and medical professionals.

The Victorian Council for Mental Hygiene and the Australian Council for Educational Research were established as non-government

¹² Established in 1930 with a grant from the Carnegie Corporation in the United States, (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs website).

organisations. These organisations still exist today, with ACER retaining its name and the VCMH becoming the Mental Health Foundation of Australia (Victoria) (Balshaw 2007: 19). They both retain their non-government status with ACER receiving no direct financial support from government (ACER website), and the Mental Health Foundation of Victoria receiving some government funds but mostly relying upon private donations (MHFV website).

With the Mental Hygiene movement gaining a foothold in Australia, and with the promotion of early childhood education and research, the 1930s saw an increased interest in child psychology and behaviour. This resulted in the emergence of a new body of literature that provided parents with guidance on the psychological development of children.

In this way, during the inter-war years a number of different parent education programs appeared, initiated by a variety of sources. The state based infant welfare associations were active in educating parents through consultations and visits, as well as through the production and distribution of written materials. There also emerged associations that were focused on early childhood education and psychological development. These associations engaged in parent education activities involving public lectures and the production of literature.

This reflects a trend described by Elias where increasingly, educational advice and instructions have permeated the modern family. This has occurred, he maintains, because of the way in which, with the growing distance between children and adults, or the lengthening of the individual social civilising process, the family has become more specialised in relation to its educative or socialising functions. As a consequence of this, the twentieth century has seen an increasing emphasis placed on the importance of parental education. This is reflected in Australia in the inter-war years with the emergence of various organisations that engaged in parent education activities and produced literature for parents.

As already pointed out this trend has been noted by others. Reiger, Arnup, Lewis and Decan, for instance, discuss the way in which the inter-war years saw the establishment of a network of child welfare services that sought to teach women the skills of mothercraft. And Donzelot discusses the emergence and activities of the medico-psycho-pedagogical centre in France, and the Parents School (Donzelot 1980: 200). Such investigations view parent education as an attempt to shape the family in accordance with programs of social control. Arnup, Reiger, Lewis and Deacon, for instance, argue that efforts to educate parents can be explained in terms of the way in which the ruling class, or the state, worked to transform the family in accordance with capitalist or patriarchal ideologies. While

Foucaultian theorists such as Donzelot reject notions of the ideological state or the ruling class, they view the infiltration of scientific discourses into the family as an example of the normalising strategies of experts.

It is the argument of this thesis that these developments in parent education are not part of an all-encompassing program of social control, but instead have emerged as an unintended consequence of the civilising process. This refers, of course, to the growing distance between children and adults, and the positioning of the family as the primary site for the civilising of children. Such developments have arisen as a consequence of changing figurational patterns, where increasing functional differentiation and lengthening chains of interdependences have forced certain changes in habitus or personality structure were individuals are required to exercise ever stricter patterns of self-control or emotional restraint.

While the link between the intensification of parent education in the inter-war years and the civilising process has not yet been fully investigated, this argument will be developed further in subsequent chapters. It will be shown in chapter five, for instance, how the inter-war literature was increasingly directed towards managing the behaviour of children, particularly with regard to the regulation or civilising of emotions. For now, I want to consider the organisation

and structure of the associations discussed above, to show how the development of parent education services and activities reflect unplanned and unintended figurational determinants of change.

Figurational determinants of change

The first point to note is the polymorphic character of the development of parent education services. This refers to the philanthropic nature of the various associations involved in parent education activities, as well as the way in which these organisations emerged independently and in an ad-hoc fashion. Although state and local governments did provide grants to the infant welfare associations and FKU affiliated kindergartens, the establishment of these services was not initiated or directly controlled by the state. While the New South Wales government established a Baby Clinics Board, it was short lived with its members becoming part of the Royal Society for the Welfare of Mothers and Babies. It is interesting to note that in Western Australia the state government was reluctant to contribute funds to the Infant Welfare Association, and only did so after Edith Cowan used her influence to sway the Premier.

This raises the issue of class. It cannot be denied that class is a factor in this story as persons from middle class backgrounds, such

as Edith Cowan, played a major role in the establishment of parent education services. Individuals from the traditional entrepreneurial middle class were involved, as well as middle class professionals such as medical experts and educationalists. This has been well documented in the literature, where proponents of the social control approach, such as Deacon, Reiger and Lewis, argue that middle class involvement points to ideological control. Although it is certainly true that middle class persons were active in parent education programs, it does not necessarily follow that this constitutes the domination of one class by another, or the ideological control of the family.

One of the most important points in this regard, is that reforming strategies were not only directed towards working class families, but towards the middle class as well. This point is made by Reiger. She maintains that although the working classes bore the brunt of early reforming efforts, middle class mothers were also targeted (Reiger 1985: 136). For example, the first annual report of the Society for the Health of Women and Children of Victoria (Plunket Society) published in 1921 stated:

... there is just as much need to reform on the part of those mothers who are 'well-to-do' as on the part of those whose monetary position in life is not so thoroughly assured'

(cited by Reiger 1985: 136).

And Margaret Harper, in her report on the work of the Royal New Zealand Society for the Health of Women and Children commented that 'there was as much need for practical reform and going to school on the part of the cultured and well-to-do as there was on the part of the poor and ignorant' (Harper, cited by Cohen 1971: 21-22), and pointed out that this applied equally in New South Wales 'where the cultured and well-to-do had no assistance offered to them in Mothercraft' (Cohen 1971: 22).

Reiger, however, views this as an even more pervasive form of social control. She maintains that in the twentieth century a new middle class emerged, the professional bourgeois, who engaged in a missionary endeavour to transform not only the working class, but the traditional bourgeois entrepreneurial class (Reiger 1985: 213). Reiger argues that the infant welfare movement was very much controlled by the professional bourgeois, representing an attempt at ideological domination by this new class. There is however, another way in which professional middle class involvement in parent education programs can be understood.

The fact that it was persons from middle class backgrounds, and in particular, the professional middle class, who were most active in parent education activities reflects the way in which this group was

exposed more directly to the figurational constraints of modern life. As discussed in chapter three, Elias maintains that the emergence of a civilised rationality or mode of conduct first occurred among the upper/middle classes, and then gradually spread to the lower classes. This process of 'diffusion', as Elias describes it, was not simply a process whereby a particular mentality or rationality was forced upon the lower classes. Instead, Elias argues that the working classes began to change their behaviour because they were gradually exposed to the same 'conditions of life' or 'social situation' that forced changes in behaviour of the upper and middle classes (Elias 2000: 99). This refers to the way in which the figurational characteristics of modern life - increasing differentiation of functions and lengthening chains of interdependencies – exacted certain changes in regards to behaviour and emotions. The upper/ middle classes, through their participation in courtly society or commercial activities and trade networks, were the first to experience these figuration pressures. As the lower classes become increasingly involved in these activities, through the industrialisation of the workforce and the urbanisation of social life, they too were subjected to the same pressures.

In this way, it is not surprising that it was middle class persons who led the way in parent education reform in Australia in the inter-war years. In fact, many accounts of the history of the family describe

how change first emerged among the middle classes. Ariès, for instance, maintains that the discovery of childhood was a middle class discovery. Stone put forward a similar argument with regards to the emergence of affective individualism, and Shorter maintains that concern for the welfare of children and corresponding changes in child rearing practices first emerged in middle class families. Elias too, argues that it was not until the bourgeois became the dominant class that the family became the primary institution for the civilising of children.

The involvement of middle class persons in parent education reform in Australia can be explained in terms of the way in which this group experienced particular 'conditions of life', which made possible, or demanded, a certain type of rationality or mentality. In this regard, it is important to note the significance of the professional bourgeois. Elias discusses the emergence of this class in *The Court Society*. He argues that the professional bourgeois evolved from the former 'courtly' classes, and while retaining some aspects of courtly forms of life conduct, developed in their own distinctive direction. In particular, central to the professional bourgeois was the need for *économie*, or the subordination of expenditure to income, and a limitation of consumption in the interest of saving (Newton 1996: 141). In this way, there was an even stronger emphasis placed on self-restraint, and by the time of 'bourgeois mass society', 'the professional sphere

[becomes] the primary area in which social constraints and formative tendencies impinge on people' (Elias, cited by Newton 1996: 141).

As such, the middle class professionals involved in parent education activities in the inter-war years were merely reflecting a certain mentality or mode of life conduct consistent with the way in which this class was exposed to figurational constraints. If working class parents, or indeed their middle class fellows, followed their advice, perhaps they did so because they recognised the benefits to be gained by adapting certain forms of behaviour. Indeed, it cannot be said with certainty whether or not parents were influenced by the discourses of these professionals, what can be said is that these discourses reveal an attitude or mentality that reflects the particular experiences of this group.

In this way too, it can be seen how an Eliasian reading offers a point of difference to Foucaultian interpretations, where 'expert' authorities are seen to impose normalising discourses upon individuals and the family. It may be argued that these discourses 'reflect' rather than 'construct'. Tim Newton maintains that this was a point made by Wetherell and Potter where they distinguish between what they call 'constitutive' discourse and 'established' discourse. 'The former refers to the Foucauldian account of the way in which subjects are constituted within discourse. The latter expresses an

acknowledgement that discourse is developed or 'established' through human agency under particular kinds of social conditions' (Newton 1996: 140). A similar point is made by Denis Smith. He argues that 'Foucault treats discursive practices as an alien imposition upon human beings, shaping consciousness, whereas Elias treats a group's discourse as a product of its shared experiences, a reflection of those experiences rather than something that creates them' (Smith 1999: 93). As such, the experts involved in parent education activities and the production of parenting discourses in Australia in the inter-war years reflect a civilising mentality or rationality, as a consequence of their participation in, and exposure to, the figurational constraints of modern life. Thus, their efforts to educate parents and reform families must be placed within the context of the long-term unplanned processes of development within which they take place. This refers to the way in which the increasing emphasis placed on parent education in the twentieth century can be understood as a consequence of the growing distance between children and adults, itself an unintended consequence of figurational change, which is blind and unintended.

Another issue examined under the umbrella of social control is the question of gender. As noted previously, many accounts of parent education activities in the inter-war years focus on the consequences for women, and in particular the way in which the state, and/or middle

class professionals work to subjugate women to the domestic sphere. While it is true that much of the child rearing literature produced during this time was directed towards women, it must also be noted that most of it was written by women and that women were prominent in child welfare and parent education activities. This is evident in the charity organisations where middle class women were involved, for instance Edith Cowan's work with the CPS, but also with regard to the involvement of professional women. For example, the Medical Women's Association was represented at the first meeting of the VBHCA, and Dr Isobel Younger Ross and Dr Scantlebury were prominent in this movement in Victoria. Dr Margaret Harper was influential in New South Wales, and Dr Helen Mayo in South Australia. These professional women also authored most of the child rearing literature produced by this movement.

In addition, women also made a significant contribution to the education and psychology discourses. While most of the contributors to the two volumes produced by the Victorian Council for Mental Hygiene were male, Gutteridge emerged as one of the strongest voices in the field of child guidance. Not only did she author one of the chapters in the 1931 VCMH publication, she produced two FKU publications and also authored a paper called 'The Mental Hygiene of Childhood' which appeared in *The Medical Journal of Australia*

(Gutteridge, 1931b). Christine Heinig (1938) and Mary Lush (1926) also made contributions to this literature.

In fact, the involvement of women is one of the most striking features of parent education programs and parenting literature produced during the inter-war years. Most of the texts produced prior to World War I were authored by male doctors and health professionals. These include Musket (1889) and (1906), Ferguson-Stewart (1903), Jamison (1871), Hunter (1878), and Gardner (1888). Two works produced prior to World War I were authored by women, and these appeared after the turn of the century: *The Australian Mother's Own Book* (1912) by Edith Aitken, and *The Australian Baby* by Mrs Everett Elliss (1902).

Thus, prior to World War I men were advising women in matters relating to child rearing, while after World War I it became a case of women advising women. Perhaps this reflects the way in which women were beginning to enter the professional sphere, and the fields of paediatrics and education were areas in which they were able to do this. It is interesting to note that this occurred at the same time as, according to Arnup and Deacon, women were becoming further entrenched within the domestic sphere, and this was occurring as a result of mothercraft education strategies.

In addition, it may also be argued that the targeting of women in parenting literature reflects not so much the subjugation of women, but the way in which women were gaining more power within the family. The historians discussed in chapter two, for instance, argue that the modern family is characterised by a lessening of the hierarchical structure and a rebalancing of power relationships. This refers not only to the parent-child relationship, but to the husband-wife relationship. Stone, in particular, made the point that although women became more economically dependent upon their husbands, they were granted a greater degree of decision making within the family, specifically in relation to the care of children (Stone 1979: 412). Perhaps the fact that child rearing texts were directed at women highlights their elevated status as household managers. In this regard, it is worth pointing out, that one of the earliest child health texts produced in Australia, *Infectious and Contagious Diseases of Children*, was directed not at women, but at 'Heads of Families, School Teachers, and others' (Central Board of Health: 1881).

Another factor to highlight is the way in which the question of gender is positioned as the dominant issue in many accounts of the infant welfare movement and parent education activities in the inter-war years. Many feminist texts explicate parent education discourses as being primarily about the ideological control of women. While it is

important to acknowledge that these activities did have consequences for women, it is equally important to take into consideration the complex array of other factors that can help to explain parent education in the twentieth century. Foremost among these, and what this chapter has attempted show, is that the historical transformation of childhood, or what Elias describes as the growing distance between children and adults, is an important factor that can help to explain the way in which, during the twentieth century, educational advice and instruction entered the family.

Conclusion

This chapter investigated parent education activities in the inter-war years. It was established that during this time there was an intensification of efforts to educate parents. This is made evident in the fact that there emerged a number of organisations concerned to promote child health and well-being that engaged in education programs and produced literature for parents.

The next chapter will investigate the literature produced by these organisations to show the way in which the infiltration of parenting discourses into the family reflects a civilising trend. It will be revealed that an increasing amount of information was provided on guiding

child behaviour, or what may be described as the 'civilising' of children.

5. The management of children

This chapter will investigate the literature produced by professionals associated with the organisations discussed in the previous chapter. It will show that this literature became increasingly focused on providing advice about managing the behaviour of children. In particular, much emphasis was placed on the importance of teaching children to control emotions or impulsive tendencies. It will be argued that these efforts to guide parents in child management reflect a civilising imperative, where attention was directed towards regulating the emotional behaviour of children. In addition, it will also be argued that this emphasis placed on the regulation of emotions reflects the way in which figurational pressure is brought to bear upon individuals, providing an alternative to accounts that focus on social control.

The first section of this chapter will show how the inter-war texts contained an increasing amount of information on the management of child behaviour. The second section will examine the specific advice given about behaviour, where it will be demonstrated that the regulation of instincts and emotions emerged as a dominant theme. The third section will investigate the figurational determinants of change, where it will be shown that authors encouraged the

development of a civilised disposition in order to provide children with the skills necessary for them to 'fit into the social scheme'.

The increasing emphasis on behaviour

As discussed in our examination of *The Civilizing Process* in chapter three, Elias describes how certain changes in the figurational structure of Western societies led to changes in habitus or personality structure. This refers to the way in which individuals situated within a social structure characterised by increasing functional differentiation and lengthening chains of interdependencies, are required to exercise a high degree of self-restraint or emotional control in their interactions with others. Elias argues that as a consequence of this requirement for a careful regulation of emotions, the family has become more focused on guiding the behaviour of children.

This is reflected in inter-war parenting discourses where we see the way in which the literature became increasingly focused on providing advice on the management of child behaviour, and how parents were accorded a greater responsibility in relation to this. Not only did the texts contain an increasing amount of information on behaviour, an emphasis was placed on the way in which the environment can play

a major role in determining behaviour (as opposed to being 'in-born' or biologically determined), raising the possibility that behaviour can be shaped or modified.

The increasing emphasis placed on behaviour is demonstrated in the fact that more information about behaviour appeared in the health texts produced by the infant welfare associations, but also because by the 1930s psychology and education discourses emerged. In fact, a comparison with texts produced prior to World War I shows that there was a gradual movement away from addressing the immediate physical needs of children towards attending to the non-material aspects of care including the management of behaviour, formation of character, emotional well-being, and mental development.

This is evident, firstly, in the gradual movement away from a concern with infant mortality. The texts produced prior to World War I focused on this issue, while the texts produced during the inter-war years did not. For example, in an Australian Health Society publication "*What Kills Our Babies*", Charles Hunter pointed to what he described as the alarming infant mortality rate. He maintained that in comparison with Britain, 'Ten times more babies die in this colony than grown-up people out of an equal number living at the same time' (Hunter 1887: 3). He then went on to list the causes of death: 'it may safely be said that half of these babies should not have died; that half of them have

been killed, not intentionally, but by ignorance, carelessness, and too often mistaken kindness. Very few are starved; far more die of over-feeding with wrong foods; some of cold, from short-sleeved and low-bodied dresses; whilst others are killed by bad houses, bad air, and bad drains' (Hunter 1887: 3). Jamison addressed this issue in a chapter called 'Infant Mortality and its Causes' and expressed the hope that his work would help to 'lessen the vast amount of suffering and death amongst the young (Jamison 1871: 4). He maintained that 'at least 50 percent of the deaths in infants under one year, are caused by diseases of the various organs concerned in digestion' (Jamison 1871: 9). Musket also emphasised this issue. He devoted ten introductory pages in drawing the reader's attention to the 'appalling infantile mortality obtaining in the different Australian states' (Musket 1906: xv). He maintained that half of all infant deaths occurring in the 22 years from 1884 to 1905 'could have been prevented' (Musket 1906: xix) and pointed to problems associated with feeding as being one of the major causes of death (Musket 1906: xxv).

This contrasts with the texts produced during the inter-war years. In these the authors were not as concerned with infant mortality, and when this subject was mentioned it was to point out the declining infant mortality rate. Mayo, for instance, maintained that: 'Until a few years ago the infant deathrate and the incidence of disease in

mothers and babies, resulting from lack of knowledge and care, were much greater than at the present time, although there is still need for improvement' (Mayo 1938: 7). In pointing out the objective of *The Australian Mothercraft Book*, Mayo did not mention the prevention of infant mortality. Instead, she advised that the purpose of the publication was to instruct 'women in the art of mothercraft, so that by a popular extension of the knowledge gained by scientific research a healthier generation may arise' (Mayo 1938:7). She also expressed the wish that the book would 'help parents bring healthy babies into the world and to keep them sound in body and mind' (Mayo 1938:7). In this way, Mayo's objectives were not so much to do with keeping babies alive, but with maintaining and improving health. It is also interesting to note that she made reference not only to physical health but to mental health.

Similar objectives were expressed by other inter-war authors. Harper, for example, in stressing the importance of providing appropriate infant care, did not address the issue of infant mortality. Instead, she pointed to the way in which proper care will ensure 'healthy', 'normal' growth. She wrote:

With the first cry of the newly born infant an entirely new circulation is established. The baby now has to breathe for himself, to do his own work of digestion and to get rid of his

own waste products. In a word, he has to depend on himself for all the processes of life for which he has hitherto been dependent on his mother. This is a great change, and unless he is properly cared for at this period, much damage may be done. Gradual education of all his functions is essential if he is to grow into a healthy normal baby.

(Harper 1926: 23).

Dunlop made a similar point. In providing a rationale for the necessity of parent education, Dunlop highlighted the unhealthy state of the adult population as revealed by military medical examinations:

In Australia, during the recent war, the number of men rejected as medically unfit for war service was 20% of the total number examined. What was the reason for this?

Through lack of knowledge, much irreparable harm is done to young children. It is the very early years that count. Right throughout childhood the diet is the main factor in building up strong, healthy bodies. A healthy baby is a happy baby, and children have the right to happiness.

(Dunlop 1928: 9).

Again, infant mortality did not rate a mention. Rather, Dunlop conveyed the hope that knowledge about child care will help to

improve the health of the nation or to build up 'strong, healthy bodies'. Interestingly she also expressed a concern for 'happiness', suggesting that concern for children's wellbeing moves beyond providing for physical needs.

Another important aspect of the texts produced during the inter-war years was that there was little mention of disease. Although some texts did contain information on 'common ailments' such as constipation, diarrhoea, colic, fever, coughs, and rashes, the main focus was on the general management of health rather than the treatment of disease.

In many ways, this focus on general health was not too dissimilar from the pre-war texts. Many of these texts also provided general health advice. Musket, for example, addressed the 'five laws of health': (a) ablution - the skin and the bath, (b) bedroom ventilation, bedroom hygiene and sleep, (c) clothing, (d) diet - breast feeding, wet nursing, hand-feeding, and (e) exercise (Musket 1906:2). Although some information on the treatment of diseases was provided, these authors also mainly focused on the general management of health. Jamison, for example, stated:

... almost no attempt has been made to give any account of diseased conditions and their treatments. Even if it were

advisable to enter on the subject of the diseases of children, and their treatment or otherwise, such an attempt would be beyond the scope of this little work, its objective being to treat of the best means of preserving health, and not of restoring it when lost.

(Jamison 1871: 4).

The key difference between the inter-war and pre-war texts in this regard, is that although both emphasised general health, the pre-war texts were interested in this as a strategy to prevent mortality and morbidity, whereas the inter-war texts were more concerned with ensuring normal growth and maximising health. This shows the way in which concern shifted from addressing the immediate physical needs essential for survival, to a focus on aspects of health that extended beyond the bare necessity of keeping children alive.

Another important development in relation to this trend was that the inter-war texts included information about progress and development. For instance, many of these texts contained information about weight gain for infants. Harper, for example, outlined the average weight of a baby at birth (7 to 7.5 lb.) and provided a guide as to appropriate weight gain:

1st, 2nd, 3rd months, 6 to 8 oz. a week.

4th, 5th, 6th months, 4 to 5 oz. a week.

7th, 8th, 9th months, 3 to 4 oz. a week.

10th, 11th, 12th months, 2 to 3 oz. a week.

(Harper 1926: 73).

Other authors also provided height and weight charts. Peck, for instance, included a 'Standard Height-Weight-Age Table for Children from Birth to 2 Years' that gave separate calculations for boys and girls (Peck 1935: 64).

Developmental milestones were also outlined. For example, Sandford Morgan included a chapter called 'Landmarks in the Baby's First Year' (Sandford Morgan 1930: 2). Authors described the development of functions and abilities in accordance with age in months. As Peck wrote:

If he is developing normally he should be able to hold his head up at about three months; then by degrees he tries to sit up altogether. This is quite all right as long as he is supported. At three or four months he begins to feel that he wants to see what is going on in the world, and objects to just lying flat in his cot. At about this time he begins to cut his teeth.

(Peck 1935: 70).

Brown et al. outlined the physical and mental development of the child. They defined particular stages in the acquisition of functions such as: sight and object recognition, hearing, taste and smell, the sensations of touch, heat and pain, 'the growth of muscular power and ability to perform certain purposive acts' (as a useful guide to mental progress), and the development of speech (Brown et al. 1938: 87-91).

The inclusion of information relating to progress and development was mostly absent from texts produced prior to World War I. Exceptions were Muskett (1906) with a section in the introduction on 'Infantile Measurements, Weight, Growth and Progress', and Elliss (1902) with a chapter called 'Progress of the Child'. Conditions at Different Months.-Intelligence.-Creeping.-Walking.-Weight and Size'. Aitken (1912) included a paragraph on 'Weight of Baby', and Gardner (1888) included information on 'Weight, Length and Temperature of a Babe' in an appendix. With the exception of Gardner (1888) these texts were produced after the turn of the century. Minimal information about progress and development was presented in nineteenth century texts, and certainly, there was no information about mental development in these texts.

Again, this shows the way in which the inter-war texts focused on improving health and ensuring normal development, rather than on attending to aspects of immediate physical need.

In addition, the inter-war texts also included more information about behaviour and the formation of character. For example, Harper (1926) included a chapter called 'The Formation of Habits'; Sandford Morgan (1930) had chapters entitled 'Baby's Education', 'Sleeping Habits', 'Some Bad Habits', and 'The Formation of Character'; Purcell (1928) 'Training the Child', and Dunlop (1928) 'Management of the Child'. One of the later works, Brown et al. (1938), included a chapter called 'The Psychological Management of the Child'.

While the pre-war texts made an occasional reference to aspects of behaviour, these texts did not provide specific chapters about this issue. The exceptions were: Aitken (1912) with sections on 'Early Training of Children in the Antipodes', and 'Education of Children'; and *Healthy Mothers and Sturdy Children* (1893) with a chapter called 'Ethical Training of Children'. Muskett included a paragraph on 'Bad Habits' in *The Feeding and Management of Australian Infants*, however this did not appear until the 7th edition published in 1906¹³.

¹³ First edition published in 1888.

The topics of behaviour and psychological management, were, of course, more fully addressed in the texts produced by the education and mental hygiene associations. For example, chapter titles included: 'The Importance of Habit', 'The Growth of Character' (Victorian Council for Mental Hygiene 1932), 'Environment and Good Behaviour', 'Social Development', 'The Growth of Personality' (Gutteridge 1934), 'Human Nature and Human Behaviour', 'Ordinary Problems of the Normal Child', and 'Emotions Must be Mastered – But Not Suppressed' (Heinig 1938). In this way, by the 1930s there emerged a new body of literature on child psychology and behaviour, existing alongside the health literature.

As such, during the inter-war years we see the orbit of advice extending from a focus on physical care to include non-material aspects of care. While the pre-war texts focused on maintaining health in order to prevent infant mortality and morbidity, the inter-war texts were more concerned with improving health and ensuring normal development. In addition, the inter-war texts contained more information on the growth and development of children, and eventually on behaviour and the psychological management of children. This shows the way in which the educative strategies that emerged in the inter-war years, were directed, more and more, towards guiding the behaviour of children and shaping character.

This reflects the increasing emphasis placed on the educative or socialising functions of the family. As we have seen, Elias argues that with the growing distance between children and adults, or the lengthening of the individual social civilising process, the family has become the primary institution for regulating or 'civilising' children. In the inter-war years we see the way in which education and advice entered the family, and how this was increasingly directed towards helping parents to manage the behaviour of children.

An important point to note about this increasing emphasis placed on behaviour, is the emergence of the idea that a child's behaviour or personality can be shaped or modified. This represents a departure from the view that behavioural characteristics are inherited or 'in born'. This is demonstrated in discussions about environment versus inheritance, where authors highlighted the environmental determinants of behaviour. In fact, this emphasis placed on the environment was a distinctive feature of the mental hygiene movement in general. As Crossley argues in his account of the movement in Britain, it 'placed considerable emphasis upon the role of social and developmental processes in the aetiology of mental problems, devoting great attention to the family environment of the early infant ...' (Crossley 1998: 465).

This is reflected in the Australian inter-war literature. Cunningham, for instance, addressed this issue in a lecture called 'Why Children are "Naughty"'. He maintained that children are not 'born bad' but may develop behavioural problems as a result of:

... complex and often artificial conditions to which the child must adapt himself; ... our failure to understand children and to call out the best that is in them, ... [and] bad example and bad training.

(Cunningham 1931: 2-3).

In this way, he argued against the eugenicists Lombroso and Tredgold who claimed that criminality is inborn (Cunningham 1931: 2).

Gutteridge made a similar point. She maintained that the environment exerts an important influence on a child's life:

It was once thought that the child's hereditary traits were the dominant influence of his life. Biologists to-day are agreed that environment plays an important part.

(Gutteridge 1937: 4).

Heinig expressed a similar view:

Once life is begun environment is generally acknowledged to-day to be more important than inheritance.

(Heinig 1938: 14).

Although authors stressed the importance of the environment, they did not totally reject the part played by natural endowment, insisting that the individual is a product of both inherited characteristics and the environment. For instance, Heinig maintained that:

There are two forces which determine social behaviour: the individual himself and the social world in which he lives. Social behaviour is the action which takes place when these forces are interacting.

(Heinig 1938: 53).

This was similar to the position taken by Wrigley:

Previous lectures, both last year and this, have shown that normal children are born with a certain natural endowment which will normally develop along certain lines.

It is a commonplace that this development may be helped or hindered or even cut short by the action of the

environment, and that there is an optimum time for the emergence and development of different native aptitudes.

(Wrigley 1932: 59).

In this regard, Wrigley distinguished between 'character' and 'temperament', maintaining that temperament is in-born while character is something that is developed. He argued that the answer to the question of how character may be formed:

... is to be sought in certain psychological considerations regarding the basis of character and particularly in the view taken of native endowment, and the possibility of modifying this. Schopenhauer indeed held that character is fixed at birth, invariable, and not susceptible, therefore, to modification by education. To him, modern psychologists would reply that this may be true of temperament but not of character.

(Wrigley 1932: 59).

It is important to note that by the use of the term 'environment' these authors were mainly referring to the human or social environment. Albiston, for example, maintained that by 'environment' he meant:

... the universe in which we live. Earth, air, water, trees, houses, streets, books, trams, people, everything.

(Albiston 1932: 48).

He then went on to say that human beings are the most important factor:

By far the most important elements in our environment are human beings. Their objection or approval, their encouragement or derision, their resistance or assistance are all reactions of our environment.

(Albiston 1932: 49).

This emphasis on the environment, and in particular, the human environment, had important implications. Firstly, it meant that the child's character or personality was seen as being malleable and able to be modified, and secondly, that adults have the potential to play an important role in shaping the child's character. This role can be positive, in the sense of helping the child to develop good habits, or negative in the sense of hindering the child's development or cultivating unwanted attributes. In this way, authors were keen to impress upon parents the importance of their role as child trainers, and to provide instruction as to the best means of 'calling out' desirable characteristics.

As such, not only do we see in the inter-war texts an increasing focus placed on the management of child behaviour, but on the idea that behaviour, or character, is able to be shaped or modified. The desire to modify behaviour is accompanied by a belief in the possibility of doing so. This further underscores the civilising thrust of these educative strategies, where the regulation of behaviour is not only seen as an imperative, but as a viable prospect. This also shows how, parents, as the most important elements in the social environment, were accorded an important role in the management of child behaviour. It is in this context, that parents become, as Elias describes, the primary agents of conditioning, and we might add, the targets of educative strategies.

Controlling instincts and emotions

So far it has been established that the inter-war texts were increasingly directed towards providing guidance in the regulation of child behaviour. It is now time to examine the particular precepts for behaviour contained in the literature. In this regard, an important theme to emerge is the way in which an emphasis was placed on helping children to manage emotions or instinctive tendencies. Central to understanding the changing role and function of the family, where the family has become more focused on its socialising, or

civilising, functions, is the way in which this is related to changes in habitus or personality structure, where individuals are expected to exercise a high degree of self-restraint or self-control in their relations with others. As we have seen, Elias argues that as a consequence of this, the family has become the dominant institution for installing 'drive-control', or ensuring that children are provided with the skills necessary to be able to operate in an adult world that demands a high level of differentiated self-control from individuals.

An examination of the inter-war literature shows that a prime objective of the behaviour management strategies advocated was to provide children with the capacity for self-control. This is made evident in the way in which authors emphasised the importance of habit, where habit was defined in terms of the sublimation of instinctive behaviour. This section will investigate the way in which authors sought to help parents civilise the impulsive behaviour of children, and how this was to be achieved through the cultivation of habit. In addition, it will also be demonstrated that through the notion of habit, authors sought to develop a more pervasive and all-embracing compulsion towards self-restraint, or what Elias refers to as *selbstzwänge*.

Habit

The emphasis on habit appeared right the way through the parenting discourses produced during the inter-war years. This included the health texts produced by the infant welfare associations as well as the psychology and education texts. An analysis of the health texts will be undertaken first, where habit was discussed in relation to the establishment of routines. This will be followed by an examination of the way in which the notion of habit was used in the psychology and education literature, where the emphasis on self-restraint was made explicit.

Authors of the health texts were primarily concerned with establishing regular habits in relation to daily routines. Brown et al., for example, stressed the importance of regularity in relation to sleeping patterns:

During his first month baby should sleep 22 hours out of the 24. He should wake only for feeding, changing and washing, he must not be played with nor over-excited, and his hours should be set and rigorously observed.

(Brown et al. 1938: 47).

And Dunlop advised:

Sleep is of enormous importance to the child. As the baby grows older, he will have just two long sleeps in the daytime. When he is a year old, he will have one long sleep from breakfast-time till dinner-time. At fifteen months let the one long sleep be in the afternoon. The baby can play in the morning sun. Give him an early dinner and then lay him down to sleep for two or three hours. On awakening, he can be taken out for an airing and then brought home to tea and bed. Children should be in bed as near to 6 p.m. as possible ...

(Dunlop 1928: 65).

Authors also emphasised regularity in relation to toilet habits. Harper, for instance, advised that 'regular bowel and bladder action' must be achieved (Harper 1926: 67). Dunlop maintained that as 'soon as the baby is put on to artificial food, then an endeavour must be made to get a daily motion' (Dunlop 1928: 64). She insisted that if this did not happen naturally then efforts must be made to establish the daily event. The diet, for example, 'can be varied ... give more fruit-juice, such as orange –juice or vegetable juice, such as the juice of carrots, raw turnips or raw swedes' (Dunlop 1928: 64).

Regularity was applied to feeding. Opinion was divided as to the appropriate interval between feeds, for example, some authors

suggested four hourly intervals while others insisted on three hourly intervals. The most important thing was for a regular routine to be established. For example, Harper maintained that 'Whichever interval is selected, *the feeding must be regular*' [original emphasis] (Harper 1926:28). She went on to say that regularity is of such importance that 'No baby should be fed simply because he cries' (Harper 1926:28), and that '*During the first few weeks of life the baby may have to be awakened for his meal*' [original emphasis] (Harper 1926:29). A similar sentiment was expressed by other authors. For example, Brown et al. maintained that 'Feeding should be done regularly by the clock – not by guess work. If baby cries between feeds and especially at night, this is not an indication for feeding', and, they say, 'If baby is asleep at feeding time he should be awakened' (Brown et al 1938: 52). Some authors provided a feeding time table, for example, Brown et al. included a schedule for a three hourly and four hourly program:

Three Hourly Feeding-6 and 9 a.m.; 12 (noon); 3, 6, 9 or 10 p.m.: total, six feeds.

Four Hourly Feeding-6 and 10 a.m.; 2, 6, and 10 p.m.; total, five feeds.

(Brown et al. 1938: 52).

Reasons cited for the importance of regularity related to the baby's health needs as well as the needs of the mother. For example, Harper maintained that the 'reasons for preferring the four-hourly interval are that the mother has more time for attending her household duties and recreation' but also because the 'baby's stomach has a period of rest between feedings' (Harper 1926: 27). This focus on regularity was also seen to have implications in terms of behaviour and the development of character. For example, Dunlop wrote:

No words can over-estimate the importance of training a baby to good regular habits from the very first day of his life. It means so much to him in health as well as in moral welfare.

(Dunlop 1928: 63).

And Sister Maude Primrose maintained that habits will help children to learn obedience and self-control:

In the observance of strict regularity in baby's daily routine, we are regulating and controlling his conduct. He is in this way gradually being taught habits of obedience and self-control.

(Primrose 1938: 30).

In fact, the relationship between habit and self-control was a theme that emerged strongly in the literature. In particular, this was addressed by the authors of the education and psychology texts, where habit was seen as a way of controlling or modifying instincts.

Albiston (1932), for example, contributed a chapter to *The Growing Child* called 'The Importance of Habit'. He defined habit as all forms of learned behaviour. Habits, he wrote, are 'modes of expressing thoughts, feelings and actions that are learned by experience' (Albiston 1932: 49). Heinig expressed a similar point of view, maintaining that habit can be defined as 'all acquired methods of acting and thinking' (Heinig 1938: 46).

Albiston provided further explanation. He drew a distinction between two types of behaviour. Behaviour that can be described as the 'ready-made tools for dealing with situations with which the infant is by inheritance equipped' (Albiston 1932: 40), and behaviour that is learned or acquired. In the first category Albiston placed reflexes and instincts. Reflexes are automatic or unconscious responses to external stimuli, for example, when an infant draws up a leg in response to having a foot tickled (Albiston 1932: 41). To the adult, maintained Albiston, 'this seems an obvious response to make to an annoying stimulus, but it is well known that it occurs under conditions

in which it is impossible for the infant to be conscious of the sensation' (Albiston 1932: 41). He maintained that there are many 'reflexes present in the body, such as the contraction of the pupil of the eye to the stimulus of light, the flow of saliva on food entering the mouth, the movements of the stomach and intestines during digestion' (Albiston 1932: 42).

Instincts, he maintained, are similar to reflexes but differ in certain respects. Like reflexes they 'can be described in terms of stimulus and response, but are more complicated' (Albiston 1932: 43). Instincts 'involve the whole organism, suggest impulsive desire as activating them and, unlike reflexes, their action is more or less prolonged and may be varied in detail and duration from time to time' (Albiston 1932: 43). In this category Albiston placed 'the self-preservative instincts of flight or fight in the presence of danger, the sex and hunger instincts and others about the existence of which there is not universal agreement' (Albiston 1932: 43).

Albiston then went on to explain how reflexes and instincts can be modified. He cited the example of Pavlov's dogs and J. B. Watson's experiment involving an infant and a rabbit. This is where a child is presented with a rabbit, and at the same time is frightened by a loud noise 'such as a blow from a hammer on an iron bar behind him' (Albiston 1932: 44). This is repeated several times so that the child

is conditioned to fear the rabbit. The child 'reacts to the rabbit as he did to the loud noise, although the latter is no longer present' (Albiston 1932: 44). In this way, 'the child has formed the "habit" of being afraid of the rabbit' (Albiston 1932: 44).

As such, Albiston described habits as conditioned responses or 'modifications and elaborations of instincts' (Albiston 1932: 49). He wrote:

In fact, the simple motor habits are very like conditioned reflexes, and the more complicated habits involving the whole individual are like conditioned instinctive responses. Habits, in fact, may be regarded quite legitimately as bundles of conditioned reflexes – as acquired instincts.

(Albiston 1932: 46).

This theme of modifying instincts was addressed by other authors. Gunn, for instance, maintained that 'Instincts provide the raw material for personality', and that 'They must not be repressed but directed or sublimated to higher ends and noble achievements. Training, that is habit, will count for much' (Gunn 1931: 64). And Wrigley wrote that: 'Human beings, and, in less degree, the higher animals, modify their instinctive reactions in the light of experience

and vary them in order to suit new conditions or carry out definite aims' (Wrigley 1932: 60).

Heinig and Gutteridge also emphasised the way in which instincts must be modified or regulated, although they referred to this as 'adjustment'. Heinig, for example, maintained:

... adjustments are necessary between instinctive tendencies and the acceptable behaviour of a given social group.

(Heinig 1938: 45).

And:

... adjustment is what we mean by the term "growing up". In the process of growing up we must acquire habits in order to fit into the social scheme, and not come into conflict with our environment.

(Heinig 1938: 46).

Gutteridge made a similar point. She maintained that the child must make the necessary:

... adjustment of his hereditary characteristics to his environment, and, through contact with those people with whom he is associated.

(Gutteridge 1937: 4).

In this way, through the cultivation of habits, these authors hoped to provide children with the capacity to place limits on, or to modify, instinctive or impulsive behaviours. Albiston expressed this most clearly. He maintained that habits are a 'compromise between illimitable desire surging within us for expression and the limitations of the reality of the world around us' (Albiston 1932: 49).

This demonstrates the way in which these authors sought to encourage the development of a so-called 'civilised' mode of conduct. Authors expressed concern as to the way in which children were guided by instinctive, impulsive behaviours, and provided instructions to parents as how best to help them control these tendencies. The sublimation or restraint of unlimited desire was to be achieved through the cultivation of habit.

Selbstzwänge

It is also through the use of habit, that authors sought to inculcate what Elias describes as a self-regulating, or 'automatically functioning', self-restraint. This refers to the development of *selbstzwänge* or constraints exercised by one-self, as opposed to *fremdzwänge* or constraints exercised by others. The latter takes the form of a 'conscious self-steering', where the compulsion to exercise self-restraint is dependent upon the presence of others. Elias associates this particular mode of behaviour with *civilité*, or the stage of 'courtly-absolutist society', where the tendency towards self-restraint only existed intermittently. *Selbstzwänge*, on the other hand, is a more 'even' or 'all-embracing' (Elias 1996: 32) patterning of affect regulation, where the self-restraint mechanism operates as an automatic habit, without the need for external forms of regulation. Elias argues that the development of this mode of conduct was associated with the industrial bourgeois nation state, where networks of inter-dependencies became increasingly complex, demanding a more disciplined form of self-regulation.

Authors of the inter-war texts expressed a mentality consistent with this patterning of affect regulation. Albiston, as we have seen, described habits as 'acquired instincts'. By this he meant that

'conditioned instinctive responses' are so deeply ingrained that they become a permanent modification. He wrote:

It seems that new paths for the passage of impulses are channelled through the nervous system by each new experience, and that more or less permanent changes are produced in the condition of nerve cells and fibres so that a repetition of the stimulus even years after will tend to be followed by a similar response.

(Albiston 1932: 45).

Thus, he maintained, conditioned responses eventually come to be performed automatically or unconsciously:

... the complicated movements involved in tying our shoe laces, which seemed so difficult when we were very young, are now performed without thought.

(Albiston 1932: 45).

In this way, Albiston hoped to inculcate an automatically functioning self-restraint, where learned behaviour is performed without conscious deliberation. As such, it was hoped that children will develop the capacity to self-regulate, in the sense that 'acquired'

behaviour will become instinctive, removing the need for constant supervision or external forms of regulation.

Figurational pressure

An important point to note about this increasing emphasis placed on self-restraint, is the way in which it is driven by figurational pressure. Elias argues that the emergence of the so called civilised personality is related to changing figurational patterns, where the development of lengthening chains of interdependencies, meant that individuals became increasingly reliant upon each other. In this way, individuals are increasingly compelled to exercise self-restraint in their conduct with others. As we have seen, Elias contends that these figurational changes emerge from the unintended consequence of intended action, and as such follow an unplanned or unintended course of development. In this way, the compulsion towards self-restraint can be understood as an unintended consequence of changing figurational patterns, rather than as a mode of behaviour that is deliberately forced upon individuals. As discussed in chapter three, this offers an alternative to the social control approaches, that view parent education and parenting discourses as a way of shaping the family in accordance with various ideological or political objectives.

The way in which figurational pressure is brought to bear upon individuals is made apparent in the inter-war literature. Authors expressed a concern to provide children with the capacity to regulate behaviour, and in particular to exercise emotional control, in order get along to with others. As noted by Heinig and Albiston, an emphasis was placed on the importance of modifying or adjusting behaviour in order to be able to 'fit into the social scheme' (Heinig 1938: 46), or to 'compromise' with the 'world around us' (Albiston 1932: 49). This emerged strongly in relation to advice about social development.

Heinig and Gutteridge, in particular, provided sections on social development in their publications. Heinig (1938) included a chapter called 'Social Development' in *The Child in the Nursery School*, and Gutteridge included a chapter called 'Social Development' in her 1934 work, and a chapter called 'Extreme Importance of Social Development' in her 1937 publication.

Essentially, social development refers to the acquisition of skills necessary to be able to interact with others. Gutteridge maintained that learning to get along with others is of vital importance to the child. She wrote:

The importance of the social development of the child can scarcely be over-emphasised. How to train the child so that

he will find the best and happiest way to adapt himself to the people about him, is one of the big problems that face every parent and every adult who has the care of little children. The key to successful and happy personality lies in the child's – and later the adult's – ability to mix with others.

(Gutteridge 1937: 14).

Here, Gutteridge highlights the importance of children being able to adapt themselves to others. Heinig expressed a similar view when she outlined the difference between the type of behaviour that is approved by society, and the type of behaviour that is condemned:

The type of conduct approved by society is that which does not cause its fellow members any inconvenience or annoyance. On the other hand, conduct which is frowned upon brings conflict between individuals or society ...

(Heinig 1938: 45).

Heinig points to the importance of being able to interact with others without causing conflict. Brown et al. also identified this as an important skill. They maintained that children should be encouraged to play together so that they may learn to cooperate with others. They wrote:

Children should be given the opportunity to play together. The only child learns to give of his toys to his playmates, he learns self-control, and to take his place as a member of the community.

(Brown et al. 1938: 47).

Here, Brown et al. identify self-control as a skill necessary for successful social interaction. This was expressed by others. Gutteridge, for instance, maintained that the ability to mix with others depends on the child's ability to exercise emotional control:

The test of a child's development, personality and balance shows in his ability to live with others and in his emotional control.

(Gutteridge 1934: 22).

And Heinig cited a child 'expert' in pointing out that:

the development of adequate social responses rests on three important factors:-

1. The child's ability to talk.
2. Development of bodily control.
3. Control of his emotional behaviour.

(Heinig 1938: 55).

Thus, these authors expressed an awareness of the demands that highly interdependent individuals place on one another. They were concerned to provide children with the capacity for emotional restraint, in order that they may be able to undertake successful social interactions.

As such, we see the way in which figurational pressure is brought to bear upon individuals. The compulsion to exercise self-restraint, as articulated in these texts, arises from the figurational constraints of modern life. Authors wish to imbue children with the personality characteristics necessary for them to operate successfully within a figurational structure characterised by complex networks of inter-dependencies.

It can be seen how this analysis provides an alternative to the social control approaches. Attempts to educate families in the inter-war years can be explained as a consequence of figurational change, rather than as a direct attempt to shape the family in accordance with particular political or ideological objectives. The authors of inter-war parenting discourses were concerned to cultivate a certain pattern of affect regulation in order to provide children with the skills that they need to function within a particular social configuration. It is the figurational structure, characterised by the development of complex

networks of inter-dependencies, that demands of high degree of self-control from individuals. In providing instruction as to what they considered to be an appropriate mode of conduct, authors were merely reflecting the civilising imperatives of modern life to which they themselves were subject. While these authors did indeed attempt to encourage the development of a particular mode of life conduct, this must be placed within the context of long-term unplanned processes of change that provide the context for their actions.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated the way in which the child rearing advice that entered the family during the inter-war years was directed at the civilising of children. It was shown that an increasing emphasis was placed on managing the behaviour of children, and that this was accompanied by the idea that child behaviour can be shaped or modified. In particular, it was revealed that the behaviour management strategies advocated by authors was focused on providing children with the capacity for self-control. Specifically, authors emphasised the importance of teaching children to regulate strong emotions or impulsive tendencies. In addition, authors encouraged the development of what Elias refers to as

selbstzwänge, or an ‘automatically functioning’ self-restraint. This is a more disciplined or ‘all-embracing’ pattern of affect regulation which reflects the way in which the figurational constraints of modern life place increasing demands upon individuals.

Of importance is the way in which parents were seen to play a significant role in this civilising process. As demonstrated, one of the themes to emerge from the literature is the emphasis placed on the environment, and in particular, the human environment, as a factor in determining character and behaviour. This has important implications for parents, as it means that they have the potential to shape the character of children. As such, the behaviour of parents, and the way in which they responded to, and interacted with children, became an issue of concern. This will be the subject of the next chapter where we will explore advice given to parents, particularly mothers, concerning the regulation of their own conduct.

6. Maternal care: how a mother should order herself during pregnancy and the neonatal period

This chapter will investigate advice given to parents, and in particular mothers, about their own personal care and conduct. Specifically, this analysis will focus on instructions relating to prenatal and neonatal care. It will be shown that the inter-war texts contained an increasing amount of information on this subject. Authors offered advice on the management of physical health as well as psychological health, and stressed the importance of maternal care in relation to the health and well-being of the child. In particular, an emphasis was placed on the management of emotions, and the implications of this in terms of the consequences for the child. This demonstrates the way in which the civilised mode of behaviour was applied to mothers, and how this was linked to the civilising of children.

In addition, in examining how child rearing texts can be read as civilising texts for mothers, this chapter will address an aspect of Elias's work that has received inadequate attention: the question of gender and the civilising process. In *The Civilizing Process*, Elias

investigates etiquette manuals that were written by men for a male audience. He provides little comment on the issue of gender and whether or not similar standards of behaviour were expected of women. An examination of inter-war child rearing literature will shed light on this topic, showing the way in which, in the twentieth century, the civilised mode of conduct was applied to women. In taking this approach however, in highlighting the way in which the education of mothers is part of the civilising process, this chapter will challenge feminist interpretations that emphasise social control.

The first section of this chapter will investigate how the question of gender is dealt with in the work of Elias. The second section will examine the increasing emphasis placed on maternal care in the inter-war years. The third section will investigate the advice given to mothers, looking at the way in which the health and psychological disposition of mothers was linked to the health and well-being of children.

Women and the civilising process

In *The Civilizing Process* Elias is largely silent on the issue of gender. He mentions gender in relation to Minnesang¹⁴, where he discusses

¹⁴ A form of poetry or song written for women of noble rank.

changes in the balance of power between men and women and how petty knights were obliged to regulate their behaviour in the presence of women of higher rank. He continues this theme in a later essay on gender relations in ancient Rome (Elias 1987), where he discusses the way in which the centralisation of the state and the pacification of social life led to greater power chances for married women. In his examination of early modern manners texts, however, little is said about gender. These texts were written by men for young men or boys. They say nothing about appropriate behaviour for women, and Elias does not mention whether similar texts were written for women. He provides little comment on civilising processes for women, and whether or not similar standards of *civilité* were applied to women.

This is a point addressed by van Krieken. He maintains that the 'individual positioned in Elias's ever-longer chains of interdependency, planning and calculating the gains to be had from self-restraint, was male' (van Krieken 1990: 364), and that the 'disciplined self, able to achieve strategic gain from a subordination of emotion to instrumental ends, was masculine in the sense that femininity was perceived as the *embodiment* of emotion and physicality, its ultimate *expression* rather than the product of the restraint of emotion' (van Krieken 1990: 364-365). While this is an interesting point to consider, and an investigation of gendered notions of *civilité* in the sixteenth century would certainly be an

important undertaking, I argue that women have not been excluded from, or indeed have not escaped, the civilising imperatives of modern life. If the sixteenth century notion of the civilised individual only applied to men, it is interesting to note that in the twentieth century we see this standard of behaviour being applied to women. This becomes apparent through an analysis of inter-war child rearing literature, where we see the way in which women were encouraged to cultivate a civilised disposition, and how this was related to the health and well-being, and indeed, the behaviour of children.

The Question of Maternal health

Maternal health was an issue that attracted much concern in the inter-war years. This is reflected in the child rearing texts where an increasing amount of information was provided on prenatal care and care during the nursing period. Most of the texts from the inter-war years included a specific chapter devoted to prenatal care, and some texts also contained a chapter on the care of nursing mothers. Peck's *Your Baby* (1927) for example, had one chapter called 'Care of the Prospective Mother', and another chapter entitled 'The Nursing Mother'. Texts that did not contain a specific chapter on the care of nursing mothers usually addressed this in sections on breast feeding. For example, Harper's *The Parent's Book* (1926) included a chapter

called 'Natural feeding' which provided information on the diet of the nursing mother, as well as other aspects of health such as exercise, fresh air and rest.

This differs slightly from child rearing texts produced prior to World War I. While most of these texts provided information relating to the care of nursing mothers in the sections on breast feeding, almost no information was given about prenatal care. One of the most popular publications during the pre-war period, Muskett's *The Feeding and Management of Australian Infants in Health and Disease* (1906) did not address this issue at all¹⁵. Two texts produced during this period stand out as being different: *Healthy Mothers and Sturdy Children* (1893) and Elliss's *The Australian Baby* (1902). *Healthy Mothers* contained a chapter called 'Diet During Pregnancy', and Elliss included a chapter called 'Before Birth' that contained the following sections: 'Pre-natal Influences.-The Health of the Mother.-Ablution.-Diet.-Corsets.-Exercise' (Elliss 1902: 9). Apart from these texts, manuals produced during the pre-war period provided little or no information on the topic of prenatal care. It was not until after World War I that this advice became common place in child rearing

¹⁵ This manual mainly focuses on the care and health of the child, with health issues for the mother being addressed as part of the section on breast feeding. Musket included the following chapters: Part I The Management of Infants (relating to the 'five laws of health' – Ablution, Bedroom ventilation and hygiene, Clothing, Diet, and exercise), Part II The Dietary of Health (breast feeding and hand feeding), Part III The Diet in Disease (relating to the child), Part IV Useful Information for Australian Mothers (relating mainly to the treatment of diseases of children), Part V Mountain Air as a Remedy in the Treatment of Infantile and other Diseases, Part VI 'Superior Quality Milk: And the Necessity for Milk Laboratories, in Australia, and Part VII Recipes and Accessory Information.

manuals. This is noted by Reiger. She maintains that during the inter-war period, 'guidelines for ante-natal care became much more detailed and specific ... the expectant mother was given more explicit directions on actual diet; and by the 1930s, the idea of ante-natal exercise was starting to appear ...' (Reiger 1985: 84-85).

Reiger maintains that this was part of a more general trend within the medical profession, where there was an increased interest in antenatal care, and labour and birth became medically managed and hospital-based (Reiger 1985: 84). She points out that during the mid 1920s there was a 'noticeable increase in the number of articles and letters on maternal health' in the *Medical Journal of Australia*, and there 'were essay competitions among medicos and a burst of research interest in maternal morbidity' (Reiger 1985: 88-89). In addition, in 1924 the University of Melbourne received funding from the Edward Wilson (Argus) Trust to appoint a director of obstetrical research for two years, and ante-natal clinics were established at the Women's, Queen Victoria and Alfred Hospitals' (Reiger 1985: 89). Lewis makes a similar point. In her analysis of the infant welfare movement in England, she maintains that 'During World War I, it was realised that foetal and neonatal deaths were associated with the mother's welfare, and the overwhelming desire to increase population caused infant welfare work to be extended to the ante-natal period' (Lewis 1980: 33).

These writers, however, explain this trend in relation to the extension of ideological control over women. As discussed in chapter three, Reiger argues that through child rearing literature the professional middle class sought to subject women to an 'ideology of technical rationality' to promote the ends of capitalism (Reiger 1985: 210). Lewis maintains that mothercraft education promoted an ideology of motherhood which served the interests of white, male, middle-class policy makers (Lewis 1980: 108). This chapter will look at this from a different angle. It will be argued that the increasing emphasis placed on maternal care is part of the civilising process, where the civilising of mothers is linked to the civilising of children.

The civilising of mothers

As discussed in previous chapters, Elias argues that the modern family is characterised by an increasing emphasis placed on the care and education of children, and in particular, on guiding the behaviour of children or the civilising of children. It has been established that parent education literature produced during the inter-war years included an increasing amount of information on managing the behaviour of children. Specifically, authors were concerned with encouraging the development of a civilised disposition, where

emphasis was placed on the way in which children were to regulate strong emotions or impulsive desire.

An analysis of advice given to mothers will show that the civilised mode of conduct was applied to mothers, and that this was thought to be important in relation to the health and well-being of children. Firstly, advice relating to physical care will be examined, where it will be demonstrated that the mother's health was seen to have an impact on the health of the unborn child, as well as on the production of breast milk. An analysis of advice relating to psychological health will then be undertaken, where it will be revealed that the mother's emotional disposition was seen not only to have an impact on the physical health of the child, but on behaviour.

Health precepts for mothers

The following analysis will focus on instructions relating to physical care. As discussed above, one of the most important themes to emerge in the literature was the way in which authors emphasised the relationship between the health of the mother and the health of the child. Harper, for instance, maintained that the 'proper care of the infant should begin long before it is born, since to produce healthy children the parents must themselves be healthy' (Harper

1926:9). And Peck quoted a Baby Health Centre leaflet which stated: 'Every Mother should do her utmost to keep herself in good health before baby is born, for on her health depends the health of the baby' (cited by Peck 1927: 7). Truby King, in an Australian publication, expressed a similar point of view:

All that the past can do for the baby, all that 'heredity' can do, has been done nine months before its birth.

During the first nine eventful months of life in the womb the health of the mother is the health of the baby.

(King 1923: 1).

This theme was constantly reiterated in the literature. In providing advice on various aspects of personal health, such as disorders during pregnancy, diet, clothing, rest, exercise, care of the bowels, and general hygiene, authors pointed to the way in which the health of the mother was associated with the health of the unborn child and the production of breast milk. This advice will now be examined.

Disorders during pregnancy

Most manuals contained information on minor ailments or health problems associated with pregnancy. Problems identified included: morning sickness, swollen legs, varicose veins, cramps, problems with urination (kidney and bladder), haemorrhoids, miscarriage,

constipation, backache and headache. Advice was provided on how to prevent or deal with these problems. Dunlop provided a section called 'Danger Symptoms of Pregnancy' which she listed as: 'severe headaches, dimness of vision, convulsions, persistent vomiting, bleeding from the vagina, swelling of the legs, acute shortness of breath, loss of consciousness, severe abdominal pain, pain or difficulty in passing water, diminution in amount of water passed' (Dunlop 1928: 31). She maintained that these symptoms are 'warning of trouble and the doctor ought to be consulted immediately' (Dunlop 1928: 31). Similarly, Peck (1927: 11) included a section called 'Danger Signals' where various symptoms were pointed out such as; haemorrhaging, swelling of the hands and feet, persistent headaches or flashes of light before the eyes, or abdominal pain. She advised to consult a doctor and maintained that if 'prospective mothers would take these simple precautions, there would be very much less risk of premature births, and they would have the satisfaction of knowing that they had done all in their power to ensure the birth of a normal, healthy, happy baby' (Peck 1927: 11). In this way, emphasis was placed on potential harm to the unborn child, and on the obligation of mothers to monitor their health to ensure the birth of a healthy baby.

Clothing

Clothing was an aspect of personal care that received much comment. In particular, authors stressed the importance of loose fitting clothes. In this regard, corsets were advised against during the later months of pregnancy, however, a specially made maternity corset was recommended 'during the last few weeks when the weight of the child becomes irksome' (Brown et al. 1938: 15). In this event, instructed Brown et al., 'a simple abdominal belt suspended by braces will give the necessary support' (Brown et al. 1938: 15). Authors advised caution, however, when wearing this item. According to Harper, special 'care must be taken that no pressure is made on the rapidly developing abdomen nor on the breasts', and 'all weight should be borne from the shoulders' (Harper 1926: 12). She went on to say that 'Any corset which is made so that the support is given from below or upwards is satisfactory' (Harper 1926: 12). Dunlop advised against corsets altogether. She wrote: 'Do not wear maternity corsets. All tight bands and any constriction must be avoided' (Dunlop 1928: 30). In this way, in providing advice about clothing, principal consideration was given to the way in which the clothing of the mother may impact upon the developing child.

This was also highlighted in relation to advice for nursing mothers. Authors expressed concern as to the way in which inappropriate clothing may affect the supply of milk. Purcell, for instance,

maintained that 'As breast milk can be affected so easily by any continued discomfort on the part of either mother or babe, it is very important that the clothes should allow free movement in every way. The general principle to remember about the nursing mother's clothes is that they should be light, warm, porous and loose' (Purcell 1928: 42). She went on to describe in great detail appropriate clothing for nursing mothers:

The detail of the garments is most important, and as follows:- The combinations or singlet worn next to the skin should be open down the front; corsets should be cut low in front so that the upper rim altogether clears the breasts. In the early days of nursing some good support is sometimes required for the back and abdomen, and in cases where corsets are not worn a suitable well-shaped abdominal belt could be worn (patterns of such belts are easily obtainable), or a straight binder may be fitted comfortably into position with safety pins. Later on this is discarded. A slip bodice should be worn to support the breasts (without any pressure on the nipples), also opening in front. A very good breast binder is made of strong calico, cut in a Y-shape, with a long tail. Patterns of this are obtainable at all Baby Health Centres.

(Purcell 1928: 42)

Special mention was made of footwear. Authors recommended that mothers wear sturdy and comfortable shoes, advising against 'high heels or narrow toes' (Brown et al. 1938:15). This was because of the danger in relation to the risk of a fall. As Harper maintained, high heels are 'sources both of discomfort and danger during pregnancy. They interfere with freedom of gait, and with balance of the body' (Harper 1926: 13). In this way, Harper expressed concern for the comfort of the mother, but also for the safety of the unborn child.

General hygiene

Information was provided on general hygiene, particularly in relation to care of the body and bathing. For example, it was recommended that a regular bath be taken in order that the 'waste products from the pores of the skin may be got rid of' (Purcell 1928: 15). Similar to the advice given in relation to the bathing of children, authors insisted on a cold bath. According to the *Australian Mothercraft Book*, 'Those accustomed to cold showers may continue this habit ... and where cold baths cannot be borne a warm or tepid shower may be substituted' (Brown, et al. 1938: 15). Harper took a somewhat firmer stance. She maintained that 'if the mother is not accustomed to a cold bath, she should accustom herself to it gradually. A good plan is to stand in warm water and sponge the rest of the body with cool water. Daily the water can be made cooler, until cold may be used

without discomfort' (Harper 1926: 13-14). The cold bath is preferred as 'the stimulus of cold water helps to keep the skin and muscles toned up and healthy' (Brown, et al. 1938: 15-16). Authors specifically advised against hot or warm baths during the later stages of pregnancy.

Particular attention was paid to oral hygiene. Peck, for example, maintained that 'The teeth should be attended to, and any carious teeth filled or extracted' (Peck 1927: 9). Harper provided a quotation from the late Dr. J. W. Ballantyne who maintained that 'Carious teeth are a sure cause of many troubles during gestation. They interfere with proper mastication of the food, they produce oral sepsis, they cause toothache and neuralgia. They undoubtedly have an evil, even if indirect effect upon the unborn child, and they may necessitate tooth extraction during pregnancy' (cited by Harper 1926:15-16). Once again, the implications in terms of child health were emphasised.

Rest, exercise and fresh air

Authors recommended plenty of rest. Purcell, for instance maintained that, 'An extra amount of sleep is necessary' (Purcell 1928: 15). Harper (1926: 12) and the authors of *The Australian Mothercraft Book* (Brown et al. 1938: 13) recommended nine hours sleep at night with morning and afternoon rests. Brown et al.

suggested that during the 'later months of pregnancy it is wise to sit down at frequent intervals with the feet raised; or, better, to lie down on a couch. This relieves the pressure from the legs and lower part of the body and helps to prevent the onset of varicose veins and cramps' (Brown et al. 1938: 13). Peck advised that a mother use a stool during household duties: 'Extra rest can also be obtained through the day if a fairly high stool is made for the mother who has to do her own washing up, preparation of vegetables, and so on ... This will save many moments which would be otherwise spent standing. A stool should also be placed near a telephone, to obviate standing' (Peck 1935: 23).

Although the importance of rest and sleep was highlighted, this did not mean that women were to refrain from physical activity. Most texts recommend exercise. Brown et al. maintained that a 'certain amount of exercise is desirable to keep the muscles toned up and to prevent the body from getting flabby' (Brown et al. 1938: 14), and Harper maintained that the 'mother who has been most active during her pregnancy is usually the one who has the easiest labour' (Harper 1926: 10). To this end, women were advised to keep up their usual household chores (provided that certain activities were avoided such as reaching up or lifting heavy objects). In addition, women were advised to continue with any exercise that they may be accustomed to, including walking, 'tennis, dancing, golf, etc.' (Peck 1935: 21), but

were instructed to discontinue these activities during the later stages of pregnancy. Limitations were placed on certain other activities such as 'Driving over rough roads' (Peck 1935: 21) and 'Horse or cycle riding and rowing' (Brown et al. 1938: 14). Some texts also provided instructions for exercises to strengthen the abdominal muscles. Peck (1935), for instance, described several abdominal exercises, as did Harper (1926) who provided diagrams.

An emphasis was also placed on fresh air and sunshine. Peck, for example, maintained that 'the mother should make it a rule to try and get out every day, fresh air and sunlight being essential to the health of the mother and the unborn babe' (Peck 1927: 8). Harper maintained that 'the rooms which are occupied by the expectant mother should be light and airy, getting the morning sun if possible. The windows should be open day and night' (Harper 1926: 10). Reasons given for this were to do with the affect on the unborn child. Harper maintained that a 'plentiful supply of air is necessary to keep the blood pure. The baby gets all its oxygen from its mother's blood, and if this is not pure and healthy, the infant suffers' (Harper 1926: 10).

Similar advice was given to nursing mothers. Dunlop, for example, maintained that 'The [nursing] mother must pay attention to her general health ... She must have enough exercise, fresh air, sunlight

and sleep' (Dunlop 1928: 48). Purcell maintained that 'The mother needs extra rest very often and regular pleasant exercises in the open air and plenty of sunshine' (Purcell 1928: 38). And Harper encouraged mothers to 'take some outdoor exercise every day, and while indoors should have plenty of sun and air' (Harper 1926: 30). This was identified as being important because of the effect on the production of breast milk. Peck, for instance, maintained that 'exercise has a definite effect on the milk supply' (Peck 1927: 18).

Marital relations

Peck (1935) and Brown et al. (1938) mentioned 'marital relations' or 'sexual intercourse during pregnancy'. Both authors advised that this matter is largely left to the temperament or feelings of the mother, however they stipulated certain times when this should not take place. Brown et al., for example, maintained that, 'It is advisable to avoid it during the first three months, especially in cases where there has been miscarriage in a former pregnancy. It is however most essential that there should be no sexual connection during the last two months, as intercourse so near confinement is considered to be a possible cause of infection and may lead to childbirth-fever' (Brown et al. 1938: 17-18). Peck provided two views on the matter. She maintained that 'Most authorities say that marital relations should not take place for the first three and the last three months of pregnancy, and not for at least six to eight weeks after the confinement'. Others

state, she maintained, that 'providing the times be avoided when the menstrual period would normally occur, it is perfectly safe, up to the seventh month of pregnancy, and six to eight weeks after the confinement' (Peck 1935: 13). Peck pointed to the following risks:

- (1) Danger of abortion in the early months.
- (2) Nervous shock, nausea and vomiting often increased.
- (3) Danger of infection in the later months of pregnancy.

(Peck 1935: 14)

Again, the impact upon the child is highlighted.

Diet

This was a subject that attracted much attention, both in relation to diet during pregnancy and the nursing period. Most texts advised a plain, well-balanced diet. For example, the *Australian Mothercraft Book* maintained that 'the diet of a pregnant woman need not differ from that of an ordinary individual provided it is simple, adequate but not excessive, and contains a mixture of the necessary food elements' (Brown, et al. 1938: 16). Harper maintained that the 'diet should be simple and sufficient, containing the due proportions of the several necessary classes of food', and outlined the following foods to be taken:

The expectant mother requires meat, fish, poultry, cheese and eggs, as body builders, and to make up for wear and tear. She needs sugar, rice, sago, bread and similar foods – the great carbohydrate group. Thirdly, she needs fat, such as butter. Besides these three classes of foods, mineral salts are necessary, as well as the so-called accessory food factors, the vitamins. Salts are present in our ordinary foods, as well as in table-salt. The vitamins are present in fresh fruit and vegetables, especially in lettuce and salads in general. Milk in moderation is an excellent article of diet for the expectant mother, containing, as it does, all the elements necessary for good nutrition.

(Harper 1926: 13).

An emphasis was also placed on drinking an adequate amount of water. Peck maintained that the mother 'should drink plenty of water, especially on rising in the morning; this flushes the kidneys and somewhat relieves the extra strain that is put on them at this time, and also helps to prevent constipation' (Peck 1927: 8). Purcell instructed that 'six to eight glasses should be taken daily, the first one on rising' (Purcell 1928: 17).

Information on eating habits was also provided, with emphasis placed on regularity. Purcell, for instance, advised that 'Three good

meals a day are all that is necessary for the expectant mother', and that 'Meals should be taken regularly at the same time every day' (Purcell 1928: 17-18). Peck provided a meal schedule, outlining appropriate foods for breakfast lunch and dinner. The schedule also outlined suggested times for morning and afternoon tea:

10 a.m.: Tumbler of water, or lemon or orange drink, or barley water, or cup of tea.

3:30 p.m.: Glass of water, or afternoon tea.

(Peck 1935: 20)

Most texts also contained information about foods to be avoided. For example, Purcell maintained that 'On no account must food be fried or twice cooked' (Purcell 1928: 17), and the authors of the *Australian Mothercraft Book* maintained that 'the amount of meat and eggs should be restricted during the last two months' (Brown, et al. 1938: 16). Most texts advised against the consumption of alcohol, particularly in relation to the potential risk to the unborn child. For example, Harper maintained that 'Alcohol should never be taken by the expectant mother, except under the instruction of the doctor. The use of alcohol is harmful both to her and to the child. It circulates as a poison in her blood, and the tender growing cells of the baby are injured by it' (Harper 1926: 13). Dunlop also advised against the use

of drugs: 'Drugs and narcotics should not be taken. The mother must not smoke' (Dunlop 1928: 28).

Authors stressed the importance of the diet of the mother in relation to the health effects on the unborn child. For instance, Purcell maintained that 'If the expectant mother is not properly nourished she is less likely to produce a healthy child' (Purcell 1927: 17). Dunlop emphasised the effect that the mother's diet may have on the baby's developing teeth: 'A baby's teeth are in the gums long before birth and will be influenced by the diet the mother is taking' (Dunlop 1928: 28).

Similar advice was given to nursing mothers. Harper, for instance, recommended that a nursing mother should take 'three good meals a day with milk, eggs, meat, and plenty of fresh green vegetables. She should drink plenty of water' (Harper 1926: 30). Peck (1935: 56) provided a suggested diet proscribing appropriate foods for breakfast, dinner, afternoon tea, evening meal and supper. Reasons given for attending to diet relate to the impact on the production of breast milk. Harper, for instance, maintained that diet 'is very important in keeping up the supply of milk' (1926: 30).

Care of the bowels

Regularity in relation to toilet habits was a topic that received much attention. Dunlop, for instance, advised that 'It is important that the bowels should be regular in action' (Dunlop 1928: 28), and Purcell maintained that 'Regulation of the bowels is very necessary' (Purcell 1928: 15). Again, this is similar to the advice relating to the management of children where regularity in establishing a daily motion was emphasised. This was identified as an issue of concern mainly in relation to avoiding constipation, which was viewed as a problem that could impact upon the health of the child. Dunlop, for example, maintained that, 'Constipation means that toxins (poisons) from the bowels are absorbed and circulate in the blood and may harm the baby' (Dunlop 1928: 28). In this regard, instruction was given as to the appropriate consumption of foods and in some cases treatments or remedies were recommended.

As such, we see the way in which the link between the health of the mother and the health of the child was emphasised right throughout the literature. In relation to almost every aspect of maternal care, authors highlighted the health implications for the child. In this way, health advice directed at mothers was centred around the health and well-being of children.

This demonstrates the way in which mothers were pulled into the orbit of advice as a consequence of increasing concern for children. As has been discussed, an important feature of the modern transformation of the family is the strengthening of its care and educative functions. This is reflected in the inter-war years where an increasing amount of child rearing advice entered the family. We also see, that in association with this, mothers were increasingly targeted in educative strategies. This shows the way in which the intensification of efforts to educate mothers, is related to the changing role and function of the family. This is made evident in the fact that the health and well-being of mothers was linked to the health and well-being of children.

Psychological care and conduct

As well as providing information on physical health, the inter-war texts also contained information on psychological health. Similar to the advice relating to physical care, authors emphasised the way in which the psychological health of the mother can impact upon the child. Interestingly, the psychological state of the mother was seen to have an impact not only on the physical health of the child, but on behaviour. In this way, authors encouraged the development of what may be described as a civilised disposition, where mothers were

advised to control or regulate emotional responses. This advice will now be examined.

Nervousness

Nervousness was an issue addressed in many of the texts. Brown et al. maintained that it 'is not uncommon for the pregnant woman to find that she is more nervous and irritable than usual and that her temper is more easily aroused' (1938: 21). This was seen to be a problem because of the impact upon the developing child. Harper maintained that an 'abnormally excited nervous system cannot be favourable to the regular and steady development of the infant' and that the 'expectant mother should therefore do her best to live in a calm and happy frame of mind' (1926: 17). She provided solutions as to how best to deal with nervousness:

The expectant mother should-

1. Guard against continued constipation;
2. Avoid an excessive quantity of meat in the diet;
3. Drink a liberal amount of water;
4. Take plenty of outdoor exercise, and keep all rooms of the house well ventilated day and night;
5. Bathe every day;
6. Wear light but suitably warm and comfortable clothing;

7. Sleep at least nine hours out of the twenty four, and avoid over-fatigue;
8. Have the urine examined at stated intervals;
9. Strive to be happy, to seek self-control, and not to worry;
and
10. Consult her doctor when any symptoms of discomfort or illness arise.

(Harper 1926: 17-18)

While many of these solutions focus on aspects of physical care, Harper also pointed to the importance of self-control.

Emotional disturbances

Many authors provided comment on the importance of eliminating emotional disturbances and cultivating a calm and stable state of mind. In this regard, several texts mentioned 'maternal impressions'. This was a 'popular superstition that deformities and birthmarks in a baby are due to some shock or fright experienced by the mother during pregnancy' (Brown et al. 1938: 18). While this was dismissed as a myth, authors nevertheless highlighted the dangers of emotional disturbances. Harper, for instance, maintained that 'frights or disagreeable experiences happening to the mother ... can hardly be blamed for misdirections of processes already finished', however, 'a

disturbed state of mind is not a suitable condition for the expectant mother' (Harper 1926: 17).

Other authors also provided comment on the state of mind of the expectant mother. Purcell, for example, maintained that 'There should be an absence of fear, worry and anger in order to avoid upset of the nervous system' (1928: 15), and Dunlop wrote: 'Pregnancy sometimes has a depressing effect upon the spirits of a woman. She herself and those about her should make every effort to keep her as cheerful as possible' (Dunlop 1928: 31). Peck also commented on the importance of 'cheerful surroundings', and insisted that 'Fits of temper or emotional disturbances of any kind should be avoided as far as possible' (1935: 14). She also provided advice as to how to induce an agreeable state of mind. The mother 'should visit her friends', and 'if she has time for reading she should read cheerful books and occupy her mind, otherwise she is inclined to become miserable and fret over trifles' (1935: 14). She suggested that the family should play a role in protecting the mother from emotional disturbances. The husband, particularly, 'should try and shield her from worry and anxiety, and the little irritations of daily life' (1935: 14).

Predictably, reasons given for avoiding emotional disturbances relate to the effects this may have on the unborn child. Peck, for instance,

maintained that 'Much of the baby's future health and happiness will depend on the mother's outlook' (Peck 1935: 14). Younger Ross explained this in more detail. She maintained that anxiety, worry and fear adversely affect the physical health of the mother, which in turn impacts upon the unborn child:

Over-fatigue, anxiety, worry, and fear are the greatest enemies to the mother during the prenatal period. They interfere with the natural functions of the body. By being suppressed into the subconscious mind they produce disturbed rest at night, emotional upsets, digestive troubles, nervous headaches, and disharmony between the muscles and nerves of the body. Through the mother they act adversely on the unborn child, robbing it of the nourishment the tissues otherwise would be able to produce.

(Younger Ross 1940: 9).

Similar advice was given to nursing mothers. Authors made special mention of the mother's psychological or emotional state and how this may influence the quality and quantity of milk. Truby King, for instance, maintained:

The best way to ensure good milk for the baby is for the mother to lead a bright, happy, active home life; to be strictly

regular, enjoy her meals, and spend plenty of time over them; to take daily outdoor exercise; to have reasonable recreation, enough rest and sleep, no avoidable worries, no late hours, no over-excitements, and no undue stresses of any kind.

(King 1923: 31).

Several other texts also mentioned the emotional or mental state of the nursing mother. Younger Ross, for instance, maintained that 'After birth uncontrolled emotions seriously affect the supply of breast milk' (1940: 10), and Peck insisted that:

A nervous, highly-strung mother, has much more difficulty in feeding her baby than a placid mother; very often poor baby is blamed for not drinking properly when the trouble is really due to the mother's temperament.

(Peck 1927: 19).

And in a section called 'Difficulties in Breastfeeding' Purcell maintained:

There are difficulties on the part of the mother, and difficulties on the part of the infant. Let us first take those on the part of the mother. Chief among these is her mental attitude. She is

afraid that she cannot feed her baby. She feels her milk is not satisfying him, etc., etc., and so she worries, and is nervous.

(Purcell 1928: 3)

Younger Ross explained the effect that nervousness and worry may have on the milk supply:

It has long been known that the production of milk can be affected by the influence of the nervous system, about which I could tell you many true stories for which there is as yet no scientific explanation. We do know, however, that the emotions, especially when adverse, can and do reduce the flow of milk. Fear, anxiety, anger, even the hearing of bad news, seeing an accident, the sudden loss of a near and dear relative, can not only reduce the amount of breast milk, but have been known to stop the flow entirely. It is highly probable that some day we shall find that the quality of breast milk is affected also, as well as the quantity.

(Younger Ross 1940: 23).

To this end, advice was offered as to how to regulate emotions. Peck insisted that the mother 'must try and avoid any undue excitement, fits of temper, etc' and, 'if she wants to nurse her baby, she simply must learn self-control' (Peck 1927: 19). She went on to

say that the father and other members of the family should assist 'by being more considerate and helping her to avoid worries' (Peck 1927: 19). Purcell suggested seeking support and guidance from others: 'Right in the beginning she needs someone to reassure her, and make her know that with care and attention and perseverance, she will be able to successfully feed her baby' (Purcell 1928: 37). And Younger Ross advised that 'talking over any anxieties and fears with [a] doctor' (Younger Ross 1940: 10) will help to establish confidence. She also suggested that 'recreation out of doors, added rest and an orderly life' will help to eliminate worry and fatigue (Younger Ross 1940: 10).

Interestingly, the state of mind of the mother was also seen to have implications in terms of the conduct or behaviour of the child. Younger Ross, for instance, advised her readers that although 'Calmness and mental poise are not easy to acquire':

the self-discipline involved will stand you in good stead when you are breast-feeding baby, and later on when you are called upon to deal with the behaviour problems of early childhood. The object lesson you give your family will then be more effective than all your teaching or preaching.

(Younger Ross 1940: 10).

The self-disciplined mother, suggested Younger Ross, will model appropriate behaviour not only for the child but for the whole family. A similar point was made by Dunlop. She maintained that in exercising self-control, mothers will be teaching by example. She wrote:

Many an accident occurs, many a vexatious thing happens, but the wise mother philosophically regards all as part of the day's life work, teaching self-control by her own example, constantly curbing her own desires and emotions.

(Dunlop 1928: 11).

As such, we see the way in which the civilised mode of conduct was applied to mothers, and how this was associated with the development of the child. The psychological disposition of the mother was problematised, with 'uncontrolled emotions' being viewed as potentially dangerous or detrimental. These dangerous emotions were seen to have an impact upon the development of the unborn child and the production of breast milk, and also to have implications in terms of the behaviour of the child. Mothers were encouraged to act with self-restraint in order that this mode of behaviour may be transferred to children. The civilised mother was to act as a 'model and as a means of education ... to impose a high degree of self-constraint on children in their turn' (Elias 1998: 209).

This demonstrates, once again, how the education of mothers and the increasing emphasis placed on maternal care is part of the civilising process, and in particular, the historical transformation of childhood and the family. As the family has become increasingly focused on providing care and education for children, and on guiding the behaviour of children, or the civilising of children, parents, and in particular mothers, have increasingly become the targets of educative strategies. In the inter-war years we see the way in which child rearing literature came to include more information on the health and behaviour of mothers, and how this was tied to the health and well-being of children, and in particular, to the civilising of child behaviour.

This highlights the way in which this analysis offers an alternative to the investigations discussed above that explicate the increasing emphasis placed on maternal care in terms of the ideological control of women. By demonstrating how the education of mothers is linked to the civilising process, this investigation brings to the fore the unintended or unplanned determinants of change. The increasing emphasis placed on maternal care can be understood as an unintended consequence of the historical transformation of childhood and the family, where mothers were pulled into the orbit of advice as

the family became increasingly specialised with regard to its care and educative functions.

Although this chapter has sought to challenge traditional feminist approaches, this does not mean that the issue of gender has been ignored. On the contrary, this analysis has thrown light on the question of women and the civilising process, a subject that received little attention in Elias's work. This examination of inter-war child rearing literature has revealed the way in which the civilised mode of conduct was applied to women, and how this can be explained in terms of the historical transformation of childhood. As the family has become a site for the civilising of children, it has also become a site for the civilising of women.

Conclusion

This chapter examined the way in which inter-war childrearing literature contained advice for mothers, particularly in relation to the management of physical and psychological health. It was demonstrated that mothers were encouraged to cultivate a civilised disposition, where an emphasis was placed on the regulation or management of emotions. This was seen to be important in terms of the impact upon the health and behaviour of children. It was argued

that this can be explained as an unintended consequence of the civilising process, where the increasing emphasis placed on the education of mothers is linked to the changing role and function of the family, and in particular, to the civilising of children.

The next chapter will further investigate advice relating to the management of parental conduct. Specifically, instructions about discipline and parent-child relations will be examined, where it will be revealed that an even stronger emphasis was placed on the way in which parents were to exercise self-control.

7. The parent-child relationship

This chapter will investigate advice relating to the parent-child relationship, particularly with regards to the way in which parents were instructed to regulate their behaviour in their interactions with children. This will focus on advice relating to discipline and the learning of elementary tasks where a trend towards 'informalization' can be observed. Elias uses this term to refer to the loosening of the hierarchical structure of inter-personal relationships, and the removal of formal social codes regulating behaviour. Elias argues that this reflects a modern development in the civilising process, where the formation of increasingly complex networks of interdependencies compels individuals to more demanding patterns of self-control. An examination of inter-war parenting literature will show the way in which this was expressed in parent-child relationships. Specifically, authors of this literature placed limits on the use of violence, discouraged authoritarian disciplinary methods, and promoted children's independence and autonomy. It will be argued that this trend towards the informalisation of the parent-child relationship, represents the way in which a greater capacity for self-restraint was exacted on the part of both children and parents. It will also be shown how this way of interpreting the data offers an alternative to the many accounts that interpret the liberalisation or democratisation

of parent-child relationships, either in terms of social control, or emancipation.

The first part of this chapter will investigate the social control and emancipation perspectives. The second part will explore Elias's notion of informalisation, and the third section will examine the informalisation of the parent-child relationship as reflected in inter-war parenting discourses.

Social control or emancipation?

The liberalisation of democratisation of the parent-child relationship has been noted by others. For example, Donzelot (1980), Dickinson (1993), Philipson (1981) and Tyler (1993). These authors, however, offer different interpretations. Donzelot, Philipson and Tyler argue that this phenomenon can be explained in terms of social control, while Dickinson views this as a move towards emancipation. This section will investigate these accounts, where it will be argued that Elias's approach offers an explanation that provides an alternative to both of these perspectives.

Harley Dickinson investigates parenting discourses produced by professionals associated with the mental hygiene movement in

Canada. He maintains these professionals advocated the democratisation of family relationships and that this represented an emancipatory development. Dickinson cites two Canadian experts who encouraged fathers to participate in the parenting process and who deplored the fact that “the average parent today, particularly the father, is removed from the activities of his own child, not merely in school but also at home” (Blatz and Bott [1929], cited by Dickinson 1993: 6). He cites another commentator who advocated more equitable parent-child relationships through the establishment of a “family council’ in which matters of common interest are discussed and all members, old and young, can have their ‘say’” (Bernhardt, cited by Dickinson 1993: 7).

Dickinson explicates this in relation to Jürgen Habermas’s notion of the rationalisation of the ‘lifeworld’. Drawing from Habermas, Dickinson described the lifeworld as ‘a sphere of life wherein the household is the institutional core (Dickinson, 1993: 3), and that is characterised by a rationality or form of ‘communicative action directed towards the institutionalisation of moral-practical, as opposed to instrumental or purpose-rational action’ (Dickinson 1993: 3). He maintains that the rationality of the lifeworld holds an emancipatory potential, which ‘makes possible higher levels of reflexivity, the criticisability of interpretations, the demystification of legitimations, and the expansion of spaces for public discussion’

(Seidman, cited by Dickinson 1993: 3). In this respect, Dickinson argues that the mental hygiene movement, with its emphasis on democratic participation, contributed to the rationalisation, or the emancipatory potential of the lifeworld, 'transforming family relations and child rearing practices in a more liberal, democratic and egalitarian direction' (Dickinson 1993: 8).

This contrasts with the approaches taken by Philipson, Donzelot and Tyler that focus on social control. Philipson, for instance, adopts a Marxist perspective arguing that child-rearing literature produced in the United States during the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries 'act[ed] as a major ideological medium for conveying the importance of internalised authority' (Philipson 1981: 97), and that this served the interests of capitalism. Philipson maintains that in a pre-capitalist society, it was assumed that 'children would grow up and spend their adult lives in the community of their birth' (Philipson 1981: 65), and expected to find traditional forms of employment within the community. In capitalist societies, however, as it became necessary for children to leave the home to look for work, future employment options took many forms. In this regard, children were required to be more flexible to adapt to a changing lifestyle and negotiate an uncertain future. 'To raise a child according to a strict code of behaviour', maintains Philipson, 'could potentially produce an individual incapable of meeting new standards of conduct and

adapting to new systems of values and beliefs' (Philipson 1981: 66). In this way, 'permissiveness in the rearing of young', or less 'strict' or 'dogmatic' forms of child rearing (Philipson 1981: 65), were encouraged by 'those who controlled society' (Philipson 1981: 66) to produce individuals capable of contributing to the capitalist system.

Donzelot also explains the loosening of the hierarchical structure of parent-child relationships in terms of social control, although he moves away from the Marxist focus on capitalism and ideology. Drawing on Foucault, Donzelot links this phenomenon to the emergence of the 'psy' disciplines and the spread of normalising 'technologies'. He maintains that since the demise of the ancient regime, the French family has undergone a process of liberalisation. Under the ancient regime, the father was the head of the family. He had complete control over family members to the extent that he could:

make use of them for all the operations that were intended to further his *état*; he could determine the children's careers, decide how the family members would be employed and which alliances would be contracted. He could also punish them if they did not live up to their obligations toward the family, and for this he could get the support of the public authority that owed him aid and protection in his endeavour.

(Donzelot 1980: 49).

This contrasts with family life in the modern era, he argues, where the power of the patriarch is weakened and the rights of women and children are proclaimed.

Donzelot contends, however, that this liberalisation process occurred in association with the emergence of 'psy' tutelary practices and resulted in the family becoming subjected to more pervasive forms of control. He writes:

A paradoxical result of the liberalisation of the family, of the emergence of children's rights, of a rebalancing of the man-woman relationship; the more these rights are proclaimed, the more the strangle hold of a tutelary authority tightens around the poor family. In this system, family patriarchalism is destroyed only at the cost of a patriarchy of the state.

(Donzelot 1980: 103).

In this sense, the liberalisation of the family has resulted in making the family more susceptible to outside intervention or to the normalising technologies of experts and public authorities. As such, the liberalisation of the family is part of the process of its subjectification.

This is similar to the approach taken by Deborah Tyler in her analysis of pedagogical discourses and practices associated with the 1930s kindergarten. Also drawing on Foucault, Tyler focuses on the relationship between knowledge and power. Specifically, she is concerned with the way in which child populations are governed within the pedagogical space of the kindergarten, focusing on ‘non-coercive techniques’ that ‘depend upon normalisation, individualisation, surveillance and the installation of the capacity for self-regulation’ (Tyler 1993: 45). Tyler maintains that the fostering of such attributes as ‘self-regulation and independence’ can be understood as ‘technologies of the self’, which, according to Foucault, ‘permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct and ways of being’ (Foucault, cited by Tyler 1993: 53). In this way, the ‘installation of the capacity for self-regulation’ and the encouragement of certain traits such as independence and individuality, are understood to be part of the process of government, where individuals are imbued with the capacity to govern themselves. As Tyler explains of the Foucaultian approach known as ‘governmentality’: an ‘interest in “governmentality” is an interest in the intersections between the efforts of modern states to maximise the effectivity of the population in line with particular objectives and the projects of self government in the lives of individuals’ (Tyler 1993: 42).

In this way, Tyler, Philipson and Donzelot view the 'liberalising' of family relationships in terms of processes of social control or subjectification. Whereas Philipson focuses on the ideological objectives of capitalism, Donzelot and Tyler emphasise the knowledge-power relationship and the role played by experts as normalising agents. This differs from the approach taken by Dickinson, who explains the liberalisation of the family as a positive step toward more equitable and democratic social relationships. It will be argued that Elias provides an alternative way of understanding this trend. Using his work on the civilising process, it will be shown that the liberalisation of the family, or what Elias refers to as 'informalization', does not necessarily represent an emancipatory development. Nor can it be understood in terms of governance or social control. By using Elias's framework, it will be demonstrated that this trend towards informalisation can be more usefully understood as part of a long-term social process that is unintended and unplanned. It is to such a consideration that I now turn.

Informalisation and the civilising process

Elias developed his ideas on 'informalization' in *The Germans*, where he discusses the emergence of a particular pattern of affect

regulation which he calls *selbstzwänge*. As discussed in chapter three, this term refers to constraints exercised by oneself, as opposed to external constraints or *fremdzwänge*. Elias argues that *selbstzwänge* represents a more pervasive or 'all-embracing' form of self-restraint, where the compulsion to exercise self-restraint operates without the need for external forms of regulation. This trend towards *selbstzwänge* was explored in chapter five, where we saw the way in which this pattern of affect regulation was applied to children. It was shown that through the use of habit, authors sought to encourage the development of an 'automatically functioning', or self-regulating, self-restraint. The informalisation of the parent-child relationship provides another example of this tendency towards the development of stronger self-constraint mechanisms, which had implications for both children and parents.

By informalisation Elias refers to the loosening of the hierarchical character of social relationships and the breakdown of formal social codes regulating behaviour. He cites, for example, the relaxation in manners that occurred after the first world war, particularly with regard to modern bathing and dancing practices (Elias 2000: 119). While this trend may be interpreted as a reversal of the civilising process or as a 'loosening of individual self discipline' (Elias 1998: 207), Elias maintains that the removal of formal social codes regulating behaviour resulted in the cultivation of a greater capacity

for self-restraint. This applies not only to individuals occupying the subordinate position of a relationship, but to superordinates as well. As Cas Wouters explains, 'the loosening of restraints and codes of behaviour – the informalisation process – is closely connected with, and contains at the same time a 'tighter binding of drives' (Wouters 1977: 442).

Elias illustrates this by using the example of changes in courtship rituals governing sexual relations among German university students. Prior to the first world war male students followed a highly ritualised social code when courting women of the same class. As Elias describes, 'The conventions of good society applied to them: one bowed, kissed their hand, danced with them in the prescribed way, kissed them when they allowed it, called, when necessary, on the parents – in short, contact with them was ruled by a quite well-established, strictly formalised code of behaviour' (Elias 1996: 35). Elias contrasts this with the late twentieth century, where, in association with the democratisation of power relations between men and women and with the admittance of women to universities, courting rituals became less formalised. For example, 'Rituals such as addressing a young woman as "*Gnädiges Fräulein*" [gracious young lady], and even the distancing use of '*Sie*' [the formal 'you'] have become obsolete in relations between the sexes at universities, and certainly not just there. Men and women students, like other

members of the same age group, use 'du' [the informal form of 'you'] to each other as a matter of course, even from the very beginning when they are not previously acquainted with each other at all' (Elias 1996: 35-36).

Elias describes this highly ritualised form of behaviour as a type of external constraint which served to guide the behaviour of young men and women. He argues that with the removal of this external apparatus, individuals were required to negotiate social relationships for themselves and to regulate their own behaviour. If 'one cannot really follow existing models, one has to work out for oneself a dating strategy as well as a strategy for living together through a variety of ongoing experiments' (Elias 1996: 37). In other words, the removal of external constraints results in an increased pressure towards individualisation and 'ma[de] higher demands on the self-constraint apparatus of each individual participant' (Elias 1996: 37). As Wouters maintains, 'a less imperative use of "fremdzwänge" (constraints exercised by others) ... is conducive to a stronger development of "selbstzwänge" (constraints exercised by oneself)...' (Wouters 1977: 446).

In his essay, 'The Civilizing of Parents' (1998), Elias explores this trend in relation to contemporary developments in parent-child relationships. He maintains that during the late twentieth century, the

parent-child relationship lost some of its hierarchical character, specifically in relation to the loosening of the barriers of respect and with children being accorded more autonomy and a greater degree of decision making. He also asserts that this occurred in the context of a 'tightening of the prohibition of the use of physical violence in family life', which, 'applies not only to the relations between adults and children within the family', but also 'to the relation between adults and children in general, particularly to those of teachers and children at school' (Elias 1998: 207). This had the effect of eliciting a high degree of self-restraint from adults in their relations with children, and also of inculcating similar patterns of behaviour in children. As Elias argues:

... the informalization of the parent-child relationship and the loosening of traditional taboos in inter-generational relations goes hand in hand with a heightening of the taboos against violence in relations between parents and children, and demands – perhaps even forces – a higher degree of self-control on both sides.

(Elias 1998: 207).

In this way, Elias contends that this trend towards the informalisation of the parent-child relationship had a 'civilising' effect on both parties.

One important point to note about this development is the way in which it has emerged as an unintended consequence of long-term figurational change. As part of the civilising process, the informalisation of the parent-child relationship can be explained as a response to changing figurational patterns. This refers, of course, to the way in which modern industrial societies are characterised by what Elias describes as increasing differentiation of functions and lengthening chains of interdependencies. In order for individuals to operate successfully in a society characterised by such a structure, individuals must exercise a high degree of differentiated self-control in their relations with others. The informalisation of social relationships, which constitutes a movement towards more exacting forms of self-restraint, reflects the development of denser networks of interdependence and more complex patterns of functional differentiation. Such figurational changes, argues Elias, have not been brought about deliberately, but instead have taken the form of a blind or unintended course of development.

It is in this way that Elias's approach provides an alternative to the Marxist and Foucaultian perspectives discussed above. These perspectives explain the liberalisation or informalisation of the parent-child relationship in terms of social control. While Philipson views this phenomenon as a form of ideological domination, where 'those who control society' sought to inculcate a mode of behaviour

conducive to the interests of capitalism, Donzelot and Tyler explain this in terms of the increasing subjectification, or government, of the family and individuals. An Eliasian approach highlights the way in which the informalisation of the family has emerged as an unintended consequence of long-term figuration change. Providing an argument against the social control approaches however, does not mean to say that the liberalisation or democratisation of the family has resulted in liberation or emancipation. The informalisation of the parent child relationship has resulted in a tendency towards stricter patterns of self-discipline for both children and parents. This will now be demonstrated through an analysis of inter-war parenting literature.

The Informalisation of the parent-child relationship as reflected in inter-war parenting literature

An investigation of parenting literature produced in Australia in the inter-war years reveals a trend towards informalisation. Specifically, a loosening of the hierarchical structure of the parent-child relationship can be observed, where authors discouraged the use of authoritarian disciplinary methods and encouraged children's independence and autonomy. It was thought that this would have a civilising affect on both parties, where parents would restrain violent

or aggressive tendencies, which, in turn, would lead to the development of a similar pattern of affect regulation in children.

The first part of this section will investigate the loosening of the hierarchical power structure. The second part will examine the civilisatory implications of this, in terms of the removal of violence from the parent-child relationship.

Loosening of the hierarchical power structure

This will be discussed in relation to two main factors. Firstly, with regard to advice about discipline where authors discouraged authoritarian control, and secondly, in relation to the learning of elementary tasks where authors promoted children's independence and autonomy.

Authority and control

One of the main topics of discussion in the literature was the extent to which parents should exercise authority and control. Most authors advised against the use of strict authoritarian disciplinary methods. For example, Professor J. Alexander Gunn maintained that 'Authority must never be so harsh and rigid that it creates vindictive rebels or awed and submissive children ...' (Gunn 1931: 62). And Professor L.

J. Wrigley wrote that 'Within the limits of the child's comprehension, discussion and reasoning rather than authoritative direction should usually be the method' (Wrigley 1932: 70). Mary Lush, in her lecture 'The Child in the Home' described two types of parents. The first type takes the position that: 'I know what this child should do and be, and I wish to have such authority and control over him as will enable me to make him do and be what I wish' (Lush 1932: 7). The second type takes up the following position: 'I also wish to have control over this child so that I can steadily and progressively train him to be fully responsible for himself, and thus give him the chance to enjoy his life experience, by using his own powers in a way that will be satisfying to himself and useful to the community' (Lush 1932: 7). Needless to say, Lush favoured the second type of parent, maintaining that the "mother knows best" attitude may be a serious hindrance to the development of a healthy and independent personality' (Lush 1932: 8-9).

Gutteridge addressed this issue in a lecture entitled 'Should Children Obey?' She asked the following questions: 'Should children obey all that is requested and demanded of them?', 'Will any kind of obedience do?', and 'What is the effect of unwilling obedience, obedience with a conflict or a grudge, upon his development?' (Gutteridge 1931a: 28-29). To answer these questions Gutteridge turned to psychology, drawing attention to the laws that govern

behaviour. The first law to be noted, she maintained, is that '*Every act has something to start it off, a stimulus*', and the second law is that '*This stimulus lasts until another takes its place*' [original emphasis] (Gutteridge 1931a: 30). The third law, she maintained, is that although children and adults are 'alike in that their behaviour is an attempt to satisfy their desires', the 'simple, natural desires of the child are far removed from the conventional desires of the adult' (Gutteridge 1931a: 30). If a child sees a silver teapot, for instance, he or she may wish to play with it, while an adult may wish to treasure it.

Gutteridge went on to explain how these laws can help to understand how to manage the behaviour of children. If a child reaches for a teapot, she maintained, scolding or saying 'no' will have little or no effect because the 'stimulation is still running between the nerves of the eye, the brain and the fingers', and 'even if we remove the teapot, the child's memory keeps the picture of the teapot well in his mind' (Gutteridge 1931a: 30). The solution, advised Gutteridge, is not to stifle the child's natural desire, but to channel it. 'We see plainly', she maintained 'that "don't" and "no" are not solutions unless followed immediately by a positive suggestion that will provide another stimulus. There are so many interesting things that a child may do that it is a simple matter to find a suitable substitute, especially for a young child' (Gutteridge 1931a: 30). She suggested, for example,

that the child be taught to handle the object in an appropriate way: 'Could we not suggest drying, polishing the precious vessel, or carrying it to the table or shelf where it belongs, *taking it for granted that the child wants to know the right thing to do*' [original emphasis] (Gutteridge 1931a: 31).

As such, Gutteridge appealed to parents to respect the natural laws of child development. As Gunn explained, 'It is desirable to get obedience ... not to ourselves, but to the great laws of life and health and social intercourse' (Gunn 1931: 61). Gutteridge maintained that, 'In growing there are laws that must be obeyed. We know that a child must crawl, climb, experiment, pull, push, open and shut, and make all variety of noises in order to satisfy his developing mind and body' (Gutteridge 1931a: 33). She went on to explain that if these laws are not obeyed, if parents try to impose too many restrictions on children, then this will have a detrimental effect upon development. She maintained that 'if he obeyed us too implicitly with our commands, "Sit still! Be quiet!" or "Leave that alone!", his development would suffer' (Gutteridge 1931a: 33).

In this way, children are granted a degree of tolerance. Behaviours that may be considered to be childish or 'naughty' are accepted as being a natural or necessary part of the child's development. Cunningham explained this further. He advised that parents should

not be overly concerned about behaviours that are typically interpreted as disobedience or naughtiness. 'Food and sleep habits', he maintained, 'should never be brought into the category of naughtiness', and 'the child should not be punished for refusing to eat food which the parent thinks is good for him, nor failing to go to sleep at the expected time' (Cunningham 1931a: 4). Cunningham even suggested that 'spitting' should fall into this category, as this is merely the exercising of a 'sophisticated form of a reflex type behaviour' (Cunningham 1931a: 4). Cunningham maintained that if 'no notice is taken at all, or if a few matter-of-fact suggestions are given to the effect that "So-and so is growing a big girl now, and big people don't do that," the habit will soon die a natural death' (Cunningham 1931a: 4).

This collected response was suggested by other authors. Springthorpe, for example, warned against abrupt interference in children's activities. He maintained that children should be given a preparatory request such as "In five minutes you will have to stop playing" (Springthorpe 1931: 41), and that this will be met with a 'readier response than peremptory demands for instant obedience' (Springthorpe 1931: 42). He maintained that, for children, 'mental absorption in an occupation can be at least as intense as with adults, and the child should be allowed a reasonable time for comprehension and compliance' (Springthorpe 1931: 42). As such,

children were not expected to comply instantly with adult commands, moreover, it was adults who were expected to comply with the natural laws of child health and development.

This may be described as a modification of the power relations between parents and children, or what Elias refers to as a loosening of the hierarchical structure of the parent-child relationship. Parents were encouraged to allow children a degree of autonomy, and to tolerate and accommodate the developmental needs of children. Total obedience was not expected of children, and parents were encouraged, in some matters at least, to acquiesce to the demands of children.

The benefits of this strategy were pointed out by Gutteridge. She maintained that children must learn to say 'no', and that by doing so they are developing strength of character. She cited a 'child expert' who maintained that "It is disastrous if a child does not exert his own will and learn to say no". He pointed out, reported Gutteridge:

that the child who is continually encouraged to be a "good" child, who is taught to do exactly as he is told, and to offer no opinions or objections of his own may later on, when he meets serious temptation, be quite incapable of saying no. The well-meaning parent has weakened and not strengthened, his

character though she may have gained what she regards as “goodness” in the child.

(Gutteridge 1934: 16).

In this way, Gutteridge maintained that a reversal of the authority relationship strengthens the child’s capacity to think and act independently. Parents who use absolute authority to dominate and control a child may be successful in obtaining obedience, but the child does not learn to make moral decisions on his own. When he meets ‘serious temptation’ later on, she maintained, the child will be ‘quite incapable of saying no’. It was feared that if a too rigid discipline was applied, preventing the child from exercising his ‘own will’, the child would not be able to behave appropriately when adult authority is taken away.

As such, we see the way in which the informalisation of the parent-child relationship, or the loosening of the hierarchical structure, was thought to strengthen the child’s capacity for self-regulation. It was believed that by removing external forms of regulation, children will learn to regulate their own behaviour, or to make the right decisions, independently of adult authority.

Independence and Autonomy

This emphasis on independence was a theme that emerged strongly in the literature and was extended to other aspects of child guidance such as problem solving and the learning of basic skills. Gutteridge, for example, provided advice on 'guidance through difficulties'. She maintained that parents must allow or help children to solve problems for themselves. She described a scenario where a child is pulling along a wagon and gets a wheel caught. Gutteridge advised that when this happens and the child 'gets in a temper, the parent should go to his assistance to prevent a long temper storm' (Gutteridge 1934: 17). The parent, however, should not fix the problem for the child: 'she should not lift the wagon out and put it right again because, if so, the child will only get into a temper when next it happens' (Gutteridge 1934: 17). Instead, Gutteridge advised the parent to 'show the child what to do, and either let him do it for himself or share with him in taking it out' and the next time it happens the 'child should be encouraged to do it all alone' (Gutteridge 1934: 17). In this way, it was hoped the child will develop the capacity to deal with the situation should it occur again, rather than relying on an adult to fix the problem.

Self-help skills were also encouraged with regard to the learning of elementary tasks. Lush, for instance, advised parents to enlist the child's help during the process of dressing. When 'dressing a very

little child', she maintained 'we can teach him, as part of a game, to hold out his arms for us to slip on the tiny garments, to hold out his foot for socks and shoes, instead of just sitting to be dressed like a doll' (Lush 1932: 8). In this way, the parent is encouraged to allow, or perhaps to induce, the child to play an active role in the process. Christine Heinig advocated a similar strategy. She maintained that parents have a tendency to over-help children and that this tendency produces a passive or dependent child. She wrote:

Perhaps it is [the child's] exceedingly inadequate struggle for independence that causes adults to over-help children, which results, if children are submissive and adults persistently aggressive, in three-year-olds who are still being fed, in five-year-olds still being dressed, in eight-year-olds still being taken to school ...'

(Heinig 1938: 39).

As such, parents were encouraged to take a back seat role or to 'Keep out of the picture' (Albiston 1932: 53). As Gutteridge maintained, 'The wise mother must step into the background; she must be there to guide and help the child when needed, but she must leave him more and more to do things and think for himself (Gutteridge 1934: 23). The objective of this strategy, of course, was

to engender within the child, a capacity for self-regulation. As Heinig explained:

If we wish our children to express and use self-confidence, assurance and independence when problems in adolescence appear, we cannot expect them suddenly to conduct themselves in that way when they have had no chance to control their own affairs previously, to think for themselves and reap the results, whether pleasant or unpleasant, of their actions.

(Heinig 1938: 39).

Once again, we see the way in which external constraints, in the form of adult guidance, are loosened or removed. It was believed that in removing these external constraints, children will learn to regulate their own behaviour, make decisions for themselves, and be able to accomplish tasks independently.

The removal of violence and aggression

This re-structuring of the authority relationship, and the granting of a greater degree of freedom and autonomy, not only had implications for children, but also for parents. Accommodating the laws of child development was no easy task. Tolerating the natural expression of impulsive behaviours, and allowing children to make mistakes,

required that parents display a great deal of patience and emotional-restraint.

This was reflected in the literature, where authors advised parents to limit or control violent or aggressive tendencies. In fact, the condemnation of the use of violence was a theme that emerged strongly in the literature. Not only did authors advise against physical violence, they also admonished the use of psychological violence or what was described as 'punishments of the emotional type'. This demonstrates the way in which a high degree of emotional control, or self-restraint, was demanded of parents.

This first point to note, is the way in which parents were encouraged to suppress feelings of anger and aggression when dealing with children. Springthorpe, for instance, maintained that 'explanation and correction is most effective when carried out calmly and, if possible, cheerfully' (Springthorpe 1931: 45), and the 'salutary coercion should not be accompanied by fuss or anger, or performed with an intent to punish' (Springthorpe 1931: 41). Gutteridge maintained that even when a child does something that is 'intensely annoying' such as dropping a cup, spilling milk, or breaking an expensive piece of equipment, the parent should refrain from showing 'Alarm, anger [or] irritability' (Gutteridge 1937: 6). Blaming or scolding the child, she maintained, 'is wrong', because blame is

'always emotional; it 'invariably contains irritation and annoyance', and is merely a way of relieving feelings (Gutteridge 1934: 18). As such, Gutteridge suggested other ways of dealing with the 'irritations' caused by children. She advised that instead of venting anger, the parent should ask the 'child to wipe up the spilt milk or pick up the broken crockery, but she must do all this in a calm, unemotional voice' (Gutteridge 1934: 18).

Authors also condemned the use of corporal punishment. Gutteridge, for instance, maintained that 'the negative training of scolding, and slapping, and punishment is useless', and Heinig advised her readers that 'Child psychology has taught us many more effective and wholesome ways to discipline children than by using corporal punishment, slaps and spankings' (Heinig 1938: 14). Cunningham maintained that in the 'best schools to-day there is little or no corporal punishment' and that the 'old flogging regime in school and home was ... based on a crude form of belief in the doctrine of original sin' (Cunningham 1931: 1).

Not only did these authors advice against the use of physical violence to exact obedience, they also warned against the damaging affects caused by what Cunningham described as 'punishments of the emotional type' (Cunningham 1931: 7). John F. Williams, for instance, in a lecture entitled 'The Mischief of Fear', maintained that

although some progress had been made towards the elimination of the use of physical violence in disciplining children, this resulted in the implementation of other methods which were no less dangerous.

He wrote:

There seems to be a widespread impression that fear as a factor in development is not now so important as in bygone years, when the thrashings in school and home were carried out with a frequency and severity which have become proverbial. Unfortunately this view appears to be incorrect. The factors which have caused the pendulum to swing away from corporal punishment have had a tendency to open the way for the admission of other fears, less obvious, perhaps, but quite harmful.

(Williams 1931: 15).

Here, Williams referred to fears induced through psychological or emotional manipulations. In this category, he placed 'threats'. He maintained that:

Threats of all kinds are often used to instil fear into children, generally with the mistaken idea of exacting obedience. Death and illness are often emphasised; for example, the child is told that if it eats fruit it will die, if it climbs and falls it will be killed,

and if it doesn't come when called the 'fond' mother threatens to kill it.

(Williams 1931: 19).

Williams then went on to outline the damage caused by this type of disciplinary method. He maintained that the harm resulting from the use of fear to induce obedience may be summarised into the following categories: 'physiological disorders, conduct disorders, and mental disorders' (Williams 1931: 21). Physiological disorders may include problems with blood circulation, 'cold sweats', loss of appetite, vomiting and bed wetting. Conduct disorders refer to the onset of nervous habits, thumb-sucking, facial grimaces, muscle spasms and masturbation. Mental disorders include the prevention of useful or healthy thought, the individual may become selfish or 'shut-in', and fear may be turned to hatred, jealousy and cruelty to other children and animals (Williams 1931: 23). He also maintained that there may be a delay or stoppage of intellectual or emotional development as curiosity is blocked and the 'tendency to acquire further knowledge broken down by a fear of failure and lack of self-confidence' (Williams 1931: 23).

Williams was so concerned about the damage caused by psychological fears, that he even cautioned parents about the use of 'fairy tales'. 'Injudicious use of fairy tales' he maintained, 'which,

while useful for quickening the imagination, may be harmful if terrifying and told just before the light goes out ...' (Williams 1931: 21). Gutteridge expressed a similar concern. She maintained that:

We should be careful that stories and fairy stories do not frighten children. Very little children should not be told such stories as Jack the Giant Killer, Babes in the Wood, The Three Little Pigs, Red Riding Hood, for though the child of six or seven can understand that these are just stories they may be very real and terrifying to the little child.

(Gutteridge 1937: 8).

Cunningham even advised against the use of religious stories. He maintained that 'however valuable religion can be as an element in the child's training, a direct appeal to religious ideas and motives should rarely be made in the attempt to overcome behaviour problems' (Cunningham 1931: 8).

Interestingly, this trend towards the elimination of physical and emotional violence did not represent an entirely new development in child rearing advice. Child rearing literature produced prior to the first world war contained similar precepts. For example, the author of an article published in *The New Idea* in 1903 maintained:

Don't nag, or scold or threat, and, finally don't whip. For all thoughtful child-trainers, in marked contrast to the old-fashioned teachings, decry whipping. "Use the rod and spoil the child" is now the correct reading of Solomon's advice.

(The New Idea 1903: 687).

Two English authors provided similar advice. Dr Harry Roberts maintained that 'Personal violence as a means of punishment is too often resorted to from thoughtlessness or temper on the part of the offended grown-up' (Roberts 1911: 77), and Henry Ashby wrote that 'care must be taken not to ... [apply] a too rigorous and violent discipline' (Ashby 1898: 10-11).

These authors however, were not concerned to eliminate violence altogether, but rather to place limits on its use. Roberts, for instance, maintained that under some circumstances inflicting pain is a necessary part of child discipline. He wrote:

The great thing to aim at in correcting children should be correction and not the infliction of pain, though at times it may be necessary that the child should feel pain in order that it may realise the consequences of its wrongdoing to itself or its effect upon other people.

So far as it is possible, follow the adage "let the punishment fit the crime," always bearing in mind that there is

a lesson to be learned by the child from punishment. For such offences as do definitely inflict pain upon some other creature, it may be necessary to punish by the infliction of pain upon the child. Wanton cruelty to animals, for instance, or to a nurse or another child, merits perhaps the severest reprimand, much more indeed than more abstract offensives.

(Roberts 1911: 78).

This sentiment was echoed by Nurse Aitken in *The Australian Mother's Own Book* (1912). She maintained that 'There should be certain forms of punishment meted out for certain offences, always provided the punishment is not unduly excessive or prolonged' (Aitken 1912: 81). And the author of an article published in *The New Idea* (1903) maintained: 'Keep your punishments for grave offences. Never neglect administering them when a principle has been violated' (*The New Idea* 1903: 687).

In addition to placing restrictions on the use of violence, these authors also warned of the dangers of psychological fears. Another anonymous author from *The New Idea* maintained that:

Too much cannot be said against the pernicious and inexcusable habit, practised not alone by ignorant nurses, but

also by many mothers of intelligence, of frightening children into obedience.

(The New Idea 1902a: 182).

This author then went on to explain that an infant's imagination can be perverted by visions presented to it 'of the big dog that will get it if it runs into the street, or of the man in the dark cupboard who will carry it off if it doesn't be good ...' (The New Idea 1902a: 182). Roberts also warned against the harmful affects of inducing psychological fears. He maintained that 'Bogies and all such foolish terrors should be the last ideas to be introduced to the mind of a child, and wrong ideas about the dark and the fear of darkness should be banished too from the nursery world ...' (Roberts 1911: 72).

Although these authors advised against the use of psychological fear in obtaining obedience, they nevertheless promoted other psychological methods to induce obedience. For example, ostracism and the withdrawal of parental love:

The simplest plan to quell an infantile insurrection is, in place of scolding or threatening, to leave the child alone for a few moments. Freed from the excitement of arguing or direct

opposition, cut off from the association, sympathy, and love of the mother, the little offender will soon sob out, "I'll be good".

(The New Idea 1903: 687).

Other authors suggested a more direct method of inducing feelings of guilt and fear. For example:

Without saying a word I left the room and went about other matters. Returning, I said, very gravely and gently, "Do you know what I have? I have a little girl who does not love me".

(The New Idea 1902b: 338).

And:

... when he grew calm I used to talk to him very gently and tell him how bad he made me feel when he acted in this way and nobody would ever love him if he did not try to control himself.

(Everylady's Journal 1912: 626).

This author went on to explain the logic behind this type of punishment:

The young naturally crave for praise and love, so perhaps the most effectual and moral way to deal with this fault is to

inculcate in the child the dread of going through life unpopular and disliked on account of a trait which it is quite possible to alter for the better if he really wishes to do.

(Everylady's Journal 1912: 626).

Although this author claimed this method to be a more 'moral' approach to child discipline, this attitude was not shared by authors of the inter-war period. Springthorpe, for instance, advised that 'Ostracism, [or] being made to feel unwanted' is undesirable and likely to cause ill effects. He maintained that 'man is a gregarious animal, and for natural development requires the approval of his fellows' (Springthorpe 1931: 44). In this regard, he maintained, 'prolonged lack of affection' is serious and may cause the development of an 'inferiority complex' (Springthorpe 1931: 44). Gutteridge also cautioned against the withdrawal of love. She maintained that the common threat – 'Mother won't love you if you are naughty' is 'unwise and hurtful' (Gutteridge 1937: 8), and that the *Fear of punishment or of parental disapproval cannot build up the "wish to do right"* [original emphasis] (Gutteridge 1937: 8). She also went on to say that the need for affection plays an important role in the child's development, and that the child 'must feel that he is wanted, that he is really needed and loved for himself' (Gutteridge 1937: 9).

In this way, the literature reveals a civilising trend where parents were encouraged to control strong or aggressive emotions and to refrain from the use of violence. Not only did this apply to physical violence, but also to what may be described as emotional or psychological violence. Although this trend was evident in the pre-war texts, authors from this time were not as insistent as authors from the inter-war period. The pre-war authors placed limitations on the use of corporal punishment, but made allowances for it under certain circumstances. A similar trend can be noted with regards to 'punishments of the emotional type'. While the pre-war authors warned against using fear to obtain obedience from children, they advocated other psychological methods that were considered to be 'unwise and hurtful' by authors of the later period. In this way, the civilising imperative, or the prohibition against the use of violence, tightened.

An important point to note is the way in which this was seen as having consequences in terms of child behaviour. Authors constantly pointed to the negative effects of violent or aggressive emotions. Gutteridge, for example, maintained that if an adult displays 'irritation and annoyance', this may be 'handed on to the child' (Gutteridge 1934: 18), such that he or she may treat others in a similar way. Cunningham expressed a similar concern. He described a scenario where a young boy 'on commencing school soon attracted attention

by his cruelty to other children' (Cunningham 1931: 7). Investigations, he maintained, 'showed that the father was particularly anxious that his boy should grow up "good," and would chastise him severely for the smallest misdeed. The boy was getting his own back, not on his father, but on his school-fellows' (Cunningham 1931: 7). Gutteridge also maintained that dealing with children aggressively may induce feelings of shame and inferiority, which, in turn, can lead to passivity. A feeling of shame, she maintained, 'may kill that wonderful spirit of inquiry and adventure and independence in a child' (Gutteridge 1934: 18). Children afflicted in this way may be fearful of making mistakes and as such hesitate to experiment and take risks. This is similar to the point made by Williams in his assessment of the damage caused by fear. As cited earlier, he maintained that a child who fears failure or has a lack of self-confidence may be hindered in his/her emotional and intellectual development. Curiosity may be blocked and a tendency to acquire further knowledge stifled (Williams 1931: 23).

In this way, these authors maintained that strong emotional reactions in adults may not only induce similar patterns of behaviour in children, but may also suppress a child's independence. As such, we see the way in which the civilising of parental behaviour was to elicit a similar pattern of affect regulation in children.

This demonstrates the way in which, through the informalisation of the parent-child relationship, authors sought to inculcate ever more exacting patterns of self-restraint in both children and parents. Firstly, as a consequence of the loosening of the formal hierarchical power structure, a greater capacity for self-restraint was demanded of parents. In submitting to the natural laws of child behaviour, parents were required to curb violent or emotional responses. Secondly, it was believed that this, in turn, would elicit similar patterns of behaviour from children.

Conclusion

This chapter explored parenting advice relating to the management of the parent-child relationship. It was shown that authors of this literature discouraged authoritarian disciplinary methods and advised against the use of violence. It was argued that this reflects a civilising trend, where both children and parents were expected to exercise ever stricter patterns of self-restraint. This was explained in relation to Elias's notion of 'informalization', where, he argues, the loosening of the hierarchical structure of the parent-child relationship demands a higher degree of self-control on both sides.

This chapter also showed the way in which this analysis offers an alternative to the armoury of perspectives that focus on social control. These perspectives emphasise the way in which the liberalisation of the family, or efforts to inculcate certain patterns of self-regulation or independence in children, are part of a process of domination or subjectification. Using an Eliasian framework, it was demonstrated that these efforts are not part of some all-encompassing program of social control, but can be more usefully understood as an unintended consequence of long-term figurational change. This refers to the way in which the informalisation of the parent-child relationship, reflects a modern phase of the civilising process, where the development of increasingly complex networks of inter-dependencies, compels individuals to tighter patterns of self-control.

It almost goes without saying that this trend towards the liberalisation of the family cannot be interpreted as an emancipatory outcome. The informalisation of the parent-child relationship has not so much resulted in greater freedoms for individuals, but instead binds the individual to a more rigorous self-discipline.

8. Conclusion

This thesis examined child rearing literature produced in Australia in the inter-war years. In particular, it focused on the way in which this literature had implications for parents, specifically in relation to the regulation of conduct and the structuring of relations with children. This thesis argued that efforts to educate parents in the inter-war years can be explained in relation to long-term changes in the history of childhood and the family that emerged as an unintended consequence of the civilising process. This refers to the growing distance between children and adults, and the positioning of the family as the primary site for regulating, or civilising, the behaviour of children.

These long-term changes were discussed in chapter two where various accounts of the history of the Western family were examined. This chapter highlighted some of the major trends identified by historians in relation to the historical transformation of childhood and the changing role and function of the family. The main developments discussed included the separation of childhood, or the so called 'discovery' of childhood, and the way in which the family has become more specialised in relation to its care and educative functions.

Chapter three examined Elias's work on the civilising process, and how this relates to the changes in family life outlined in the previous chapter. Elias views these changes as being connected to certain developments in the figurational structure of modern industrialised societies. This refers to what he describes as lengthening chains of interdependencies and increasing differentiation of functions. Elias argues that individuals situated within such a social structure are required to exercise a high degree of self-restraint, or emotional control, in their relations with others. This has led to the growing psychological and behavioural distance between children and adults, and to the family becoming more specialised with regard to its socialising function, particularly in relation to managing, or regulating, the emotional behaviour of children.

Chapter four discussed the way in which these developments are reflected in Australia in the inter-war years, where child rearing advice entered the family and was increasingly directed towards managing child behaviour. In particular, this chapter examined the emergence of various organisations that engaged in parent education activities and produced child rearing literature. These included the infant health associations that were established in most States, as well as the Free Kindergarten Union and the Victorian Council for Mental Hygiene. While parent education literature was produced in Australia prior to World War I, more of an effort was

made to produce and distribute this information in the inter-war years.

Chapter five examined the content of this literature. It was revealed that an increasing emphasis was placed on providing parents with instructions on guiding the behaviour of children. At first, the literature mainly focused on managing child health, but with the emergence of education and psychology discourses, information on child training and the development of personality was also included. In addition, authors highlighted the way in which a child's personality or behaviour is able to be shaped or modified (as opposed to being inborn or biologically determined), and emphasised the important role that parents play in relation to this.

Another significant feature of this literature was the focus on providing children with guidance in the regulation of emotions and instinctive tendencies. This was discussed in relation to the emphasis placed on habit, where habit was defined in terms of the sublimation of instincts. Authors highlighted the importance of this in relation to social development, where the ability to exercise self-restraint or emotional control was identified as being necessary in order to get along with others or to 'fit into the social scheme'.

It was argued that this demonstrates how the family came to function as a site for the civilising of children. Parents were guided in methods of child management where a strong focus was placed on the importance of teaching children to regulate or control emotions. This highlights the civilising imperatives of these educative strategies. Authors were concerned that children be provided with the skills necessary to function as an adult within a social configuration characterised by a high level of functional differentiation and complex networks of interdependencies.

But this is only part of the story. Central to this thesis is the way in which the education discourses that entered the family had implications for parents. Not only did the literature contain advice relating to the care and management of children, it also contained advice for parents in relation to the management of their own personal care and conduct. This was discussed in chapters six and seven.

In chapter six, precepts relating to prenatal and neonatal care were examined. Here, authors provided instructions to mothers on various aspects of health care. Not only were they provided with advice relating to physical health, for example, in relation to diet, clothing and exercise, they were also provided with advice on psychological health and emotional well-being. In this regard, mothers were

warned about the dangers of psychological disturbances, and encouraged to regulate 'uncontrolled emotions' and to cultivate a calm and even disposition. It is in this way that a civilised mode of conduct was applied to mothers, in a manner not too dissimilar from that which was applied to children.

Of special significance is the way in which the health of the mother was linked to the health of the child. In providing information about diet, for instance, authors pointed to how this could impact upon the production of breast milk and the development of the unborn child. This was also discussed in relation to other aspects of maternal care, for example, authors highlighted the way in which clothing, sleeping patterns, physical activity, and oral hygiene could influence the health of the child.

In addition, the psychological health and emotional disposition of the mother was also seen as being connected to the health of the child. Authors emphasised how emotional disturbances could affect the quality and quantity of milk, and impede the development of the unborn child. Authors also commented on the behaviour of the mother and how this could influence the behaviour of the child. In this way, authors encouraged the cultivation of a civilised disposition, in the hope that this would encourage a similar standard of behaviour, not only in children, but in the whole family.

This demonstrates the way in which efforts to educate mothers, particularly in relation to the regulation of conduct, is part of the process of the civilising of children. As the family has become increasingly focused on providing care and education for children, and on guiding the behaviour of children, parents, and in particular mothers, have increasingly become the target of educative strategies.

This was discussed further in chapter seven, where advice relating to the parent-child relationship was examined. In particular, this chapter investigated what Elias describes as the 'informalization' of the parent-child relationship. This refers to the loosening of the hierarchical power structure and the way in which children were granted a greater degree of freedom and autonomy. Authors hoped that this would have a civilising effect on both parties, where, in order to accommodate the developmental needs of children, parents would restrain violent or aggressive tendencies. It was thought, that this in turn, would elicit a similar pattern of affect regulation in children. Again, this highlights how the civilising of parents is linked to the civilising of children.

As such, we see the way in which, the instruction and education that entered the family in the inter-war years, particularly as it relates to

the regulation of parental conduct and the structuring of parent-child relations, can be explained in relation to the historical transformation of childhood and the family that developed in association with the civilising process. With the growing distance between children and adults, and the family becoming increasingly specialised with regard to its socialising or civilising functions, child rearing advice entered the family. This advice contained instructions for parents in the regulation of child behaviour, but it also contained instructions for the regulation of parental behaviour. Moreover, the conduct of parents was linked to the conduct of children, demonstrating that parents were targeted because they were thought to be able to shape child behaviour. As such, parents were pulled into the orbit of advice as a consequence of the positioning of the family as the primary site for the civilising of children.

In explicating parent education strategies in this way, as being part of the civilising process, this thesis offers an alternative to the many accounts that focus on social control. As discussed in chapter three, such accounts draw from Marxist, feminist and Foucaultian theoretical perspectives, and explain efforts to educate parents in terms of the way in which certain groups or individuals worked to shape the family in accordance with various ideological or governmental objectives. While Marxist/feminist theorists focus on the ideological state, or the ruling class, Foucaultian writers point to

the normalising strategies deployed by experts. An Eliasian analysis emphasises how parent education strategies are connected to unplanned or unintended processes of change.

This refers to how the conditions that precipitated the increasing emphasis placed on parent education in the inter-war years are related to long-term changes in the figural structure of social life, specifically, lengthening chains of interdependencies and increasing functional differentiation. These figural changes have led to changes in habitus, or the personality structure of human beings, which has resulted in the growing distance between children and adults, and the changing role and function of the family. These figural developments have not been fashioned with deliberate intent, but instead, have emerged as an unintended consequence of intended action.

The figural determinants of change were discussed in chapter four. Firstly, the role of the state was addressed, where it was shown that efforts to educate parents in the inter-war years were not directed by the state, but rather, emerged in an ad-hoc fashion largely through philanthropic activities.

Secondly, it was argued that although middle class persons, and in particular, middle class professionals, were involved in parent

education programs, this does not necessarily constitute class domination or ideological control. Instead, it was shown that middle class involvement can be explained in terms of the way in which this class was exposed more directly to the figurational constraints of modern life. As Elias argues, the civilised rationality first emerged among the upper/middle classes as these groups were involved in courtly circles and trade networks, and as such experienced more immediately the figurational pressures which necessitated a particular mode of life conduct. In this regard, Elias makes special reference to the professional bourgeoisie, whom, he argues were subjected to more exacting demands for *économie*, and as such were obliged to exercise ever tighter patterns of self-control. In this way, the involvement of middle class professionals in parent education reform in Australia, can be explained in terms of the way in which this group experienced particular 'conditions of life', which made possible, or demanded, a certain type of rationality or mode of life conduct.

It was also shown how this argument can be extended to challenge Foucaultian interpretations that focus on the way experts, or medical professionals, worked to impose normalising discourses upon the family. It was argued that these discourses reflect rather than construct, in the sense that a group's discourse is a product of its shared experiences (Smith 1999: 93). In this way, the parent

education discourses produced by experts reflect the way in which these individuals were subjected to figurational pressures.

And finally, the question of gender was examined. This subject features prominently in many of the social control accounts where parent education, and in particular, mothercraft education, is associated with the subjugation of women. This thesis acknowledged that women were mostly targeted in parent education literature, but also pointed out that most of this literature was written by women. It was argued that this represents the way in which women were beginning to enter the professional sphere, and reflects the re-balancing of power relations. It was also argued that the targeting of women in parenting discourses highlights their elevated status as household managers. As pointed out by Stone, one characteristic of the modern transformation of the family is that women were granted a greater degree of decision making, particularly in relation to the care of children.

This thesis has also challenged the way in which, in many feminist accounts, gender is positioned as the central question in explicating parent education discourses. This thesis has shown that in order to understand parent education in the twentieth century, consideration must be given to the way in which the family has been shaped by long-term unintended processes of change. Of particular importance

here, is the civilising process and its consequences in terms of the historical transformation of childhood and the changing role and function of family.

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