

The Anthropology of Childhood: Cherubs, Chattel, Changelings

By David F. Lancy

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How are children raised in different cultures? What is the role of children in society? How are families and communities structured around them? Now available in a revised edition, this book sets out to answer these questions, and argues that our common understandings about children are narrowly culture-bound. Enriched with anecdotes from ethnography and the daily media, the book examines family structure, reproduction, profiles of children's caretakers within family or community, their treatment at different ages, their play, work, schooling, and transition to adulthood. The result is a nuanced and credible picture of childhood in different cultures, past and present. Organised developmentally, moving from infancy through to adolescence and early adulthood, this new edition reviews and catalogues the findings of over 100 years of anthropological scholarship dealing with childhood and adolescence, drawing on over 750 newly added sources, and engaging with newly emerging issues relevant to the world of childhood today.

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Editorial Review

Review

"... the most comprehensive, and perhaps only, review of the human child in terms of evolutionary biology and sociocultural anthropology. Based on the best of theory and field ethnography, it is essential for any study of human development and human nature."

Barry Bogin, Loughborough University

"The scholarship in this book is incredibly sound and thorough in breadth and scope."

Rebecca Zarger, University of South Florida

"David Lancy's *The Anthropology of Childhood* was essential the moment it appeared; the second edition is even better! He has digested the survey material even more, used updated materials, and held back less on his criticism of contemporary Euro-American childrearing."

Susan D. Blum, University of Notre Dame

"If I were to assign just one book as required reading for students of child psychology, this would be it. It opens our all-too-parochial eyes to childhood's possibilities."

Peter Gray, Boston College

"... a valuable forum to better understand childhood as a rapidly growing sub-field of anthropology."

Akira Takada, Kyoto University

"... this revised version of the volume is very welcome, providing students, teachers and generalists who are interested in the subject with a broad overview of the anthropology of childhood, supported by a comprehensive and helpfully interdisciplinary bibliography."

Sally Crawford FSA, University of Oxford

"... it [is] possibly the only book that new parents will ever need ... Perhaps the most surprising thing about *The Anthropology of Childhood* was how it taught me to value things that, in a cross-cultural perspective, might suddenly seem arbitrary: how we approach hygiene, for example, or teach etiquette."

The New York Times

"... an excellent addition to any library ... This work will be useful for any of the disciplines concerned with studies of the young."

J. Newberry, Choice

"This is a book of exceptional scholarly quality and breadth, highly recommended for all libraries, scholars and students interested in the study of children and childhood."

Chrysanthi Gallou, *Childhood in the Past: An International Journal*

About the Author

David F. Lancy is Emeritus Professor of Anthropology at Utah State University. He is author/editor of several books on childhood and culture, including *Cross-Cultural Studies in Cognition and Mathematics* (1983), *Studying Children and Schools* (2001), *Playing on the Mother Ground: Cultural Routines for Children's Learning* (1996) and *Anthropological Perspectives on Learning in Childhood* (2010).

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