I. Introduction: Taking Pupils into Account in Educational History Research

Today, research on informal schooling processes and peer group socialisation among children and teens in contemporary education constitutes a well-established, multidisciplinary field. Few challenge the basic premise that the modern-day school is a multiform meeting place that, particularly outside the classroom – on playgrounds, in hallways and school-related Internet forums, etc. – provides meaningful arenas for the socialization of today’s young, both during and after school hours.

In educational history however, the picture is somewhat different. The latest decade of research has been characterized by an increased interest in cultural perspectives on past schooling and by a growing focus on the linguistic, material, spatial, emotional and sensory physiognomies of education.¹ This has engendered a broadened awareness of the dialectical

¹ Cf. Sol Cohen, Challenging Orthodoxies: Toward a New Cultural History of Education (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Publishing, 1999); Marc Depaepe, “History of Education as a Discipline: Some Historiographical, Theoretical,
relationship between for example formal educational policies, architecture, teaching technologies and the individuals subjected to school environments. Even so, the field keeps much of its traditional focus trained on practices connected to formal institutional and pedagogical aspects of education, more or less habitually analyzing schooling as a “top-down”, adult-controlled phenomenon. Features of extracurricular school life such as play and recess, organized forms of pupil self-governance, liberal self-study in local school societies, boarding school culture, national and transnational school youth movements, extramural exchange of ideas between pupils, and more subtle forms of peer group socialization linked to day-to-day school life, are still rarely examined and accounted for in the field.

**Aim and Ambition**

The ambition of the present volume is to contribute to the understanding of such extracurricular practices and to highlight the more elusive routines of informal schooling processes they imply. There are a number of reasons that motivate this undertaking. First of all one can argue that such practices and routines are, and have always been, essential but hidden parts of the education for children and teenagers. Research in this area can thus pave the way for a better overall understanding of what actually happened in different school environments, of the learning processes that have taken place outside the classroom and their meaning. With such knowledge and understanding might also follow the ability to raise new questions about the nature of the history of education, and perhaps also perceive contemporary schooling in new ways. Secondly, by shifting the analytical focus,
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Researchers are encouraged to include the implemented, rich and far more complex nature of everyday institutional life while examining schooling, rather than emphasizing what can be perceived as a principally intentional level. This in turn opens for more precise and nuanced discussions about the relationship between formally intended moral and pedagogical instruction and its impact on those for whom these instructions were composed. Thirdly, research into this area also accords potent comparative perspectives to various components of the educational system, different school cultures, and so on. Finally, if the extracurricular sphere is perceived as a single domain where ideas and innovations connected with society at large meet and fuse with educational practice, it can also allow researchers to better examine and understand aspects of educational and institutional change.

Against this background, the present volume draws attention to past modes of pupil participation in the schooling process. It provides the reader with eight case studies from a variety of European educational contexts, each offering empirically grounded examples in accordance with its comprehensive theme. The cases also present the reader with empirical, methodological and theoretical input to facilitate future research illuminating the roles played by pupils in educational history. In this way, our book seeks to contribute to the overall historical understanding of pupils’ involvement in the school process and their role in the creation of institutional life.

The Extracurricular Life and Socialization of Schoolchildren: Overview of a Fragmented Field

Concern for what schoolchildren do and do not do and how they should and should not behave when out of the teacher’s sight has a history that is probably as long as education itself. Classical perceptions of youth as inherently ruled by their passions, and therefore in need of strict rules and authority both in and outside of school seems to have echoed in the texts of teachers and school reformers down through the ages. In his correspondence, fifteenth-century humanist, educational reformer and schoolmaster Vittorino da Feltre (1378–1446) constantly complained about the outrageous moral behavior of students and the nature of the student
culture at Italian schools and universities, as did one of his sixteenth-century German counterparts, the Lutheran educational reorganizer, Philipp Melanchthon (1497–1560). Likewise any researcher who has leafed through seventeenth- or eighteenth-century school logs or the flora of nineteenth- and twentieth-century teachers’ magazines has likely stumbled upon discussions on the art of disciplining schoolchildren, as well as on what should be regarded as appropriate and inappropriate activities for them to engage in outside of the classroom. Although the topic of this book – aspects of the extracurricular sphere – has a parallel history worthy of thorough investigation in itself, the following pages will deal solely with what we characterize as modern academic interest in schoolchildren and their extracurricular lives, in both contemporary and historical contexts. Furthermore, this brief overview deals almost exclusively with West European and North American research.

The Study of Contemporary Contexts

Sociological and pedagogical interest in understanding the informal sphere of contemporary school life has a long, albeit fragmented, history. Early contributions to the field came from American sociologists and functionalists who, in their effort to establish models for understanding societies as social systems, also became deeply interested in aspects of school life. In “The School Class as a Social System: Some of Its Functions in American Society” (1959), Talcott Parsons acknowledged the significance of peer socialization. However, in his analysis of adolescents and teenagers in school, the classroom and formal education drew the lion’s

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3 Parts of this research overview have previously been published in Björn Norlin, *Bildning i skuggan av läroverket: Bildningsaktivitet och kollektivt identitetsskapande i svenska gymnasistföreningar 1850–1914* (Umeå: Umeå University, 2010), chapters 1 and 2.
share of attention. A far more extensive and pioneering work was James S. Coleman’s *The Adolescent Society: The Social Life of the Teenager and its Impact on Education* (1961), in which social activities and value patterns among students at American high schools were thoroughly examined. Coleman argued that the expansion of the education system in the first half of the 1900s had led to detachment from family-bound moral instruction, only to be replaced by the school’s semi-autonomous youth environments, which he believed had equalled if not surpassed traditional socializing agents like family and formal instruction. Thus Coleman ascribed school youth a more autonomous and influential role in the constitution of educational institutions.

At roughly the same time, French scholars like Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron began publishing works on the nature of the French educational system and its students’ relationship with culture. These studies not only included investigations of the social and cultural background of students, but also extracurricular activities and their correlation with study results. Their findings later found their way into influential theories of social and cultural reproduction, including *The Inheritors: French Students and Their Relationship to Culture* (1964) and *The State Nobility: Elite Schools in the Field of Power* (1989).

In the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s, British sociologists and ethnographers also started to engage with pupil culture, differentiation processes related to school life and pupils’ means of adapting. Noted publications included David H. Hargreaves’ *Social Relations in a Secondary School* (1967), Colin Lacey’s *Hightown Grammar: The School*
as a Social System (1970) and perhaps the most widely read, Learning to Labor: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs (1977) by Paul E. Willis, which examined English working-class boys’ disobedience and contempt for the school and its middle-class culture. An attempt to collate research in the field was undertaken in the early 1980s by Martyn Hammersley and Peter Woods in Life in School: The Sociology of Pupil Culture (1984), in which seventeen scholars discuss differentiation and sub-cultural polarization within the student body, conformism and delinquency, and the experiences of minority students.8

From the late 1980s onward, educational research concentrating on aspects of the intramural school life, informal processes of schooling, student-teacher relationships, peer socialization and so on has flourished and branched out. Some examples should be highlighted. British psychologist Peter Blatchford published (alone and with others) works concerning the importance of primary school pupils’ play and social activities outside lesson time. Based on the assumption that recess was an important but forgotten part of the school day, he argued in Playtime in the Primary School: Problems and Improvements (1989) and later in Social Life in School: Pupils’ Experiences of Breaktime and Recess from 7 to 16 (1998) that a number of social competences were activated during recess, competences that were more or less essential to adult life.9 Together with another psychologist, Sonia Sharp, he also compiled an anthology on schoolyard behavior, Breaktime and the School: Understanding and Changing Playground Behavior (1994), with articles by some dozen scholars from a variety of disciplines, which by shifting focuses analyzed pupils’ social activities as they related to school life.10

The expansion and elaboration of identity theory and gender research in the 1990s triggered an increased interest in schools as arenas for processes of identity construction among adolescents and teens. Scholars like Valerie Walkerdine in *Schoolgirl Fictions* (1990), Barrie Thorne in *Gender Play: Girls and Boys in School* (1993), Máirtín Mac an Ghaill in *The Making of Men: Masculinities, Sexualities and Schooling* (1994) and Valerie Hey in *The Company She Keeps: An Ethnography of Girls’ Friendships* (1997) all contributed to a better understanding of processes of identity formation, the relation between norms of the individual, groups and the adult world, as well as of the role played by gender and class in school life.\(^{11}\)

In the anthology *Learning to Labor in New Times* (2004), American sociologists Nadine Dolby and Gregory Dimitriadis compiled a series of essays on the theme that Willis introduced almost thirty years ago, now applied to new social conditions with new theoretical perspectives.\(^{12}\) More recently, *Family, School, Youth Culture: International Perspectives of Pupil Research* (2008) compiles some twenty articles examining the interaction between family, school and youth culture. This included studies of peer group socialization, teacher-student relationships and differentiation processes in the school environment.\(^{13}\)

**Historical Research**

Even though historical investigations of pupils’ involvement in the school process and their role in the creation of institutional life are not very

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common, some studies are of interest insofar as they touch upon related issues. Already in his lectures on the history of secondary education in France held in 1904 and 1905, Émile Durkheim devoted substantial space to describing the dynamic student social life in conjunction with the evolution of the university in medieval Paris. This was not done simply to entertain the audience with amusing anecdotes about the life and habits of students in the Middle Ages, but because it was deemed central to understanding how the first university organizations – colleges, student housing – took shape. Efforts to form and formalize educational practice were thus, according to Durkheim, dependent on an already existing social sphere, bound to the very nature of schooling as a social enterprise and to the fact that at this stage – and for a long time to come – studying often meant leaving home and moving to new, unfamiliar places and living in close proximity to school. These circumstances set the general framework for the physical and social environment of schooling, and at the same time engendered a dialectic relationship, or interdependence, between formal, regulated education and informal, extracurricular life.¹⁴

Several additional studies of medieval and early modern educational institutions have emphasized equivalent features of schooling and – though but briefly – elaborated on intramural aspects of the social life of pupils, such as the evolvement of corporative modes of organization and ritual practices at both universities and secondary schools. The work of Hastings Rashdall on medieval European universities and preparatory schools – first published in 1895 – is one such example. Frequently highlighted are school initiation rites along with the alleged pugnacious lifestyle and lack of discipline among school youth. Congruently, studies of educational institutions of the late 1700s, 1800s and 1900s have contributed knowledge regarding socialization linked to extracurricular life, including the emerging flora of local school youth associations and regional, national and international student exchange (see below).

Important to keep in mind is that educational institutions were long characterized by social seclusion and that schools were often granted their own

jurisdiction. Together with the fact that going to school also meant leaving home for many children and teens, this induced semi-boarding school conditions. This unique social context could thus function as a social replacement for family and household, encouraging strong bonds among pupils and resulting in the growth of often elaborate social sub-systems within the student body, including internal hierarchies, fixed regulations for behavior, ritual practices and other customs developed to support norm integration. Sometimes these systems of internal discipline were sanctioned by school authorities, sometimes not. Not until the late nineteenth-century expansion of the educational system would the in loco parentis-conditions of schooling begin to change. Important to remember is also that progressive pedagogical models – at least from the early nineteenth century and onwards – took shape in relation to these conditions and were actually designed to support (or master) self-activity and self-governance among pupils.

Deeper interest in the past emerged with the growth spurt of youth and childhood studies in the 1960s and ‘70s, as efforts to make visible youth and youth groups as autonomous forces in both contemporary and historical societies attracted a more profound, structured interest. In *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life* (1962), French historian Philippe Ariès argued that the emergence of institutional life as a social experience was crucial to the development of youth and childhood as societal concepts, and subsequent surveys in the 1970s and ‘80s by the likes of John R. Gillis, Joseph F. Kett and Michael Mitterauer also drew

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15 In this sense, the formation of school youth at educational institutions shows similarities to the formation of other youth groups both in the pre-modern and the modern society (eg. journeymen, guild apprentices, etc.). Cf. Andreas Griessinger, *Das symbolische Kapital der Ehre: Streikbewegungen und kollektives Bewusstsein deutscher Handwerksgesellen im 18. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt am Main: Ullstein, 1981), 451pp; Johan Wennhall, *Från djäkne till swingpjatt: Om de moderna ungdomskulturernas historia* (Uppsala: Uppsala universitet, 1994).


In British educational history, there is a distinctive tradition of research about the country’s public schools that delves into the intramural life and social conditions of schooling. J. R. de S. Honey’s *Tom Brown’s Universe: The Development of the Victorian Public School* (1977) and John Chandos’ *Boys Together: English Public Schools from 1800 to 1864* (1984) are two classic studies, while James A. Mangan (1987) and Christine Heward (1988) approached the topic from the perspective of gender studies.

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Walter Laqueur (1962), Harry Pross (1964), Konrad H. Jarausch (1978) and Michael Mitterauer (1991) have produced important works on male high school students and student movements in the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century German context. Some Nordic studies can be woven into this strand of historical research, addressing a variety of aspects of the pupils’ associational life and self-fostering activities in the state-governed school system and even pupils’ relationship to subjects like science.


Sources and Perspectives

Following this overview, some general remarks are necessary to the contextual framing of this book. First of all, and naturally, this field of research embraces different theoretical and interpretative traditions, in which varying analytical interest is paid to pupils in school contexts and varying amount of freedom of action or agency is ascribed to them. In short, a general shift can be said to have occurred, from structuralism and class analysis, via social and cultural reproduction theories to post-structural theoretical perspectives. This has also meant a gradual shift in the perception of children and adolescents at school from being victimized or ascribed an externally determined agency, to being accredited a freer role and more internally determined agency. This shift has also facilitated a better understanding of the school environment as an arena for autonomous processes, including social differentiation, meaning making, individual and collective identity construction and cultural creation, and so on.\textsuperscript{24}

Secondly, the field has primarily dealt with boys and young men from the middle and upper classes, particularly at the secondary level and above. The reason for this is obvious, insofar as schooling was long socially and gender exclusive, and historians have been restricted to the preserved source material, derived from sectors of the educational system dominated by boys and young men from the upper social strata.\textsuperscript{25}

Thirdly, it is apparent that a broad range of perspectives can be applied fruitfully to this field of study. They might be grouped according to categories like \textit{organizational} (the study of pupil associational practice, the social texture of boarding school culture, regulated systems of pupil self-governance); \textit{pedagogical} or \textit{didactical} (the study of self-activity as an integrated component of the pedagogical process, pupil reading and writing habits, their knowledge and perceptions of school subjects) and \textit{discursive} (the pupil’s role in creating the representations, narratives and language of

\textsuperscript{24} Cf. discussions in Amira Proweller, \textit{Constructing female identities: Meaning making in an upper middle class youth culture} (Albany: State Univ. of New York Press, 1998); Sundkvist (2006); Norlin (2010), 39–42.

\textsuperscript{25} Also, as Jarausch (1986) has pointed out, research on younger children in school has usually been included in childhood or family history rather than the history of education.
school life along with processes of self-representation and collective identity formation).

As regards source material, there are a number of ways of assembling evidence on pupils and their school lives. Aside from the traditional sources of educational history, there is abundant useful and underused historical data spread around school, city, county and national archives. School logs and disciplinary records have a great deal to say about the general conditions of intramural life and pupil culture, norms and the breaking thereof. Teacher journals and local newspapers can also provide a surprisingly detailed picture of pupil whereabouts, especially behavior that did not respect the general norms of conduct. School memories – a minor genre that grew parallel to or as an integrated part of the late nineteenth-century autobiography – along with diaries and letters from youngsters to their families and friends are also interesting potential sources. The emergence of pupil associations (both male and female) in the early nineteenth century is another rich seam of source material, containing data as diverse as legal statutes, programmatic scripts and public and non-public magazines written and edited by the pupils themselves. The archives of local pupil associations often yield correspondence between pupils at different schools, records from club meetings, magazines, listings from book and music libraries, lectures held by pupils for pupils, poetry, drawings, photos, and so on. This data affords researchers true depth and breadth, particularly desirable in light of current and emerging trends in educational history focusing on the spatial, visual and iconic, the senses and emotions.

Our intent is that the present volume will not only contribute to the field of educational history by shedding light on the historical infrastructures of informal schooling, but also broaden its methodological repertoire by introducing a range of studies based on diverse and often neglected sources.

Contents

Following this introduction, eight essays present empirically based studies culled from a variety of national contexts. In “‘It is Better to Learn than to be Taught’: Pupil Culture and Socialization in The Hazelwood Magazine in the 1820s”, Sian Roberts presents the progressive Hazelwood School in Birmingham, England, and its innovative model of pupil self-government.
By analyzing *The Hazelwood Magazine*, a rare example of a periodical written and published by pupils, she discusses their participation in the culture and governance of the school.

In “Karlberg as a Total Institution: The Royal Swedish War Academy in the 1800s”, Esbjörn Larsson employs the concept of a “total institution” and analyzes the way in which boarding schools can be considered as such. He shows that there are many similarities between the boarding school and the total institution, originally defined and described by studying asylums and mental hospitals. There are of course also differences, the most central of which concerns the importance of internal hierarchies among the internees.

Björn Norlin’s “The Nordic Secondary School Youth Movement: Pupil Exchange in the Era of Educational Modernization, 1870–1914” examines cooperation and the exchange of ideas between pupils at Nordic upper secondary schools by examining pupil magazines and other data generated by pupil associations. The study highlights local, provincial and transnational aspects of exchange and culture building among secondary school youth and its impact on schooling as a social experience. His essay also draws attention to the dialectic of the formal structural change of education and intramural processes related to day-to-day schooling.

“School Culture at Fons Vitae: Capturing Pupils’ Experiences in a Catholic Girls School, 1914–40”, features a discussion by Marieke Smit of the methodological opportunities offered by analyzing diaries. She focuses on the concept of “school culture” in her case study of the pupils’ roles and lives in relation to formal expectations at Fons Vitae, a Catholic grammar school for girls in interwar Holland. She shows how pupils were not just receivers of the school’s educational philosophy, but also highly active in shaping school culture.

In “Remembering School: Autobiographical Depiction of Everyday School Life, 1918–80”, Anna Larsson explores memoirs and autobiographical novels and finds that they contain a unique capacity for revealing otherwise hidden, emotional aspects of school life. Based on a comparative analysis, she discusses two generations’ worth of experiences of different school systems and emotional communities as well as the interaction between memory and narrative.
“Simulating Society: The Summer Home of Norra Latin 1938–65” by Joakim Landahl describes a summer camp for grammar school boys that was established and run as a copy of society at large. By focusing on central elements like work, punishment, play, contact with the opposite sex and nightlife, Landahl reveals how self-governance and a deeply original institutional culture developed.

Emmanuel Droit analyzes the experiences of adolescents and teenagers in “Between Willfulness and Stigmatization: The Socialization of East Berlin Pupils in the 1950s”, showing how school became the heart of the political project of radical social transformation. Drawing on manifold official sources and archival documents, he discusses how pupils, in their self-governing units as well as in socialist youth organisations, interact with the norms of adult-driven, ideological pedagogy.

The book concludes with “Material and Affective Movements: Danish Pupils’ Reminiscences, 1945–2008”, by Lisa Rosén Rasmussen, based on in-depth interviews with three generations who graduated from secondary school in the 1950s, ‘70s and ‘90s, respectively. Rosén Rasmussen traces memories of physical and affective movements in the school context and discovers diverse modes of knowing, relating, and attending to things, teachers and classmates among and between the generations. Through this, she demonstrates how spoken memory is a rewarding source for understanding school from the pupils’ perspective.