

Reclaiming Childhood: Freedom and Play in an Age of Fear

By Helene Guldberg

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Children are cooped up, passive, apathetic and corrupted by commerce… or so we are told.

Reclaiming Childhood confronts the dangerous myths spun about modern childhood. Yes, children today are losing out on many experiences past generations took for granted, but their lives have improved in so many other ways. This book exposes the stark consequences on child development of both our low expectations of fellow human beings and our safety-obsessed culture. Rather than pointing the finger at soft 'junk' targets and labelling children as fragile and easily damaged, Helene Guldberg argues that we need to identify what the real problems are – and how much they matter.

We need to allow children to grow and flourish, to balance sensible guidance with youthful independence. That means letting children play, experiment and mess around without adults hovering over them. It means giving children the opportunity to develop the resilience that characterises a sane and successful adulthood. Guldberg suggests ways we can work to improve children's experiences, as well as those of parents, teachers and 'strangers' simply by taking a step back from panic and doom-mongering.

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Editorial Review

Review

‘This is a powerful and passionate book that explains why so much of what we say about children is so wrong.’ - Professor Frank Furedi, author of *Paranoid Parenting*

'*Reclaiming Childhood* is a lovely blend of developmental theory and up-to-date research, a deep knowledge of children, and good old common sense. This bracing book is a gift to children everywhere.’ -David Anderegg PhD author of *Worried All the Time* and *Nerds: Who They Are and Why We Need More of Them*

'a book that should be read by every student teacher, teacher trainer and teacher. It will be a "must" for every parent. It is of more value than any parenting course! Politicians and the press who are paranoid about parenting should be made to read it.' - Professor Dennis Hayes, co-author of *The Dangerous Rise of Therapeutic Education (Routledge 2008)*

'Guldberg has the ability to look at the whole weird world of what we now call "parenting," and figure out how this natural stage of life got to be so strange, so stilted and so difficult. Luckily her writing is anything but! A clear and illuminating look at our parental foibles and their effect on our kids. - Lenore Skenazy, founder, *Free Range Kids.*

'A Voice of Sanity in the World of Anti-Bully Hysteria [...] If you are a parent and consider stress-reduction a worthwhile expense, this book will be worth every penny!' - *Psychology Today Blogs*

'Helene Guldberg offers a fresh and invigorating challenge to the gloomy conservatism that informs so much contemporary discussion of childhood.' - *Professor David Buckingham, Institute of Education, University of London*

'...an impassioned, lively and thought-provoking polemic' - *Nursery World*

'[T]his book is a valuable primer in critical thinking about taken-for-granted assumptions regarding many children's experiences today. It is a highly readable synthesis of a variety of ideas and sources, and contains important information for those who work with children and create the policies which shape their lives.' - *Teachers College Record, July 31, 2009*

'Reclaiming Childhood: Freedom and Play in an Age of Fear is not only an important book, it is groundbreaking ... This entire straight-talking book is worthwhile and a must read for anyone concerned with child development and social policy ... We should be grateful that there are still psychologists around like Helene Guldberg who have not confused political laws with the laws of nature and can inform us what kids truly need for healthy psychological development. - *American Journal of Education, August 2010*

About the Author

Helene Guldberg is co-founder and Director of *spiked*, the first custombuilt online current affairs publication in the UK. She teaches undergraduate and postgraduate courses in developmental psychology with the Open University and the US study abroad centres CAPA and IES.

Users Review

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