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DOI

[10.1353/jsh.0.0108](https://doi.org/10.1353/jsh.0.0108)

Publication date

2008

Document Version

Final published version

Published in

Journal of Social History

[Link to publication](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

van Daalen, R. (2008). Children and their educators: Changing relations in a meritocratizing world. *Journal of Social History*, 42(2), 403-423. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jsh.0.0108>

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CHILDREN AND THEIR EDUCATORS: CHANGING RELATIONS IN A MERITOCRATIZING WORLD

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Children growing up today in meritocratic post-industrial societies encounter a variety of socialization regimes—some introduced recently. Parents continue to be the most important adults in children's lives, but over the past century a host of caretakers, counselors, teachers and educators has emerged on the pedagogical stage, all eager to give advice. Large and complex educational systems, a variety of media included,¹ now surround children as they grow up; within these systems siblings and peers have a special place as relevant others.

The socializing tasks previously undertaken, chiefly by parents, and neighboring adults have been differentiated and re-allotted: now many people perform them. Initially, this change took place among the elite. In the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic, for instance, well-to-do families of merchants and regents fine-tuned the supervision of child-rearing among various educators. A host of adults, often including domestic servants, household staff, tutors and teachers, was involved in the care and education of the children of the elite.² Meanwhile, children from the lower social classes were growing up within simpler socialization networks; their preparation for adulthood was therefore less complex. Insofar as they attended school, their education primarily consisted of learning the Christian virtues. To master skills required for a craft or job, they had to be apprenticed and learn through on-hands practice.

From the second half of the nineteenth century through the first decades of the twentieth century, many European and North American countries passed laws requiring universal education. In the Netherlands this happened in 1901, within the framework of the emerging welfare state. Wide-ranging schooling regimes were introduced for children from all social classes and religious denominations, and for both town and country children. More recently, as mothers entered the labor market, specialized collective caring regimes came into being. The appearance of each new specialized regime coincided with a transformation of the existing ones, resulting in a concomitant shift in the division of tasks and the hierarchical position of each participant. The more educators, the less room for maneuver each of them had, and the more limited their influence on the socialization regime as a whole.³ This process changed the balance of power between children and adults, reducing the inequality between them. And, the position of children was even strengthened by the increasing influence of their peers, which went in tandem with shifts in the boundaries of childhood.⁴

In sociology and in history, socialization at home and education at school tend to be studied separately. These specialized sub-disciplines—family history and the history of education—leave little room for an encompassing view of child-rearing. In contrast, the present article aims to view these early twentieth-century socialization regimes as a whole: an entangled, many-sided system whose diverse participants, in their well-defined hierarchical context, divide the tasks

of raising and educating children. My article focuses on the Netherlands in the first half of the twentieth century, during the early stages of the expansion of the schooling regime. In it, I also describe and analyze the changing relations between home and school, and attempt to unravel the complex, multifaceted relations between children and the people around them. Special attention will be given to the effects of these new socialization regimes on the children's daily life, as well as on their ideas and feelings regarding their mothers, fathers, teachers and other children.

First I shall address some methodological considerations and then sketch the Dutch middle-class ideal of family life, together with a vision of the enlightened modern school that held sway in the first decades of the twentieth century. Starting with this material, I shall consider the division of labor between mothers and teachers, and their relative autonomy in their own domains. I shall inquire into the hierarchical relations between parents and teachers in the socializing networks as a whole, and investigate the concomitant changes in affective and cognitive bonds between children and their educators. I include autobiographical citations, in which the children express their attitudes towards home and school, and towards adults who nurse or teach them. I also consider the role of peers and siblings in the children's formative years.

This autobiographical material answers questions such as: how did children feel about the division of tasks between their different educators?; how did they perceive and react to the power structures and the authority figures around them?; and, how did they react to their cognitive and affective bonds with their educators and nursing figures? Which qualities did they attribute to these adults and other children?

The research

The research is based on a variety of material. Dutch 'classical' fiction is used to provide a picture of the educational regimes of both parents and teachers in the first half of the twentieth century in the Netherlands. These books may be considered as idealized images of family and school life.

The mothering regime is illustrated by the series of books about two small children named *Ot* and *Sien* (first published 1904/1905) which describe their adventures at home before they reach school age.⁵ These books describe the typical, or rather the idealized, Dutch daily family life during the first half of the twentieth century. The authors, Jan Ligthart (1859–1916) and Hindericus Scheepstra (1859–1913), were both progressive school educationists. Scheepstra, whose father was at various times a farmer, grocer or peddler in the small village of Roden in Drenthe, experienced a somewhat deprived childhood which later served as the basis for many of his stories. These were intended to be cheerful alternatives to the almost universally dull and preachy school books of the day. The *Ot en Sien* series aimed particularly at teaching children to read.⁶

As a model for life within the classroom in the first decades of the twentieth century, I have selected the book *Schoolland* (1925). This work is by Theo Thijssen (1879–1943), teacher and educationist, writer and politician, and involved in the Dutch Teachers' Trade Union. He wrote it from the perspective

of an idealistic teacher at a state elementary school for working-class children in Amsterdam. Although this book is partly fictional, critics consider that it contains a large measure of autobiographical content.⁷ Thijssen describes the teaching experiences of progressive school teachers like himself. In reconstructing these experiences, I also used some of his non-fiction publications.

In addition, I considered the child's point of view by researching comments made by children about their daily experiences, their fathers, mothers, nurses, teachers, siblings and peers, as they recorded them in autobiographical writings. The various children whose autobiographical recollections were analyzed were born between 1913 and 1933.⁸

Socialization regimes in the welfare state: school and home

Toward the end of the eighteenth century, the task of mothering became upgraded in middle-class Dutch families.⁹ Educating children came to be seen as a complex collection of tasks which should ideally be carried out by mothers. The assistance of paid nurses and nannies was discarded, and mothers sought the advice of child-rearing professionals. Later, in the nineteenth and twentieth century, they learned about the most recent expert insights in the field, arising from such disciplines as medicine, psychology and pedagogy. The shifts in pedagogical thinking were first implemented by the middle classes, and gradually trickled down to the lower social strata, partly thanks to so-called 'civilizing campaigns,' and partly to the imitation of middle-class behavior by mothers from the lower social strata.¹⁰ This twentieth century homogenizing of educational practices in different social classes was promoted by the implementation of breadwinner arrangements and facilities. The Dutch welfare state became relatively strongly attuned to a family life in which mothers were almost completely exempted from participation in the labor market. Thus they were able to spend all their time in the household. Collective facilities for childcare were disliked and the institutionalization of welfare arrangements and social security made such forms of childcare superfluous.¹¹

The spread of such ideals about motherhood was accompanied by changes in the social functions of schooling. During much of the nineteenth century, schooling had been aimed at providing moral education and training children's characters, especially those from the lower social classes. Ignorance was seen as the root of all evil, while cognitive development was also thought to improve general standards of behavior. Schooling was thought of as a way to fight pauperism and undesirable behavior, such as the evils of alcoholism. Furthermore, schools were used as vehicles in the formation of a nation state. A citizen-to-be required formal schooling in order to become a worthy citizen.¹² In this system, schools were expected to prepare people for a life in the social class of their birth; education was not meant to contribute to their social mobility. Even elementary schools were categorized: those for the middle classes, those for the poor, and the so-called 'charity' schools. Parents on social benefit who failed to send their children to school were punished by the state, which accordingly denied them the benefits.

When Dutch society started to industrialize in the 1870s, this social constel-

lation was changing. The developments in occupational structure and stratification patterns changed the role of education in preparing children for adulthood. Cognitive goals became more significant and going to school became a ticket for opportunity in the labor market, as well as a stepping stone for the social mobility of talented individuals. Formal education became a necessary supplement to parental socialization and instruction.

As the economic and material infrastructure developed, the expansion of educational facilities steadily gained more relevance. And parents, teachers and politicians became increasingly aware of the importance of schooling. The gross expenditure on each pupil was increasing; the number of pupils taught by one teacher was decreasing; the school system was extended and differentiated.¹³ These tendencies continued throughout the twentieth century and still persist today. The time that children and teenagers spend under a schooling regime has continuously increased. Since 2007 the school-leaving age in the Netherlands is 17 years, while young people without credentials must continue with their schooling. As is the case in all meritocratic Western welfare states, schools have acquired the power to select and grant qualifications to their students; the notion of 'merit' has become defined in the limited terms of diplomas and educational certificates.¹⁴

These developments imply a further differentiation of the socialization regimes under which children develop. First of all, the labor division between educators at home and at school became sharper. Second, this process influenced the hierarchy among educators, parents and teachers. Third, these changes in the relations between educators had consequences on the children's affective and cognitive ties. And besides, going to school meant spending your time among peers, which had consequences for the relationship between generations.

At home

The two young children mentioned above, Ot and Sien, are stereotypical characters personifying the ideals of Dutch domestic life in the first half of the twentieth century, and indeed even up to the 1970s. The books reflect the ideas of enlightened teachers and educationists regarding family life; school life and the meaning of school in the daily life of the children are briefly referred to. The authors considered the nature of young children and regarded freedom and rational arguments, rather than harsh discipline and punishment, to be important aspects of their education. The series had enormous sales, which may partly be ascribed to its 'modern' image and partly to the romantic and detailed illustrations by Cornelis Jetses (born 1873). The stories represented lower-middle-class family life; they presented autonomous and intimate family relations, with mother and children at the centre, and they were nicely attuned to the views and expectations of their enlightened creators. The families of Ot and Sien were not rich, but they could afford to live comfortably and were satisfied with their lifestyle. Home and school were in harmony. The mothers behaved in a way teachers approved of. Consequently teachers felt no need to interfere with their home life.

In the stories of Ot and Sien, the home is presented as a peaceful, pleasant

place. It is a haven with mother and the children at its heart, in the midst of a sea of kindly people. The two children are neighbors, four and five years old, seen at play close to their house, with Ot's mother always nearby and always in charge. The home is her castle, her operational base. She is not a breadwinner; she does not work on the land or in a shop. Her task and her calling are running the household and looking after the children. She has few activities outside the home. She does some errands, maintains family contacts and visits her children's school. Much of her time is spent in the home, busy in the kitchen, watching at the window, standing in the doorway, observing the children at play.

She is a major protagonist in the story; it is she who feeds, counsels, educates and protects the children. Sometimes she interrupts their games, sometimes she consoles the children, sometimes she plays with them. She guards the confines of Ot and Sien's small world. Her household activities are independent and autonomous. Her authority goes completely unchallenged. She plays a multi-faceted role, not only affectively but also cognitively. She functions as an omnipresent source of information and inspiration.

The outside world is represented by various people. First of all, there is father. The children wait for him to come home and soon he is seen giving them piggyback rides or perhaps sitting reading the newspaper, just as in the cliché representation. On Sundays father takes the children out to feed the ducks, while—amazingly—mother stays home. Grandparents also make their presence felt, visiting the family, celebrating birthdays, playing with the grandchildren and telling nostalgic stories beginning: 'When I was a boy ...' or, perhaps, '... girl'.

The wider world is also brought into the book by passers-by; there is the man and woman who play a barrel organ, the man selling cherries, and the musicians playing trumpet and drum. Furthermore, Ot and Sien explore the world outside for themselves, for instance running errands—and begging the grocer for some candies. For them, one of the most intriguing places outside the limited domain of the home and the garden is the school, attended by Trui, Ot's older sister. She tells Ot and Sien about her life at school: it's fun and the teachers are good storytellers and it's nice being there. The voices of the two progressive-minded authors resonate throughout the books, both in their picture of home and school.

The educational regime of the mother of Ot and Sien is virtually a one-woman affair, characteristic for twentieth-century families living in the Dutch breadwinner welfare state.¹⁵ Such mothers managed the world of their children when they were at home, before school-going age and after the lessons were finished. The last sentence of the book mentions the cat, who is bored because she misses the children. "Poor cat. Yes, the cat should go to school as well. To the cats' school."¹⁶ Just like every child.

At school

The growing awareness of the importance of education led to structural changes in the daily life at schools. Smaller classes, more money, more teaching material, and new goals were indicators of this development, as was the professionalization of teachers. At the beginning of the twentieth century teach-

ers had a low-status profession; one of the aims of the Dutch restructuring of teacher education in 1920 was to raise this status. The reform implied several improvements in teacher education. One was that candidates could only apply for training at the Teachers' College after they had gained a leaving certificate from secondary school. Furthermore, the teacher-training course was lengthened to five years. Three years were occupied with (educational) theory, while two further years were directed towards practical experience. The knowledge and skills of the trainee teachers were improved and standardized. The theory of teaching and learning became basic standard elements in the curriculum. In this way the reformers tried to make Teaching into a specialized, fully-fledged profession and a worthwhile, satisfying job.¹⁷ And the reformers had another aim: they wanted education to produce self-reliant teachers with a broad cultural knowledge, people who would feel at ease in any social milieu. It was hoped to make the profession attractive to all social circles. Here, however, the reformers failed. Teaching became chiefly a means of social mobility for bright young people from the lower-middle class, who were the first generation in their family to enjoy higher education.¹⁸

The year 1920 was not ideal for launching an improved course in teacher training. The possibilities of achieving major changes were limited by the political and economic aftermath of the First World War and the ravages of Spanish influenza. Financial resources were cut; classes swelled and the number of jobs decreased. The schools for poorer children suffered in particular from the economic shortages: classes were overcrowded, teaching material was inferior and teachers were overburdened.¹⁹ The job of teaching remained a toilsome one, and this was reflected in the salary. Teachers were obliged to attend Night School to acquire further certificates, and to accept jobs on the side in order to earn enough to maintain a family. Some of them had to live in with their parents. The position of teachers was characterized by status incongruence: they stood for enlightenment and literacy and their work could be considered as a calling. They were serving future generations, fitting them for a better, more civilized world. But unfortunately, this lofty ideal was not recompensed in terms of material rewards.²⁰

With regard to teachers' role in the socialization network of children, Theo Thijssen gives an informative picture in his autobiographical novel *Schoolland* (1925). The book allows insight into the relationships between teachers and pupils and their parents, and between colleagues and the government. It describes the relative autonomy of teachers and their hierarchical position, as they operate in a school situated in a typical working-class district in the Dutch capital of Amsterdam. The school has 240 pupils, divided into six classes of 40 pupils, each with its own teacher. The headmaster is ambulant and the only specialized instructor teaches Gymnastics. The problematic social position of teachers becomes an issue on several occasions in *Schoolland*. For instance, the teacher Mr. Staal stays on during the summer vacation for four weeks with his parents-in-law, in order to improve his family's financial situation. He describes how his shoes are worn so thin that he gets wet feet through the soles. And when he falls ill a colleague has to loan the money needed to pay the doctor's fees.²¹

Important to note is the fact that although their material position was not very

rosy, teachers were the boss in their own class. Their relations with their pupils were both stable and enduring, and comprehensive. For several years they would have the same class, and they became strongly and affectively attached to 'their' children. Starting with a new class posed problems for all parties concerned. Thijssen gives a very vivid description of the rivalry between schoolmaster Staal, the first-person narrator in *Schoolland* (1925), and his colleague who the previous year was in charge of his class. The colleague teacher finds it difficult to let go the ties with her old class and is jealous of the new teacher. Staal, the newcomer, in turn, has to make a strenuous effort to capture the interest of his new pupils and build up a warm relationship with them. The pupils remain attached to their former teacher, with all the resulting frictions. Both teachers desire their pupils' loyalty and it takes several weeks before the problems are solved.

In the idealized picture of school life which Thijssen provides, the close and longstanding affective bond between teacher and pupils was based on mutual trust and may be considered an important component of the power and influence of teachers. Not only did teachers know a lot about the children themselves, they were also familiar with their family and home circumstances. The task of teachers included instructing the three Rs, disciplining the children by rewarding or punishing their behavior, and also looking after them. Teachers noticed when their pupils were sick, and dealt with their absences.²² They visited them at home and communicated with the local doctor when they wanted to know if a child were healthy enough to work intensively at school. If children had learning difficulties, their teachers were the obvious ones to give them extra tuition (often outside school hours). In dealing with their own class, teachers had a many-sided function, ranging from schooling to social work.²³ Thijssen suggests the general and comprehensive expectations that were held regarding the role of teachers. They were expected to combine a number of abilities. Apart from their cognitive knowledge and their expertise in the fields of teaching and education, their personality, attitudes and behavior were seen as important qualities in their role as educators.²⁴

Theo Thijssen depicts the school as a tiny, relatively closed community, with a small team of teachers and little division of labor. The teachers treat each other as equals and only the length of their work experience differentiates them. Even their relationship with the headmaster is far from hierarchical and seems to be strongly dependent on the person who fulfills that role. The coordination of the school organization is uncomplicated, as may be seen among other things in the few staff meetings that are held. For instance, when new reading books had to be chosen by the staff, Mr. Staal required every ounce of his persuasive powers to organize a staff meeting to discuss the issue.²⁵

Thijssen describes how Staal and his colleagues experience the visits of the school inspector: they perceive him as an encroachment into their well-defined territory. The book relates how this intrusive representative of the Dutch state concludes that the teachers are an independent and radical lot. In his report the inspector notes several irregularities that he observed in the school. The teachers are indignant at his presence and ignore his assessment. As soon as the inspector has departed, they continue as they had done before.²⁶ In one of his short articles, Theo Thijssen also describes a visit of the 'ambulant' head of the school with intense dislike, as an intrusion into his didactic conventions.²⁷

Idealistic teachers working in schools for the poor tried to make their class a separate world, a kingdom of their own, isolated from the poor social conditions and the oppressing problems children confronted at home. During the lessons teachers aimed to create a safe haven in which children could read books, could break their brains on difficult arithmetical assignments, and also dream and fantasize. They offered them a refuge, which was, however, temporary. As soon as their pupils became twelve years old, school lost its protective function. Thijssen gives a moving picture of his clever and eager working-class ex-pupils, visiting their old school. He describes their dramatic transformation and their silence concerning their dull and drudging jobs.²⁸

Teachers could 'not compensate for society', and besides, their autonomy was limited as the result of government regulations and financial restrictions. They had to work according to the conditions drawn up by the central government, as for school buildings, time-tables and subject-content, supervised by inspectors. And changes in this respect point to a development in which the autonomy of teachers is more and more restricted, while educational goals tend to shift. They moved away from the external disciplining of children to their self-disciplining, toward individual development and personal expression, self-control and responsibility. Along with these changes, school became increasingly an instrument for the selection of individual pupils, working with 'objective' assessment procedures and tests.²⁹ For teachers, this development implied a narrowing of their task in the direction of further cognitive specialization.

Home, school, and leisure time with peers

Between home and school there were often tensions. Teachers actively tried to bridge the gap between school and home, as is related in books and in personal recollections preserved in autobiographical documents. This gap was in particular produced by social class, and varied from family to family. On the one hand teachers tried to communicate with parents in order to gain more insight into the children's background. On the other hand they informed parents about how their children behaved at school. They organized evenings, sometimes with formal lectures, sometimes of a more festive nature. They sent regular school reports about the achievements of pupils, and weekly so-called 'behavior-letters'.³⁰ All these efforts had the same function: the adjustment and attunement of the two educational regimes—family and school.

Not only the disciplining of pupils, but also that of parents, was an important component of teachers' activities. Teachers indicated to parents what behavior the school expected of their offspring, making such comments as: 'talks too much' or 'insolent behavior'. Sometimes they visited the children's homes. These contacts could have a confrontational character, even when teachers had a sympathetic and understanding attitude and were concerned with the difficulties of pupils from the working classes, or children who had unemployed fathers. But despite this empathy, their social position as members of the local learned elite often formed a barrier between themselves and parents. Lower-class parents sometimes distrusted them, because they felt teachers represented 'the authorities'. Such parents often insulted their children's teachers and occasionally refused to let them into their home. Some teachers were afraid and did not dare

to visit them. In order to avoid fights and abusive language, they invited the parents to school. But when teachers succeeded in winning parents' trust they might acquire the position of confidante. Then they would be asked for advice and help in family issues and could function as a kind of social worker.³¹

Absenteeism was one of the issues on which teachers' expectations could clash with parents' behavior, while children suffered the consequences. In the book *Schoolland* we observe the teacher Mr. Staal regularly sending letters to mothers enquiring about the cause of children's absence; he considers reasons such as 'head ache', 'visit to doctor', 'running an errand', 'caring for younger brother' to be 'impermissible absence'. He is engaged in a continuous battle with the mothers. If he is not prudent, if he lets up for the slightest moment, the mothers strike. It is as if they are crouching in the shadows and waiting for their chance.³²

Hygiene was another domain in which schools were expected to complement and change parental care in poor families, living in houses lacking sanitary facilities. Gerlof Verwey (born 1901) describes how, if children seemed to be in need of a good wash, teachers ordered them to hold each other under the pump. Serious cases were even scrubbed by the headmaster's wife who assisted her husband in such domestic duties. Such hygienic civilizing was not restricted to the early twentieth century. Dacapo, teacher at an elementary school in a working-class district in Amsterdam in the 1940s and 50s, describes how the mothers of his pupils protested against the hygiene campaigns. Special louse-nurses (Dutch: *pietenzusters*) regularly visited his school to check such things as the children's hands, nails, hair and heads. When the nurse informed the mothers that she had discovered bugs on their children, they felt insulted—and objected. They assumed that the nurse had something against them. Part of these hygiene campaigns was the weekly visit of the class to the Bath House: all pupils, issued with towel and soap, had a good scrub.³³

Sexuality was also disputed territory, the target of civilizing campaigns. In particular, schools founded by a religious denomination had much to say on the subject of sex. Chris Schriks (born 1931) describes how Roman Catholic schools promoted chastity and struggled against depravity at school. Schriks' sister was removed from school because she wore knee-socks, and consequentially, her knees and part of her legs were bare. But in the end the school was more anxious about the number of pupils than about morals. When girls at a neighboring school were indeed allowed to wear knee-socks to school and when parents threatened to remove their daughters from the first school, the rules were relaxed.

Disagreement among parents and teachers could also arise in connection with punishments: what form they should take and how severe they should be. This was related to class-bound and religion-bound differences in behavior and manners. Sometimes children were supported by their parents against their teacher. The architect-to-be, Hendrik Th. Wijdeveld (born 1885) was punished because he helped a friend who was spanked with a ruler in front of the class. Wijdeveld was locked up in a broom cupboard. He managed to escape and spent several hours roaming in the dunes. When he came home everyone was greatly relieved, no one was angry, and his father announced proudly: "Mother, this boy of ours has a mind of his own."

The families of children living during the 1940s and 50s in the Jordaan, a working-class district of Amsterdam where many longshoremen and peddlers resided, actively supported their children when it came to a conflict with teachers. Parents would struggle openly and sometimes physically with teachers. If a teacher failed to keep order and tried to use the whip hand, he would be well advised not to lash! The parents' attitude would be: 'Do what you like, but don't touch my child.' Once after a pupil had been beaten, the father, mother, sisters and brothers of the victim rushed into the playground to attack the schoolmaster, and it was only thanks to the intervention of the head of the school that the row subsided.³⁴

But in some cases parents' behavior was even more uncompromising than that of teachers. The father of Jan Postma (born circa 1900) spanked his son publicly in the classroom, with the intention of demonstrating to those present what real punishment meant. The mother of Jo Juda (born 1909) slapped him because of a bad report. In these cases we see parents and teachers collaborating in the moral education of children.

Cooperation between parents and teachers presupposed a moral common ground between home and school, and comprehensive, overlapping roles of teachers and parents. Think of fathers who wanted to demonstrate their 'good educatorship' in front of their children's teachers, think of parents who acted as substitute-teachers at home. Think about teachers like Theo Thijssen who saw children's cognitive development as only one of many aspects of their professional task.

All these adults were charged with the affective, moral and cognitive socialization of children. But despite these overlapping tasks, both mothers—supported by fathers—and teachers had considerable autonomy in their own domain. For most of the day, mothers were the boss at home, while teachers went virtually unchallenged in their own classrooms. The relationship between them changed however under the influence of the growing importance of elementary schooling, which became increasingly linked with success in higher education and opportunities on the labor market. As certificates and diplomas became necessary conditions for acquiring a job and social success in meritocratizing welfare states, more and more parents came to see the necessity of good schooling for their children's future and for increasing their opportunities for social mobility. When their living standards permitted, they were, more than before, prepared to invest in the formal education of their children, while the raising of the school-leaving age reinforced their growing involvement. Gradually the balance of power between parents and teachers changed: and schools came up trumps.³⁵

When disagreement arose between them, parents and children had to comply in some measure with the standards and the discipline demanded by teachers. They, after all, represented the government and the nation state, they stood for modernity and social mobility. They could enforce compulsory education, they could compel compliance with the time schedule of the school, and they could demand 'good' behavior and manners. This was all the more true in such cases as when parents were unable to choose a school—for instance because the family was poor.

One aspect of this process was a further differentiation between socialization at school and at home. School became more and more associated with the cognitive aspects of child development, while the socialization of manners and behavior, and the affective training of personality became more and more defined as a parental task.

The children's point of view

The autobiographies refer to the experiences and feelings of the authors about their daily life and about the people within their social circle: mothers, nannies as substitutes in rich families, fathers, teachers and peers. What did all these parties have to offer the children? How were their qualities assessed?

For some children, going to school gave rise to a continuous combat with their parents. They did not want to go to school, indeed, often hated it, but mothers who considered school important would not support such attitudes. Autobiographical sources contain many examples in which children experience school as a prison. A boring expanse of monotonous desert, remembers Leonard Huizinga (born 1906), waiting for the bell, waiting for salvation from the confinement of four walls. H. Guittart (born 1878), recalls how he was about five years old when he entered the strange, hostile world of the kindergarten. He saw this as a brute expulsion from the paradise of a carefree childhood and he regretted having lost his freedom forever. Carel Scharten (born 1880) tells us in his autobiography how he sobbed because he did not want to go to school, but this failed to help him. His mother was kind but firm. "At two o'clock, she and my aunt brought me again to my prison." And Gerard Brom (born 1882) had such a deep aversion to school that his sisters, accomplices of his parents, had great difficulty in getting him there. "I lay stretched out at full length on the street (in an effort) to retain my freedom." Ab Visser (born 1913) describes the regaining of freedom after school-time each day as a bewildering experience, celebrated with much screaming and yelling and jumping up and down. And when Jan Goos (born 1877) was nine years old, he asked his mother if he could leave school, in order to earn some money for the family. Notwithstanding her advice, Jan quit school when he was ten years old. He chose to go to sea.³⁶ But positive opinions may be found as well: some former children call their school time 'highly pleasant' (H.W.F.Stellwag, born 1903).

Somewhat paradoxically, compulsory education also implied more leisure time for children, although working-class girls had to do some chores in the household. More time for playing on the streets meant less guidance and supervision by adults. And this relative autonomy of children changed their relations with adults, both with their parents and their teachers. The Flemish writer N.E.Fonteyne (born 1904) saw the street as the natural milieu of children, as a world of their own. He argued: at school, somebody else was regulating their life, at home they received the important basics; but only the street offered them the real life, with its blows and its frictions. The street was the place where children were on their own, where they learned to endure mockery and teasing, where they learned to act independently.

One finds such characterizations of the street in many other autobiographies.

The street meant freedom and happiness, mischief and tough interaction with peers, initiation in sexual matters, solidarity and betrayal, inclusion and exclusion. There, contacts between children could occur without any organization, but children also met each other within such organizations as clubs, the scouts or political youth groups.³⁷ In these communities of children, adults were marginal participants, indeed, often absent. They could only control them from a distance, which made their influence proportionally limited.

Mothers, fathers, nannies

The autobiographers write about a range of subjects: about the impressive beauty of their parents, especially mothers; about their personalities, in positive or negative terms. As regards their cognitive and affective qualities, they depict their fathers and mothers differently.

Cognitive qualities are ascribed to fathers. Some of them were themselves teachers or instructed their children systematically, for instance the father of Hein Roethof (born 1921) who taught his son such things as the Dutch and Latin names of butterflies. Or the father of Dieuwke Eringa (born 1911) who thought of himself as complementary to her teacher. When she received a poor grade for Greek, she had to do her homework supervised by her father in his study. While mothers are portrayed as sweet and soft, or warm and caring, the affective images of their male counterparts are stereotypically contrasted. They are described as strict and punctilious (Goedhart, born 1923). They keep their children at a distance (Theo Joeke, born 1923). They are stern (F. van Ree, born 1927). At the same time, and here they show to advantage, they are described as ambassadors from the fascinating world outside the home, discussing their work, and familiar with the expressions of high culture, like the father of Fie Werkman (born 1915) who read books and listened to music together with his daughter.

Unlike the fathers who are described in the accounts of development of cognition and learning, mothers are seldom pictured as instructors or supplementary teachers. The autobiographical writers fail to mention the kind of information and knowledge that Ot's mother transmits, although many mothers presumably functioned as a source of practical commonsense for daily life. A mother's qualities were not measured in intellectual terms nor in terms of scholastic achievements. J. Verkuyl (born 1908) writes that although his mother didn't possess much factual knowledge her limited cognitive development in no way reflected a lack of understanding and insight. For she understood everything you felt. Some autobiographers linked their mother's lack of education with family poverty, not with absence of intellectual ability.

The bond between mother and children is described in terms of affection more often than is the case with fathers: that is, very much according to stereotype. Mothers are portrayed as good, sensitive and affectionate (Mooij, born 1901); as gentle, kind and ever-helpful, even as self-effacing (Goedhart, born 1923). One mother is portrayed as always attentive to her children's needs, every morning waving them off to school, lovingly fastening up their coat buttons (D. Sevenster-Meuter, born 1906). One is pictured as utterly endearing, continually showing kindness and concern for others, helpful, patient and not

preoccupied by questions of rank and status; and on top of all this, she managed the entire household (Nabrink, born 1903).

But not every mother and not every father fit into the stereotypical frame. Many mothers, corresponding with the picture given in the book about Ot and Sien, are represented as the boss in the home and the authority figure in the daily interactions with their children. The mother of Jo Juda (born 1909) buys books for her son in order to let him study at home, for one hour a day. Sometimes both parents are pictured as affectionate, or in contrast, as unemotional; some fathers are depicted as the warm and cuddling parent, while mothers may be shown as cold.

In this respect, so-called 'nurses' or 'nannies', could also play the affective role, often associated with physical contact. That could be the case in the households of wealthy families, where the labor division among educators was from the seventeenth century on more specialized, (see the diary of Otto van Eck, 1780–1798).³⁸ Early autobiographies I have looked at offer many examples of close and intimate, often physical, attachments that children could develop with their nurses, especially when the relationship had begun at a very early age. Children felt the warmth and immediacy of their nannies and developed long-lasting affective bonds with them. "My first nanny was also my first love!" writes F.A. Hartsen (born 1838). And the Social Democrat De Goes van Naters (born 1900) apparently loved his nurse more than his mother. Christiaan L. Schuller tot Peursum (born 1813) wrote about the domestic servant of the grandparents in whose house he was growing up: "She was my confidante; she didn't punish, she didn't ridicule, but she instructed." The painter and art critic Havelaar (born 1880) speaking of his nanny, recalls: "How I loved her! How I could confide in her all my secrets and my tender feelings." Physically intimate scenes are described as well. The writer and translator Jeanne van Schaik-Willing (born 1895) was not allowed to awaken her nanny who slept nearby, but as soon as she saw her hair moving she wanted to join her in bed. "She was very round and not very tall, her bosom was extremely soft and buxom, it felt wonderfully safe and protected to snuggle up against her under the blankets, warm and cozy. I don't have any comparable memories of my mother [. . .] 'Put your hands in the postbox,' she would say to me and I placed them happily between her warm, full breasts." Similarly, a teacher born in 1901 recalls: "My mother was not somebody who cuddled you. She was not the sort of person who would say: 'Come and snuggle up on my lap, let's have a nice cuddle together.' That was something I did with the maid, she was a real darling and loved children [. . .]."³⁹ These affectionate memories are contrasted with the chilly relationships these children had with their mothers. The warm bond the children encountered with their nannies was based on intimate living together over a long period.⁴⁰

All in all, within the parental socialization regime, both parents seem to have had comprehensive roles, despite the home-bound caring role of mothers and the job-oriented role of fathers. The complementary difference does not simply reflect hierarchical differences between them. As far as mothers had a subordinate position, this inequality between parents was ambiguous because of the intimate, affective and all-embracing bonds between mothers and children.

Statements by the children about their parents as educators tell us much about the children's vision concerning their parents' level of education. Some of them

wrote of the embarrassment they felt about the low intellectual level of their parents. Some of them describe their sense of shame, especially with regard to their mothers, who, more often than fathers had only received primary education. Sal Santen (born 1915) writes that he felt more comfortable when his father visited his school than with his mother, because of her lack of education. However, in contrast to this the ballet choreographer Rudy van Dantzig (born 1933) expresses respect for the fact that his parents were self-taught people. They grew up without any books at home. But they were socialists with a craving for culture and they transmitted this yearning to their children. Van Dantzig addresses them with these words: "You were a generation of idealists, you wanted to take giant steps and so you did. How much I love you, how much I owe you."⁴¹

Both differentiation and stratification took place between caring regimes and schooling regimes in twentieth century welfare states. Socialization regimes became more affectively or more cognitively focused, and these regimes were valued differently in terms of status. While a tension exists between intimate relations with beloved family members and the associated loyalty to the home circle, and in contrast, the social esteem and importance of school, nevertheless the relations between home and school are too complicated for unambiguous inequality—just as in the case of the relations between parents.

Teachers

Idealist teachers like Theo Thijssen had their admirers. Autobiographers describe how their teachers introduced them to contact with books, to other languages, to a world of knowledge, insight and ideas. And some of them were spotted by their teachers because of their intelligence, as children who should continue to learn, after school-age (among others: Hendrik Algra, born 1896). The journalist and writer Piet Bakker (born 1897) demonstrates how school kindled within him the desire to distinguish himself from people who shared his fate, who came from the same class, who lived in the same street. The singer Corry Brokken (born 1932) did not like her teachers, who were nuns, but one of them took her seriously and talked to her as if she were an adult. This nun, who taught the Dutch language, inspired self-confidence in Corry and stimulated her to think deeply about the books she read and the things she heard on the radio. In this way teachers functioned as guides on issues of cultural capital, and as the twentieth century progressed they acted more and more as gatekeepers for higher forms of education and the associated jobs.

Teachers continuously assessed the efforts of their pupils. They praised them, they would select an essay or other assignment and use it as an example for the other pupils.⁴² By ranking children according to their school records, teachers could help them to discover their latent talents and capabilities. For some smart pupils this could have a stimulating effect (Sigfried van den Bergh, born 1912), while other children only remember their nightmares before having tests (Evan Ree, born 1927).

Many of the autobiographers' statements demonstrate the negative side of their teachers' autonomy. Some ruled with a hard hand and abused their power. Teachers could be pompous and self-satisfied. They might give sound and thorough lessons, but without inspiration, without deriving any apparent pleasure

from their work, without enjoying their pupils. Teachers could be angry and hostile toward the children; they sometimes imposed humiliating punishments, tried to put down the children and make them cry. Some teachers made the class laugh at a pupil who did not know the right answer. The Flemish writer Louis Paul Boon (born 1912) writes about his teacher: "He was the first one who shook my belief in justice in this world."⁴³

Siblings and peers

What did siblings and peers have to offer each other? What qualities do the autobiographers mention as characteristic of friends or foes? This issue requires a thorough analysis, but within the framework of this article I can offer a short impression of the relations between siblings.

Brothers and sisters could have bonds of understanding, consoling each other, conspiring against their parents. "Our best weapon was giggling (*ginnegappen*). No bigger triumph than during breakfast to be sent out of the room." The feast was complete when both brother and sister were having their lunch in the corridor, sitting on the staircase (Elisabeth Keesing, born 1911). The brother of the writer Marinus de Jong (born 1914) brings him something to eat when he is sent to bed without dinner. And the sister of Jo van Dam (born 1914) cried when her brother was spanked. Younger siblings often saw their elder siblings as an admired model. The playwright and actress Luisa Treves (born 1920) for instance, granted unlimited authority to her elder brother. For her, it was self-evident that everything he said had to happen.

But siblings could hinder each other as well. Tensions were caused by a lack of understanding or sympathy, jealousy and competition, by incompatible personalities and the clash of preferences. Some women describe in their autobiographies how naughtily they acted as substitute-mothers, when looking after their younger siblings. Because the singer Corry Brokken (born 1932) did not like this task, she vigorously pushed the pram against a blind wall in order to let her youngest brother bump his forehead. She lied that this was her brother's own fault, that he wanted to climb out of the pram and fell forward. And the feminist activist Els Wolters (born 1927) as a child accompanied a girl neighbor, who had to walk with her brother. When the little boy started to cry, they were allowed to bring him home. So they moved wildly with the pram, they rolled it around and around, they pushed it on and off the sidewalk and shook the buggy, making him cry. The writer Marijke Höweler (born 1938) describes how she transformed their house into a punishment prison, when she was looking after her sister and her brother. Once a day she gave her protégés permission to visit the bathroom. She argued: "Otherwise it would become a chaos."⁴⁴ For some younger siblings it was a long and difficult struggle to obtain a place in the world of their elders and betters.

Conclusion

Socialization regimes during the first half of the twentieth century became more differentiated. Mothering became defined as an expertise for women, who needed support from professionals; it warranted a full-time investment of en-

ergy. The role of teachers as cognitive specialists became more important and more elaborated, while their autonomy was lessened by an increase in government regulation. As the numbers of educators grew, they lost both influence and control over socialization networks as a whole.

This applies primarily to parents. Although they possessed many-sided and wide-ranging combinations of power, which might be economic, cognitive, affective and social—and indeed, while their relations with their children might be both affectionate and enduring—they increasingly had to take due account of schooling regimes whose importance had grown with the meritocratization of society. Parents had to deal with teachers as complementary educators and as representatives of the state, as complementary rivals who possess the keys for the social and economic success of their children. Furthermore, over the past decades an increasing number of parents has come to depend on paid child carers as the parents spend more and more time at work outside the home.

All part-time specialized educators are in some measure subordinate to the more comprehensive parental regimes, and as regards their ties with the children they care for, they compare unfavorably with parents. The assets parents have to offer to their children are many and their qualities are multi-sided, while the cognitive focus of teachers makes their relation with children more limited and more fragmented. They often play restricted roles, just like nannies, representing the newest branch of the pedagogical tree.

The various types of educators have different qualities to offer children, depending on the length, scope, intensity and intimacy of their ties with the children, and depending on the nature of their activities and interventions. They may give the children physical and economic protection, warmth and love; they may distribute diplomas and certificates. The value of those assets is among other things associated with the social ranking in contemporary meritocratic societies. Educators participating in paid caring regimes rank lower than those in cognitive regimes, in terms of educational qualifications, salaries and status. But compared to these specialized regimes, home ranks higher as regards affective qualities, and as regards intimacy and intensity of the relations with the children. The value attached to these different assets is reflected in the relations between the educators, and between educators and children. Different assets result in variations in the degree of influence, control and authority of the adults. Besides, the increasing influence of peers diminishes the 'pedagogical grip' of adults.⁴⁵

I propose that analyses of the growing up of children in the twentieth century should take into account different socialization regimes. They should regard the participants in relation to each other in terms of their division of labor and their hierarchy. In this respect the separation of regimes between parents and teachers during the first half of the twentieth century implies important changes in the relations between children and the adults around them. I have examined these connections using the terms which the former children employed in describing the adults in their lives. Apart from further research into the views of children on parental and teacher regimes, the next step should be an analysis of the growing importance of peers, and the expansion of the socialization network due to the rise of paid caring regimes, which took place in the final decades of the twentieth century.

The intricate, differentiated and fragmented socialization processes of today's

children can only be understood once their relations and interactions with all those people participating in their socialization network are also considered.

(English copy-editing by Wendie Shaffer)

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ENDNOTES

I should like to offer my most sincere thanks to Hugo Röling, for all that he did to make the 600 diaries and autobiographical notes about childhood and youth 1770–1970 accessible to the internet.

1. The role of the media warrants attention, which I am not able to give within the frame of this article.
2. See for example: Arianne Baggerman & Rudolf Dekker, *Kind van de toekomst. De wondere wereld van Otto van Eck* (1780–1798) (Amsterdam, 2005).
3. Norbert Elias, *What is sociology?* (London, 1978); Johan Goudsblom & Bert de Vries, "Introduction: Towards a Historical View of Humanity and the Biosphere," in: Bert de Vries & Johan Goudsblom eds., *Mappi Mundi. Humans and their habitats in a long-term socio-ecological perspective. Myths, maps and models* (Amsterdam, 2002), pp.15–46; Christopher Lasch, *Haven in a Heartless World. The Family Besieged* (New York, 1977); Jacques Donzelot, *The Policing of Families* (New York, 1979); Rineke van Daalen, "Paid mothering in the public domain. Dutch dinner ladies and their difficulties," *Journal of Social History*, spring 2007, pp. 619–634.
4. Among others: Norbert Elias, "Die Zivilisierung der Eltern," in: Linde Burkhardt (ed.), "... und wie wohnst du?" (Berlin, 1980) Christien Brinkgreve, *Jong mondig, vroeg volwassen* (Amsterdam, 2006).
5. Jan Ligthart & H.Scheepstra, *Dichtbij huis* (Groningen, 1902); *De wereld in* (Groningen, 1904); *Nog bij moeder* (Groningen, 1904); *Het boek van Ot en Sien* (Groningen, 1911).
6. Jan A.Niemeijer, *Kijk Ot en Sien. Een klassieker in de Nederlandse jeugdliteratuur* (Drachten/Leeuwarden, 1991).
7. Hugo Röling, *Zichzelf te zien leven. Herinneringen aan Nederlands en Vlaams gezinsleven 1770–1970* (Amsterdam, 2006).
8. I used the site *Jeugdherinneringen*, [Childhood Recollections] which is collected and adapted for internet by Hugo Röling: (<http://www2.fmg.uva.nl/pow/jeugdherinneringen/index.cfm?page=colophon>, 27/7/2007). This site is based on 600 diaries and autobiographical notes about childhood and youth, 1770–1970. Hugo Röling wrote a book about this material: *Zichzelf te zien leven. Herinneringen aan Nederlands en Vlaams gezinsleven 1770–1970* (Amsterdam, 2006).

As regards the references used in this article: 60 autobiographies are used, 2 are written by people born before 1850 (both early autobiographies are used as illustrations of the experiences of children with their nannies), 4 by people born in the 1870s, 5 by people born in the 1880s, 4 by people born in the 1890s, 14 by people born in 1900s, 16 by people born in the 1910s, 12 by people born in the 1920s, 5 by people born in the 1930s. The authors belong to a specific group, some of them professional writers, but others simply recollecting their past experience. All of them are highly literate; some however have a working class background.

9. Elizabeth Wolff-Bekker, *Proeve over de opvoeding. Aan de Nederlandsche moeders* (The Hague, 1779).

10. Ali de Regt, *Arbeidersgezinnen en beschavingsarbeid* (Amsterdam, 1984).

11. Hettie Pott-Buter, *Facts and Fairy Tales about Female Labor, Family and Fertility. A Seven-Country Comparison 1850–1990* (Amsterdam, 1993), p. 201; Wil Portegijs, Annemarie Boelens and Linda Olsthoorn, *Emancipatiemonitor 2004* (The Hague, 2004), p. 64; Janneke Plantinga, *Een afwijkend patroon. Honderd jaar vrouwenarbeid in Nederland en West-Duitsland* (Amsterdam, 1993).

12. Lea Dasberg & J.W.G. Jansing, *Meer kennis, meer kans. Het Nederlandse onderwijs, 1843–1914* (Haarlem, 1978); Jan Lenders, “De Nederlandse schoolpedagogiek in de 19de eeuw: tussen verlichting en romantiek,” in: Jan C.C. Rupp & Wiel Veugelers (eds.), *Moreel-politieke heroriëntatie in het onderwijs* (Antwerp-Apeldoorn, 2003), pp.59–108.

13. P.J. Idenburg, *Schets van het Nederlandse schoolwezen* (Groningen, 1960); Lea Dasberg & J.W.G. Jansing, *Meer kennis, meer kans. Het Nederlandse onderwijs, 1843–1914* (Haarlem, 1978).

14. Amartya Sen, “Merit and Justice,” in: Kenneth Arrow, Samuel Bowles, & Steven Durlauf (eds.) *Meritocracy and economic inequality* (Princeton, NJ, 2000).

15. Until the 1970s, this kind of family life, with children and mothers inhabiting a confined and orderly world, remained the reality for many Dutch children. This is very clear from the famous books by Annie M.G. Schmidt about two toddlers, Jip and Janneke, whose experiences and small-time adventures resemble in many ways those of Ot and Sien. In the intervening years, Dutch prosperity has noticeably increased, as witness the range of pricy possessions (mentioned in the books) including a children’s scooter and a television. Another change is the diminishing hierarchical distance between the children and their mother; there is less formality, their behavior is more relaxed.

There are, however, many similarities between Ot and Sien, and Jip and Janneke. The latter two also inhabit a small, safe world where mother is always nearby. The world outside is represented by kindly folk; by members of the family, such as their father, an uncle and their grand-parents; and by outsiders, such as the neighbor who gives them rides in his wheelbarrow, the doctor and the local grocer. As regards autonomy, Jip and Janneke’s mother also has a lot of influence. She is an important figure in the lives of her children, with her diffuse and comprehensive tasks and qualities, which are both affective and cognitive. That the mothers played a pivotal role in the educational regimes in which both Ot and Sien, and Jip and Janneke were growing up, is typical for Dutch mid-twentieth-century families in which the father was the breadwinner.

16. Jan Ligthart & H.Scheepstra, *Het boek van Ot en Sien* (Groningen, 1911).

17. Professionalization, however, meant different things for women and men teachers. Different professional competences and skills were demanded of them. Mothers functioned as the model for women teachers who tended to teach the younger children, and some of whom worked at schools exclusively for girls. They were considered to require fewer professional qualifications than their male colleagues, and expected to possess typically motherlike characteristics. But fathers did not function as models for male teachers, and furthermore men teachers had more opportunities to gain a solid and many-sided education (Mineke van Essen, *Kwekeling: tussen akte en ideaal. De opleiding tot onderwijzer(es) vanaf 1800* [Amsterdam, 2006]).
18. Eliot Freidson, *Professionalism. The Third Logic* (Cambridge, 2001); Mineke van Essen, *Kwekeling: tussen akte en ideaal. De opleiding tot onderwijzer(es) vanaf 1800* (Amsterdam, 2006).
19. While the number of pupils in the class of one qualified teacher was on average 60 in 1862, it dropped to 33 in 1914. But these numbers are averages: in Vriezenveen, a small village in the eastern part of the Netherlands, there were as many as 84 children in one class in 1906 (L.Dasberg & J.W.G. Jansing, *Meer kennis, meer kans. Het Nederlandse onderwijs, 1843–1914* [Haarlem, 1978], pp. 15,73,74; Manuela Du Bois-Reymond et al., *Onderwijzersleven* [Nijmegen, 1981], pp. 106–112).
20. Manuela Du Bois-Reymond et al., *Onderwijzersleven* (Nijmegen, 1981), pp. 106–112; Mineke van Essen, *Kwekeling: tussen akte en ideaal. De opleiding tot onderwijzer(es) vanaf 1800* (Amsterdam, 2006).
21. Theo Thijssen, *Schoolland. De roman van een klas* (Bussum, 1925), p. 36.
22. Going to school was not self-evident in the urban district of *Schoolland*, not even after World War II. A teacher working twenty years later in the same part of Amsterdam as did the schoolmaster Staal in the book *Schoolland* describes a boy who was regularly absent for long periods without feeling guilty. When the master reproached him for his absence, he didn't understand the reason for all the bother (Dacapo, *Op school in de Jordaan. Belevissen van een onderwijzer* [Utrecht, 1988], pp. 23–25).
23. Theo Thijssen, *Schoolland. De roman van een klas* (Bussum, 1925), pp. 99, 177, 178.
24. Mineke van Essen, *Kwekeling: tussen akte en ideaal. De opleiding tot onderwijzer(es) vanaf 1800* (Amsterdam, 2006).
25. Theo Thijssen, *Schoolland. De roman van een klas* (Bussum, 1925), p. 45.
26. Theo Thijssen, *Schoolland. De roman van een klas* (Bussum, 1925), pp. 61, 111, 112.
27. Theo Thijssen, "Meneer-zélf komt een uurtje," in: Theo Thijssen, *Een bonte bundel* (Amsterdam, 1935), pp. 84–93.
28. Theo Thijssen, "Armenschool," in: Theo Thijssen, *Een bonte bundel* (Amsterdam, 1935), pp. 5–10. See also the happy memories of children, who looked back nostalgically to their schooldays (Greetje Schroeter, born 1915; Nel Hoenderdos, born 1913).
29. Rineke van Daalen & Ali de Regt, "Twintigste-eeuwse veranderingen in schoolse disciplineren: ruimte, tijd en beoordeling," in: Jan C.C. Rupp & Wiel Veugelers (eds.), *Moreel-politieke heroriëntatie in het onderwijs* (Antwerp-Apeldoorn, 2003), pp. 159–189.

30. Manuela Du Bois-Reymond et al., *Onderwijzersleven* (Nijmegen, 1981), pp. 106–112; Rineke van Daalen & Ali de Regt, “Twintigste-eeuwse veranderingen in schoolse disciplineren: ruimte, tijd en beoordeling,” in: Jan C.C. Rupp & Wiel Veugelers (eds.), *Moreel-politieke heroriëntatie in het onderwijs* (Antwerp-Apeldoorn, 2003), pp. 159–189.
31. Manuela Du Bois-Reymond et al., *Onderwijzersleven* (Nijmegen, 1981), pp. 106–124.
32. Theo Thijssen, *Schoolland. De roman van een klas* (Bussum, 1925), pp. 16, 24, 54. The growing concern of parents for schooling was visible in a drop in absences in primary schools. When compulsory education for children of all classes and all religious denominations was implemented in 1901, the significant drop in absences had already taken place, and absenteeism had stabilized at 5% of all pupils (P.J. Idenburg, *Schets van het Nederlandse schoolwezen* (Groningen, 1960); L. Dasberg & J.W.G. Jansing, *Meer kennis, meer kans. Het Nederlandse onderwijs, 1843–1914* (Haarlem, 1978).
33. Dacapo, *Op school in de Jordaen. Belevissen van een onderwijzer* (Utrecht, 1988), pp. 11–13, 39–41.
34. Dacapo, *Op school in de Jordaen. Belevissen van een onderwijzer* (Utrecht, 1988).
35. The educational expansion was not only demand-driven, but also self-propelling. As people spent more and more time at school, they forced each other to lengthen these periods. Geert de Vries, *Het pedagogisch regiem. Groei en grenzen van de geschoolde samenleving* (Amsterdam, 1993); Randall Collins, *The Credential Society. An Historical Sociology of Education and Stratification* (New York, 1979).
36. In two autobiographies the authors describe their inability to adjust themselves to the discipline at school. One of them is Eduard du Perron (writer, born 1899), son of privileged and culturally-educated parents, who as a boy was taught at home by his father. His attitude toward sitting in a class became an endless struggle between him and ‘the system’, between him and each successive teacher. Louis de Visser (born 1878) couldn’t get used to the discipline and the collective nature of classical teaching at school for other reasons. He spent some time as a street urchin, with nobody keeping an eye upon him. At school he would attack the master with a stick and he often played truant.
37. Nine van der Schaaf, born 1882; H.R. van Heekeren, born 1902; Hans Tiemeijer, born 1908; Annie Averink, born 1913; Ab Visser, born 1913; Jan Spierdijk, born 1919; Louis Velleman, born 1919; Johan M. Snoek, born 1920; Karel van het Reve, born 1921; Michel van der Plas, born 1927.
38. Arianne Baggerman & Rudolf Dekker, *Kind van de toekomst. De wondere wereld van Otto van Eck (1780–1798)* (Amsterdam, 2005).
39. Manuela Du Bois-Reymond et al., *Onderwijzersleven* (Nijmegen, 1981), p. 16.
40. This may suggest similarities with contemporary relations between au-pairs and their ‘children’. See for example Arlie Russell Hochschild, “Love and gold,” in: Arlie Russell Hochschild, *The Commercialization of Intimate Life* (Berkeley/Los Angeles, 2003), pp. 185–197.
41. See also: A.J. Koejemans, born 1903.
42. See: Louis Velleman, born 1919; Samuel Ram, born 1929.

43. See also: Annie Averink, born 1913; S.Hacohen, born 1926.
44. Annie M.G.Schmidt, born 1911; Ab Visser, born 1913; Hella S. Haasse, born 1918; Ans Wortel, born 1930.
45. Compare: Judith Rich Harris, *The nurture assumption. Why children turn out the way they do* (New York, 1998).