

The Father's role was paramount. It was his role to bring his wife and children back to God. There was much of the idea that "if you spared the Rod you would spoil the child." Harsh measures, while frowned on, were generally condoned.

These attitudes were predominant up to the period of the Revolution.

Humphrey, Pres. of Amherst College, summed the puritan beliefs somewhat

- 1) The Father was the dominant figure in the raising of children. From the 4th month,
- 2) This continued until 21 and even after if the child remained in the home.
- 3) If the parenting was successful the child would have a moral conscience by the time he was 16 months old.
- 4) The training was to be predominantly religious.

In spite of his retention of the "old" ideas of child rearing, he did not condone harsh methods of child rearing.

The ideas of the right to make your own decisions, of freedom etc fostered by the Revolution began to change child roles.

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Generally good discussion. However, you didn't really address the question of the changing perceptions of the nature of children in the 18th + 19th centuries. Be sure you don't get carried away with background so that you neglect the question.

Lydia Leggum in the 1830's in her "Letters to Mothers" talked about a child being more influenced by those around them than by his "inherent" nature.

Thomas Galland wrote a book on the Religious Training of children in which he suggested that while early Bible training was important the Raising of the Sabbath paramount the child should come to it by his own curiosity & the mother using the "teaching moment".

She also said parents should let children have a "happy" childhood and provide proper playmates and toys.

She and Abbot believed in the inherent innocence and malleability of the child.

Although the child specialist gradually came around to the ideas of the innocence of children, the effect of example by the end of the 19th century the emphasis had shifted from the father being dominant in the child's training to the mother's dominance in that training. Households became "child oriented" and child rearing of utmost importance in the home.