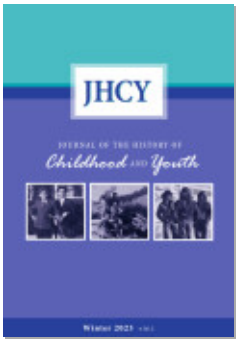
Crying the News: A History of America's Newsboys by Vincent DiGirolamo (review)



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and comparatively about the post–World War II phenomenon of international adoption. Van Steen's discussions of proxy adoptions, the coercion of birth mothers, and the emergence of critical adoptee voices will ring familiar to those versed in the history of Asian international adoption, suggesting the contours of a more global history shaped by the neocolonial relationships between the United States and its Cold War allies. At the same time, Van Steen highlights important differences between Greece and other "sending countries," such as the absence of a significant US military presence (in contrast to West Germany, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam) and the relative gender balance of Greek adoptees. By analyzing the adoption movement in Cold War Greece as a reflection of both local socioeconomic conditions and Cold War international politics, Van Steen's groundbreaking study contributes significantly to the ongoing project of writing the global history of international adoption.

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Crying the News: A History of America's Newsboys

By Vincent DiGirolamo.

New York: Oxford University Press, 2019. xii + 698 pp. Cloth $40.95, paper $29.95.

Vincent DiGirolamo, a member of the History Department of Baruch College of the City University of New York, a former newspaper reporter, and the son and nephew of newsboys, has performed nothing less than a miracle of research in the writing of C*rying the News: A History of America's Newsboys*. His sources, almost without exception primary ones, are so extensive that his endnotes take up over one hundred pages. It is difficult to imagine a more comprehensive, compelling history of America's newsies.

The book is divided chronologically into three sections: the antebellum period, Reconstruction and the Gilded Age, and the first forty years of the twentieth century. In each section, DiGirolamo chronicles the doings of the newsboys or newsies (an omnibus term that included girls, young adults, and grown men and women) and their cultural representations in the visual and literary arts. DiGirolamo fluidly crosses and integrates usually discrete subdisciplines. The newsies were, after all, at one and the same time, children, laborers, independent entrepreneurs, immigrants, consumers and subjects of popular culture,

and ever-present visual and aural presences on the streets of every major and minor American city for more than a century.

Though they were persistently portrayed as capitalists in the making—and some were—America's newsboys were of the working classes, mostly immigrants, and serious laborers whose earnings on the street constituted a critical contribution to their family's income. To protect those earnings, they formed their own unions, incited boycotts, and when they deemed it necessary, struck against the publishers. They fought as well against the do-gooder progressive reformers and child protective activists whose goal was to regulate their hours and conditions of employment, if not to get them off the streets entirely.

Crying the City is a history of journalism as well as a history of the newsies. DiGirolamo is attentive to the technological advances in gathering, printing, and distributing the news in printed form. The newsies were an indispensable component of this history—one too often ignored in chronicles of print journalism. Without armies of children not only to sell the papers but to advertise that day's stories by shouting, and often embellishing, the headlines, the industry could not have developed and prospered.

The newspaper publishers, understanding the centrality of the newsies to their enterprise, pursued several, often contradictory strategies to attract, retain, and control this itinerant, unruly, rambunctious, and independent workforce. They fought the boys when they attempted to unionize; patronized and curried their favor with clubs, gymnasiums, parades, free meals, and excursions; and joined with them to battle local, state, and federal government agencies when they sought to regulate the boys' hours and ages.

DiGirolamo is compelled, as are all historians of childhood, to navigate the difficulties inherent in relying on mostly adult sources: items in the newspapers, reports by child labor reformers, or memoirs by grown-ups recalling their childhoods. DiGirolamo understands these dangers and remains vigilant against the temptation to report rather than interrogate his sources.

The strength and weakness of this book is the density of detail with which DiGirolamo narrates his story. The upside is that he provides us with a complete and complex history of childhood, journalism, and working-class history; the downside is that the book cannot easily be used in the classroom. *Crying the News* is a remarkable work of scholarship and should be accepted and celebrated as such. It would, nonetheless, be of great assistance were the author to condense the 566 pages of text and illustrations into an abridged version more suitable for classroom use.

The author and his publisher, Oxford University Press, are to be commended for the care with which the book is designed. The thirty-three full-color

plates are brilliantly curated by the author and reproduced by the publisher. The black-and-white illustrations, interspersed with the text, are likewise not supplemental ornaments but critical elements in the narration.

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Childhood, Youth and Religious Minorities in Early Modern Europe.

Edited by Tali Berner and Lucy Underwood.

Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019. xiii + 362 pp. Cloth $149.99, paper $149.99, e-book $109.00.

This volume assembles eleven chapters that examine religious division and conflict as experienced by children and young people in early modern Europe. The extensive chronological coverage of the book starts in the 1420s and continues to 1800. This length of time is deemed necessary by the editors, who suggest that such an expanse is useful for highlighting continuity and change across the centuries. The eleven chapters are divided into three sections, although recurring themes of religious conflict are evident throughout the book.

The first section focuses on how beliefs about childhood affected the religious ceremonies and rights of children as well as the lived religious experiences of children within minority communities. Tali Berner identifies the roles of children in important Jewish religious rituals, such as Passover preparations. Tali argues that these rituals were reserved specifically for children and highlight the place of religious education in the home. Anna French considers baptism in post-Reformation England. Key to French's discussion is the intersection of Protestant and Puritan beliefs on babies, childhood, and women regarding the act of baptism. A particular concern of the "Godly" puritans was the practice of emergency baptism by women, usually midwives. "Morally slippery" women were permitted by the Church of England to "deliver salvation to dying infants" (95). Children's agency can also be seen in this section, particularly in Naomi Pullin's discussion of the early Quaker household. Despite physical and mental persecution, children continued with meetings during their parents' imprisonment. Agency can also be seen to a lesser degree in Mary Clare Martin's chapter on children's denominational identity in the long eighteenth century.