
Spoiled Rotten by Elizabeth Kolbert: Analysis Of The Article

The article Spoiled Rotten by Elizabeth Kolbert explores the self-indulgence and laziness of American children today. In contrast, children in France and Matsigenka tribe in Peruvian Amazon are remarkably well-behaved and self-sufficient.

Kolbert suggests that part of the problem may be that parents care too much for their kids. As residents of a highly developed, modernized country, parents are able to provide their kids with a lot – good food, new clothes, iPods and cell phones just to list a few. As a result, kids feel entitled. Parents end up striving for their children's approval rather than the other way around. In the words of Sally Koslow quoted in the article, "Our offspring have simply leveraged our braggadocio, good intentions, and overinvestment... the best way for a lot of us to show our love would be to learn to un-mother and un-father." By working so hard to help their kids, parents end up holding their kids back. It's a cycle – parents monitor their kids' work to help them improve, and in turn children feel less competent and confident, so they need even more supervision.

A potential impetus for this increased level of parental care may be college rankings. Well-educated, economically stable parents want more opportunities for their kids, and they think a top-tier college degree is the only way to achieve that. In order to obtain this, they are willing to do whatever it takes. Doing all the housework is a given, and on top of that they are willing to help out with homework, hire tutors, and if necessary, sue their high school.

What's the solution to this problem? What can American parents do prevent their kids from being wholly unprepared for the real world? My answer is that parents need to be more firm in refusing their children, even if it's more difficult than giving in. As a child raised by a traditional Chinese family in the US, I have noticed that American parents have a tendency to take the easy way out when disciplining their children. For example, if I felt the urge to buy a pack of Pokemon cards accompanying my mom on her weekly trip to the grocery store, my mom would tell me no, no matter how many times I bugged her. In contrast, my friends' parents would usually give in and buy them what they want since it's easier than repeatedly refusing or potentially dealing with a publicly embarrassing tantrum. This creates an expectation for the kid that they can get what they want by crying - it's a matter of conditioning. This creates problems later on in life in which the kid needs to be self-sufficient, such as relationships with friends and partners, academic pressure, or finding a job. So all in all, I agree with the article – parents need to actually mean it when they say 'no.'

Need help with the assignment?

Our professionals are ready to assist with any writing!

GET HELP

gradesfixer.com

Need help with the assignment?

Our professionals are ready to assist with any writing!

GET HELP