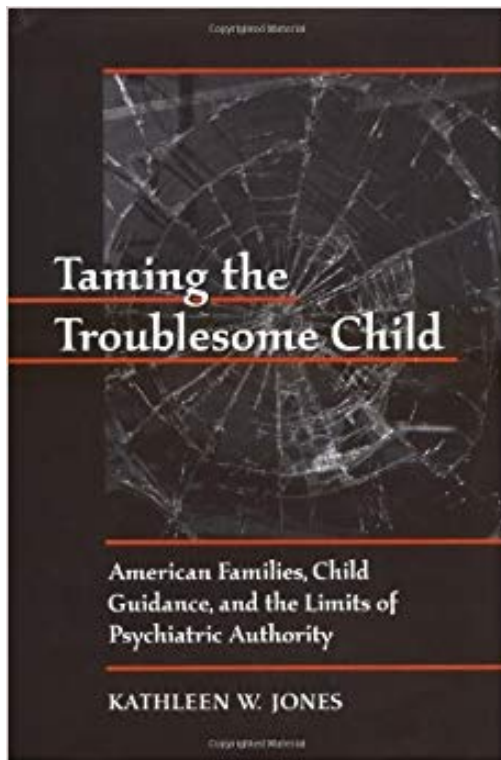


Taming the Troublesome Child: American Families, Child Guidance, and the Limits of Psychiatric Authority *by* Kathleen W. Jones



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When our children act up--whether they're just moody and rebellious or taking drugs and committing crimes--our solution, so often now, is to send them to a psychiatrist or developmental psychologist for help. What makes us think this will work? How did we come to rely on psychological explanations--and corrections--for juvenile misconduct?

In *Taming the Troublesome Child*, these questions lead to the complex history of "child guidance," a specialized psychological service developed early in the twentieth century. Kathleen Jones puts this professional history into the context of the larger culture of age, class, and gender conflict. Using the records of Boston's Judge Baker Guidance Center from 1920 to 1945, she looks at the relationships among the social activists, doctors, psychologists, social workers, parents, and young people who met in the child guidance clinic, then follows the clinicians as they adapt delinquency work to the problems of nondelinquent children--an adaptation that often entailed a harsh critique of American mothers. Her book reveals the uses to which professionals and patients have put this interpretation of juvenile misbehavior, and the conditions that mother-blaming has imposed on social policy and private child rearing to this day.



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