



The Sexualization of Childhood (Childhood in America)

Sharna Olfman



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Only a generation or two ago, childhood in the United States was understood to be a unique and vulnerable stage of development; a time for play and protection from adult preoccupations and responsibilities. In recent decades however, we appear to have jettisoned these norms, and the lines that separate the lifestyles of even very young children from adults are blurring. As widely known experts on the team that created this book explain, children begin formal education now in preschool, dress like adults, listen to the same music, play the same video games, explore the same Internet sites, and watch explicit depictions of sex and violence on TV and in movies. What is the impact of immersing children in a sexualized world? *The Sexualization of Childhood* first explains the nature of healthy sexual development. It then describes the ways in which children are being sexualized, and the physical and psychological consequences. It then looks at the lower and lower age at which girls are experiencing puberty, that reduction being fueled by the pseudoestrogens in so many of our foods and products, as well as obesity. Finally, it examines what we can do legally, politically, and as caregivers to protect children from developmentally inappropriate sexual experiences.



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