

Summary

„Rousseaus Grundlegung der Rechte des Kindes“

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Conventions on the rights of the child are becoming more and more of a reference point for pedagogical thinking and acting because it is doubted by many that binding standards for education and formation can be justified. In this context it is noticeable that educational science is generally more interested in the history, reception and implementation of the rights of the child than in answering the question, how the universal claim of these rights can be justified and where it can be derived from. Considering the two main tendencies in the history of children's rights this question must not be neglected. While one approach (e.g. Rousseau) stresses the conservation and guarantee of humane living conditions for children, the other (e.g. E. Jebb and J. Korczak) emphasises the equality and participation of children. In a critical engagement with the protagonists of the so-called 'post-modern Early Childhood Education' aiming at 'participation' and 'self-determination', this paper tries to show the basis of children's rights in the constitution of the child as a human being. According to Rousseau children do not owe a debt of gratitude to their parents for being alive. In fact, it was the parents' fault that caused the life of their child. For this particular reason children are not in their parents' debt. To empower children to look after themselves as adults, it is the parents' duty to ensure the child's physical conservation and an adequate education and formation.