

Abstract

Cormack, Phil, 2001 'Schooling adolescence: The student subject of post-primary education in early twentieth century South Australia', Paper presented at the Australian Association for Research in Education 2001 Conference, 2 to 6 December, Fremantle WA.

This paper reports on a curriculum-historical study of the role of schooling in shaping adolescence in early twentieth century South Australia with a particular focus on the role of the English subject.

Beginning with a problem in the present that of the failing/(ill)iterate youth in school examine aspects of the genealogy of that problem in the time of the establishment of post-primary government schooling in South Australia. In the first three decades of the century a variety of post-primary schools was developed with different, but related, courses of instruction. The English subject plays a central role in the curriculum of these schools and the variations on the subject in each site, provides some useful insights into the ways adolescence was to be shaped by school. I explore the theme that adolescence and schooling are mutually constitutive fields, between which notions of literateness/literacy have acted as powerful relays.