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Children's Lives: From the Birmingham Collections

From March to June 2012, the School of Education is worked with Birmingham Archives and Heritage on an exhibition: *Children's Lives: From the Birmingham Collections* which was held in Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery. The exhibition, the first ever major exhibition in the city on childhood, used the Birmingham collections (from Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, and Birmingham Archives and Heritage) to explore the different ways people have thought about childhood as a stage of life, the relationships of children with their families and peers, the experiences of children in school, at work and at the hands of various welfare institutions, and the ways in which children have imagined the world. The exhibtion also acted as a showcase for the collections in the lead-up to the opening of the new Library of Birmingham in 2013. The exhibition was co-curated by Ian Grosvenor, Professor of Urban Educational History and Dr Sian Roberts, city archivist and Honorary Research Fellow in the School of Education. The final part of the exhibition was curated by young people from two Birmingham schools.

Listen to the podcast **Children's Lives: from the 18th century to the present day (MP3 - 14.1MB) (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Audio/news/professor-ian-grosvenor-podcast.mp3)** Professor Ian Grosvenor - **read full transcript (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/accessibility/transcripts/professor-ian-grosvenor.aspx)**

The exhibition builds on the work of the AHRC funded *Birmingham Stories* project which was concerned with facilitating a dialogue between the academy, heritage practitioners and wider community audiences through a shared engagement with existing historical research produced from local, national and international archive resources available in the city of Birmingham. The 'stories' contained in the archives hold an important key to understanding urgent social issues surrounding citizenship, identity and belonging. In this context Birmingham stories, a partnership project between the University of Birmingham and Birmingham Central Library, was established to extend an awareness of the diverse histories of the city in its many voices and cultures, making research on archive collections more available to the public. The exhibition in particular develops work produced for Birmingham Stories on the theme of Urban Childhoods.

Find out more details on the **Connecting Histories Website (http://www.connectinghistories.org.uk/childrenslivesinfo.asp)**

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