CHILDREN IN SITUATIONS
OF ARMED CONFLICT
2002

SCHEDULE
ANTHROPOLOGY 558.004
SOCIAL WORK 719

MEETING 1: JANUARY 7
INTRODUCTION. THE PROJECT - 5 AREAS OF RESEARCH

MEETING 2: JANUARY 14
CONSIDERING THE PROJECT. BASIC TENETS OF WORKING WITH CHILDREN
READ TWO RESEARCH REPORTS –
1 IMPACT OF ARMED ONFLICT ON CHILDREN
2 REPORT OF THE FLORENCE WORKSHOP
AND THE 3 SHORT UN PIECES IN THE COURSE PACK

(NO MEETING ON JANUARY 21)

MEETING 3: JANUARY 28
CRITIQUE AND PLANS
READ (AND PREPARE TO CRITIQUE THE PAPERS IN CLASS) –
FILLING KNOWLEDGE GAPS: A RESEARCH AGENDA ON THE IMPACT OF ARMED CONFLICT ON CHILDREN. BACKGROUND PAPERS, 2 – 4 JULY 2001, PAGES 1 TO 94 PLUS ABER PAGES 1 TO 6

MEETING 4: FEBRUARY 4
REVOLUTION AND THE PARTICIPATION OF THE YOUNG AND THE SILENCE OF HISTORY
READING –
REYNOLDS, P. TRADITIONAL HEALERS …. CHAPTER 3
MEETING 5: FEBRUARY 11
FILM  THE GUGULETU SEVEN – DISCUSSION OF FILM
REPRESENTATION IN CLASS
[PROPOSAL HAND IN]

MEETING 6: FEBRUARY 18
RECRUITMENT, DEPLOYMENT AND POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT
READINGS –
1 RICHARDS,P.  FIGHTING FOR THE RAIN FOREST, CHAPTER 4, PAGES 87 –104
2 HOISKER “UNDER AGE AND UNDER FIRE”
3 GUILLERMO PRIETO “THE CHILDREN’S WAR”

SPRING BREAK

MEETING 7: MARCH 4
HARM – VICTIMS, LANDMINES, BORN OF RAPE
READINGS –
1 CARLTON-FORD ET AL  WAR AND CHILDREN’S MORTALITY
2 CHILDREN AFFECTED BY ARMED CONFLICT
3 GOLDHAGEN PAGES 308 – 309

(NO SEMINAR ON JANUARY 21)

MEETING 8: MARCH 11
LITERATURE ON VICTIMS AND CONFLICT
READINGS –
1 WILKOMIRSKI, B.  FRAGMENTS
2 TAYLOR, J.  UBU AND THE TRUTH COMMISSION
[both to be handed out in class]
MEETING 9: MARCH 18
REPRESENTATIONS OF CHILDREN IN THE MEDIA
READINGS –
1 STRAKER, G. “FROM VICTIM TO VILLAIN” PAGES 20 TO 27
2 BERTELESEN, E. “ADS AND AMNESIA” PAGES 221 TO 241

MEETING 10: MARCH 25
INTERNATIONAL LEGISLATION AND DEFINING WAR
READING -
GUTMAN AND RIEFF  CRIMES OF WAR  SELECTED PAGES

MEETING 11: APRIL 1
ENDING CONFLICT: TRUTH COMMISSIONS, INTERNATIONAL COURT, TRIALS
READINGS -
1 WOUNDED NATIONS BROKEN LIVES. INDEX  PAGES 110 TO 147
2 GOLDSTONE, R. FOR HUMANITY  PAGES 74 TO 119

MEETING 12: APRIL 8
PRESENTATIONS

MEETING 13: APRIL 15
PRESENTATIONS  FINAL MEETING
The situation of children in armed conflict is currently a major concern among those who focus on the interests of the young and among those whose interest is in the propagation of Human Rights and International legislation to restrict the involvement of children in war and to limit harm done to them. During the course, the situation of children in recent and on-going conflicts will be examined and the nature and causes of their participation will be analysed. We shall begin by looking at the role of children in past wars and at the possible reasons for the absence of detailed documentation of it. We shall consider why the engagement of the young in warfare is pruned from the archive. We shall discuss the romance of war and reflect on the possible influence on children of ideals to do with bravery and heroism that imbue stories about and images of combat.

The course will examine written evidence for data on recruitment, training, treatment, deployment and political engagement of the young during periods of armed conflict. A particular focus will be on the participation of the young in resistance movements and their acquisition of political consciousness. In accord with this, we shall take account of their rejection of the manner in
which they are often categorised once war has ended and of some political compromises that accompany the return to peace.

Material will be presented that deals with the harm war does, including the damage wrought on children’s bodies by land mines; their predicament when born as a consequence of rape; and the callous targeting of children as members of civilian populations during the conduct of war. Representations of children’s terror and suffering in the media will lead us into a consideration of its use and abuse.

Finally, we shall look at various ways in which conflicts are brought to an end and the attention that is given to children’s needs in the process. Patterns of healing and ideas about trauma will be traced with regard to recent formulations of diagnosis, counselling and attempts to lay the ghosts of the past.

**Goals:** It is expected that students will emerge from the course with an understanding of the ways in which social-cultural studies contribute to the analysis of an ancient activity – warfare – as it affects the young who seem to be increasingly drawn into its ambit as participants and/or victims. It will suggest ways to examine the archive and critique current universalistic and directive institutional forms. Students will be encouraged to analyse the effects of definitions that are widely drawn on in the description of a variety of conflicts and query the extent to which they influence the analysis of queer the pitch. A critical response will be developed as we consider the power that institutions can wield, for good or ill, in defining patterns of description and prescription of the conduct of war. It will be further developed when we contemplate concepts like “coercive harmony” (Laura Nader) as applied to institutional means employed in ending conflict, and “the politics of contempt” (Olga Nieuwenhuys) as applied to the imposition of Western notions of childhood around the world.

**Requirements:** Active participation in the seminar discussions and in co-leading one of the sessions. Co-leading requires additional preparation and consultation with the instructor. Each student will write a research paper (20-25 pages maximum) on a substantive topic related to the course. A two page
research proposal and a list of readings is due in class on February 11, 2002. The final paper is due on April 20, 2002.

The course will be organised around collaborative work, research, readings, co-leading a session, preparation of a proposal and the subsequent presentation and writing of a research paper. Students will be expected to work with colleagues, do the readings, attend the lectures and presentations, and submit work as required. The proposal and the co-led session will each count for fifteen percent of the work expected in the course; the presentation will count for thirty percent; and the research paper for forty percent.

**Required Text:**


Course Pack.

(Both available at Shaman Drum Bookshop.)


SYLLABUS

Week 1: Introduction. Project – 4 areas of research.
Week 2: Considering the Project. Basic tenets of Working with Children
Week 3: Silence of History. Thoughts on Figures, Truth and Method
Week 4: War and Heroism, Romanticism and Disgust (Beowulf, Mother Courage….)
Week 5: Recruitment, Deployment and Political Engagement
Week 6: Harm - Victims, Landmines, Born of Rape
Week 7: Revolution and the Participation of the Young
Week 8: Literature on Children in Conflict (Ann Michaels, Wilkomirski…) 
Week 9: Representation of Children in the Media
Week 10: Human Rights
Week 11: International Legislation and Defining War
Week 12: Ending Conflict: Truth Commissions, International Court, Trials
Week 13: Healing
Week 14: Presentations