

SYLLABUS

Selected Social Problems: Children and War

1. COURSE

TERM:	Wed, Jan 5 – Mon, Apr 11, 2005
NUMBER:	077.231 (3.0 credit hours), Section L02
TITLE:	SOCIAL PROBLEMS: War and Children
INSTRUCTOR:	Jessica Senehi, Ph.D. associate director, Mauro Centre for Peace and Justice
ROOM:	313, St. Paul's College
HOURS:	Slot 3 Mon, Wed, Fri 10:30 to 11:20

2. COURSE DESCRIPTION

More than 2 million children died in war in the 1990s alone. In the past 15 years, throughout the world, many wars have been waged within communities, often characterized by genocidal violence. War creates conditions of homelessness, poverty, famine, and disease, to which children are especially vulnerable. Children lose their parents and other family members, and are witnesses of torture and murder. Children are disabled by violence or by the legacy of past wars—landmines. There are 300,000 child soldiers. Today's children are tomorrow's world citizens, and these events will shape the future in unforeseeable ways.

This course will examine the impact of international war, civil war, and genocide on children. Specific issues regarding war and children will be identified, described, and analyzed. Theoretical ideas regarding the causes of war and violence, as well as practical ideas for intervention will be reviewed. Specific contemporary conflicts will be addressed. The role of gender, class, and culture will be explored; as well as the role of international organizations, governments, communities, and social activists in addressing these issues. **The implications for both the political socialization of children as well as how children may be actors in political solutions will be explored.**

3. INSTRUCTOR

OFFICE:	Room 252, St. Paul's College
OFFICE HOURS:	<u>Mon, Wed, Fri, 11:30 A.M. to 12:30 P.M., no appointment required.</u> <u>Or, Mon, Wed, Fri, 1:15 to 2:45 P.M., appointment required.</u> <u>Or, other time by appointment. Call me any time. Leave a message.</u>
PHONE:	474-7978 (direct line) 474-6052 (Ariann) Home: 489-5865
EMAIL:	Jessica_Senehi@umanitoba.ca
NOTE:	The quality of student engagement impacts a course significantly. If you have any concerns regarding the syllabus or course at any time, I welcome you to share in the interest of making this as good a course as possible.

4. REQUIRED TEXTS

- **Raymond, Alan, and Susan Raymond.** 2002. *Children in War*. New York: TVBooks. ISBN: 0-5750-0098-9
- **Kielburger, Marc, and Craig Keilberger.** 2002. *Take Action! A Guide to Active Citizenship*. Athens: Ohio University Press. ISBN: 0-4712-7132-2
- **Wallach, John.** 2000. *The Enemy Has a Face: The Seeds of Peace Experience*. Washington, D.C.: The United States Institute of Peace. ISBN: 1-8783-7996-8
- **ON-LINE.** Several official reports and academic articles will be made available on-line, accessible through WebCT.

NOTE: Background materials and recommended readings will be on reserve at the libraries.

5. COURSE OBJECTIVES

For students to:

- (1) Develop theoretical knowledge of sociological as well as psychological, and political theories that are relevant to an analysis of war and how war impacts children.
- (2) To critically evaluate the theories reviewed in this course.
- (3) To gain an in-depth understanding of specific issues and case studies of how children are impacted by war.
- (4) To become especially expert in a particular substantive issue regarding war-affected children—the causes, recommendations for addressing the problem, and a particular original idea to address the problem; and to develop the analytical skills required for developing this expertise.
- (5) To learn about the relatively new field of peace and conflict studies, and some of the key concepts that provide an underpinning to that field.
- (6) To enhance reading, writing, and speaking skills.

6. WEBCT

This class will also be supported by a WebCT page. Course materials will be provided in class, but they will also be placed on the WebCT page. If you don't receive a handout because you are absent, or if you lose one, you will be able to get a copy on WebCT. I will cover this point in more detail in class.

7. OVERVIEW OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS

I have designed this course so that the focus is on the readings. When grading assignments, I will use a letter grade (e.g., A+, A, B+, B, ...) and when calculating final grades I will change these letter grades to numbers using the college system.

As a general rule, an A-grade represents outstanding work (grammatical and organized writing, factually complete, well-thought-out analysis that makes an original contribution to the topic discussed), a B-grade represents good work (mostly grammatical and organized writing, factually accurate and mostly complete, thoughtful analysis), a C-grade is satisfactory (information provided is not complete and/or is inaccurate, both writing and analysis need further development), a grade of D or F means work is unsatisfactory because there is not

enough accurate information, there may be inaccurate information, and the analysis is not developed enough).

Chart for transferring letter grades to numerical grades during the semester:

A+	A	B+	B	C+	C	D	F
4.1-4.3	3.4-4.0	3.1-3.3	2.4-3.0	2.1-2.3	1.4-2.0	1.8-2.2	<1.8

Chart for transferring numerical grades to letter grades:

96-100	90-95	86-89	80-85	76-79	70-75	66-70	<66
A+	A	B+	B	C+	C	D	F

(a) Participation 20 percent of grade

This class will include both lecture and seminar (discussion) formats. Also, there is a lot of reading for this course, and this participation grade is a way you can get credit for that reading. Your class participation will be evaluated according to the following criteria: Attendance and quality of participation and good attendance.

All students are expected to attend regularly. Regular attendance is important for several reasons. For one, classes will help you to recognize and absorb the nuances of the readings. Also, the quality of class discussion is contingent upon students' ability to build on previous deliberations and analyses. You cannot build up a store of knowledge without a measure of consistency and continuity. Class participants are expected to participate actively in class discussion and activities as learning is an interdependent and mutual process. Good attendance includes being on time. Persistent lateness or absences will affect your grade negatively.

High quality participation includes raising good questions about the reading material; staying on topic; listening carefully and responding thoughtfully to colleagues' ideas in addition to expressing your own ideas about the course material. Talking a lot does not guarantee high quality participation. Going off topic and not listening to others, of course, are not good discussion skills.

Differences enrich discussion—and keep us awake! Maintaining respectful discussion of differences is critical.

If you tend to be a quiet person and would like to talk to me privately about how to ensure that you contribute enough to discussions, I would be happy to meet with you.

(b) Thought paper on the book *Children in War* 15 percent of grade

A thought paper (7 pages) on *Children in War* is required. The thought paper is a reflective, analytical essay on key ideas in the readings that you would like to discuss. You will not be evaluated on whether or not I agree with your points, but rather on the depth of the analysis and how well that analysis is supported by reasoning and/or evidence. **Please see Section 8 of the syllabus for more information on my general criteria for evaluation.**

(c) Problem Analysis 30 percent of grade

This assignment involves research and analysis regarding a particular violent conflict or war-related problem and how that affects children. *A detailed description of this assignment will be provided in class.*

(d) Recommendations for Addressing Problem 20 percent of grade

This assignment involves providing recommendations to address the same social conflict or problem discussed in Assignment 3. *A more detailed description of this assignment will be provided in class.*

(e) Letter 15 percent of grade

This assignment will involve designing a very specific means of addressing the social problem discussed in assignments 2 and 3, and drafting a letter of proposal to someone who may be critical in gaining resources or gaining access to execute the proposed intervention. *A more detailed description of this assignment will be provided in class.*

8. GENERAL CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

• **Nature of Evaluation**

My goal in evaluating student work is to provide useful feedback. This is a time-consuming process and a responsibility that I take seriously. Always keep in mind that grades are evaluations of the work submitted, not evaluations of a person or a person's overall abilities. Please feel free to discuss the evaluation process with me at any time. Evaluations of written assignments will be based primarily on the quality of the analysis (*See below*). However, assignments that are poorly written, poorly formatted, or handed in late may be graded down (*See below*).

• **Analysis**

Academic writing is nearly always an argument. That is, the academic writer is making a point, and these points need to be backed up with high-quality, persuasive supporting evidence. We need to always be asking ourselves: *How do we know what we know?* Anyone can have opinions about social issues. Backing up analyses with evidence (whether research, documented examples, or references to other literature that provides this evidence) is what scholarship is all about. I do not evaluate students' analyses based on whether or not I agree with them, but rather based on the depth of analysis and the quality of the support for that analysis.

In other words, statements like "in the United States, there aren't any family values anymore" are unacceptable without supporting evidence. It is critical to get the facts, ask questions, do research, test out your ideas. Frame questions that you can seek answers to before moving too quickly to conclusions.

For example, in this case, it may be better to ask, "What was the nature of American families in a particular time period (e.g., during the revolutionary period, before the Civil War, after the Civil War, at the turn of the 20th century, during the depression, during the 1950s, now, etc.); and/or for particular groups of people (e.g., the poor, the middle class, the very wealthy, coal miners, factory workers, farmers, educators, children, men, women, the aged, African Americans, immigrant Chinese, immigrant Italians, immigrant Russians, gays and lesbians, Protestants, Catholics, Jews, urbanites, rural dwellers, Northerners, Southerners, Mexicans in the Southwest, Westcoasters)? How have families changed? What factors have caused these changes? What do these changes mean? Also, what is meant by the term "family" and "family values" in the first place?

In this case, you might begin by consulting Stephanie Coontz's book, *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap* (1992), for an historical analysis of families in the U.S. Or, you might consult her book, *The Way We Really Are: Coming to Terms with American's Changing Families* (1997), for data and analysis on the nature of the modern U.S. family.

- **Writing**

I expect writing to be grammatical (e.g., in terms of paragraph structure, sentence structure, and spelling). Do not rely solely on the spell checker to check your work. If I feel that there is an excessive amount of writing problems (as opposed to content issues) with your work, I will grade that assignment down one to two steps depending on the severity of the problem (e.g., A to A-, or A to B+, etc.). I know that writing skills cannot be developed overnight, and I will not grade subsequent assignments down *as long as the writing skills are improving*. I have a number of books on writing and I will provide you copies of chapters, etc., that focus on your most salient writing problem(s) if that may be helpful.

I may comment on your writing no matter how good your writing is in order to suggest how you can take your writing to the next level (although I will only mark the paper down if the problems are severe). This is intended as useful feedback. *Improving one's writing skills is incredibly empowering* no matter what your plans for the future are. More effective writing skills will enhance the possibility that your writing will be (in the workplace or elsewhere) will be well received. Improving writing skills also improves speaking and analytical skills. People are not essentially "bad writers" or "good writers." Like other skills, writing improves with practice.

- **Citations and References**

I expect citations and references to be handled professionally. Any official referencing style is acceptable. I will provide guidelines for the *Chicago Manual Style* as well as some websites that provide this information. Again, any style will be acceptable as long as it is a recognized style and is applied consistently. If references are not cited properly within the text and/or in the bibliography, papers will be graded down one step.

- **Format**

All papers must meet the minimum formatting requirements listed below. After one warning, I will grade papers down one-step if they are not formatted appropriately. Consistent formatting will make my job easier and will make the presentation of your ideas more effective.

Minimum format requirements:

- (1) Font: **Times [New] Roman**
- (2) Size: **12-point type**
bold and italic only for special sections/text
- (3) Pages: **include page numbers**
- (4) Spacing: **Double space**
- (5) Indents: **Indent paragraphs! Do not use double return.**

- **Late Assignments**

Late assignments are not acceptable because I have found that late assignments disrupt the learning process. This course is envisioned as a synergistic learning environment where students learn in interaction with each other and the instructor. If you are not caught up with assignments and readings, you are unable to participate effectively in class discussions, and this affects the quality of the whole course as learning is an interdependent process. Without ongoing feedback on assignments, it is impossible to create a dialogue between the student and instructor regarding the development of student work. Also, it is rarely possible to build up a store of knowledge without a measure of consistency and continuity. But things happen! I will accept one late assignment during the semester. All subsequent late assignments will be marked down a step if they are submitted one week after the due-date (e.g., A to B+), and two steps if they are submitted more than two weeks after the due-date (e.g., A to B, etc.).

9. ACADEMIC POLICIES

- **Academic Honesty**

Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated for any reason. This includes claiming another student's work as one's own or using published work without proper citation. This also includes resubmitting papers that were submitted for credit for a previous class. It is essential that you acquaint yourself with the University's policy on "Examinations and Personations" (p. 25) and "Plagiarism and Cheating" (p. 26) found in the *Undergraduate Calendar*. If you have any questions about this policy, please ask me.

- **Dropping a Course**

Please note that the voluntary withdrawal date for this term is Fri, Mar 18, 2005.

10. SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO READ ARTICLES AND BOOKS

Reading new academic literature can be quite challenging. The most effective approach to reading academic material, in my experience, has been to follow and practice the guidelines below:

- 1 As you read—or after reading through an article once—**take notes** or outline the article. You might also develop a chart organizing the concepts in the reading.

- 2 Look up words you don't know in a dictionary or encyclopedia. Identify and strive to grasp **new terms and ideas** the author introduces. Imagine explaining new concepts or terms to a friend. Think of examples where the terms or concepts might apply.

- 3 Identify the **author's thesis**. That is, what is the major point the author is trying to make? Briefly summarize the article in your notes.

- 4 Identify **major assumptions** the author makes and expects you to accept in arguing her or his thesis.

- 5 Analyze how the reading relates to or is in dialogue with **previous readings**.

- 6 Analyze how the reading fits into its particular **historical and social context**.

7 Critically reflect on the reading as a whole and evaluate its **strengths and weaknesses**.

8 Consider whether or not there are any **alternative arguments** or perspectives that might better explain what the author is trying to explain.

9 **Share your journey.** Discuss readings with your peers and practice explaining concepts to others.

10 **Enjoy! It's worth the effort!**

10. READINGS

Week 1: W Jan 5, F Jan 7 | *Human Security*

READING

- Excerpt: Axworthy, Lloyd. 2003. *Navigating a New World: Canada's Global Future*. Toronto: Knopf.

Week 2: M Jan 10, W Jan 12, F Jan 14 | *Bosnian Conflict, Post-Traumatic Stress*

READINGS

- Excerpt: Power, Samantha. 2002. "A Problem from Hell": *American and the Age of Genocide*. New York: Perennial.
- Raymond, Alan, and Susan Raymond. 2002. "Bosnia." In *Children in War*. New York: TVBooks.

Week 3: M Jan 17, W Jan 19, F Jan 21 | *Rwandan Conflict, Genocide*

READING

- Raymond, Alan, and Susan Raymond. 2002. "Rwanda." In *Children in War*. New York: TVBooks.

Week 4: M Jan 24, W Jan 26, F Jan 28 | *Israel, Intractable Conflicts*

READING

- Coleman, Peter. 2000. "Intractable Conflict." In *Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice*, edited by Morton Deutsch and Peter Coleman. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Raymond, Alan, and Susan Raymond. 2002. "Israel." In *Children in War*. New York: TVBooks.

Week 5: M Jan 31, W Feb 2, F Feb 4 | *Northern Ireland, Peace Education*

READING

- McEvoy, Siobhan. 2000. "Communities and Peace: Catholic Youth in Northern Ireland." *Journal of Peace Research* 37(1): 85-103.
- Raymond, Alan, and Susan Raymond. 2002. "Northern Ireland." In *Children in War*. New York: TVBooks.

Week 6: M Feb 7, W Feb 9, F Feb 11 | Children's Human Rights

ASSIGNMENT SUBMITTED

- THOUGHT PAPER, due Monday, February 7. (Detailed assignment description will be provided in class).

READING

- Excerpt: United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). 2002. *Children Affected by Armed Conflict: UNICEF Actions*. New York: UNICEF. Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, & 13.

Week 7: M Feb 21, W Feb 23, F Feb 25 | Child Soldiers

READING

- Nordstrom, Carolyn. 2001. "Carita's War." *Development* 44(3): 30-35.
- Nordstrom, Carolyn. In press. "The Jagged Edge of Peace: The Creation of Culture and War Orphans in Angola." In *Troublemakers or Peacemakers? Youth and Post-Accord Peacebuilding*, edited by Siobhan McEvoy-Levy. South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.

Week 8: M Feb 28, W Mar 2, F Mar 4 | Child Soldiers

ASSIGNMENT SUBMITTED

- ANALYSIS OF PROBLEM, due Monday, February 28. (Detailed assignment description will be provided in class).

READING

- Wessells, Michael, and Jonah Davidson. In press. "Reintegration of Former Youth Soldiers in Sierra Leone: Challenges of Reconciliation and Post-Accord Peacebuilding." In *Troublemakers or Peacemakers? Youth and Post-Accord Peacebuilding*, edited by Siobhan McEvoy-Levy. South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Excerpt: United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). 2002. *Children Affected by Armed Conflict: UNICEF Actions*. New York: UNICEF. Chapter 5.

Week 9: M Mar 7, W Mar 9, F Mar 11 | Youth Peacemakers

READING

- Helsing, Jeff, and Namik Kirlic, Neil McMaster, and Nir Sonnschein. In press. "Young People's Activism and the Transition to Peace: Bosnia, Northern Ireland, and Israel." In *Troublemakers or Peacemakers? Youth and Post-Accord Peacebuilding*, edited by Siobhan McEvoy-Levy. South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.

Week 10: M Mar 14, W Mar 16, F Mar 18 | Youth Peacemakers

ASSIGNMENT SUBMITTED

- RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDRESSING PROBLEM, due Monday, March 14.
(Detailed assignment description will be provided in class).

READING

- Kielburger, Marc, and Craig Keilberger. 2002. *Take Action! A Guide to Active Citizenship*. Athens: Ohio University Press. First half of book.

Week 11: M Mar 21, W Mar 23 | Youth Peacemakers

READING

- Kielburger, Marc, and Craig Keilberger. 2002. *Take Action! A Guide to Active Citizenship*. Athens: Ohio University Press. Second half of book.

Week 12: M 28, W Mar 30, F Apr 1 | Conflict Resolution Approaches

READING

- Wallach, John. 2000. *The Enemy Has a Face: The Seeds of Peace Experience*. Washington, DC: The United States Institute of Peace. First half of book.

Week 13: M Apr 4, W Apr 6, F Apr 8 | Conflict Resolution Approaches

READING

- Wallach, John. 2000. *The Enemy Has a Face: The Seeds of Peace Experience*. Washington, DC: The United States Institute of Peace. Second half of book.

Week 14: M Apr 11 | Conclusions

ASSIGNMENT SUBMITTED

- LETTER, due Monday, April 11. (Detailed assignment description will be provided in class).