



Child Soldiers: The Role of Children in Armed Conflict

By Ilene Cohn, Guy S. Goodwin-Gill

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1994 is the International Year of the Family, and debates about the rights of the child are once again at the top of the national and international legal and political agenda. Yet in places of armed conflict all over the world tens of thousands of children are recruited to fight in bloody conflicts, and their rights are systematically ignored and abused.

In this path-breaking study, Goodwin-Gill and Cohn assess the status of the Child Soldier in international law and highlight the ways in which international humanitarian law fails to provide effective protection, particularly in the internal conflicts which are the most common battlefields today. Based on empirical data gathered from places of conflict all over the world, the authors examine the consequences for child soldiers, their families and community of their participation in armed conflict. They conclude their study with practical suggestions for preventing recruitment, and call for a more coherent policy of treatment for those children who have participated in acts of violence.

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- Sales Rank: #930607 in Books
- Published on: 1994-11-10
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 6.13" h x .54" w x 9.13" l, .94 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 248 pages

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`a comprehensive analysis of a tragic, yet often neglected topic ... very well documented' NOD and Conversion

`What makes this volume different is that the analytical prose is interspersed with photographs that would move the hardest heart. Each young child, weighed down with the trappings of modern weapons, makes a convincing argument for the need for a more effective international humanitarian law regime.' Times Higher Education Supplement

`Cohn and Goodwin-Gill offer a comprehensive and compassionate analysis of the issue of child soldiers, which those who deal with the human consequences of conflict would do well to read.' Development in Practice

`thorough study written...adduces a wealth of information" The American Journal of International Law

`long-overdue study...an invaluable addition to the body of information available to those such as lawyers, psychologists and policy-makers concerned with the plight of child soldiers and with the search for realistic responses and solutions to their problems." Child and Family Law Quarterly

From the Back Cover

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About the Author

Ilene Cohn is at University of Amsterdam. Guy S. Goodwin-Gill is at University of Amsterdam.

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