

***War Babies:
Sexual Violence, Children's Human Rights and the Global Community***

R. Charli Carpenter, Editor

BACKGROUND PAPER / INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER DRAFT

**“Gender, Ethnicity and Children's Human Rights:
Theorizing Babies Born of Wartime Rape and Sexual Exploitation”**

Sexual violence and exploitation is endemic in war-affected regions, and babies are often produced as a result (Rehn and Sirleaf, 2002). It has been estimated that tens of thousands of children have resulted from mass rape campaigns or sexual exploitation during times of war in the last decade (Grieg, 2001). Anecdotal reports suggest these “war babies” often face stigma, discrimination and even infanticide. Conceived in conflicts around the globe - East Timor, Bangladesh, Kosovo, Kuwait, Liberia, to name a few - children born of wartime rape and sexual exploitation are often viewed as children “of the enemy” (Powell, 2001; Rozario, 1997; Smith, 2000; Weitsman, 2003; Gaylor, 2001). Local and international actors contest their ethnic identities and citizenship rights (Carpenter 2000); their rights to education, family, identity, physical security and even survival may be severely curtailed.¹

This is the picture that emerges from the press, from conversations within the aid community and from the literature on war rape. But beyond such anecdotes, very little scholarship exists that systematically tracks these children's status and fate from a human rights perspective, assesses the efficacy of attempts to protect them, or evaluates the global and local politics surrounding their births. We know, for example, that the rejection of war babies by their communities is not uniform, but we do not fully understand the conditions under which rape survivors and their families are empowered to accept them (Mazurana and Whitworth, 2002:28). Despite the burgeoning interest in the international humanitarian community both to sexual violence as a problem in conflict situations and to the protection of war-affected children, to date there have been no systematic fact-finding missions at the global level to assess the needs and interests of “war babies” in different contexts and establish best practices with respect to advocating for and securing their human rights.

This lack of research and legal attention to their fate and well-being of these children is problematic. Without a better understanding of the scope and nature of the problem, best practices regarding their care cannot be established, promoted or evaluated. This requires theorizing war

¹ Children of forced pregnancy or sexual exploitation, on which this project focuses, in fact are part of a larger group of ‘war children’ possessing one parent from the ‘other’ side of a conflict or from an international organization, including those whose mothers engaged in consensual liaisons with ‘enemy’ soldiers. In each case, the citizenship and family rights of the children are often complicated or denied. See Grieg 2001.

babies as subjects of human rights law and beneficiaries of the protection that the humanitarian community claims to afford war-affected civilian populations.

The first step in this process is the gathering of systematic data on the children's whereabouts, status and needs. How does stigma against children of rape or sexual exploitation – often by the very communities who are understood as the victims of massive human rights violations – be best understood, and how can it be alleviated? How does it manifest differently in different contexts, regions, cultures? Humanitarian practitioners and human rights activists need to know why some rape survivors kill their children and what enables others to embrace them; why some post-war governments would prefer to sequester war-babies in orphanages than allow them to be adopted abroad; why there is such a silence on this issue in major humanitarian organizations; and how to integrate a respect for the needs and rights of rape survivors with those of their children in aftermath of armed conflict.

These questions must be taken seriously by local and global actors claiming an interest in the “protection of war-affected civilians” or “human security” as we move into the 20th century (McRae and Hubert, 2001). Indeed, important questions must be asked about the role of actors and discourses throughout global civil society in producing and mitigating these outcomes. Are the legal norms and political practices surrounding children's rights and wartime sexual violence and exploitation sufficient to protect this category of child, or are they fundamentally complicated by issues such as these? In what ways are states, international organizations and well-intentioned transnational actors implicated in the mistreatment or misrepresentation of these children? Why have war babies by and large remained invisible on the international agenda, and how can this be changed?

The edited volume that will result from this project will develop preliminary answers to some of these questions. Each chapter will be informed by two fundamental underlying questions: what are the obstacles to securing human rights for this category of children, and in what ways can these obstacles be overcome? The papers will theorize war babies as subjects of human rights by

- 1) conducting region-specific case analyses on these children's human rights
- 2) re-examining conceptual and legal frameworks for addressing their rights
- 3) evaluating efforts to respond to these and broader human rights violations in armed conflict and
- 4) considering the role of local and global political actors in enabling or legitimating the current situation, and in promoting or blocking positive change.

Comparative Case Analysis

There exists a fair amount of anecdotal evidence pointing to a general pattern of severe discrimination against children born of wartime rape and sexual exploitation. One goal of this research will be to more systematically evaluate these patterns, as well as to determine the extent to which children of somewhat different origins experience these outcomes differently, and how their situation overlaps with that of all small children growing up in a conflict situation.

One of the clearest human rights issues that war babies may face is infanticide, a violation of infants' survival rights under Article 6(2) of the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child. Babies born of systematic rape campaigns during the war in the former Yugoslavia were neglected, abandoned, and sometimes killed (Niarchos, 1995; Stiglmayer, 1994:137; Salzman, 1998). In Kosovo, one woman snapped her baby's neck in the presence of the WHO nurses who attended its birth (Smith, 2001). According to a report by Human Rights Watch, of the 2000-5000 children born as a result of the sexual violence during the 1994 Rwandan genocide, some have

been killed (Nowrojee, 1996). Death by neglect may also result if rape survivors are psychologically unable to care for their infants and community or humanitarian resources are unavailable to fill the gap (Aaldrich and Baarda, 1994). It seems crucial to begin by establishing the scope of this fundamental protection problem and then to identify effective strategies for prevention.

Children of rape who survive infancy may face severe stigma within their communities. In Rwanda, some have been maligned as “devil’s children” (Nowrojee, 1996); in Kosovo they are called “children of shame” (Smith, 2001); in East Timor, “children of the enemy” (Powell, 2001); in Nicaragua, “monster babies” (Weitsman, 2003:11). There is some evidence that male war babies are particularly at risk of being viewed not merely as illegitimate or as reminders of sexual torture and national humiliation, but in fact as fifth column enemy combatants growing up within the community (Toomey, 2003).

In political contexts where nationality and citizenship rights are determined according to ethnicity or patrilineal descent, children of sexual violence or exploitation may become stateless. As Rehn and Sirleaf note, Liberia is one of the very few countries whose constitution recognizes war children as citizens (Rehn and Sirleaf 2002:18). Children of Bosnian refugee mothers in neighboring Croatia were sometimes denied citizenship (Jordan, 1995:20A; Mertus and Pine, 1994). Because international law on children’s human rights is based on the assumption of state responsibility, this problematizes the possibilities for securing fundamental social benefits such as an education.

Children born of sexual exploitation or sexual slavery during armed conflict face problems similar to those conceived in mass rape campaigns. Babies born to girl soldiers held as “wives” in slavery-like conditions are reported to be rejected by extended families when they escape the armed forces with their mothers (Bennett, 2002:74; Mazurana and McKay, 2003:21). Those born to mothers who have been sexually exploited by peacekeepers, occupation forces, or humanitarian workers may grow up without claims to paternal rights, child support or a name (Naik, 2002; Grieg, 2001:11). Deprived of extended family and other social networks, it has been suggested that these children are particularly vulnerable to being trafficked or becoming street children (Author interview, Women’s Commission Official, August 2003). They may also be maligned as being ‘mixed’ or ‘different,’ particularly in contexts where their biological origins are evident in their physical features.

Although a certain general pattern of abuse and stigma seems common to the children in these various contexts, case- and region-specific analysis will enable us to go beyond such a general understanding and pay closer attention to how human rights abuses against these children manifest in different ways in different contexts. In Rwanda and East Timor, for example, it seems that a larger percentage of women chose to actually raise their children than those in Kosovo or Bosnia. What accounts for this variation? What are the implications for the children’s rights in the different contexts?

Thinking about these children as a particular category in comparative context will also help us consider the specificity of their needs in relation to the general population of war-affected children. What is it about their biological origins that puts them particularly at risk? Is it merely the fact of having a parent on the ‘other side of the conflict’ (Grieg 2001), which broadens the category to erase differences based on the particular relationship of the biological father to the mother? Or are children who are conceived out of mass rape or sexual slavery facing a fundamentally different environment than those whose mothers provided sexual services to humanitarian workers or peacekeepers, or who engaged in consensual affairs with occupation

forces? Are children conceived intentionally through a systematic forced impregnation policy facing different obstacles than those conceived “incidentally” through rape (Daniel, 2003)? Clarifying the different factors that lead to violations of these children’s human rights, and the circumstances under which these factors are neutralized or mitigated, is a fundamental first step to understanding how to most effectively address these violations.

Conceptual and Legal Frameworks

As human beings, war babies possess in theory all the rights articulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other major instruments, including notably the right to life and the right not to be adversely discriminated against. Additionally, a number of legal instruments regulate the treatment of children under international law, both in peacetime and time of war, and all of these incorporate, in principle, the assumption of impartiality: that children’s human rights codified in law apply to all children, regardless of sex, nationality, religion, social or biological origin.

The most important of these is the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, which provides for all children’s right to know their parents (Article 7); to an adequate standard of living, social security and health care (Article 6); to a nationality (Article 7) and to protection against abuse, maltreatment or neglect (Article 19) (Leblanc, 1996). The Fourth Geneva Convention and its Additional Protocols also provide specific treatment for war-affected children, preventing forced recruitment of children, requiring families torn apart to be reunited and laying down principles for rebuilding communities shattered by war, including the provision of basic needs and educational resources to children (Plattner, 1994). Children’s identity and family rights are also protected by Article 2(e) of the Genocide Convention, which considers forcibly transferring children from one group to another an act of genocide; and children are protected by refugee law, in theory, to the same extent as adults (UNHCR 2002).

Despite numerous legal instruments that in theory apply to these children’s human rights, serious questions must be raised about the sufficiency of these laws to secure basic survival and identity rights for war babies. Certain of the rights in the CRC seem to be in tension with respect to war babies: in some cases protecting children against mistreatment may mitigate against their right to know their biological origins. In other respects, the CRC might be said to be inapplicable, insofar as it does not outlaw discrimination against children born out of wedlock as a social category. (One empirical question might be: does stigma against these children stem primarily from their “illegitimate” status or from their association with “enemy” soldiers?)

There are more general issues at stake. International law, often based on an understanding of the state and the biological family as guarantor of rights and identities, itself is inscribed with deeply entrenched cultural norms regarding gender and ethnicity (Charlesworth, Chinkin and Wright, 1996; Wing and Merchan, 1993). This may explain why there is no specific legal protection for this category of children, and why war babies’ human rights have remained ambiguous throughout the process of codifying “forced pregnancy” and “sexual slavery” as crimes in international law (Carpenter, 2000a). Attempts to frame forced pregnancy as genocide, for example, contradict aspects of the Genocide Convention pertaining to children and reproductive rights of groups.² Another question to be explored, then, is whether the international rules that have evolved to protect children’s rights seem at all adequate to address the particular harms to which children of forced maternity or wartime sexual exploitation may be subject.

² The most ground-breaking legal arguments on forced pregnancy as genocide include Fisher, 1996 and Allen, 1996. For legal contradictions within this formulation see Carpenter, 2000b.

Global/Local Institutions, Norms and Politics

Formulating answers to the questions above requires more than simply a critique of existing law. It entails spotlighting local, transnational, and global social and political institutions involved in structuring, interpreting and responding to the particular patterns we are uncovering. Numerous actors, agendas, and discourses are brought to bear in creating a context in which rape survivors through their infants into the river (Becirbasic and Sestic, 2001); in which a state prioritizes the immigration of a war baby for domestic adoption, while placing barriers to refugee status for the child's birth mother (Stanley 1999); in which children of rape appear in the international press to suit a particular war narrative but are absent from the agendas of global institutions concerned with war-affected women and children (Carpenter, 2000a)? What are we to make of these contradictions? Evaluating the way in which war babies are constructed, represented, or rendered invisible by different sectors of the world community will generate new insights – not only on how to address the issue, but also on the intersection of global, transnational and local norms and interests regarding gender, ethnicity, sexuality, violence and identity.

One important area of inquiry is the way in which states respond to children born of sexual violence and exploitation as a humanitarian concern. With respect to children born of sexual exploitation, it will be useful to track the ways in which states' policies enable or produce these outcomes; the conditions under which it becomes a political issue; and compare the effect of state action (or non-action) regarding these children and their mothers. As Cynthia Enloe has documented, access to local women's bodies for soldiers and peacekeeping troops is often explicitly manufactured through negotiations between countries, as a normalized aspect of international diplomatic/military culture (Enloe, 2000). Such arrangements have often historically been contingent on the assumption that the state of whom the soldiers were nationals would bear no responsibility for children fathered by liaisons with local women (Grieg, 2001). This tradition of impunity has been challenged in some recent cases, with women and older war children organizing to achieve recognition and restitution from the fathers' countries (e.g. Reuters, 2003). Comparative study is needed to understand why some of these efforts are more successful than others, and what, indeed, might be considered benchmarks for "success."

With respect to mass rape campaigns, the issue may be even more complex. While children born of sexual exploitation have generally been ignored by official bodies, children born of mass rape have sometimes been exploited for their propaganda potential (Weitsman, 2003). Specific narratives linking gender, ethnicity and identity may in some cases provide the strategic logic behind mass rape campaign in the first place, as in Bosnia (Allen, 1996), East Pakistan (Brownmiller, 1979), and Rwanda (Baines, 2003). Governments of populations targeted by such campaigns may exploit stories of rape to encourage international intervention or justify military policy (Hansen, 2001): in such narratives sexual assault may be treated as a crime not against women but against collective groups (Yuval-Davis, 1997), and the identities of the children involve may be represented in conflicting ways by different actors (Carpenter 2000a).

States may also play an important role in responding to the needs of rape survivors and their children, though in the past they have typically done so out of a sense of their own strategic and ideational interests rather than a concern for women's or children's rights. Weitsman (2003:11-12) notes that Rwanda viewed the children as a means of repopulating the country after the genocide; the new Bengali government attempted to frame survivors of the 1971 rapes as "national heroines," to counteract the stigma within communities that threatened the identity and reproductive future of the emerging nation (Rozario, 1997). But even such efforts can have an

ambivalent effect on the status of war babies. Despite Bengali government efforts to counteract stigma against rape survivors, the government took the opposite position toward the children born of the mass rapes, possibly accounting for the futility of their efforts to reintegrate the women (D'Costa, 2003). Anti-abortion exceptionalism has been documented in many contexts, where state prohibitions on abortion rights have been rewritten to include access for women carrying children "of the enemy" (Harris, 1993); in some cases, such discourses have empowered women in the aftermath of conflict but also naturalized stigma against born war babies. The Kuwaiti government provided financial support to war babies of the 1990 Iraqi occupation, but denied them family names and thus various social rights (Evans, 1993). Considering the links between states' reproductive and social welfare policies and their nationalist agendas will be important for evaluating efforts to promote the rights of rape survivors and their children.

Various other transnational institutions interact with the community of states in shaping the discourses and political realities of war babies. The global media plays a critical role in generating attention to specific humanitarian crises, but also in generating specific kinds of attention. A number of articles have critiqued the role of the news media in covering wartime sexual violence (Weitsman, 2003; Stanley, 1999), or of linking stories of to gendered and nationalist narratives that impact political discourse and humanitarian decision-making (Hansen, 2001). It will be useful to better understand not only the media's role in producing cultural narratives, but also the pre-existing cultural discourses into which they tap, and how to harness those in the service of an agenda that can do the most good. Despite its tendency to simplify or distort, the media can also be a humanitarian resource (Ignatieff, 1998). An interesting research approach would be to track the response from citizens to specific news stories (as evidenced by letters to the editor or by offers of international assistance) and examine what kinds of media frames led to what sort of response.

International organizations as a source of norms, discourses and operational practices impacting war-affected populations must also be examined. The past decade has seen a remarkable transformation in multilateral discourses regarding gender, security and human rights. Global institutions such as the United Nations Security Council now consider women's issues, children's issues, and the protection of war-affected civilian populations a fundamental part of their mandate (McRae and Hubert, 2001); the need to "mainstream a gender perspective" is recognized, if not always implemented, within much of the humanitarian assistance community (Mertus, 2001). In what ways does the issue of war babies map onto or problematize these emergent norms?

At a glance, there would appear to be little agenda space available for war babies at the level of global institutions. To the extent that the gendered basis of international law has been challenged it has generally been in the context of women's human rights advocacy. An enormous literature has proliferated since the end of the Cold War on the ways in which women are targeted in armed conflict, and much greater attention is now being paid in international law and humanitarian policy to the psycho-social and protection needs of women and girls (Jacobs et al, 2000; Bennett, et al, 1995; Moser and Clark, 2001; Gardam and Jervis, 2001; Mertus, 2000; Lindsey, 2001). Yet feminist literature on forced pregnancy and sexual exploitation has typically treated these as crimes against women only (e.g. Goldstein, 1994; Copelon, 1994); major documents articulating women's human rights in armed conflict make only cursory mention of the need to look at children born of sexual violence (see Mazurana and Whitworth 2002:28; Rehn and Sirleaf, 2002:17-18; Lindsey, 2001:56).

A more interesting question may be the lack of such attention within the international *children's* human rights network. While some humanitarian field manuals have mentioned the

protection needs of war babies in post-conflict, settings (UNHCR, 1999; UNFPA, 1999), it is difficult to identify programs in the humanitarian community aimed at implementing these guidelines. Officials interviewed by this author at major children's rights organizations in summer 2003 were unable to point to any specific initiatives addressing war babies' particular vulnerabilities, in stark comparison to other themes on the international agenda relating to children in armed conflict such as child soldiering, trafficking in children, and child-headed households. War babies are seldom discussed as a "particularly vulnerable group." Nor have global fact-finding studies materialized to assess their whereabouts, status or needs, as the Graca Machel report recommended in 2000.

How can we explain these gaps in the international agenda? To develop answers, we must consider the character of humanitarian action; the hierarchy of humanitarian institutions in specific contexts; and the local and global interests driving the operational practices and strategic frames of humanitarian organizations and advocacy networks. Is the seeming neglect of war babies as an international issue due to the sensitivity of implicating humanitarian workers themselves and peacekeeping troops of powerful donor states (Naik, 2002)? Is the gap an operational one or merely a strategic silence in international discourse on war-affected children? There may be reasons for humanitarian workers and norm advocates to avoid raising the issue explicitly. Field research is needed to assess the way in which the children's needs are or are not being met in different contexts.

Responses and Redress

Finally, a fundamental question motivating this project is: what can or should be done? At the outset, in the absence of systematic policy research, there are more questions than answers. But it is likely that what constitutes a best practice will depend greatly on the specific socio-political context in which the children are born, and so careful comparative case studies are needed to clarify both broad patterns and specificity in outcomes. Understanding the changing nexus between gender roles, ethnicity, and in-group/out-group identity in post-conflict situations can also enhance our understanding of the social processes that enable violent conflict, the way in which those processes continue after wars "end," and how interventions in the interest of healing, reconciliation and reconstruction can succeed.

One approach is to gather data on the indigenous resources that war-affected communities bring to bear to cope with children born of rape and their mothers. Understanding the way in which communities interpret children born of rape is crucial to mobilizing local resources to address their protection needs. As Salzman points out, the creation of 'little Chetniks' in the context of Yugoslavia could only work as a tool of genocide if the target communities internalized the assumption that rape-babies were children "of the enemy" (Salzman, 2000). Women's organizations such as Medica Zenica as well as religious organizations actively attempted to counter this view (Tooney, 2003; Nikolic-Ristanovic, 2000). To what extent were they successful? Were some more successful than others? In what ways might the ability of war-affected communities to support and integrate such children and their mothers be strengthened? A comparative analysis of such efforts would be useful in guiding developing practices.

Indeed, despite stories of stigma, rejection and physical abuse and neglect in communities worldwide, there are many other stories of extended family members accepting and supporting abused women and their children (for example, Human Rights Watch, 2002:67). Much more needs to be known about the circumstances under which the acceptance of previously stigmatized groups becomes possible and succeeds in the context of post-conflict reconciliation. And crucially,

we need to know about the obstacles to such success and how to effectively intervene on behalf of abused or neglected children when such efforts fail or are for other reasons inappropriate. In conducting these analyses and generating policy recommendations, particular attention must be paid to reconciling these children's rights with the psycho-social needs of their mothers. Many of the papers developed for this project will examine the nexus between women's and children's human rights, as well as the points of disconnect between these two issue areas, and ask difficult questions about directions for successful advocacy and change.

Another question has to do with the effectiveness of post-conflict instruments such as tribunals, truth commissions, or reparations. A number of studies have suggested that these instruments can be ineffective - or worse, counter-productive - if they fail to take into account gender hierarchies and women's experiences of war and its aftermath (see DeLaet, forthcoming). Should such a critique be applied in the case of war babies as well? What progress, if any, have such instruments made in addressing the human rights situation of war babies and their mothers, and how do we evaluate and improve that record? An examination of successful and unsuccessful campaigns to gain recognition or reparations for children of rape and their mothers would provide useful insight into what works, what can be made to work, and what might be changed about current institutional approaches.

There are also serious unanswered questions about the effectiveness of different modes of humanitarian action to respond to the specific protection issues that war babies face. For example, are the best interests of these children served by raising them in the communities where they are born? During the war in the former Yugoslavia, Western families mobilized to lobby for removing the children from the war-affected context and have them adopted abroad. Governments in the Balkans opposed these efforts as imperialist, many of them seeking to exploit the war baby issue for their own nationalist agendas (Weitsman, 2003). Human rights organizations, cognizant of the risks involved in transborder adoption of war orphans, have generally been skeptical of such solutions, and supported the idea of keeping the children in situ (Williamson, 1993).

We need to more carefully inspect the decision-making process whereby current solutions have been devised. Were they based on the best interests of the child or on other normative, institutional and political factors? For example, to what extent were war-affected populations themselves consulted? There is some evidence that in the Bosnian context, women's organizations believed both the children and their mothers would benefit from the babies' adoption abroad (Becirbasic and Secic, 2002). In Rwanda, some mothers were eager to adopt their children out of the country, but unlike the demand for Bosnian babies, there were few such offers, and little effort to generate them (Grieg, 2001:97). By tracking and evaluating the life histories of specific children in different contexts, measured against the standards codified in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, can we confirm whether current policies constitute best practices? By interviewing adult war children, what can we learn about what such children themselves might consider to be ideal?

Similarly, there is an assumption among many actors in the humanitarian world and much of the literature on treatment of rape survivors that silence is an important protection mechanism for children born of wartime rape. If mothers deny where the children came from, both to the child and the broader community, it is assumed this will be easier for the child psychologically and protect him/her from stigma (Aldrich and Baarda, 1994:61). Similarly, orphanages with such children in custody and human rights organizations have been careful to screen such children from the curiosity of journalists and researchers, under the assumption that only harm can be done by calling attention to these children as a specific category.

There are certainly grounds for these concerns. Until we conduct more careful research, however, it will remain an open question under what conditions silence is an adequate protection mechanism, and wherein lie the tradeoffs. If silence about a young child's biological origins makes it easier to have him/her adopted or preempts discriminatory treatment, does that offset the problems created later in life when the child or adult demands the "right to know"? How can a mother's desire for silence be reconciled with an older child's right to identity in such cases? How can children of rape who do experience disadvantage lobby for restitution without knowledge of the circumstances behind the stigma to which they are subject? Survivors of wartime sexual violence who have risked stigma to testify at war crimes tribunals remind us that silence protects perpetrators as well as victims; and a willingness to speak out about such crimes can in some respects help to reduce stigma suffered by survivors (Human Rights Watch 2002:67). What are the pathways for enabling war children to speak out about the issues that concern them, without drawing attention to them in such a way as to do harm?

This brings us to a point that must remain front and center in any work that engages issues of human rights ethics and praxis: how do we gather data systematically in such a way as to empower, rather than exploit or marginalize, our population of concern? Ethical concerns attend all research that involves human subjects, and all research with implications for political and social practice. But addressing culturally sensitive topics such as these requires particular care. Lindner's reflections on ethnography in the Horn of Africa remind us of the potential for one's research methodology to be damaging to its subjects (Lindner, 2001). Writing about the power of representations in narratives of wartime sexual violence, Mookherjee calls our attention to researchers' role in transmitting and constructing the past through the representations they create, and cautions us about ethical considerations in representing the voices of survivors (Mookherjee, 2003). Feminist scholars in particular have emphasized in the past decade the need for research on survivors of violence to contribute to healing as well as to fact-finding (Sharatt and Kaschak, 1999), to engage those affected as participants, rather than subjects (Reinharz, 1992) and for researchers to give back to those studied, both in person and through the uses to which the research is put (Cockburn, 1998).

That said, it has been shown again and again that to shy away from sensitive topics simply for fear of doing harm can also deprive a marginalized population of much-needed outlet for voice and recognition (and can mask or support those whose interests are served by silences and taboos). Research itself constitutes a response and, potentially, a necessary first step to redress; correspondingly, lack of data can be an obstacle to sensible advocacy and positive change. It seems important to undertake the process reflectively, keeping conscious of our own privilege, motives and bias, challenging our own and one another's assumptions, seeking out alternative perspectives and creating careful and systematic criteria for evaluating the truth-claims we present. What motivates us as researchers? To which discourses are we contributing through our choice of descriptive labels in our work? Simply choosing a term of reference – such as "war baby" – is a value-laden move. As researchers and activists we should carefully inspect such moves, our own and one another's, the bases on which we make them, and how they are connected to the processes we are studying or critiquing. As many critical theorists have suggested, such reflexivity makes research more objective rather than less, and also more likely to achieve its intended goals.

Conclusion

Children born of wartime sexual violence or exploitation represent a global constituency facing specific challenges from a human rights perspective. They deserve attention from scholars

and policy-makers alike, yet to date they have been understudied as subjects of human rights concern. The lack of systematic research on these issues is the first obstacle to successful advocacy. This collaborative project represents a step in the direction of filling this gap. Each of the authors will explore the experience of infants born of wartime rape or sexual exploitation through a children's human rights lens. We hope in so doing to generate a basis for considering and evaluating how best to respond to the socio-political processes that affect these children's human rights after birth, as well as to better understand the interrelationship between gender, ethnicity, and human rights in the global community.

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Work Plan

“War Babies” Research and Writing Project

Authors for this project will come together on March 16, 2004 in Montreal, Quebec for the International Studies Association Workshop entitled *War Babies*. Participants in this project were selected either by invitation (on the basis of their previously known work in this area) or on the basis of a quality proposal submitted in advance of the initial workshop.

The workshop will be an opportunity to present work in progress, to give feedback on one another's papers, and to network and exchange ideas as we move toward the goal of a book manuscript. Each participant is asked to write and distribute a working draft of a book chapter by March 1, 2004. Papers should be developed in accordance with the guidelines attached to this framing chapter, and with the spirit of the framing chapter in mind. Papers will ultimately be selected for inclusion in the edited volume on the basis of their suitability and fit, along with the quality/originality of the research. Comments, feedback and critique of the framing paper itself is encouraged.

The workshop is an opportunity to refine our ideas and writing styles so as to increase the likelihood that each paper will culminate in a publishable book chapter. To this end, workshop participants should review colleagues' papers prior to the workshop and be prepared to give feedback and suggestions during the workshop itself. Participants should also prepare a brief (10-15 minute) presentation on their own paper for the workshop. We want to keep presentations brief so as to increase the time for discussion, so the time limits will be enforced. The workshop will consist of panel presentations, discussion of the presentations, and a mid-day small-group discussion period, where we will consider ethics with respect to methodology, over a box lunch. Dinner at the Sheraton will follow the day of the workshop.

After the workshop, participants will continue to revise and refine their papers over the course of summer 2004. Second drafts of the papers will be due August 15 for consideration as part of the book manuscript. Authors will be notified of their manuscript's status by December 15, after which further editorial revisions will be requested before the complete manuscript is sent to publishers in Spring/Summer 2005.

WAR BABIES WORKSHOP PROVISIONAL AGENDA*

International Studies Association Annual Meeting

Montreal, Quebec

March 16, 2004

7:30 – 8:00 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

8:00 – 9:45 WAR BABIES AS HUMAN RIGHTS SUBJECTS

Rachel Hess, “Babies of Girl Soldiers”

Megan Murphy, “HIV-AIDS and War Babies’ Human Rights”

Christopher Maravilla, “International Law Applicable to War Babies”

Joana Daniel, “Socio-Cultural Responses to Children of Mass Rape: Bosnia v. East Timor”

Marie Mainil, “War Babies in the Congo”

9:45 – 10:15 COFFEE BREAK

10:30 – 11:45 DISCUSSION

12:00 – 1:30 BOX LUNCH AND SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION: “ETHICS AND METHODS”

1:30 – 2:00 COFFEE BREAK

2:00 – 3:15 GLOBAL/LOCAL INSTITUTIONS, NORMS, POLITICS

Martin-Jones Osgoode, “War Babies and Refugee Law”

Marlene Siedlarz, “National and International Legal Instruments”

Kai Grieg, “Advocating for War Children: Norway’s War and Children Identity Project”

Julie Mertus, “Why We Need War Babies: A Critical View”

3:15 – 3:45 COFFEE BREAK

3:45 – 5:00 RESPONSES AND REDRESS

Guila Baldi “Responding to War Babies as a Health Issue in Sierra Leone”

Donna Sharkey, “Peace Education in Post-Conflict Societies”

Lindy Muzila, “Redress Through International Tribunals”

5:00 – 5:30 WRAP UP: WHERE TO FROM HERE

5:30 – 6:00 BREAK

6:00 – 8:00 Dinner

*Agenda may change as several additional participants are currently unconfirmed. A revised agenda will be distributed prior to the workshop.