

Myriam S. Denov, Bree Akesson, eds. *Children Affected by Armed Conflict: Theory, Method, and Practice*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2017. 368 pp. \$37.00, paper, ISBN 978-0-231-17473-2.

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Published on H-War (February, 2023)

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Based on the research studies of over twenty scholars, Myriam Denov and Bree Akesson edited one of the most comprehensive works on children's experiences and responses to war in conflict-ridden regions of the world. Traditionally, such literature overly focused either on children's victimization by war or overemphasized post-traumatic growth. The authors edited various recent qualitative research works from a holistic perspective. Children respond to trauma of war and conflict not only as victims but also with resilience and growth.

A notable aspect of these edited research studies is that all the researchers approached children in their social context—that is, their familial, economic, religious, and educational environments. This is important because developing children grow in a context of relationships, interconnectedness, and various social structures. However, the voices of the individual children were not neglected; rather, the researchers took special care to report their views sensitively and accurately. The result revealed that children of all ages have the capacity to be resilient agents who can overcome tragic atrocities with strength and dignity even as they experience profound trauma and suffering.

Myriam Denov and Bree Akesson described the three aims of their work as follows: 1) “explore emerging theoretical and conceptual understand-

ing and approaches to the study of children affected by armed conflict”; 2) “examine innovative research methodologies that seek to both empower and actively engage children affected by armed conflict in the research process”; and 3) “critically consider strategies of intervention that validate the perspectives and participation of children themselves” (p. 7).

The authors subdivided the book into three parts corresponding with the three aims. *Children Affected by Armed Conflict* is a well-organized and meticulously researched empirical work, and mental health practitioners, researchers, human rights advocates, and policymakers will benefit from reading, learning, and taking account of it.

Overall, this is a comprehensive qualitative research book aimed for an empirically minded audience. This book is flawlessly organized with thorough citations and a professional presentation, and it will require mental tenacity to comprehend all that it offers. For those who are in search of research methods, this book will be a priceless resource, for it offers truly innovative methods of qualitative research. Many of the researchers not only show sensitivity to the process in which they interview the children and their caretakers, but they also offer roadmaps of how they navigated each country's political system to gain access to the children and those who are important to them.

For a lay person, the readability is dense. The experience of reading this book may simulate the experience of reading more than twenty highly thoughtful, exceptionally researched, well-presented doctoral theses.

For those who are in search of practical applicability in clinical and therapeutic settings, the overall understanding the book offers of children's trauma is extremely helpful. The researchers' perspectives broaden the clinician's understanding of how resilient and capable children can be and how important it is to validate and nurture the growth and skill they acquire as result of experiencing war and armed conflict. The book will also enhance the clinician's understanding of how children live in a context and in various socioecological support systems that can contribute to their empowerment.

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Citation: Dol U. Green. Review of Denov, Myriam S.; Akesson, Bree, eds, *Children Affected by Armed Conflict: Theory, Method, and Practice*. H-War, H-Net Reviews. February, 2023.

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