INTRODUCTION

More than Victims: Framing the History of Modern Childhood and War

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By the dawn of the twentieth century, wars were no longer fought with sword and shield. Yet, despite their declining utility, these ancient tools of war remained potent symbols. Both figured prominently in Joseph Leyendecker's 1918 poster in support of the Third Liberty Loan Campaign, which urged Americans to buy more war bonds (Figure 0.1). What makes this piece of propaganda from World War I stand out, however, is not the association of sword and shield with a nation in arms or the towering, flag-draped Miss Liberty, bearing a shield with the seal of the United States of America. Rather, the most striking element in the scene is a kneeling Boy Scout, in full uniform, who looks up at the stern Miss Liberty and presents her with a mighty sword engraved with the words "Be prepared." Quite effectively, the poster ascribes a crucial role in war-making to this boy, and by extension to millions of other American boys. Rather than seeking shelter behind Miss Liberty's shield, the boy provides the "weapons for victory," thus serving as a metaphor for how children were not only enhancing the nation's combat readiness, but also enabling it to wage war in the first place.[1]

Leyendecker's allegorical poster opens a fascinating window onto the complex and seemingly contradictory relationships between children and armed conflict in the era of the world wars. According to contemporary ideals of childhood, children should have been protected, even hidden, from conflict and danger, yet they were also called on to contribute to the

[1] Leyendecker's illustration first appeared on the front page of the March 2, 1918, issue of the *Saturday Evening Post* and was reprinted in the April 15, 1918, issue of the magazine *Scouting*.

FIGURE 0.1 Joseph Leyendecker, poster for the Third Liberty Loan Campaign (1918). Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

welfare of their families, the stability of their communities, and even the survival of their states in times of crisis. Children sold war bonds, grew victory gardens, worked in coal mines, collected rubber and scrap metal, sang patriotic songs, played war games, marched in parades, wrote letters to soldiers, made drawings, volunteered in hospitals, engaged in war relief, campaigned for peace, and fought and died in combat.

At the same time, people began to regard the determination and ability of societies to shield their young ones from the destructive forces of war as a measure of civilization.[2] Writing a history of war and childhood in the first half of the twentieth century thus means coming to grips with a fundamental paradox: How was it possible for modern societies to imagine childhood as a space of sheltered existence while at the same time accepting the need to mobilize children for war? How could it be, to draw on Leyendecker's imagery, that children were asked – forced, in some instances – to carry the sword when they should have been sheltered behind the shield? Unraveling and historicizing the paradox of these competing urgencies – to protect children from harm but also to integrate them into the body politic – is the purpose of this volume.

Children have been caught up in war since the dawn of humankind, but the scope of their engagement soared with the scale of the global conflicts that dominated the first half of the twentieth century. The period from 1914 to 1945, which Winston Churchill famously described as "another Thirty Years War," witnessed dramatic and mutually reinforcing transformations in the histories of war and childhood.[3] Both were shaped by converging forces, including nationalism, imperialism, capitalism, social Darwinism, and the global competition for resources and influence. First articulated by Enlightenment philosophers and developed by nineteenth-century bourgeois educators, budding ideals of a protected childhood,

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[2] For overviews of the subject of childhood and war, see James Marten, ed., *Children and War: A Historical Anthology* (New York, 2002); and Elizabeth Goodenough and Andrea Immel, eds., *Under Fire: Childhood in the Shadow of War* (Detroit, 2008). Studies with a national or regional focus include William M. Tuttle, *"Daddy's Gone to War"*: The Second World War in the Lives of America's Children (New York, 1993); Nicholas Stargardt, *Witnesses of War: Children's Lives Under the Nazis* (New York, 2005); Christoph Schubert-Weller, *Hitlerjugend: Vom "Jungsturm Adolf Hitler" zur Staatsjugend des Dritten Reiches* (Weinheim, 1993); Ulrich Herrmann and Rolf-Dieter Müller, eds., *Junge Soldaten im Zweiten Weltkrieg: Kriegserfahrungen als Lebenserinnerungen* (Munich, 2010); Olga Kucherenko, *Little Soldiers: How Soviet Children Went to War, 1941–1945* (New York, 2011); and Yeeshan Chan, *Abandoned Japanese in Postwar Manchuria: The Lives of War Orphans and Wives in Two Countries* (New York, 2011).

[3] Winston Churchill, *The Gathering Storm* (London, 1948), xiii.

which reinforced the romantic view that youth was endowed with pre-
cious innocence and purity, were accompanied by the socially and politi-
cally motivated institutionalization of childhood, which brought the
youngest members of society into direct encounters with all kinds of
civic and state institutions. Policymakers in industrialized nations pro-
claimed that the implementation of child labor laws, public health
reforms, compulsory education, and organized leisure time, as well as
calls for less authoritarian forms of parenting, would improve the lives of
children and their families. Yet these reforms occurred against the back-
drop of modern nation-states trying to turn children into loyal young
citizens ready to share the burden of sacrifice in times of crisis. Schools,
child-rearing movements, and youth organizations designed in peacetime
to bring order and discipline to children – to instill proper values, loyalties,
and behavior – proved easily adaptable to the task of mobilizing young
people once nation-states and empires began marshaling their material
and human resources to compete with their enemies over territory,
resources, ideology, and influence.[4] Just as children represented the
futures of their families, they ensured the biological survival of their
countries, ethnic groups, and religious denominations. Therefore, at
a time when modern ways of childhood became increasingly possible for
economic, social, and political reasons, it became less possible to fully
protect them in the face of industrialized warfare on a massive scale.

This volume defines childhood broadly. It samples the lives of young
people from elementary school age through adolescence and beyond as
they struggled to survive in, adapt to, form bonds of community in,
remember, and make sense of worlds torn asunder by the upheaval of
war. This wide lens allows us to see how societies bent on regulating the
transition from childhood to adulthood likened the process of growing up
to a gradual evolution from higher to lower stages of dependency. This

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[4] The literature on child welfare and youth work at the turn of the century is vast and
growing. See, for example, Paula S. Fass, *Children of a New Word: Society, Culture, and,
Globalization* (New York, 2007); Jon Savage, *Teenage: The Prehistory of Youth Culture,
1875–1945* (London, 2007), 64–73; and Sonya Michel and Eszter Varsa, "Children and
the National Interest," in Dirk Schumann, ed., *Raising Citizens in the Century of the
Child: The United States and German Central Europe in Comparative Perspective*
(New York, 2010), 27–49. On the susceptibility of organized youth to militarism and
war, see David I. Macleod, "Socializing American Youth to Be Citizen-Soldiers," in
Manfred F. Boerneke, Roger Chickering, and Stig Förster, eds., *Anticipating Total War:
The German and American Experiences, 1871–1914* (Cambridge, 1999), 137–66; and
Arndt Weinrich, *Der Weltkrieg als Erzieher: Jugend zwischen Weimarer Republik und
Nationalsozialismus* (Essen, 2013).

meant that, with the rise of developmental psychology in the late nineteenth century, young people entering puberty were increasingly subsumed under modern conceptions of youth, commonly defined as a transitional period in which young people had ceased to be dependent children but had not yet been entrusted with all the privileges of adulthood. Adults' frequent association of youth with dynamism, flexibility, and vitality set adolescents apart from children, yet the discourse of youth also became an important tool in the hands of adult elites who promulgated the theory that nations and empires lacking in youthfulness were bound for extinction.[5] As both an age-based social cohort and an ideological construct detached from age, youth is integral to a multigenerational and multisited study of how children and adolescents affected, and were affected by, local, national, and transnational communities radically transformed by war.

Of course, although the history of modern childhood and war has to be framed globally, war was never a unifying global experience. War pedagogues had to contend with peace educators over the hearts and minds of children and their parents in many industrialized societies.[6] The engagement of children and youth with war differed according to geography, technology, class, age, race, gender, and the nature of the state in which they lived. In fact, one of the key findings of this volume is that ideological disparities often mattered less than regional outlooks, social locations, and military capacities when it comes to explaining the different levels of exposure to armed conflict that young people experienced. Take as an example Julie deGraffenried's discussion of US and Soviet alphabet books generated during World War II (Chapter 5), which anchors the higher frequency of war-related themes in Soviet primers not in simplistic democracy–dictatorship binaries but in the relative absence of the physical horrors of war in American children's lives. Whether children and youths wound up as victims, eyewitnesses, willing executioners, or subversive actors depended on local circumstances and contingent forms of socialization. In Antje Harms's chapter on the schism within the German youth movement during World

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[5] See, for example, Joseph F. Kett, *Rites of Passage: Adolescence in America, 1790 to the Present* (New York, 1977); Mischa Honeck and Gabriel Rosenberg, "Transnational Generations: Organizing Youth in the Cold War," *Diplomatic History* 38(2) (2014), 233–39; and Richard Ivan Jobs and David M. Pomfret, "The Transnationality of Youth," in Jobs and Pomfret, eds., *Transnational Histories of Youth in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 2015), 1–20.

[6] See, for example, Andrew Donson, *Youth in the Fatherless Land: War Pedagogy, Nationalism, and Authority in Germany, 1914–1918* (Cambridge, MA, 2010), 59–90.

War I (Chapter 10), some young Germans can be found marching enthusiastically to the trenches, while others deplored the mass slaughter of industrialized warfare. Comparing the lives of children from North America, Europe, Turkey, and East Asia demonstrates that reconciling the practices and ideals of childhood with the idea of war became a truly transnational phenomenon, far more profound than conventional political narratives can suggest. As described in Valentina Boretti's account of war toys in China (Chapter 1) and Esbjörn Larsson's analysis of defense training in Swedish schools (Chapter 6), children may not have actually experienced war, but the cultural imaginary of war provided a nearly limitless reservoir of values, practices, and identities for young people trying to master the conflicting demands of self and society.

Historians of children and youth have brought to the field at least two methodological distinctions that are important for the task at hand. Most agree that childhood is a relational category that can be grasped, at any time or place, only if one recognizes that childhood is bound up with (though not bound by) adult expectations. Most scholars also underline the culturally and ideologically constructed character of childhood by emphasizing that the boundaries of what it means to be a child are not demarcated by biological age and thus forever fixed, but evolve out of dynamic, contested, and historically specific exchanges involving young and old people alike. Appropriately, these historians stress the need to differentiate between constructions of childhood and the lives of actual children, even as these two dimensions are interwoven.[7] Understanding children as historical actors with their own ideas, intentions, and identity-forming experiences fulfills the critical function of refuting older approaches that treated young people as mere objects of adult design. Rejecting the idea that children are intrinsically passive and vulnerable victims of war, the chapters collected here stress the agency of children and youth in the face of adults' attempts to adjust their methods of controlling young people's behavior to wartime exigencies. At the same

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[7] Philippe Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood*, transl. Robert Baldick (New York, 1962); Steven Mintz, "Reflections on Age as a Category of Historical Analysis," *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 1 (Winter 2008), 91–94; and Jay Mechling, "Children in Scouting and Other Organizations," in Paula Fass, ed., *The Routledge History of Childhood in the Western World* (New York, 2013), 419–33. On children as subaltern actors, see Kristine Alexander, "Can the Girl Guide Speak? The Perils and Pleasures of Looking for Children's Voices in Archival Research," *Jeunesse: Young People, Texts, Cultures* 4 (Summer 2012), 132–45.

time, public authorities proved quite adept at sparking moral outrage by utilizing images of brutalized children in wartime propaganda, which was growing more effective due to advances in technologies of mass communication.

War obviously threatened conventional constructions of childhood and youth and introduced new ones; it also inspired an outpouring of sources unavailable to historians of peacetime childhoods, who are generally limited to one of two approaches. Some emphasize the ways that adults shape and define childhood, while others seek to provide the points of view of young people. The latter can often be difficult; children produce few documents, fewer still of which are preserved in archives. Yet wars offer an opportunity for historians to explore not only the ways in which adults considered the places of children and youth in wartime society but also the myriad responses of young people to war.

The chapters in this volume sample the many ways in which the documents produced during wars enable us to see into the lives of children and youth. They range from government reports to school curricula, textbooks to alphabets, letters from absent fathers to commercially produced war toys, from school essays to art projects, and from stories and novels explaining children's responsibilities in wartime to newspaper articles that for the first time recognized children's role in public life. These documents, which might not have been produced if war had not exploded into the lives of twentieth-century families and communities, provide extraordinary insights not just into the ways in which adults constructed young people's roles on the home front, or worried about their futures when confronted with the sharp end of war. They also shed light on how children and youth eagerly sought to participate in – or resignedly submitted to participating in – what might be the most awful or most thrilling event of their time.

Taking advantage of this abundance of evidence, this book integrates and expands on at least five bodies of scholarship. First, it joins what Dominic Sachsenmaier has summarized as "the global history trend," in particular the move toward privileging larger scales of analysis and embedding local findings in broader spatial and temporal horizons.[8] The individual chapters mostly revolve around a group of people, a region, a nation, or a certain cultural space, and only a few, such as Karl Qualls's essay on child refugees from Civil War Spain in Russia (Chapter 4) or Nazan Maksudyan's essay on Ottoman orphans in

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[8] Dominic Sachsenmaier, *Global Perspectives on Global History: Theories and Approaches in a Connected World* (Cambridge, MA, 2011), 3.

Germany during World War I (Chapter 11), are explicitly devoted to probing cross-border interactions. Taken together, however, the chapters presented here offer a mosaic of experiences that invites reflection on global interdependencies and regional particularities as they pertain to the nexus of childhood, youth, and war in the age of the world wars.

Second, focusing on children and youth allows for a reevaluation of the total war paradigm so prominent in twentieth-century military, political, and social history. Scholars of total war have crafted typologies of total warfare that usually encompass the following key elements: the ability of states to mobilize all available resources for the purpose of war-making, the belligerents' disregard for morality and international law, the erosion of boundaries between soldiers and civilians, and the magnitude of destruction.[9] Despite its implicit acknowledgement of the increased vulnerability of noncombatants – women, children, and the elderly – the concept of total war hardly conveys the multiple ways in which war affected children and youth in the first half of the twentieth century. This is not to deny that under conditions of total warfare more and more children were asked to take on adult responsibilities, from joining the workforce to assuming military and paramilitary duties. But not all the wars in the period from 1914 to 1945 were total wars, nor were the total wars total to the same degree. Furthermore, children's militarization in times of peace and their centrality to postwar reconciliation, as Robert Jacobs documents in his chapter on child survivors of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (Chapter 14), suggest that the potentials that lie in a global-comparative history of war and childhood exceed total war framings.

Third, this volume builds on works that treat the social spaces where politics and play intersect with the seriousness they deserve. One of the ways that children integrate war into their lives is, naturally enough, through play. All children "practice" for adulthood by reenacting grown-ups' behavior, and war play is no different. Play allows children to process their fears and their burgeoning patriotism, and it helps them reduce the terror and excitement of war into manageable scenarios. Children can be

[9] See, for example, Roger Chickering and Stig Förster, eds., *Great War, Total War: Combat and Mobilization on the Western Front, 1914–1918* (Cambridge, 2000); Chickering, Förster, and Bernd Greiner, eds., *A World at Total War: Global Conflict and the Politics of Destruction* (Cambridge, 2005); Alan Kramer, *Dynamics of Destruction: Culture and Mass Killing in the First World War* (New York, 2007); and Niall Ferguson, *The War of the World: Twentieth-Century Conflict and the Descent of the West* (New York, 2007).

absolutely unflinching in what they choose to act out. Even in concentration camps, Jewish children played war games, taking on the roles of guards and prisoners, while children in Northern Ireland played "soldiers and terrorists" with street patrols and fake blood. A comprehensive analysis of play and modern warfare, however, cannot be confined to the activities of children alone but needs to investigate how adults sought to manipulate the play impulse of their young ones to prepare them for war. As part of their effort to participate in war and to absorb as much information about it as possible, children eagerly consumed war culture in the era of the world wars. They read books and stories about war, crowded movie theaters, avidly followed military campaigns in newspapers, and cheered at political and fundraising rallies. Indeed, educators, publishers, and other creators of the cultures of children and youth – inspired by pedagogical innovations and aided by technological changes – produced lessons, books, and toys that, with little subtlety, tried to shape the political opinions and attitudes of young students and consumers. Among other things, they showed children supporting their families, joining the home front war efforts, and accepting the hardships thrust upon them by war.[10]

Fourth, writing a history of modern war and childhood means paying attention to how children acted on the home front as well as on the battlefield. An extension of mobilizing children politically is mobilizing them for combat. Boys as young as ten or twelve often served in early modern armies, and the use of "boy soldiers" in the modern period, particularly in revolutionary and civil wars, has been well documented.[11] The nineteenth century saw the average age of soldiers in most armies rise significantly. Yet the world wars also saw significant mobilizations of youthful soldiers, especially in Germany and the countries it occupied, where Hitler Youth-style organizations proved easily adaptable to paramilitary purposes, and in the Soviet Union. By the last year of the war, for instance, 70 percent of German sixteen-year-olds had enlisted. Even in countries where youth did not serve on the front lines, many were formed into paramilitary units, and some took over home guard

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[10] George Eisen, *Children and Play in the Holocaust* (Amherst, 1990); Morris Fraser, *Children in Conflict* (New York, 1973), 105. Tuttle's *"Daddy's Gone to War"* is still the most useful account of the war culture experienced by American children.

[11] See, for instance, Caroline Cox, *Boy Soldiers of the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill, 2016). UNICEF tracks the sobering fact that the use of child soldiers remains a significant facet of modern warfare. See more at www.unicef.org/media/media_pr_childsoldiers .html (accessed February 15, 2017).

duties.[12] Many scholars have studied the deployment of underage soldiers in dictatorial regimes; what is less well known, however, is that this practice was not foreign to Western nations, as Kate James demonstrates in her chapter on boy soldiers in the British Army and Royal Navy (Chapter 8). Studying the ways in which the wartime youth mobilization of liberal states resembled fascist youth organizations points to a much more complex, even sinister, interpretation of those states and their methods of militarizing children.

Fifth, in heeding the calls of scholars to prioritize the voices of children when writing about childhood, the chapters featured here do not simply add another social group to an already existing canvas of past events but repaint that canvas altogether. Considering children the "true missing link" for understanding modern warfare, they disprove the notion that adulthood is the requirement of meaningful historical action.[13] They follow in the footsteps of other historians who have shown how children exerted "agency" in choosing how to engage war on both the home front and the battle front. Many children, to be sure, were drawn into conflict against their will, but many also sought to be involved in war on their own terms.[14] As much as political leaders and educators might have commended young people's enthusiasm and held them up as models of self-sacrifice for their elders to emulate, the desire of elites to channel youthful behavior frequently clashed with the desire of children and youth to exercise as much autonomy as possible. As Mischa Honeck's essay on the Boy Scouts of America reveals (Chapter 7), youths' war fervor, which adult organizers had hoped to incite, often proved difficult to control. A similar story emerges from Kara Ritzheimer's essay (Chapter 2), which details the efforts of state censors in Wilhelmine Germany to curtail youths' consumption of wartime "trash" literature. A devastating trial and locus of socialization, modern war disrupted the lives of young people, sometimes with devastating consequences, at the same time that it empowered them. Acknowledging that children were struggling to

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[12] Stargardt, *Witnesses of War*, 114, 242. For recent accounts of Soviet children's experiences during the war, see Kucherenko, *Little Soldiers*; and Julie K. deGraffenried, *Sacrificing Childhood: Children and the Soviet State in the Great Patriotic War* (Lawrence, 2014).

[13] For the quote, see Steven Mintz, "Why the History of Childhood Matters," *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 5(1) (January 2012), 15.

[14] Among the historians who pioneered the study of children's agency in wartime are Tuttle, *"Daddy's Gone to War"* (1993), James Marten, *The Children's Civil War* (Chapel Hill, 1998); David M. Rosen, *Armies of the Youth: Child Soldiers in War and Terrorism* (New Brunswick, 2005); Stargardt, *Witnesses of War* (2005).

shape their destinies even in the most dire of circumstances calls into
question the victimization discourse of earlier works, as children were
reinventing the meaning of childhood for themselves and the societies they
inhabited. Manon Pignot's analysis of children's drawings of war scenes
during World War I (Chapter 9) provides a powerful reminder of chil-
dren's ability to create semiotic spaces that helped them structure experi-
ences of mass upheaval and violence. So, too, does Patricia Heberer Rice's
story of young ghettoized Jews (Chapter 12), who were building hopeful
cultural and intellectual communities as the horrors of the Shoah were
unfolding around them.

As these examples indicate, the study of children and youth rather
naturally – if tragically – meshes with the study of war in all of its military,
political, and cultural contexts. At the most basic level, the narrative of
children's experiences in wartime elicits emotional responses: horror,
admiration, and sadness. We are impressed by the resiliency of children
who endure sacrifices and shortages, contribute to family survival and
community economies, and exert agency by choosing to take part in their
countries' conflicts. They may be inspired by what Anna Freud once called
a "primitive excitement" sparked by the chaos, danger, and opportunities
for change provided by war, or by a deeper sense of political engagement,
as Robert Coles argued in his classic *The Political Life of Children*.[15]

Inevitably, wars shift, fracture, and destroy family relationships and
dynamics. The millions of refugees dislocated from their communities and
homes during the world wars suffered many hardships and indignities,
among them a disruption in the capacity of family members to fulfill their
traditional roles and responsibilities. Child migration in times of war took
on many forms, from the young Spanish evacuees highlighted by Karl
Qualls to the fervent colonizers that Halliday Piel rescues from oblivion in
her chapter on Japanese boy soldier-settlers who descended on Manchuria
in the 1930s and 1940s (Chapter 3). Although they were safe from invading
armies and falling bombs, hundreds of thousands of American children
were uprooted as families moved to areas with war industries and military
bases. Even in families who remained in their homes, the absences and
even deaths of fathers and other loved ones forced teenagers to take on
adult roles, leaving school to manage farms, work in factories, and raise
younger siblings. More than half a million underage British children went
to work in factories and mines during World War I, while two million

[15] Anna Freud and Dorothy Burlingham, *War and Children* (London, 1943), 23–24;
Robert Coles, *The Political Life of Children* (New York, 1986).

German boys and girls were sent to the country to bring in the 1942 harvest, and almost that many American youth quit high school to go to work.[16]

Wars end and children grow up. Yet the lives of all who live through armed conflict – whether they witnessed the sharp end of war or watched it from a safe distance – are forever changed. The politics and culture of a country are inevitably shaped by the ways that its children respond to war and its aftermath. Shame and anger could turn the German youth of World War I into the Nazis of the 1940s, while the triumphalist narrative that quickly developed in the United States after 1945 helped create Cold Warriors out of the children of the "Greatest Generation." Children found ways to locate their contributions, however small, in the larger national history. Children can also become part of a nation's collective war memory, as honored survivors of Stalingrad, as steady contributors to family stability, or as scarred, somber victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As such, they come to represent in their nations' memories the causes for which the wars were fought, even as the contributions of children like those discussed in Birgitte Søland's essay on American orphans who had become subjects of medical experimentation during the Second World War had left physical and psychological scars (Chapter 13). Children, then, become an audience for the lessons imposed by war. Those lessons have varied dramatically over time and place, from the jingoistic empire-building that dominated British textbooks in the late nineteenth century to the anti-imperial narrative in Japanese schoolbooks after their defeat in World War II.[17]

Another particular kind of war memory depends on children for its power: the efforts to provide relief for displaced victims of war and to promote reconciliation and reunification through such efforts. Drawing on some of the same motivations and methods exerted by early twentieth-century child welfare reformers, organizations such as Britain's Save the Children Fund and the American Red Cross mobilized during both world

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[16] Arthur Marwick, *The Deluge: British Society and the First World War* (New York, 1965), 43, 224–45; Jay Winter and Jean-Louis Robert, eds., *Capital Cities at War: Paris, London, Berlin 1914–1919* (Cambridge, 1999), 442–44; Tuttle, *"Daddy's Gone to War,"* 82.

[17] See, for instance, Stephen Heathorn, *For Home, Country and Race: Constructing Class, Gender and Englishness in the Elementary Classroom* (Toronto, 2000), and Aya Matsushima, "A Japanese History Textbook and the Construction of World War II Memory," in Heather Snell and Lorna Hutchison, eds., *Children and Cultural Memory in Texts of Childhood* (New York, 2014), 67–86.

wars to provide food and shelter to refugees, many of whom were children. One of the noble but failed efforts to prevent future conflagrations that grew out of World War I, the League of Nations, issued the "Declaration of the Rights of the Child" in 1924, which included among its five articles a mandate to care first for children in times of crisis. A generation later, in 1946, the United Nations created the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), which is still the leading organization providing relief to child victims of war. According to the cultural anthropologist Liisa Malkki, these initiatives inscribed children into the modern internationalist lexicon as "embodiments of a basic human goodness and symbols of world harmony; as sufferers; as seers of truth; as ambassadors of peace; and as embodiments of the future."[18]

Although the chapters in this collection end with the immediate aftermath of World War II, children and youth have continued to suffer because of armed conflict. Even as the capacity of most nations to build protected childhoods for their young steadily increased in the decades after 1945, and even though there have been no wars approaching the scale of either of the wars that dominate this volume, the world remains a very dangerous place for children. Civil wars in Africa and Asia, conflicts sparked by the Cold War between the great powers but fought in far-flung parts of the world, and the rise of terrorism (and the West's response to terrorism) have all contributed to disruption and death for countless children and youth. Indeed, according to the United Nations, during a single decade spanning the 1980s and 1990s, wars killed two million children and disabled at least another four million. One million young people were orphaned or separated from their parents, twelve million were made homeless, and untold millions suffered psychological trauma.[19] Worldwide conflicts might have characterized the war narratives of children in the first half of the twentieth century; the unfortunate epilogue to that story is the endless wars of liberation and repression and greed and ideology that succeeded them.

Childhood and youth are times of discovery and confusion, wonder and fear, dependence and frustration. Young people continued to pass

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[18] Liisa Malkki, "Children, Humanity, and the Infantilization of Peace," in Ilana Feldman and Miriam Ticktin, eds., *In the Name of Humanity: The Government of Threat and Care* (Durham, 2010), 60.

[19] "The State of the World's Children, 1996," UNICEF, www.unicef.org/sowc96/1cinwar .htm (accessed February 15, 2017).

through the ages of childhood and youth during the wars of the twentieth century. For some, the usual markers of maturation remained more or less in place; for others, whatever expectations they might have had for a predicable path to adulthood vanished in blood and flames. The experiences of most children lay somewhere between these extremes, and although *War and Childhood in the Era of the Two World Wars* does not attempt to provide a complete history of children and war in the first half of the twentieth century, it does bring structure to this fascinating and awful topic. It reminds us that modern warfare would not have been possible without modern childhood. More than victims, children were seen as future citizens, as future defenders, as one of the objects about which wars were fought, and as one of the resources for fighting them.