

# Coming of age amid war essays example

[Family](#), [Children](#)



They Poured Fire on Us From the Sky by Benjamin Ajak and Benson Deng is a classic example of what it means to grow up amid war, to live in an environment in which all one knows is war. The impact of this is clearly evident in this chilling account of the war in Sudan. However, historically, this is not the only account of children who have had to grow up in war-torn parts of the world. Other anthropological sources have indicated such circumstances for children, including *A Long Way Gone* by Ishmael Beah and *That Mad Game: Growing Up in a Warzone*, An Anthology of Essays from *Around the World* edited by J. L. Powers. In this paper, impact of growing up amid war is provided from the perspective of the war in Sudan, and compared to the perspectives given in the other two texts.

The lives of Benjamin, Alepho, and Benson completely change when their lives are threatened by war, causing them to leave their home and flee to the unknown to escape death and suffering from war. The boys are from the Dinka tribe of Sudan, and like many other children, have their lives turned upside down when war breaks out. The life they once knew, in their close-knit communities and abundance out of farming is completely snatched away from them. All they had known was peace until that fateful night when the Murahiliin, the government-armed soldiers raided and started attacking their villages. Since then, the lives of the boys are completely changed. The civil war in Sudan, tribal and politically motivated, would change the lives of the young boys forever. Like in many other conflicts, the most obvious reaction is normally to save one's life through escaping the pangs of war. Thus, Benjamin at the age of five and Benson at the age of seven had to run for their lives, disappearing into the darkness. Alepho at the age of seven

also escaped two years after the two. This would become the reality of life for thousands of boys from Southern Sudan, who came to be known as the Lost Boys. Amid dangers, the boys would seek refuge in refugee camps, where their lives were not much better than what they were escaping back at home. The events of war would completely change the lives of the young boys, who had to live far from their families and friends.

War as viewed in the eyes of the children has remained an interesting topic for many writers. As such, many have recounted the effects of various wars on the lives of children. The various authors have thus presented captivating memoirs and histories of war through the perspectives of children. In *A Long Way Gone*, a similar, but even more interesting account of the effect of war on children is given. Just like the story of Benjamin, Alepho, and Benson, this is a tale of Ishmael Beah, who is forced into becoming a boy soldier in a civil war in Sierra Leone. The war began the same way the civil war in Sudan did, in a single day, a village is attacked and the lives of the children and their peaceful existence are completely shattered. Beah's village was attacked when he was only twelve, causing Ishmael, his brother, and others to move from one village to another searching for shelter and food. This leads them to being used as boy soldiers, capable of unimaginable violence and for use as killing machines.

*That Mad Game: Growing Up in a Warzone* is another similar piece of literature on the impact of war on children. Powers, like Benjamin Ajak and Benson Deng, does not want the impact of war on children and teenagers to be forgotten in any discussion of war like it is the case in many stories of war. This book takes a similar perspective in detailing the struggles that

children go through in the efforts to escape the pangs of war. The author speaks about the reality of the Vietnam “baby lift,” when children from the war-torn Vietnam would flee to be adopted by American families. The reality of children in Iran being sent on suicide missions such as clearing land mines, the lost boys of Sudan, the bombed-out cities of Bosnia, the cartel-terrorized streets of Juárez, Nazi-occupied Holland, and Afghanistan under the Taliban, are among the many horrifying stories of children affected by war throughout history.

In conclusion, throughout human history, war has been an important part, with children being among the worst hit. Coming of age amid war, which is the common theme in the three texts, has been a reality for many children in various parts of the world. However, the stories are also tales of tenacity of human spirits, which leads to their salvation even against their suffering as young boys. They reveal both hope and survival in the midst of implausible suffering. An interesting aspect of the three books is that the tales are told by the actual victims of these wars and the effects narrated from their personal perspectives.

### **Works Cited:**

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