



Child to Soldier: Stories from Joseph Kony's Lord's Resistance Army

Opiyo Oloya

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What happens when children are forced to become child soldiers? How are they transformed from children to combatants? In *Child to Soldier*, Opiyo Oloya addresses these timely, troubling questions by exploring how Acholi children in Northern Uganda, abducted by infamous warlord Joseph Kony and his Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), become soldiers.

Oloya – himself an Acholi, a refugee from Idi Amin's rule of Uganda, and a high ranking figure in Canadian education – is a scholar who challenges conventional thinking on child-inducted soldiers by illustrating the familial loyalty that develops within a child's new surroundings in the bush. Based on interviews with former child combatants, this book provides a cultural context for understanding the process of socializing children into violence. Oloya details how Kony and the LRA exploit and pervert Acholi cultural heritage and pride to control and direct the children in war.

Child to Soldier is also ground-breaking in its emphasis on the tragic fact that child-inducted soldiers do not remain children forever, but become adults who remain sharply scarred by their introduction into combat at a young age. Given the constant struggle in courts in deciding whether former child-inducted soldiers should be pardoned or prosecuted for their activities and conduct, Oloya's eye-opening book will have a major impact.

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