

X^{ème} Colloque international
Droits de l'enfant et croyances religieuses :
Autonomie, éducation, tradition.
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Villa Jeantet



The Ecology of Childhood:

How our Changing World Threatens Children's Religious Rights

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The greatest threat to children's religious rights is Sectarian Conflict

- **Sectarianism** is a form of [bigotry](#), [discrimination](#), or [hatred](#) arising from attaching relations of inferiority and superiority to differences between subdivisions within a group.
- Common examples are [denominations](#) of a [religion](#), [ethnic identity](#), [class](#), or [region](#) for citizens of a state and [factions](#) of a [political movement](#).
- Fueled by economic crisis, mass migration, poverty, civil unrest, rising inequality and climate change.
- Rooted in fear and hostility to “the other”.

Logo created
in
2000 by
Polish artist
Piotr
Miodozeniec



Children in
Italian village
of Scanno
playing
bancarella,
a game of
flea market

2010 Flag
of the “Coexist
Movement”
popular on
U.S. college
campuses.



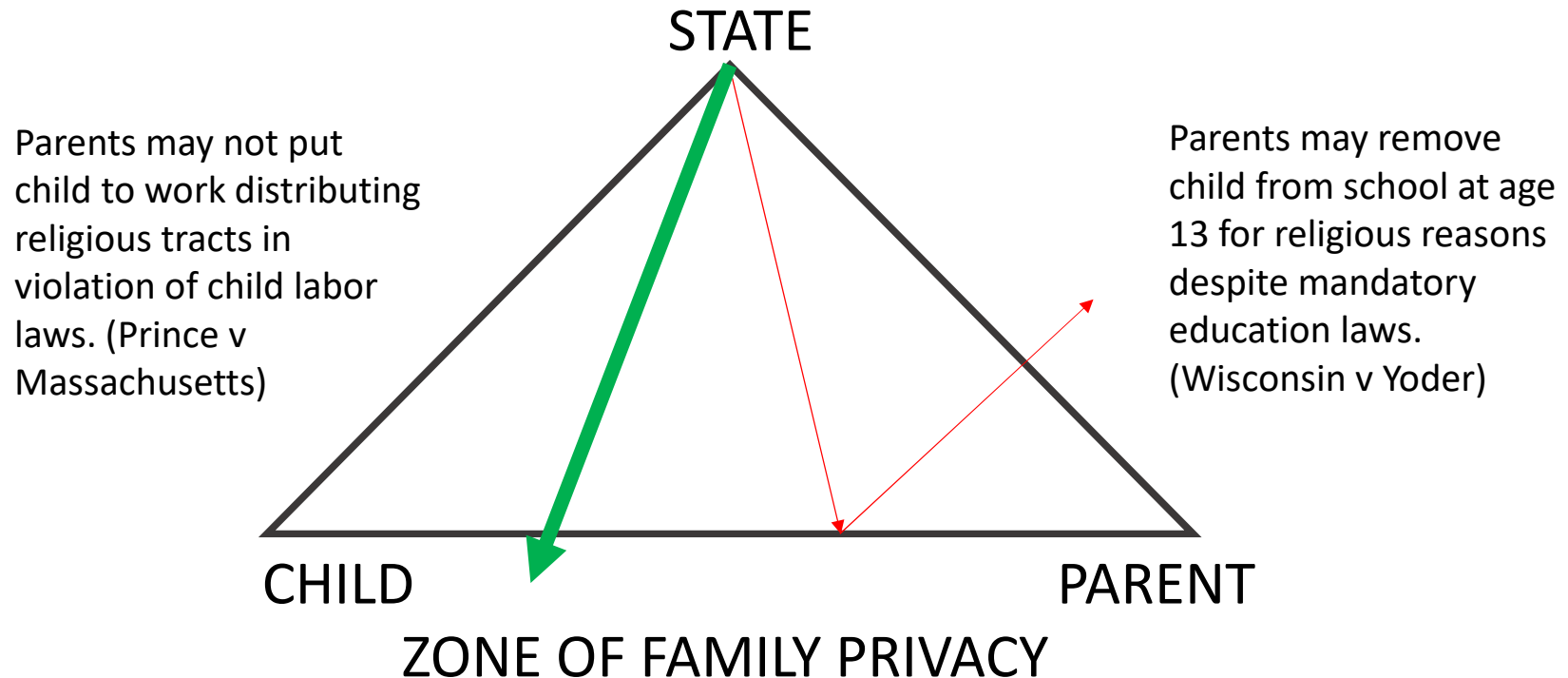
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (hereinafter CRC)

- Article 14

- 1. States Parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.
- 2. States parties shall respect the rights and duties of the parents and, when applicable, legal guardians, to provide direction to the child in the exercise of his or her right in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child.
- 3. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals, or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

DIAGRAM OF CONFLICT BETWEEN PUBLIC STATE AND PRIVATE FAMILY

(First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States)

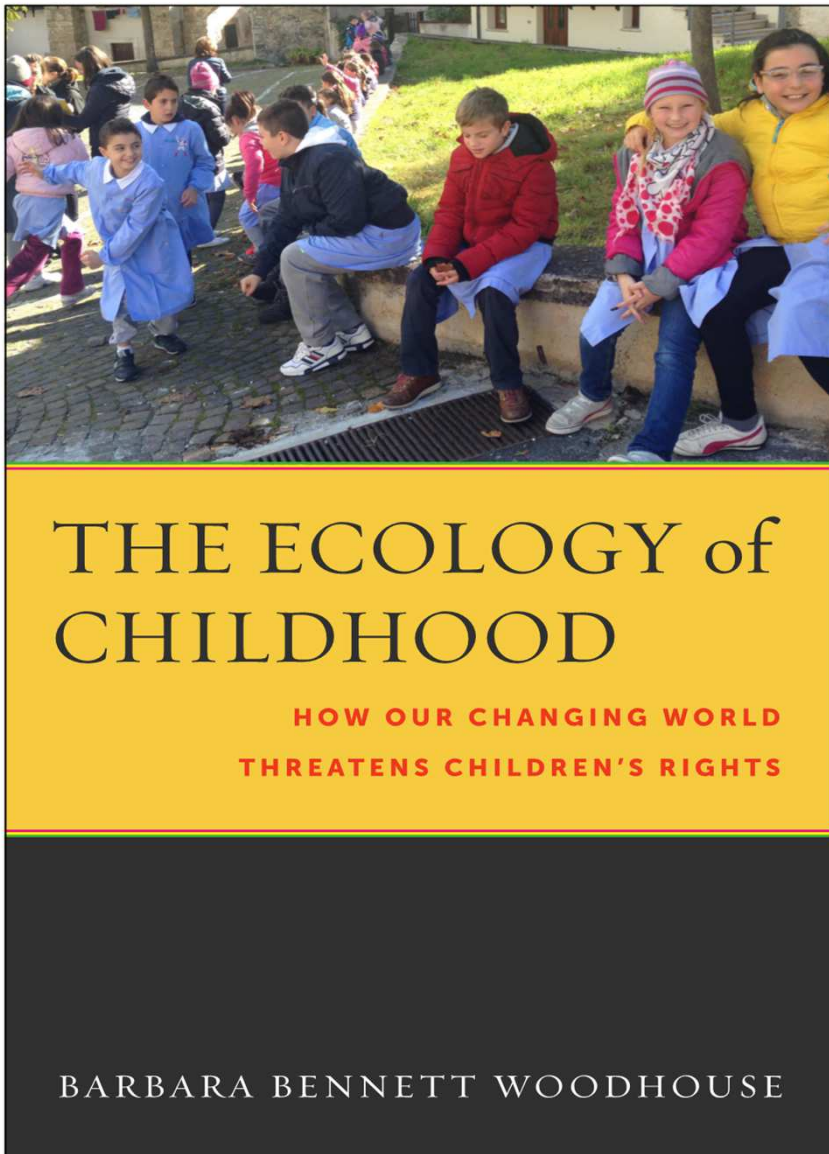


CRC Article 29: Aims of Education

1. States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:
 - a) Development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;
 - b) The [development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms](#), and the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;
 - c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and civilizations different from his or her own;
 - d) Preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, [peace, tolerance, equality of the sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin](#);
 - e) The development of respect for the natural environment.

The CRC Includes Social, Economic and Cultural Rights

- Article 4: States Parties shall undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative, and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized in the present Convention. With regard to economic, social and cultural rights, States Parties shall undertake such measures to the maximum extent of their available resources and, where needed, in the framework of international cooperation.
- Article 6 (2): States Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child.
- Article 24 (prenatal care, access to healthcare); Article 27 (adequate standard of living); Article 31 (play and recreation).



The Ecology of
Childhood:
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World Threatens
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Forthcoming
New York University Press,
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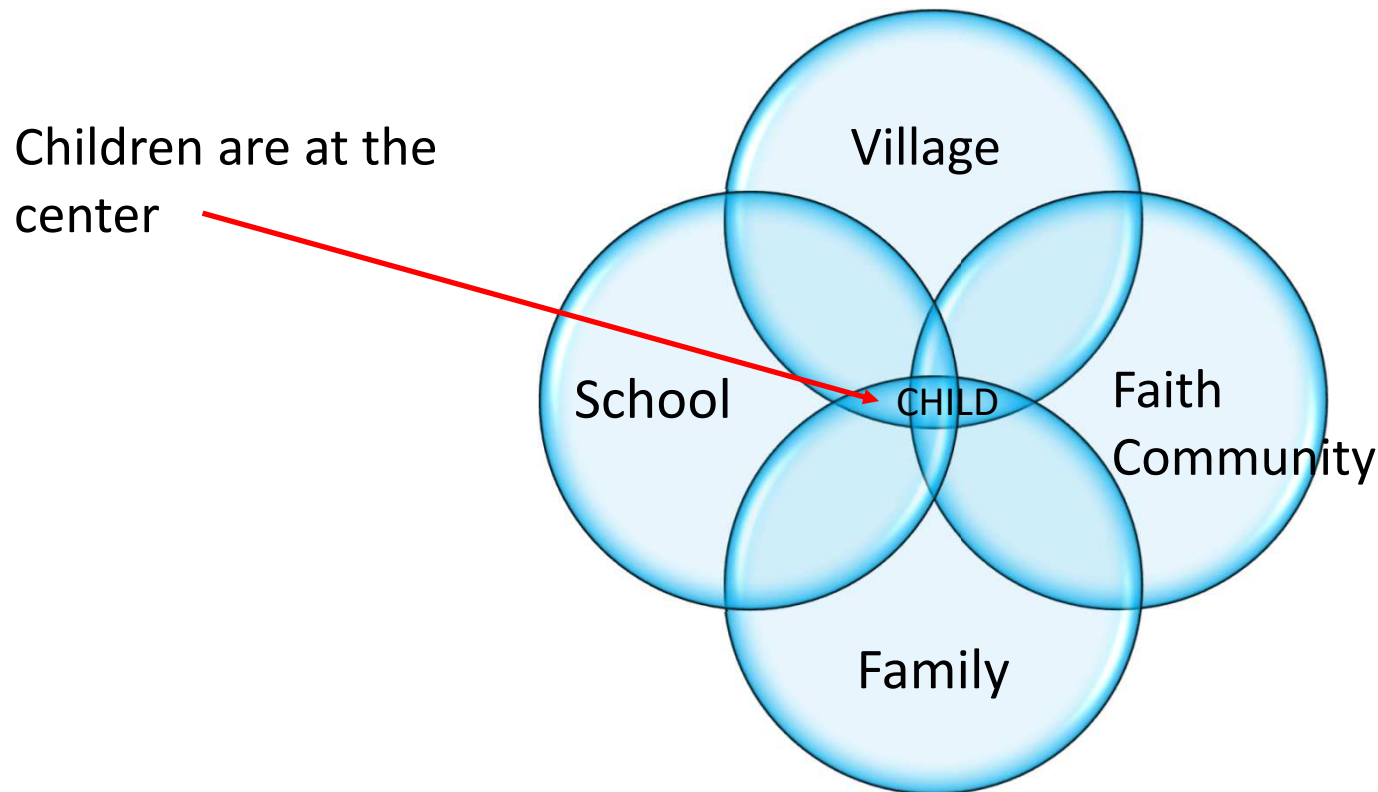
Genesis of Research Project

- Begun during Fernand Braudel Senior Fellowship at European University Institute in Fiesole, Italy 2007-2008.
- Comparative Longitudinal Study of Childhood in US and Italy
- Why Italy?
- Methods: Compare similarities and differences of childhood environments (1) through field work at the village level and (2) through comparative data at the national level.
- Goals:
 - Examine role of CRC in shaping child and family policies.
 - Compare social welfare culture with market capitalist culture.
- What I did not expect

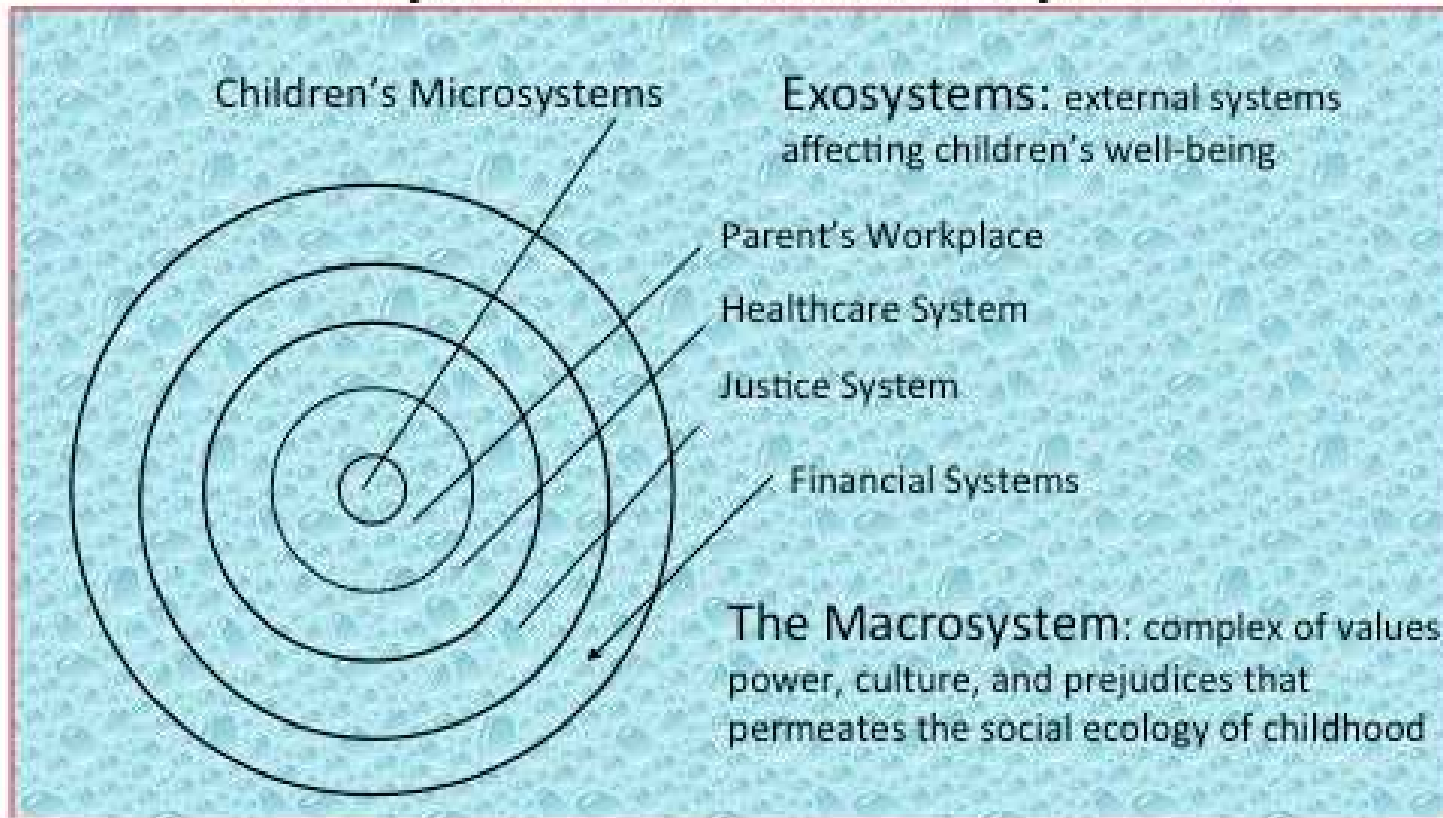
ECOLOGICAL DIAGRAM OF CHILDHOOD

Microsystems – where children live their daily lives

Mesosystems – where microsystems overlap and intersect



Exosystems and Macrosystem



The larger social ecology affecting the lives of children and families . It surrounds and permeates their micro and mesosystems.

A TALE OF TWO VILLAGES

Scanno, Abruzzo, Italy



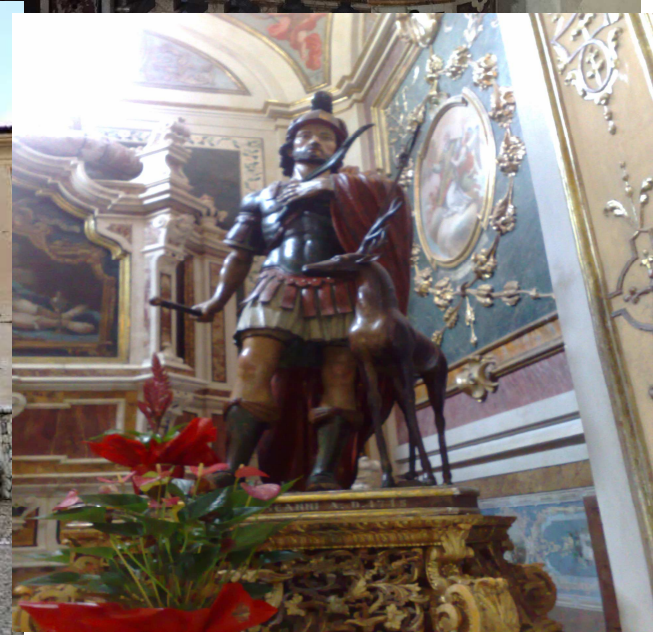
Cedar Key, Florida, US



Observing Children in their Natural Environments



From Left Clockwise: S. Maria della Valle, Madonna del Carmine, Madonna delle Grazie, S. Eustachio, S. Antonio



3 Generations of the Confraternity of the Madonna delle Grazie



Children and Horses Bringing Fire Wood for Festival of San Antonio



First Communion Procession 2014

Massimo and
Gaia, siblings
from the
Ukraine, with
their Adoptive
Parents



Asilo D'Infanzia
Buon Pastore
(Good Shepherd
Nursery School)

These children
are playing in the
Piazza after
school is over.

Bright colored
track suits
minimize
competition and
social exclusion.



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Student's
poster for
middle
school
class
project



Student's poster for 100th anniversary of deadly 1915 earthquake, showing Frattura in ruins and as it looks today.



Clowning Around After the Perfect Earthquake Drill



From left clockwise:
Methodist, Church of
Christ, Baptist, Episcopal,
Catholic



Santa Clam Arriving at Cedar
Key Christmas Boat Parade



“Old Florida Celebration of the Arts”



2019 Cedar Key “Homecoming Court” and Shark Athletes



Third Graders Dressed as Super Heroes for Homecoming “Spirit Week”



Two views of Cedar Key School



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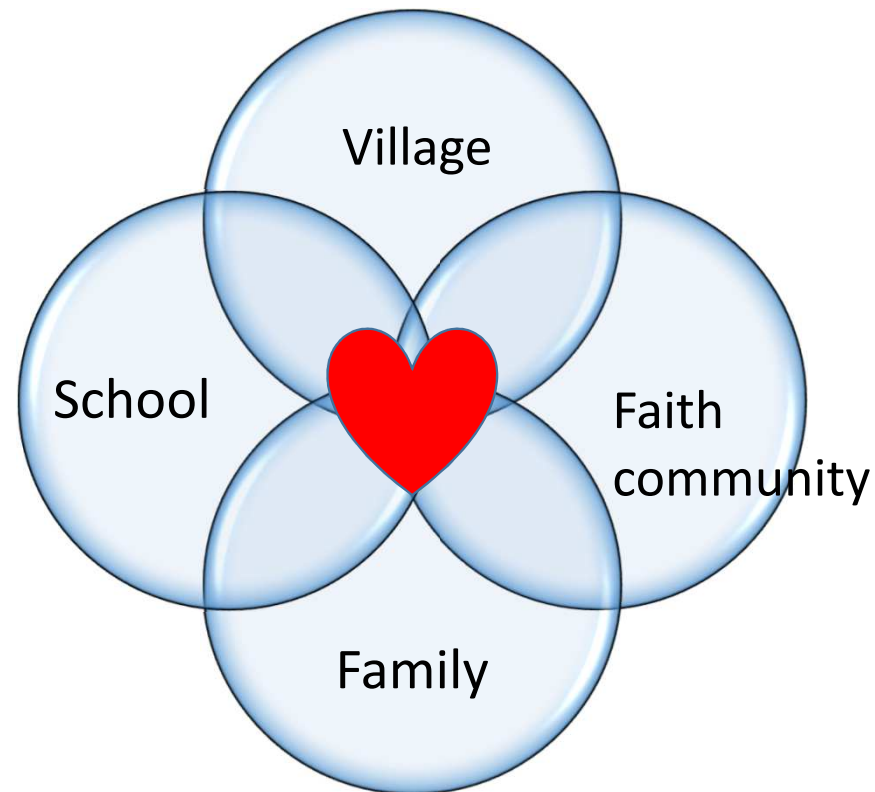
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2018



“The Magic of Mesosystems”

Faith communities engaging with each other and with civic institutions can nurture a culture of concern for **all the children**



Coexistence is Learned (or Unlearned) in the Microsystems and Mesosystems of Childhood

- “You've got to be taught before it's too late,
Before you are six or seven or eight,
To hate all the people your relatives hate,
You've got to be carefully taught!”
- Oscar Hammerstein and Richard Rogers, *South Pacific* (1949) written by a Jewish American composer about race relations in the aftermath of the Second World War.

Lautsi v. Italy

- 2009 European Court of Human Rights rules that Mussolini era law requiring display of crucifix in public school classrooms violates rights of atheist family.
- 2011 On rehearing by 17 member Grand Chamber, judgment is reversed and Court find that the European Convention on Human Rights does not require secularism or absolute neutrality but must be judged in light of the history and tradition of each nation.
- Gives significant weight to Italy's pluralistic policy of welcoming symbols and practices of all religions and concludes that in this context display of the crucifix is not coercive indoctrination.
- But evidence not offered on actual experiences of children.

The World of 2019 is Not the World of 2011

Writing in 2011, I could imagine two different futures
Religion and Human Rights (Witte and Green Oxford 2012)

ONE: A world where peaceful coexistence is such an established norm that religious symbols are not perceived as coercive.

TWO: A world so divided by sectarian conflict that display of any religious symbol or discussion of religion is experienced as coercive.

In 2011 I was far more optimistic than I am today.

CRC Article 12 Participation Rights

- Professor Laura Lundy, Queens University, Belfast, Northern Ireland, 2004, gathers children's voices in aftermath of "The Troubles."
- Elementary school children draw giant maps of their neighborhoods to facilitate discussion
- Question: what makes you feel safe and unsafe?
- Curb painting! The custom of residents painting the edge of the sidewalk orange in Protestant zones and Green in Catholic zones.
- Depending on the climate of tolerance or intolerance, even a color made with a child's crayon can signify war or peace, conflict or peaceful coexistence.

CHILDREN'S MOST IMPORTANT RELIGIOUS RIGHT IS IN OUR COLLECTIVE HANDS

