

Peter C. W. Gutkind was born on 16.09.1925 in Berlin as the third child of Dr. Erwin Anton Gutkind and Margarete Gutkind. He grew up in Berlin with his older sibling Gabriele. His brother, Claus, had died before Peter was born. As early as 1933, his father left Germany, first to Paris and then to London. His sister Gabriele followed and Peter stayed behind with his mother, who took care of her own mother and mother-in-law. In August 1939, Peter left Berlin six weeks before the start of the war on a Kindertransport and lived in the UK, finishing secondary school and then working as an emergency carpenter during the London 'Blitz.' After the war, he managed the Adventure Playgrounds, which used cleaned-up bomb sites in London.

He did this until he left for the United States to attend university, the Quaker liberal arts Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana, where he met his future wife, Alice Gutkind. He earned both a BA and an MA in the United States, the latter at the University of Chicago in the early 1950s. While in Chicago, he worked part-time in the steel mills. In the mid 1950s he taught at Makerere University, Kampala, did research, and he and his wife had three daughters there. A PhD from the University of Amsterdam followed in 1963 as well as a son.

He became a very successful and admired Professor of Anthropology and authored and edited numerous publications. His field was labour and migration and urban anthropology within the East and West African context. He worked in various places but mostly for a very long period, 1963-1986, at the anthropology department of McGill University, Montreal, and afterward in the sociology department of Warwick University, UK. He and Alice lived in Leamington Spa, England and he died on 17.02.2001.