

PAI 765: Humanitarian Action
3:30-6:15 M
Maxwell 315

Instructor: Abbey Steele
e. aasteele@syr.edu
p. 315.443.2868
Office: 131 Eggers
Office hours: Tues 4-6pm, and by appt

Course Description and Goals

Humanitarian action is an important feature of contemporary international relations. But what is it, and what are its consequences? To address these questions, this class will cover three broad themes. First, the class looks at the origins of humanitarianism and how it has changed over time. We'll pay close attention to the institutions that have emerged to lead and coordinate humanitarian action. Second, we examine contemporary humanitarian action, with a particular focus on refugees and displaced people. We consider both man-made and natural disasters. Third, we will consider the consequences of humanitarian action, particularly for human welfare and international politics.

Students will gain both substantive knowledge and analytical skills in the class, by studying a range of institutions and cases. Students will also improve their writing skills through iterative assignments with the opportunity to incorporate instructor and peer feedback.

Requirements and Grading

- *Participation and Weekly assignments*: This is a seminar; coming prepared to participate is essential. In other words, complete the readings assigned and spend time thinking about them. Each week, students will submit 3 questions related to the readings by 5pm Sunday to the class blackboard. They will not be graded, but they are required. (10%)

- *Short presentations*: In small groups, students will present an overview of a humanitarian agency. Selections will be in week 2, and presentations in week 4. (20%)

- *Mid-term group papers* (due Mar 4): This paper will describe a case or cases of humanitarian action, describing: (1) what the crisis was; (2) what organizations were involved – alternatively, the paper can focus on one organization's involvement; and (3) how needs were addressed. (8-10pp; 30%)

- *Final group papers and presentations* (due May 1): This paper will build on the material from the mid-term and offer: (1) an explanation for action (or inaction); and (2) an evaluation of the action. The group will also present their findings to the class in a short presentation (15 min). (15-20pp; 40%)

Course Materials

Required Texts

Séverine Autesserre. 2010. *The Trouble with the Congo: Local Violence and the Failure of International Peacebuilding*. NY: Cambridge University Press.

Michael Barnett. 2011. *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Helton, Arthur C. 2002. *The Price of Indifference: Refugees and Humanitarian Action in the New Century*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hodge, Nathan. 2011. *Armed Humanitarians: The Rise of the Nation Builders*. New York: Bloomsbury.

Stewart, Rory and Gerald Knaus. 2011. *Can Intervention Work?* New York: WW Norton.

Additional readings can be found online, or will be posted to blackboard.

In addition, everyone is required to read the following:

George Orwell, "Politics and the English Language."
http://www.orwell.ru/library/essays/politics/english/e_polit

Strunk & White, Elements of Style. <http://www.cs.vu.nl/~jms/doc/elos.pdf>

These are useful guides to improve writing. Please note that they are not hard-and-fast rules, but if you follow the recommendations, you're likely to improve your writing.

Class Schedule*

**Subject to change*

Week 1

January 14

Class plan and overview of the syllabus

Concepts: What is humanitarian action?

Week 2

January 28: Origins

Barnett, Michael. *Empire of Humanity* (Intro, parts I & II)

Save the Children *International* website: www.savethechildren.net

Anti-Slavery International

http://www.antislavery.org/english/what_we_do/antislavery_international_today/antislavery_international_today.aspx.

*Select agency for presentations.

Week 3

February 4: The Evolution of Humanitarianism

James Fearon. 2008. "The Rise of Emergency Aid," in Michael Barnett and Thomas Weiss, eds., *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, and Ethics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press)

Barnett, Michael and Jack Snyder. 2008. "The Grand Strategies of Humanitarianism." In Michael Barnett and Tom Weiss, eds. 2008. *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Origins of Humanitarianism: Part III

George Orwell. 1949. Reflections on Gandhi, Partisan Review.
http://www.orwell.ru/library/reviews/gandhi/english/e_gandhi

Week 4

February 11: Institutions and Laws

The UN, "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights."
<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml>

ICRC: What is International Humanitarian Law?
http://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/other/what_is_ihl.pdf

The Sphere Handbook:
<http://www.sphereproject.org/handbook/>

Paul Harvey, et al. 2010. *The State of the Humanitarian System*, London: ALNAP. <http://www.alnap.org/pool/files/alnap-sohs-final.pdf>

de Waal, Alex. 1997. "The Humanitarian International," *Famine Crimes: Politics and the Disaster Relief Industry in Africa*. London: Africa Rights and The International African Institute.

Presentations on Institutions
ICRC

UNICEF
WFP
UNHCR
OCHA
Oxfam

Week 5

February 18: Liberal Humanitarianism & the Case of Rwanda

Straus, Scott. *The Order of Genocide*. Intro, Ch 1-2.

Power, Samantha, *A Problem from Hell*. Ch 10.

Gourevitch, Philip. *We Wish To Inform you that Tomorrow We Will Be Killed...* Ch 3.

Kuperman, Alan. 2000. "Rwanda in Retrospect." *Foreign Affairs*.

Terry, Fiona. Ch 2: "Rwandan Refugees in Zaire," in *Condemned to Repeat*.

Week 6

February 25: Refugees in the 1990s

Ch 1-7, 9, Helton, Arthur C. 2002. *The Price of Indifference: Refugees and Humanitarian Action in the New Century*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hilhorst, Dorothea, and Mathijs Van Leeuwen. 2000. "Emergency and Development: the Case of Imidugudu, Villagization in Rwanda." *Journal of Refugee Studies*. 13(3): 264-280.

Week 7

March 4: Responsibility to Protect / Humanitarian Intervention

Evans, Gareth and Mohamed Sahnoun. "The Responsibility to Protect." 2002. *Foreign Affairs*.

Betts, Alexander. "The delusion of impartial intervention." 1994. *Foreign Affairs*.

Helton, Arthur C. 2002. Ch 8, Reaction and Inattention Within the US Government, in *The Price of Indifference: Refugees and Humanitarian Action in the New Century*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gerald Knaus. 2011. "The Rise and Fall of Liberal Imperialism." *Can Intervention Work?* pp97-192.

Hugo Slim. 2001. Military Intervention to Protect Human Rights: The Humanitarian Agency Perspective. <http://www.ihrr.net/files/2005-2006ws/Perspective%20of%20HR%20agencies%20MIntervention.pdf>

Terry, Fiona. 2002. Ch 1, *Condemned to Repeat*.

Recommended

US Navy. 2005. Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief Operations Planning. http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/navy/tm_3-07-6-05_navy_ha&dr_ops_plng.pdf

SPRING BREAK – MARCH 11

Week 8

March 18: Humanitarian Intervention post-9/11

Stewart, Rory. 2011. “The Plane to Kabul.” *Can Intervention Work?* New York: WW Norton. Introduction, pp 5-89.

Hodge, Nathan. 2011. *Armed Humanitarians: The Rise of the Nation Builders*. New York: Bloomsbury. pp 1-120

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Denmark. 2006. Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan, 2001-2005. <http://www.oecd.org/countries/afghanistan/35559322.pdf>

Recommended

Rieff, David. 2010. *The Nation*. <http://www.tnr.com/blog/foreign-policy/76050/has-liberal-interventionism-run-its-course> [Read all related debate articles.]

Oxfam. 2007. Rising to the Humanitarian Challenge in Iraq. <http://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/Rising%20to%20the%20humanitarian%20challenge%20in%20Iraq.pdf>

OCHA. 2011. 5 Year Evaluation of the Central Emergency Response Fund: Afghanistan. http://ochanet.unocha.org/p/Documents/110922_Afghanistan_FINAL.pdf

Week 9

March 25: Post-Conflict / Peace-building: the Case of the Congo

Séverine Autesserre. 2010. *The Trouble with the Congo: Local Violence and the Failure of International Peacebuilding*. NY: Cambridge University Press.

“Mortality in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Results from a Nationwide Survey,” International Rescue Committee, December 2004, available at <http://www.theirc.org/index.cfm/wwwID/2129>. (31 pages)

Week 10

April 1: Challenges

Terry, Fiona. 2002. Ch 6. *Condemned to Repeat*.

UNHCR. “Dangerous Liaisons? A Historical Review of UNHCR’s engagement with Non-state Armed Actors.” <http://www.unhcr.org/50b62efe9.html>

Adam Roberts, “Refugees and Military Interventions,” in *Refugees in International Relations*.

Bass, Gary – Ch 27: “The International Politics of Humanitarian Intervention,” in *Freedom’s Battle: The Origins of Humanitarian Intervention*. New York: Vintage Books. 2008.

Week 11

April 8: Natural Disaster Relief: the case of Aceh

ALNAP, “Tsunami Emergency: Lessons from Previous Natural Disasters.” <http://www.alnap.org/pool/files/tsunamibriefing05.pdf>

Thomas, Dan - Much Done, *More to Do: Indian Ocean Tsunami Recovery, Two Years On*, UNICEF, December 2006
http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/files/tsunami_2-year_2006.pdf

U.S. Forces Aid Tsunami Relief Efforts in Southeast Asia, U.S. Department of Defense, 2005 <http://www.defenselink.mil/home/features/tsunami/>

UNICEF. Evaluation of UNICEF’s Response in Indonesia. 2004
http://www.unicef.org/evaluation/files/HQ_2009-005_UNICEFs_Tsunami_Response_Indonesia.pdf

Week 12

April 15

Guest speaker or documentary: *Triage: Dr. James Orbinski’s Humanitarian Dilemma*

Week 13

April 22: The Case of Syria

What is being done?

What should be done?

Week 14

April 29

Group presentations of final paper findings

Class policies

Late assignments

Late assignments will lose one-third of a letter grade for each day they are late. Questions will not be accepted after the class for which they should be prepared has met.

Absences

Please let me know if you cannot attend class. The weekly assignment should still be sent.

Participation

Participation is required. Formulating comments and questions is difficult, but it is an essential skill.

Laptops, etc

Students should disable any wireless connection for the duration of class. I reserve the right to ban laptops if I suspect too many class members are checking email, going online, etc. This is disruptive to class, and inhibits a productive discussion.

Cell phone and Blackberry use is not allowed – please silence them before entering, and refrain from checking them at all.

Academic Integrity

The Syracuse University Academic Integrity Policy holds students accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. Students should be familiar with the Policy and know that it is their responsibility to learn about instructor and general academic expectations with regard to proper citation of sources in written work. The policy also governs the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments as well as the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verifications of participation in class activities. Serious sanctions can result from academic dishonesty of any sort.

For more information, see Academic Integrity Office

Disability Services

Students who are in need of disability-related academic accommodations must register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS), 804 University Avenue, Room 309, 315-443-4498. Students with authorized disability-related accommodations should provide a current Accommodation Authorization Letter from ODS to the instructor and review those accommodations with the instructor. Accommodations, such as exam administration, are not provided retroactively; therefore, planning for accommodations as early as possible is necessary.

For more information, see Office of Disability Services