

Sociology 302: Advanced Topics in Human Rights

Seminar on Humanitarianism and Humanitarian Intervention

Professor Thomas Cushman

Fall, 2005

Office Hours: Monday, 2-4, Thursday, 12:30-2:00 or by appointment

This seminar explores the historical, political, philosophical, sociological and legal dimensions of humanitarianism and humanitarian intervention. We will primarily explore humanitarianism and humanitarian intervention as modern projects, although we will explore the historical and philosophical bases from which these projects emerged. These topics are extremely controversial, and the seminar will present a variety of points of view, as well as introduce students to the importance of the sociological perspective for understanding the phenomena of humanitarianism and humanitarian intervention.

Required Reading:

Our seminar is based on a core set of books which each student must read in preparation for seminar meetings. Also, there is an electronic reserve list of readings which are important to read as well. The required books, all available in the campus bookstore are:

Adam Hochschild, *Bury the Chains : Prophets and Rebels in the Fight to Free an Empire's Slaves* (Houghton Mifflin, 2004)

J.L. Holzgrefe and Robert Keohane, *Humanitarian Intervention : Ethical, Legal and Political Dilemmas* (Cambridge University Press, 2003)

Samantha Power, *"A Problem from Hell": America and the Age of Genocide* (Perennial, 2003)

David Rieff, *A Bed for the Night: Humanitarianism in Crisis* (Simon and Schuster, 2003)

Special Issue of The New Criterion: "Corrupt Humanitarianism" (not available at the bookstore, will be provided)

Thomas Cushman, *A Matter of Principle: Humanitarian Arguments for War In Iraq* (University of California Press, 2005)

Grading Policies and Course Requirements

Regular attendance at the seminar is mandatory and each student should come to the class having read all of the assignments for the week. Active participation is also required and for each class, students should come with two detailed and written questions and/or issues for discussion. Also, from week to week, each student will prepare one-page of response to the week's readings based on a question or issue which will be provided by the professor. Attendance, participation, and the quality of the written questions and responses will count for 30 percent of the final grade.

In addition, one short paper of 7 pages is required on a topic which will be assigned later in the semester. This short paper will be due on Thursday, October 27. This paper will be worth 20 percent of the grade.

Each student will choose one case of humanitarian intervention in the modern world and work closely with the professor during scheduled outside-of-class meetings to study the case. At the end of the semester, each student will write a 25 page paper and make an oral presentation to the seminar. 50 percent of the course grade will be based on the paper and presentation. An annotated bibliography and four-five page précis outlining the central issues, questions, and analytical approaches will be due before the Thanksgiving break.

September 8 : Introduction, Scope of the Seminar, Discussion of the Vocabularies of Humanitarianism: “Rescue, Aid, Intervention, Abstention, Indifference, Neutrality, Imperialism, Virtue, Resistance, Revolution, Guilt, Shame, Redemption, Salvation, Mercy.”

September 15: A Cartography of Humanitarianism and Humanitarian Intervention

Hugo Grotius, “On the Causes of Undertaking War on Behalf of Others”, from *De jure belli ac pacis*, (ER)

Theodore Meron, “Common Rights of Mankind in Gentili, Grotius, and Suarez,” (ER)

Robert Keohane, “Introduction”, in Keohane and Hozelgefe

.L Holzgrefe, “The Humanitarian Intervention Debate” in Keohane and Holzgrefe

Thomas Weiss “ (ER)

Michael Ignatieff, “The Seductiveness of Moral Disgust (ER)

September 22: Humanitarianism as an Ethical Project: The Case of the Abolition of the British Slave Trade

Read: Adam Hotchschild, Bury the Chains in entirety

September 29: African Interventions and the “Humanitarian International”

Alex de Waal, “The Humanitarian International” and “A New Humanitarian Disposition” from Famine Crimes: Politics and the Disaster Relief Industry in Africa. (ER)

Please note: During our seminar this week, we will have Alex de Waal, one of the leading humanitarian scholars and activists in the world today, as our guest speaker..

October 6-13: Western Responses to Genocide in Bosnia and Rwanda

(We will spread our discussions of Bosnia and Rwanda across two class periods)

Samantha Power, A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide, in entirety

Please note: We will also arrange a public screening of the film “Hotel Rwanda” in conjunction with our seminars on these issues. There is also the possibility that Samantha Power, the Pulitzer Prize winning author of A Problem from Hell will join us for the seminar on October 13.

October 20-27: Kosovo - International Law vs. the Duty to Rescue

(Because of the complexity of this material, we will be spreading our discussion of this topic over the course of two seminar meetings]

Allen Buchanan, “Reforming the International Law of Humanitarian Intervention” in Keohane and Holzgrefe

Michael Byers and Simon Chesterman, “Changing the Rules about Rules? Unilateral Humanitarian Intervention and the Future of International Law” in Keohane and Holzgrefe

Thomas M. Franck, “ Interpretation and Change in the Law of Humanitarian Intervention” in Keohane and Holzgrefe

Jane Stromseth, “ Rethinking Humanitarian Intervention: The Case for Incremental Change” in Keohane and Holzgrefe.

Please also peruse: The Responsibility to Protect, Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, in PDF format at:
<http://www.iciss.ca/report-en.asp>

November 3: The Politics of Humanitarian Intervention in the Early 21st Century

Tom J. Farer, “Humanitarian Intervention Before and After 9/11”, in Keohane and Holzgrefe

Robert O. Keohane, “Political Authority After Intervention: Gradations in Sovereignty” in Keohane and Holzgrefe

Michael Ignatieff, “State Failure and Nation-Building”, in Keohane and Holzgrefe

November 10: The Liberal Case for Humanitarian Intervention

Fernando R. Teson, “The Liberal Case for Humanitarian Intervention”, in Keohane and Holzgrefe

Brian Lepard, “Obligation to Intervene or to Support UN Humanitarian Intervention” (ER)

Brian Lepard, “The Legality of Humanitarian Intervention Without Security Council Authorization” (ER)

Professor Fernando Teson will be our guest in the seminar, and discuss his recent work on humanitarian intervention in the case of Iraq. Also, another guest will be Gary Kent, the founder of Labor Friends of Iraq, who works in the UK Parliament.

November 17: Critiques of Humanitarian Intervention

David Rieff, *A Bed for the Night*, in entirety.

David Kennedy, “International Humanitarianism: The Dark Sides,” at:

http://www.icnl.org/JOURNAL/vol6iss3/ar_kennedy.htm

“Corrupt Humanitarianism”, special issue of *The New Criterion* (to be provided)

David Kennedy, Professor of Law at Harvard University and author of the recent critique of humanitarianism, *The Dark Side of Virtue*, will be offering a public discussion and debate with Professor Cushman on the topic of humanitarianism. We will reconvene in seminar after this event for discussion. Also, at the time of the writing of this syllabus, I am trying to arrange a visit by David Rieff, the author of the book we are reading for this section., who, if he comes will join our debate and discussion.

December 1 – 8: The War In Iraq: A Humanitarian Intervention?

Cushman, *A Matter of Principle: Humanitarian Arguments for War in Iraq*. chapters to be assigned

Human Rights Watch, *Genocide in Iraq: The Anfal Campaign Against the Kurds*, at: <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1993/iraqanfal/>

Kenneth Roth, “The War in Iraq: Not a Humanitarian Intervention” (ER)