Civil Wars and International Interventions in Africa
POLS V3604

Séverine Autesserre  Undergraduate lecture class, Spring 2010
sa435@columbia.edu  Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:10 – 2:25 p.m.
Office 419, Lehman Hall  Altschul 202
Office Hours: Thursdays, 3-5 p.m.  Barnard & Columbia Colleges

Teaching Assistants:
- Michael Broache (mpb2140@columbia.edu): Discussion sections on Fridays 9-10 a.m. and 12-1 p.m.; Office hours on Tuesdays, 2:35-4:35 in the SIPA cafe (6th floor of IAB)
- Costantino Pischedda (cp2417@columbia.edu): Discussion sections on Mondays, 12:30-1:30 p.m. and Wednesdays, 5:30-6:30 p.m.; Office hours on Wednesdays, 2-4 pm in the SIPA cafe (6th floor of IAB)
- Third TA TBA: Discussion sections on day / time TBA; Office hours TBA

Substance of the Course

Why does violent conflict persist in post-independence Africa? Why do nearly half of the countries that emerge from war lapse back into violence after five years? Why do most international interventions fail to bring peace to affected populations? This class focuses on recent conflict and post-conflict situations in Africa as background against which to understand the distinct dynamics of violence and international interventions in civil wars.

The goal of the course is three-fold. First, to provide participants with the intellectual tools to understand and analyze civil wars and international interventions. Throughout the course, the participants will acquire a broad knowledge of the concepts, theoretical traditions, and debates in the study of civil war, emergency aid, peacekeeping, and peace building. The course will also introduce participants to new issues in the field, such as the micro-foundations of peace settlements. Second, the course will provide participants with an in-depth understanding of the most salient civil conflicts and peace processes in recent African history, notably the D.R. Congo, Rwanda, and Sudan. Third, the course will develop students’ research, analytical, and writing skills through assignments and papers.

Readings for this course are drawn from a variety of disciplines (political science, anthropology, and others), approaches (rational choice, constructivist), and methodologies (qualitative and quantitative). They include both theoretical works and case studies of recent conflicts. Classes will consist both of lectures and discussion. Guest speakers will be invited for several class sessions, to exchange with students and explain how the specific issues under consideration play out in the “real” world.

Grading and Requirements

1) Attendance to all lectures and sections, participation to class discussions during the sections. (15% of the final grade)

2) Readings: Assignments are on the attached list. For tips on how to do active critical readings, please see the handout distributed on the first day of classes and posted on coursework. In addition, please regularly read news articles on African civil wars in your preferred newspapers.

   All the articles are available for free through Columbia databases. If you are on campus, the easiest way to locate them is to click on the link provided in this syllabus. If you are not on campus, or if the link does not work, you can access the article through the Columbia University library webpage (www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/index.html). To find an article, simply type the journal title in the E-Journals tab and follow the appropriate link based on your citation information (volume, date).

   The books by Kaplan, Mamdani, Straus, Reno, Collier & Sambanis, Weinstein, Duffied, Jones, Fisher and Ury, Stedman, and Barnett are available for purchase at the Columbia
University Bookstore. They are also available on Library Reserve at Barnard and Butler libraries. The rest of the book chapters assigned as required readings are available through Courseworks in the library reserve section.

PLEASE NOTE: It is essential that students keep up with the weekly reading assignments. Readings are designed as building blocks for understanding topics in subsequent weeks. The readings are often difficult, it is therefore in the students’ best interest to attend all discussion sections, to ensure that they understand the main claims and the fine points of the readings. It is also essential that students attend all lectures. The lectures and the readings are complementary (the lectures will not substitute for the weekly readings and discussion sections, and vice-versa). The short, long, and final essays will test your understanding of the material covered both during lectures and in the readings.

3) A short essay (take-home, open-books, 15% of the final grade). The essay question will cover a topic already covered in class. The paper must be typed; no handwritten material will be accepted. It must be at most 4 pages double space, with 1 inches margins, and in font Times New Roman 12. It should use the material covered in the readings and during the lectures and the discussion sessions. The essay question will be given on February 9 and the paper will be due on February 16.

4) A long essay (take-home, open-books, 30% of the final grade). The essay question will cover the material learned during the first part of the semester. The paper must be typed; no handwritten material will be accepted. It must be at most 8 pages double space, with 1 inches margins, and in font Times New Roman 12 or Arial 10. It should use the material covered in the readings and during the lectures and the discussion sessions. The essay question will be given on March 4 and the paper will be due on March 11.

5) A final essay (take-home, open-books, 40% of the final grade). The essay question will cover the material learned during the entire semester. The paper must be typed; no handwritten material will be accepted. It must be at most 8 pages double space, with 1 inches margins, and in font Times New Roman 12 or Arial 10. It should use the material covered in the readings and during the lectures and the discussion sessions. The essay question will be given on April 22 and the paper will be due on April 29.

The papers must be submitted when scheduled. Extensions will be granted only in case of documented medical or family emergency. Late turn-ins will be downgraded one-third of a letter grade per day after the deadline unless you contact me beforehand to request an extension.

Writing resources: The following websites provide many very useful advice for research and writing, which may become handy as you write your essays:
- http://www.nd.edu/~dlindley/handouts/handoutlinks.html (plenty of handouts on everything you need: how to make a theoretically informed argument, core theories and concepts used in IR, etc)
- http://www.library.ualberta.ca/guides/plagiarism/handouts/index.cfm (you can find hundreds of useful tips on research and writing)
- http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/ (rules and examples on how to reference your sources)

All students are strongly encouraged to use the Erica Mann Jong Writing Center to work on their writing skills. The Erica Mann Jong Writing Center is currently located in 18 Milbank; you can sign up for an appointment at http://www.barnard.columbia.edu/writing/writingcenter.html. Columbia students are welcome to use the Writing Center for papers assigned in this course. For further information on writing resources at Barnard College and helpful strategies for writing assignments, please check http://www.barnard.columbia.edu/english/writing.html.

Challenging grades: Any student who believes a grade was given in error should follow the following procedure. S/he should wait a week before submitting a complaint. S/he should meet first with the TA who graded the paper and bring to the meeting a one-page typed document explaining why the student
believes that s/he deserves a better grade and telling which grade s/he thinks s/he deserves. If the student and the TA still disagree about the grade after their meeting, the student should come to discuss the situation during my office hours. S/he should bring the one-page document annotated by the TA. Students should realize that a change in grade is very unlikely, and that I reserve the right to lower a grade as well as raise it.

**Barnard Honor Code**: Students affirm that all work turned in is their own, and that they have fully and accurately cited every written source, including web-based sources, used in their writing.

For each paper, all students (whether or not they are Barnard College students) must sign the Barnard College Honor Code statement, affirming that their written work is completely their own. Any student found to have violated the Honor Code will face the disciplinary rules of his or her home college.

Here are some very helpful websites for all your questions on intellectual property, citing and documenting sources, avoiding disasters, etc (and of course don’t hesitate to ask me if you have any doubt or question):
- [http://www.library.ucla.edu/bruinsuccess](http://www.library.ucla.edu/bruinsuccess) (the tutorial is fun and very useful)
- [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01) (another very helpful site on avoiding plagiarism)
- [http://www.dartmouth.edu/~sources](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~sources) (very detailed information about how and why to cite sources)

**Use of laptops in the classroom**: The use of laptops in the classroom is allowed only to take notes on the class lectures and discussions. Students are forbidden to use a laptop in the classroom to browse the internet or work on something different than the material discussed in class. Students who want to use a computer should give me a written document promising to *never* use their laptop in class for something else than taking notes on class lectures / discussion. Cheaters will be severely penalized. Students using laptops should sit at the back of the classroom in order to not disturb their colleagues.

**Students with disabilities**: Students with disabilities who will be taking this course and may need disability-related accommodations are encouraged to make an appointment to see me as soon as possible. Disabled students who need test or classroom accommodations must be registered in advance with the Office of Disabilities Services (ODS) in 105 Hewitt (for Barnard students) or the office of disabilities services at Columbia.

**Pre-requisite**: At least sophomore standing, except in consultation with the instructor.

**Sub-field & Requirements**: The course fulfills the Barnard College’s General Education Requirement: Social Analysis (SOC). It also fulfills Columbia College’s Global Core requirement. Alternatively, Columbia College and Barnard College political science majors can count this class toward their international relations sub-field requirement OR their comparative politics sub-field requirement.

**Enrollment restriction**: 110 students.

**Learning Objectives**

Students who complete this course will learn how to:
1. Evaluate and critique the theories on the causes of violence and the determinants of international interventions
2. Integrate and apply conceptual tools and theories from various disciplines, in particular political science, in order to analyze issues related to civil wars and international interventions
3. Develop rigorous and convincing political science arguments
4. Demonstrate knowledge of several salient cases of conflicts and peace processes in recent African history
5. Express themselves effectively in writing
6. Perform independent research on political science, human rights, and/or African studies topics
Jan. 19 and 21 – Introduction and key concepts

Assignment: please read the first three pages of this syllabus very carefully and don’t hesitate to ask in class if you have any clarifying question.

As there is no reading for this week, take the opportunity to get started on the readings for next week.

Guest speaker: Steve Crawshaw, UN advocacy director for Human Rights Watch, on why civil wars and international interventions in Africa matter

PART 1: EXPLAINING VIOLENCE IN AFRICAN CIVIL WARS

Jan. 26 - Can we understand violence? The “new barbarism” idea & the “new wars old wars” debate


Recommended


Jan. 28 – The role of the state I: legacies of colonialism


Recommended


Feb. 2 – The role of the state II: regime type & state violence


**Recommended**


Gourevitch, Philip. 1998. *We wish to inform you that tomorrow we will be killed with our families: stories from Rwanda*. New York: St Martin’s Press.


Feb. 4 – The role of the state III: state failure & warlordism


**Recommended**


Feb. 9 & 11 – Research and Writing

February 9: How to think and write like a political scientist:
- Advice on research and writing for political science papers.
- End of class: distribution of topics for the short essay & explanation of requirements and grading criteria.

February 11: Training by Yusuf Caruso, Columbia University Librarian in charge of the Africa collections, on how to find good research resources on African civil wars.

No readings this week, review the readings for the first few weeks of the semester and work on your essay.
Recommended


See Also: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/

Various sources on citations, bibliographies, and footnotes available at: http://sipa.columbia.edu/resources_services/student_affairs/academic_policies/code_of_conduct.html

Feb. 16 & 18 – Identity and Violence


Short essay due at the beginning of class on February 16. No extension except in case of documented medical or family emergency.

Recommended


**Feb. 23 & 25 - Economic explanations of civil war violence**


Recommended


**March 2 – Insurgencies**


Recommended


March 4 – Micro-dynamics of violence


End of class on March 4: distribution of topics for the long essay.

Guest speaker: Dr. Elisabeth King, Post-Doctoral Fellow, Earth Institute, Columbia University, on education and violence in Rwanda.

Recommended


PART II – TOPICS IN INTERNATIONAL INTERVENTIONS

March 11 – International interventions to Support Warring Parties

Long essay due at the beginning of class on March 11. No extension except in case of documented medical or family emergency.

No readings for today, work on your essays.

March 23 & 25 – Humanitarian Aid


Recommended


March 30 & April 1 – From war to peace: organizing negotiations


Guest speaker: Ambassador Adonia Ayebare, Acting Director of the Africa Program at the International Peace Institute, on negotiations to end the Burundian civil war.

Recommended


Crocker, Chester A.; Hampson, Fen Oslder; and Aall Pamela R. 2004 *Taming intractable conflicts: Mediation in the hardest cases*. USIP Press


April 6, 8, and 13 – Peacekeeping


*Guest speaker: Claire Bamber, director, United Nations Operations Center, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, on current UN peacekeeping operations.*

*Guest speaker: Major General Patrick Cammaert, former United Nations Force Commander for the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, on the peacekeeping mission in the DR Congo.*

Recommended


**April 15 & 20 – Humanitarian Interventions and the Responsibility to Protect**


*Guest speakers: Emmanuel Lebrun Damiens et Emmanuelle Lachaussée, Counselors, French Mission to the United Nations, on the UN Security Council and R2P.*

**Recommended**


Reports on the Save Darfur, Enough, and International Crisis Group’s websites


**April 22 – Peacebuilding**


*End of class on April 22: distribution of topics for the final essay.*

**Recommended**


Tull, Denis M. “A reconfiguration of political order? The state of the state in North Kivu (DR Congo).” African Affairs 102: 429-446. 2003 (http://afraf.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/abstract/102/408/429)


April 27 – Challenges of third party interventions

No required readings, work on your final essays.

Recommended


Carpenter, Charli. 2006. *Innocent Women And Children: Gender, Norms And the Protection of Civilians (Gender in a Global/Local World)*. Ashgate.


**April 29 – Concluding session**

Session devoted to catching up if we are behind, Q&As, and wrapping up the semester.

*Final essay due at the beginning of the class. No extension except in case of documented family or medical emergency.*