

# **POLITICS OF INTERVENTION**

**(Political Science 101 – Freshman Seminar)**

Meetings on Wednesdays, 18:00-20:50 at Scott Hall 107

~ The Burdick Room ~

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**Overview:** This course is about intervention into the affairs of other states for the purpose of reforming or otherwise changing the behavior of those states. Intervention can take the form of UN peacekeeping forces, invasions to install new regimes, post-conflict multilateral programs to support vulnerable governments and help them to build stronger institutions, and large-scale humanitarian assistance. All of these involve state-building in varying degrees and methods. They often occur at the initiative of a powerful country, often (but not always) the US, and include the participation of international institutions such as the UN and the World Bank and other external actors such as charitable organizations, businesses and activists.

The aim of this course is to identify and pursue debates. One debate concerns policy challenges. Are these interventions effective? Is there evidence of learning from one intervention to the next? What roles do interventions play in national policies and domestic politics in the US and elsewhere? The course also will pursue broader debates about the feasibility and appropriateness of large-scale efforts to reshape other people's countries. This can be framed in terms of a reflection of the nature of power and hierarchies in the international system and the roles that norms and practices of intervention play in maintaining or undermining that system. Another aim of this course is to prepare students to think more critically about policy choices and tradeoffs and to show how political scientists think and how they conceptualize frameworks for studying complex political behavior. This course will prepare those who wish to study political science topics in more depth with basic concepts and approaches of that discipline.

Course readings and discussions will begin with a broad consideration of the history of intervention, the parameters of recent intervention and basic ideas that guide thinking about intervention and its challenges. Attention will then focus on the doctrine of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) and debates about the application of R2P responsibilities, with particular focus on the dilemmas and choices surrounding various tools for intervention. In this section we will explore the impact that R2P and other ideas have had on the politics of humanitarian aid and the development of other tools for intervention such as targeted sanctions. Then we will consider militarized interventions, with attention to Libya and to debates surrounding responses to the conflict in Syria. We then focus our attention on the development of the US military doctrine of Complex Operations that combine civilian humanitarian aid with warfighting. The course ends with attention to complex operations in Afghanistan and the nation-building effort there as US troops prepare to withdraw from that country later this year.

**Course Requirements:** Grades will be based upon the following components of this seminar:

Class discussion and participation (including class blog)	10%
Three papers (of about six pages)	60% (20% each)
Final paper (of about 10 pages)	30%

Class discussion and blog: Students are encouraged to speak up in the classroom. Students also will have an opportunity to participate in a public forum blog. Students will choose their own secret user names. The professor will moderate discussion and will accept suggestions from the class members for topics. This blog will be readable by the wider public, and thus expose students to the possibility that outsiders will be attracted to the discussion. Who knows? Perhaps policy makers may participate. [Blog details to follow.]

The three shorter papers: Students will compose three response essays to debates from class discussion and readings. Each essay should be on the order of six pages or so. Each essay will have two due dates; the first for a draft and the second for a final version.

The final paper: Students will compose a longer (10 page or so) analytical essay that grapples with a “bigger issue” question about forcible intervention. These questions will be decided in consultation with individual students. They can include (but are not restricted to) matters concerning the appropriateness or effectiveness of intervention strategies, moral and ethical considerations that are (or should be) associated with policies, the longer-term impact of policies on American political debates, and so forth. This paper is due by **5pm on Monday, 17 March**, which is also the first day of the WCAS exam week.

More details about this and the other essay assignment will follow as students become familiar with some of the topics covered in this course.

**Required Textbooks:** You have only one required textbook for this class. You should purchase the text below via an on-line operator or from one of the local Evanston bookstores.

Rajiv Chandraekaran, 2013. *Little America: The War within the War for Afghanistan*, (New York: Vintage), ISBN: 978-0307947048

All other material will be available via [Blackboard](#) and via links to the web sources below. There will also be some handouts in the classroom.

## Class Calendar

**January 8<sup>th</sup>: Histories of Intervention.** What is universal in the organization of politics and what is an extension of a European system of states? What is the relationship of intervention to liberation and to domination?

→ Two short readings to set the stage for debates

Liz Sly (2014) “Rebels battle al-Qaeda-affiliated fighters across northern Syria,” [\*Washington Post\*](#), 5 Jan.

Arthur Conan Doyle (1909) [\*The Crime of the Congo\*](#). London: Hutchinson & Co. Peruse this pamphlet and read further if you wish. [I will help guide to significant sections.]

→ Your standard readings on [Blackboard](#):

Stephen Krasner (1999) “Rulers and Ruled: Minority Rights,” *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 73-104.

Michael Barnett & Thomas Weiss (2008) “Humanitarianism: A Brief History of the Present,” in Michael Barnett & Thomas Weiss, eds. *Humanitarianism in Question*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press), 1-48.

**Key issues:** Krasner observes that intervention to protect minorities was used to justify European dismantlement of the European part of the Ottoman Empire. Concerns for minority and human rights have a long history in justifications for intervention in the affairs of other countries. Note some of the similarities between Arthur Conan Doyle’s campaign of a century ago and ones of more recent vintage.

**Some questions;** Is forcible intervention on behalf of oppressed people simply a justification for the pursuit of national interests, or is it credible as action in service of moral objectives? Are moral objectives justifiable as national interests? Can intervention reflect a universal moral standard?

**January 15<sup>th</sup>: Post-Cold War Internal Conflicts:** Morally repugnant elites (MREs), fragmentation of armed groups, the appearance of “warlords,” and security dilemmas. Is intervention becoming a more difficult task?

Mary Kaldor (2006) “The Politics of New Wars,” in *New & Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era*, Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 72-94.

Jack Snyder & Robert Jervis (1999) "Civil War and the Security Dilemma," Barbara Walter & Jack Snyder, eds., *Civil Wars, Insurgency, and Intervention*, Columbia, 15-37.

Will Reno (2013) "Crime versus War," Hew Strachan & Sibylle Scheipers, eds. *The Changing Character of War* New York: Oxford University Press), 220-37.

**Key issues:** Contemporary war economies may (or may not) differ from those of the past. The conflicts in the context of failed states appear to exhibit dynamics that are particular to these situations. Think about the differences between the kinds of warfare that are clashes between two armies and warfare that involves multiple types of intermingled armed groups ("symmetrical irregular warfare").

**Some questions;** Does the protection of civilians in the context of failed states and conflict require state-building as a necessary condition for success? {This issue will be considered at greater length in the next section.} Are contemporary war economies an "African problem"? Do people see the issue this way, whether merited or not?

**January 22<sup>nd</sup>: The Responsibility to Protect (R2P):** The evolution of an imperative of intervention and the definition of new global norms of standards of governance.

International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty. 2001 [\*The Responsibility to Protect: Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty\*](#), (Ottawa, Ontario International Development Research Centre).

[Chapter VII](#) of the UN Charter

Jon Western & Joshua S Goldstein (2011) "[Humanitarian Intervention](#) Comes of Age: Lessons from Somalia to Libya", *Foreign Affairs*, 90:6 (Nov/Dec), 48-59, and Benjamin A Valentino, "The [True Costs of Humanitarian](#) Intervention," *Foreign Affairs*, 90:6 (Nov/Dec), 60-75.

**Key issues:** Is intervention simply imperial intrusion in new guise or is it a fundamental shift in understandings about mutual responsibility. Try to discern the underlying assumptions in each argument presented in the readings. What kinds of assumptions are being made about the nature of the international system in each case, about how countries usually conduct their relations with one another, how they define interests, etc.?

**Some questions:** Is intervention to protect populations a policy that will be evenly applied? What conditions have to exist for intervention to happen? Is this fair? What advice would you give to Barak Obama and other American political leaders concerning the current abuses of international humanitarian law that are occurring in Syria?

**January 29<sup>th</sup>: Applications of R2P: The Tools of Intervention:** Focusing on the political economy of conflict zones and intervention; the challenge of making sure that aid goes to the “right” recipients and the evolution of targeted sanctions

Ian Smilie, Lansana Gberie, Ralph Hazelton (2000), [The Heart of the Matter](#): Diamonds and Human Security in Sierra Leone, Ottawa: Partnership Africa Canada.

Joanna Weschler (2009) “[The Evolution of Security Council Innovations](#) in Sanctions,” *International Journal*, 61(1), 31-43.

Linda Polman. (2010) “Aid as a Weapon of War,” and “The Logic of the Humanitarian Era,” *The Crisis Caravan: What’s Wrong with Humanitarian Aid?* (New York: Millennium), 95-105 & 157-71. You can watch Linda Polman on BBC’s [HardTalk](#) or [The Daily Show](#) (if you prefer).

Overseas Development Institute. (2010) “Aid and War: [A Response](#) to Linda Polman’s Critique of Humanitarianism,” (London: ODI).

**Key issues:** International campaigns can lead to the creation of new sanctions regimes. The PAC report provides insight into the basis for the Kimberley Process to monitor and eliminate the trade in “blood diamonds”. The evolution of a UN sanctions regime is examined too.

**Some questions:** How effective are sanctions regimes? Does success in one region or economic sector lead to the establishment of global norms of intervention? Are sanctions a good alternative to intervention for state-building? What are the aid / aid economy tradeoffs?

- The **first essay is due** at the start of this class.

**February 5<sup>th</sup>: Applications and Dilemmas of R2P, Intervention and regime change—Libya and other more recent cases.**

Alan Kuperman. (2013) “A Model Humanitarian Intervention? Reassessing NATO’s Libya Campaign,” *International Security*, 38: 1 (Summer), 105-136.

Thomas Weiss. (2011) “[RtoP Alive and Well](#) after Libya,” *Ethics & International Affairs*, 25:3, 287-92.

Anne-Marie Slaughter (2012) “How to Halt the Butchery in Syria,” [New York Times](#), *op-ed*, 23 Feb.

Asli Bâli & Aziz Rana (2013) “[Why There is No Military Solution](#) to the Syrian Conflict,” Nader Hashemi & Danny Postel, eds. *The Syria Dilemma*. (Cambridge: MIT Press), 29-44.

Sarah Birke (2013) “How Al-Qaeda Changed the Syrian War,” *New York Review of Books* [blog](#), 27 Dec.

**Key issues:** Debates tackle issues such as whether and under what conditions intervention to overthrow regimes is legitimate in international society. Some of these authors are doubtful of whether regime change accomplishes the goals of R2P, and express concern about conditions once regimes have been removed.

**Some questions:** Does intervention to change regimes necessarily require a dominant US component? How does the perception of US-led intervention shape ideas about the legitimacy of armed intervention? What kinds of regimes are targets for regime change? What is the impact of this on other potential targets?

**February 12<sup>th</sup>: The Militarization of Intervention** – The emergence of Complex Operations and the imperative of state-building as a security priority.

Craig Calhoun. (2010) “The Idea of Emergency: Humanitarian Action and Global (dis)order.” In *Contemporary States of Emergency*, ed. Didier Fassin and Mariella Pandolfi, New York: Zone Books, 29-59.

Mark Duffield. (2010) “Risk-Management and the Fortified Aid Compound: Everyday Life in Post-Interventionary Society,” *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, 4: 4 (Dec), 453-74.

Professor will provide field documents, war gaming and training material for counterinsurgency operators in the context of complex operations. We will strive to have a “complex operator” visit the class to contribute to discussions.

**Key issues:** Complex operations incorporate humanitarian aid into counterinsurgency strategies. This raises concerns about the feasibility of bureaucratic coordination and the roles of the international humanitarian agencies, international organizations (such as the UN development Program) and local civil society groups in this strategy.

**Some questions:** How does the complex operation affect local perceptions of humanitarian aid? Do these operations compromise the neutrality of non-military organizations? (Were these organizations neutral before?) How does the complex operation integrate ideas associated with humanitarian intervention and state-building?

- The **second essay is due** at the start of this class

**February 19<sup>th</sup>: Intervention for Development in Wartime**—a closer look at Afghanistan and Stability Operations

Rajiv Chandraekaran, (2013) *Little America: The War within the War for Afghanistan*, (New York: Vintage), 3-267

**Key issues:** Helmand Province and other parts of southern Afghanistan were the focus of a half billion dollar development program in association with the US military's "surge" (2009-12) in that region. Elements of that program have been applied to Kundz Province and elsewhere in Afghanistan.

**Some questions:** Is the US willing to invade a country and remove its government and go on to recreate a non-democratic political system? Is Western-style nation-building realistic in a place like Afghanistan? What is the lasting impact of state-building in Afghanistan?

**February 26<sup>th</sup>: Stability Operations, II:** More reporting from Afghanistan...

Rajiv Chandraekaran, (2013) *Little America: The War within the War for Afghanistan*, (New York: Vintage), 269-349.

**Key issues and questions** from the previous week (and more) are likely to feature in class discussions in this week's meeting.

**March 5<sup>th</sup> The Future of Intervention**

Robert Pape (2012) "When Duty Calls: A Pragmatic Standard of Humanitarian Intervention," *International Security* 37:1 (Summer), 41-80.

Gareth Evans & Ramesh Thakur, Robert Pape (2013) "Correspondence: Humanitarian and the Responsibility to Protect," *International Security*, 37: 4 (Spring), 199-214.

Major Fernando Luján (2013) *Light Footprints: The Future of American Military Intervention*, (Washington, DC: Center for a New American Security).

**Key Issues:** These authors debate whether there is a clear threshold for intervention and whether armed intervention necessarily involves the US (and is thus subject to US calculations of national interest). They also debate concerns about whether intervention brings chaos and collapse of states or whether it offers a viable alternative.

**Some questions:** Has a standard of R2P application emerged? Can R2P be said to have achieved the standing of a global norm? How can R2P be dissociated from unilateral

intervention and what is the significance of multilateral action? Where does R2P stand now, after the controversies surrounding intervention in Libya and Syria?

- The **third essay is due** at the start of this class

The **final paper** is due by **5pm on Monday, 17 March**, which is also the first day of WCAS winter exam week.