

ISCOR 301

CONFLICT AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

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Introduction:

This course will narrow down the vast domain of conflict and conflict resolution to focus on one type of conflict—namely, violent armed conflict—in one geographical area—Africa—and on one type of conflict resolution—international intervention. It will be based upon an extended case study of the conflict in northern Uganda. Drawing out a number of themes and problems, we will ask how to better understand violent conflict in Africa. In so doing, we will inquire into the stereotypes and misconceptions around African conflict found in Western media, and try to find a route to a more historically, culturally, and politically rigorous and contextualized understanding.

We will focus equally on the conflict resolution side of the equation. We will critically assess international interventions into the conflict in Uganda, examining humanitarian intervention, relief aid distribution, and international legal intervention, in particular the work of the International Criminal Court. We will ask how effective those interventions have been and how they might be made more effective in the future.

Reading:

Two books are required for the course, available at KB Books:

- Sverker Finnström, *Living with Bad Surroundings* (Duke University Press, 2008).
- Tim Allen and Koen Vlassenroot, eds. *The Lord's Resistance Army: Myth and Reality* (Zed Books, 2010).

In addition to these books, there is **a required course reader**, available at Cal Copy. A few readings, noted as such on the syllabus, are available on Blackboard.

Class Attendance and Participation:

Formal or informal discussion will be a feature of every class session, and every student is expected to participate in these discussions. This requires attending class and having done the reading. Class attendance is not mandatory, but pop quizzes and other assignments on the reading will be given throughout the semester, and will account for 25% of your semester grade. I will drop the lowest grade, so you can miss one quiz or other assignment without penalty. In addition, consistent and excellent in-class participation can lead to an extra point or two on the semester grade.

Class Rules:

- *No computers.* I do not allow computers to be used in class.
- *No voice recorders.* Electronically recording lectures is not allowed.
- *No cell phones.* Turn your cell phone off or put it on silent, and do not check it or use it during the class period.
- *No eating in class.* Beverages in spill-proof cups or bottles are fine.

Proper classroom behavior. The classroom is a place for open discussion and debate, but to facilitate this, we all need to abide by certain rules and standards. Most importantly, students are expected to be respectful of other students and of other opinions.

Email. To get in touch with me via email, a special gmail account has been set up: ISCOR301@gmail.com. Please use this address for all communications. Treat emails as short letters, not as long text messages. Use a proper salutation, such as Dear Professor/Dr./Mr. Branch, and use full sentences and correct grammar and spelling.

Disabilities:

Students with disabilities who need special accommodations in class or on tests must make arrangements through Student Disability Services, located at Calpulli Center, Suite 3101, phone number 594-6473, webpage <http://www.sa.sdsu.edu/sds/>.

Grading and Assignments:

Your semester grade will be determined as follows:

- Midterm In-Class Exam: 30%
- Final Take-Home Exam: 45%
- Quizzes & Other Assignments: 25%

Plagiarism and Cheating:

Plagiarism or cheating of any kind will result in failure and will be reported to the University. For the SDSU Academic Senate Policy on plagiarism and cheating, see http://its.sdsu.edu/resources/turnitin/pdf/Plagiarism_AcadSen.pdf. If you have further questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact me or the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities, located at Student Services West, Room 1604, webpage <http://www.sa.sdsu.edu/srr/>.

Reading Schedule

August 31: Introduction

September 2: Introduction to the Northern Uganda War

Allen and Vlassenroot, *LRA: Myth and Reality*, "Introduction." (**Also on Blackboard**)

September 7: Ethnicity in Ugandan Politics

Juma Okuku, "Ethnicity, State Power, and the Democratization Process in Uganda" (2002). (**Reader, also on Blackboard**)

September 9: Ethnicity and Political Crisis in Northern Uganda

Adam Branch, "The Politics of Violence in Northern Uganda" (2010). (**Reader, also on Blackboard**)

September 14: War, Culture, and Colonialism

Finnström, *Living with Bad Surroundings*, Orientations, Chapter 1.

September 16: The Colonial Legacy

Finnström, *Living with Bad Surroundings*, Chapter 2.

September 21: International Dimensions

Anders Sjögren, "Global Power Relations and State Formation in Uganda," in *Globalization, Imperialism, and Resistance* (2007). **(Reader)**

September 23: Donors and the Ugandan State

Andrew Mwenda, "Uganda's Politics of Aid and Violent Conflict," Chapter 2 in A&V, *LRA: Myth and Reality*.

Roger Tangri and Andrew Mwenda, "Politics, Donors and the Ineffectiveness of Anti-Corruption Institutions in Uganda," *Journal of Modern African Studies* (2006). **(Reader)**

September 28: The Holy Spirit Movement

Tim Allen, "Understanding Alice," *Africa* (1991). **(Reader)**

September 30: Daily Life During the War

Finnström, *Living with Bad Surroundings*, Chapters 3-5.

October 5: Healing and the Spirits

Finnström, *Living with Bad Surroundings*, Chapter 6, Reorientations.

October 7: Images of Africa

David Jefferess, "For Sale—Peace of Mind," *Critical Arts* (2002). **(Reader)**

Jan Nederveen Pieterse, "Into the Dark Continent," in *White on Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture* (1995). **(Reader)**

October 12: Images of Northern Uganda

Laura Edmondson, "Marketing Trauma and the Theatre of War in Northern Uganda," *Theatre Journal* (2005). **(Reader)**

Chris Dolan, "Which Children Count?," Conciliation Resources (2002). **(Reader)**

October 14: Invisible Children in Northern Uganda

Watch Movie

October 19: From Myth to Reality

A&V, *The LRA: Myth and Reality*, Chapters 3-5.

October 21: Experiences of LRA Soldiers

A&V, *The LRA: Myth and Reality*, Chapters 6-8.

October 26: The Politics of Humanitarianism

Adam Branch, "Against Humanitarian Impunity," *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* (2008). **(Reader)**

October 28: ***MIDTERM***

November 2: The International Criminal Court: Introduction

Tim Allen, "Amnesty, Peace Talks and Prosecution," in *Trial Justice* (2006). **(Reader)**

Matthew Brubacher, "The ICC Investigation of the Lord's Resistance Army," Chapter 14 in A&V, *The LRA: Myth and Reality*.

November 4: Debating the ICC

Adam Branch, "Uganda's Civil War and the Politics of ICC Intervention," *Ethics & International Affairs* (2007). **(Reader)**

Payam Akhavan, "The Lord's Resistance Army Case," *American Journal of International Law* (2005). **(Reader)**

November 9: Meanings of Reconciliation

Erin Baines, "Complex Political Perpetrators: Reflections on Dominic Ongwen," *Journal of Modern African Studies* (2009). **(Reader)**

Tim Allen, "Bitter Roots: The Invention of Acholi Traditional Justice," Chapter 13 in A&V, *The LRA: Myth and Reality*.

November 16: The Juba Peace Talks

A&V, *The LRA: Myth and Reality*, Chapters 10-11.

November 18: Transitions from War to Peace

Human Rights Focus (Uganda), *Fostering the Transition in Acholiland* (2007). **(Reader)**

November 23: AFRICOM

Jeremy Keenan, "US militarization in Africa," and Catherine Besteman, "Beware of Those Bearing Gifts," *Anthropology Today* (2008). **(Reader)**

November 30: Operation Lightning Thunder

Ronald Atkinson, "From Uganda to the Congo and Beyond: Pursuing the Lord's Resistance Army," International Peace Institute (2009). **(Reader)**

Riek Machar, Letter to Senator John Kerry (2009). **(Reader)**

December 2: American Advocacy and Military Intervention

Texas in Africa Blog Debate **(Blackboard)**

Samar al-Bulushi, "US legislation authorises military action against the LRA in Uganda," *Pambazuka News* (2010). **(Reader)**

Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative, "Letter to President Obama" (2010). **(Reader)**

December 7: Building Peace

Mareike Schomerus and Kennedy Tumutegyeize, "After Operation Lightning Thunder" Conciliation Resources (2009). **(Reader)**

December 9: Review

December 14: *TAKE HOME FINAL EXAM DUE *****