



TEACHER'S GUIDE

THE SCRAMBLE FOR AFRICA Darfur – Intervention and the USA

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About the Book

As massive human suffering continues to engulf the Darfur region of Sudan, the crisis has garnered a rhetorical circus of saber-rattling and hand wringing from Western politicians, media, and activists. Yet such bluster has not halted the violence.

In a careful yet scathing indictment of this constellation of holier-than-thou government leaders, corporate media outlets, and spoon-fed NGOs, Steven Fake and Kevin Funk reveal the myriad ways in which the West has failed Darfur.

Eschewing liberal fantasies of Western benevolence, Fake and Funk unmask the hard reality behind “humanitarian intervention” advocacy, painting a disturbing portrait of Washington’s past and present relations with some of the worst elements in power in Khartoum.

Fake and Funk offer an opportunity to take a fresh, uncorrupted perspective on the crisis and the hope that an international response can play a role in alleviating it. Just such a vantage point is necessary if the West is to offer any true aid to the people of Darfur.

TEACHING AND READING GUIDE

In the Classroom

In delving into the past and current nature of US-Sudanese relations, the book challenges conventional wisdom regarding not only the US reaction to the Darfur conflict, but also the larger role that the US plays in the world. A conflict that seems far away on the surface is instead revealed to hit uncomfortably close to home, a conclusion that the mainstream press infrequently, if ever, acknowledges. What is the historical nature of US involvement in Sudan? What is the status of US-Sudanese relations now? How do the answers to these questions affect our understanding of the Darfur conflict, and what we can do to address it? Should the West forcefully intervene to stop the atrocities, as many have suggested?

Pre-Reading Activity

Have students find and bring in recent news articles or other media that discuss Darfur, or Sudan more generally. Try to piece together and make sense of the conflict from these accounts and clippings. Discuss the history of the Darfur conflict. How do the students feel about Darfur? What do they know about the conflict? What do they see as potential solutions? What can people in the U.S. do to help resolve humanitarian crises in faraway lands?

USING THIS GUIDE

To the Teacher:

Reading and Understanding examines the reader’s comprehension and retention of the book’s contents. Students should refer to the narrative to answer these questions.

Themes and Context encourages students to use the book as a lens into larger ideas, events, and issues. These questions encourage students to think freely and independently on the Darfur conflict and the broader moral and political debates stemming from it.

Teaching Ideas offers projects, essays, and discussion questions for classes in subjects such as: History, Political Science, International Relations, Peace and Conflict Studies, Genocide Studies, and Journalism/Media Studies.

READING AND UNDERSTANDING

Definitions

Ask students to define the following terms with reference to the book: ICC; genocide; Justice and Equality Movement; Sudan Liberation Army; Jafaar Nimeiri; Omar al-Bashir; Salah Abdallah Gosh; UNAMID.

Comprehension

Look at a map of Africa. Locate Sudan, the Darfur region, and also Chad and Egypt. What other countries border Sudan? Identify the Red Sea. Find Sudan's capital city, Khartoum.

World powers have long recognized the strategic value of Sudan, given its geographical location. Why is this the case?

Who was the colonial power in Sudan? What legacy did it leave in the country?

What happened in Sudan in the 1980s? What was the US role in the country at this time, and why?

In what year did the current crisis in Darfur begin? More broadly, in what time periods since Sudanese independence has the country been in conflict? Why?

What are the root causes of the Darfur conflict? Are race, religion, and ethnicity amongst them? Why or why not?

In May 2006, the US-backed Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) was signed by the Sudanese government and the Minni Minnawi faction of the Sudan Liberation Army. What has been the long-term outcome of this agreement?

Colin Powell famously declared that 'genocide' was occurring in Darfur in 2004, making the U.S. the only world power to do so. Why did Washington make this declaration?

Why is it ironic that Washington has been so vocally critical of Khartoum? What is the current nature of US-Sudanese relations?

Describe what caused the U.S. to become openly hostile towards Sudan in the early 1990s, as well as what actions Washington took against Khartoum later that decade. What subsequently caused US-Sudanese relations to warm again?

Define the doctrine of 'humanitarian intervention,' and give examples of interventions that have been justified under humanitarian pretexts. Have these been authentic cases of 'humanitarian' interventions?

What different advocacy groups and political constituencies have been involved in Darfur activism? What are the motivations of these different groups?

What have been the main advocacy points of Darfur activist groups? Have these aims been sensible ones in helping to ease the crisis? Why or why not?

Is Darfur the world's worst humanitarian crisis? What other crises around the world get very little coverage, and why?

Describe the problems facing humanitarian aid organizations in Darfur, as well as those of the African Union (AU) and UNAMID deployments in the region?

Peacekeepers from the UN, and other regional and international bodies, have been deployed in Darfur, as well as in many other conflict zones around the world. Have these forces generally been effective? What has been their record in Darfur? What are their prospects for success?

Why has the Darfur crisis resonated so profoundly in the current political and media climate in the U.S.?

How many Darfurians have been granted asylum in the U.S. since the beginning of the current conflict?

BROADER THEMES AND QUESTIONS

PROBLEMS IN INTERNATIONAL LAW: The Mexican delegate to the founding convention of the UN remarked that the organization's charter would ensure that, "The mice would be disciplined, but the lions would be free." What are the double standards (if any) built into international law? How can major powers be punished for their crimes when international institutions like the UN lack appropriate enforcement mechanisms, and are also reliant on powerful countries for the majority of their funding? Think about how the composition of the UN Security Council, and also some possible avenues for applying justice universally, to both weak and powerful nations.

GENOCIDE: The 'genocide' label has been applied to a wide variety of conflicts and wars, from the Nazi holocaust, to Rwanda, the Srebrenica massacre, and now, by some, to Darfur. Do you find 'genocide' to be an accurate way to describe what is happening, or has happened in Darfur? Why or why not? What should define genocide? And what accounts for the fact that while cases such as Darfur are typically referred to as 'genocide' in the U.S., other crises (such as East Timor) historically have not been?

HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION: The doctrine of intervening in other countries for humanitarian ends sounds noble on the surface, but, as detailed in *Scramble for Africa*, governments have frequently used humanitarian rhetoric to justify invasions undertaken for other motives. Think of some historical (and current) examples of interventions, and how they have been justified to the public – particularly those undertaken by Washington. Under what conditions do you think a non-consensual intervention is acceptable, as a general rule, if any? Is a true 'humanitarian intervention' possible?

MEDIA: Darfur has received significant media attention, though often not in ways that help viewers and readers to understand the conflict (one of the root causes normally given is that it is a fight between "Africans" and "Arabs"; further, the US role is rarely discussed). Given that the press in the U.S. face few formal constraints, why has coverage of Darfur been so lacking? What other examples of international issues can you think of that have not been properly covered in the media?

CHINA AND OIL: China is often the main target of Darfur activists in the U.S., for its alliance with the Sudanese government, centering on China's heavy involvement in Sudan's oil industry. Is this criticism fair? Is it worthwhile for activists in the West to focus so heavily on China, given

the US role in the conflict, and failure to more adequately respond to it? Why does China ally itself with Sudan, and what should China do to satisfy its energy needs? What effect does this competition for natural resources amongst major powers in Africa have upon the local populations of those countries, as well as on the world as a whole?

TEACHING IDEAS

1) Make a map of Sudan. Add major cities, as well as the borders of different regions within the country, such as Darfur and the south. Include information on the ethnic and religious compositions of the peoples in different areas, as well as where the country's natural resources are located. Using press accounts, and information from human rights organizations, add details on the location of refugee camps, and on where attacks are occurring.

Integrate this into a larger map of Africa. Assign different countries to each student, and have them research the dominant political and human rights issues in each nation, as well as their major economic activities. Note if the country is involved in any conflicts, and if it is allied with the U.S., China, or another world power.

Viewing these individual pieces in larger context, map out which areas of the continent are currently experiencing armed conflict, as well as where oil reserves are located, and where the allies of major powers such as the U.S. and China are located.

What trends do they notice? What is the nature of the governments with which the U.S. and China are involved?

2) Hold a debate about how to resolve the Darfur crisis. Have students research the positions of, and then argue on behalf of different stakeholders, including:

- Darfur rebel groups (JEM, SLA, etc.)
- Sudanese government
- Darfurian civilians
- non-Darfurian Sudanese (including southerners and northerners)
- Chinese government
- US government
- Western activist

Issues to debate include holding peace negotiations, the deployment of the UN-AU mission (UNAMID), and the idea of a 'humanitarian intervention' undertaken by the U.S. and other Western powers.

3) Barack Obama campaigned on a pledge to bring "change" to the White House, and in particular to US foreign policy. What is the current status of US-Sudanese relations? What has Obama himself said about Bush administration policies towards Sudan, and how he intends to change them? What have his appointments to his foreign policy team said about Darfur, and what policies are they likely to pursue in relation to the conflict? What do you think the Obama administration will do about Darfur?

FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND READING

Websites

Al Jazeera

<http://english.aljazeera.net/news/africa/>

allAfrica

<http://allafrica.com/sudan/>

Amnesty International

<http://www.amnestyusa.org/darfur/page.do?id=1351050&n1=3&n2=52>

BBC

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/default.stm>

Doctors without Borders

<http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/news/country.cfm?id=2369>

Eric Reeves

<http://www.sudanreeves.org/>

Eyes on Darfur

<http://www.eyesondarfur.org/>

Genocide Intervention Fund

www.GenocideInterventionFund.org

Human Rights Watch

<http://hrw.org/doc?t=africa&c=darfur>

International Crisis Group

www.CrisisGroup.org

Making Sense of Darfur

<http://www.ssrc.org/blogs/darfur/category/darfur/>

NewsNow

<http://www.newsnow.co.uk/h/Current+Affairs/War+&+Terrorism/Wars/Sudan||Darfur>

Resist Africom

http://salsa.democracyinaction.org/o/1552/t/5734/content.jsp?content_KEY=3855

Save Darfur Coalition

www.SaveDarfur.org

Sudan Tribune

<http://www.sudantribune.com/>

Znet

<http://www.zmag.org/znet/places/Africa>

Films and Video

All about Darfur

<http://www.allaboutdarfur.com/>

Darfur Diaries

<http://www.darfurdiaries.org/>

Books

On Darfur and Sudan:

Flint, Julie, and Alex de Waal, *Darfur: A New History of a Long War*, London, Zed Books, 2008.

Johnson, Douglas H., *The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars*, Bloomington, IN, Indiana UP, 2003.

Prunier, Gérard, *Darfur: The Ambiguous Genocide*, Ithaca, NY, Cornell UP, 2005.

Scroggins, Deborah, *Emma's War: An Aid Worker, A Warlord, Radical Islam, and the Politics of Oil-A True Story of Love and Death in Sudan*, New York, Random House, 2002.

On US foreign policy, and international law:

Bennis, Phyllis, *Calling the Shots: How Washington Dominates Today's UN*, New York, Olive Branch P, 2000.

Boutros-Ghali, Boutros, *Unvanquished: A U.S.-U.N. Saga*, New York and London, I.B. Tauris, 1999.