

2022 Winter Lecture Series: Mass Atrocities and the Responsibility to Protect

The Lecture Series will consist of four sessions.

Access: *via Zoom*, on four successive Sundays beginning 2/20/2022

Time: 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM

Format: 45-minute lecture followed by an audience-driven Q&A.

Availability: Recorded lectures and Q & A sessions will be posted by the end of March 2022 on the Unitarian Church YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/unitarianchurchoflincoln

WLS Website: More information <https://www.unitarianlincoln.org/winter-lecture-series.html>

Background:

The UN General Assembly adopted wording in 2005 now referred to as R2P, the responsibility to protect. The language adopted reflects several ideas: that states through their government have a duty to exercise responsible sovereignty by, at a minimum, not allowing mass atrocities; that outside states have a duty to help other states be responsible by acting early through diplomacy to head off trends toward mass atrocity; and that as a last resort the UN Security Council can authorize use of force to stop mass atrocity. Absent this authorization, humanitarian intervention remains illegal. Notably, claiming self-defense for intervention is separate from R2P.

Most observers see the logic of R2P in positive terms. Most observers agree that R2P has not worked well in practice. Our 2022 lecture series examines the evolution of what is called R2P, the reasons for its disappointing impact on world affairs, and whether we can realistically hope for improvements in the future.

Sunday, February 20, 2022, 7:00 PM. *Professor Thomas G Weiss*, The Graduate Center, City University of New York, will present a Zoom lecture on ***the history of the Responsibility to Protect*** (written R2P) as it was developed by the United Nations and as it was subsequently applied, misapplied, and not applied to various conflicts.

Sunday, February 27, 2022, 7:00 PM. *Professor Joshua Landis*, University of Oklahoma, will pay further attention to the ***applicability of the R2P in the current conflicts in Syria and Yemen.***

Sunday, March 6, 2022, 7:00 PM. *Professor Robert Hitchcock*, University of New Mexico, will address ***R2P in Darfur and some other African cases.***

Sunday, March 13, 2022, 7:00 PM. *Professor Parks Coble*, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, will discuss ***R2P in relation to the ongoing conflicts in East Asia including Myanmar and China.***

Speakers' Bios:

Thomas G. Weiss is Distinguished Resident Fellow in global governance at The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, and Presidential Professor of Political Science at the City University of New York's Graduate Center. Among many professional positions Weiss was president of the International Studies Association; chair of the Academic Council on the UN System where he was also editor of its journal *Global Governance*; and director of the Ralph Bunche Institute at CUNY. He was the research director for the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, convened by Canada, which was at the origin of the concept of Responsibility to Protect-- a projected way of anticipating and responding to mass atrocities that was eventually endorsed at the United Nations. He has written more than 50 books and 200 articles on international relations mainly on the topics of the United Nations, global governance, and humanitarian affairs. His textbook on the United Nations, along with co-authors David Forsythe and Roger Coate, appeared in eight editions over a span of 25 years and was referred to as the gold standard for texts on the UN.

Joshua Landis is Professor of Middle Eastern History at the University of Oklahoma in Norman where he holds the Sandra Mackey Chair in Middle East Studies. At OU he is also the Director of the Farzaneh Family Center for Iranian and Persian Gulf Studies as well as the Director of the Center of Middle East Studies. Fluent in Arabic and French, he is an internationally recognized scholar on different aspects of Political Islam and the International Relations of the Middle East. He manifests special expertise on Syria, about which he writes a blog that is followed by a large number of readers. He is widely published in respected journals like *Foreign Affairs*, *Foreign Policy*, and *Middle East Policy* and has written numerous chapters in scholarly books in his areas of expertise. He is often called on to speak at places like the Brookings Institute, Council on Foreign Relations, and US Institute of Peace. He is a frequent commentator on PBS, Al Jazeera, NPR, and the BBC, among other media sources. Awarded three Fulbright grants, his research has also been supported by the Social Science Research Council and other agencies.

Robert K. Hitchcock is Professor of Anthropology at the University of New Mexico. Hitchcock is a world-renowned expert on the cultural anthropology of indigenous peoples with special emphasis on the peoples of Sub-Saharan Africa, most notably the San in the Kalahari Desert of Botswana. He began his academic career in 1983 at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln where he was promoted to Professor of Anthropology and served as chair of the Department of Anthropology and Geography and Director of International Studies. He also directed the UNL human rights program for a time. In 2006 he became Professor and Chair of the Department of Anthropology at Michigan State University, also being associated with African Studies there, before assuming his current position in New Mexico in 2009. He is a prolific author and has earned numerous awards for his field work and scholarship. Hitchcock regularly serves as consultant to international agencies and foundations seeking his expertise in land rights, social displacement, adaptation to drought, mediation and planning. He will address the R2P in Darfur (Sudan and South Sudan) and some other areas of Africa.

Parks Coble is the James S. Sellers Professor of History at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where he has been on the faculty since 1976. His primary area of research is East Asian history with particular emphasis on 20th century China, although he has taught courses on Japan, Korea and Vietnam as well. He has published six books and more than 50 scholarly articles. He has been a visiting fellow at Harvard, Princeton at several universities in both China and Taiwan. Coble has served on the editorial boards of numerous professional journals and has been awarded grants to conduct research on the political history of China, business developments in China and Chinese-Japanese military involvements. He has received several awards as an outstanding teacher and has generously contributed to the education of the local community on Chinese and other Asian affairs. Coble will speak to R2P as it applies to the Chinese suppression of the Uyghurs and the expulsion of the Rohingya from Myanmar (Burma).