

Genocide

Vermont Law School
Spring, 2008
Professors Tracy Bach and Pam Stephens

To prepare for class on Thursday, please purchase the required books and course pack at Barrister's Bookstore: Samantha Power, *A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide*; Luong Ung, *First They Killed My Father*; Elizabeth Neuffer, *The Keys to My Neighbor's House*; and Bach & Stephens, *Genocide Course Pack*.

The first assignment is laid out below. You can also find this (and more) at the syllabus posted on the course TWEN site.

Class #1: Introduction: What is Genocide?

Readings:

Samantha Power, "A Problem from Hell": America and the Age of Genocide, Preface: pp. xi-xxi; Chapters 1-3, pp. 1-45.

The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (December 9, 1948, 78 U.N.T.S. 277).

Thomas W. Simon, *Defining Genocide*, 15 Wis. Int'l L.J. 243 (1996).

William Schabas, *Groups Protected by the Genocide Convention: Conflicting Interpretations from the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda*, 6 ILSA J. Int'l & Comp. L. 375 (2000).

Discussion Questions:

What is the significance of the Treaty Title? How does the treaty define Genocide? More specifically, how do we decide who is a member of the targeted group? Should the definition be expanded to include groups targeted for other reasons? How does the Armenian genocide serve as a precursor to subsequent 20th century genocides? How did genocide become "a crime with a name"? How has U.S. policy toward genocide been shaped by the Convention? Why and how, according to Power, has this policy been "ruthlessly effective"?