IAFS 3000: Special Topics: Humanitarianism

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From zika to the Syrian refugee crisis, humanitarian concerns continue to capture headlines and spur debate over the proper role of the international community in these crises. Yet these questions are not new. Indeed, Bill Clinton has often remarked that one of the biggest regrets of his presidency was the failure of the United States to stop the Rwandan genocide in 1994. And while humanitarian intervention is perhaps most frequently associated with the immediate post-Cold War era, this course will examine a series of case studies before, during, and after the 1990s to better understand the potential and challenges of humanitarian intervention and humanitarian aid. It will also explore the rise of human rights activism from the UN’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 through the boom years of the 1970s and up to the present, delving into the role that individuals, legal institutions, NGOs, and governments have played in shaping the humanitarian order of the twenty-first century.