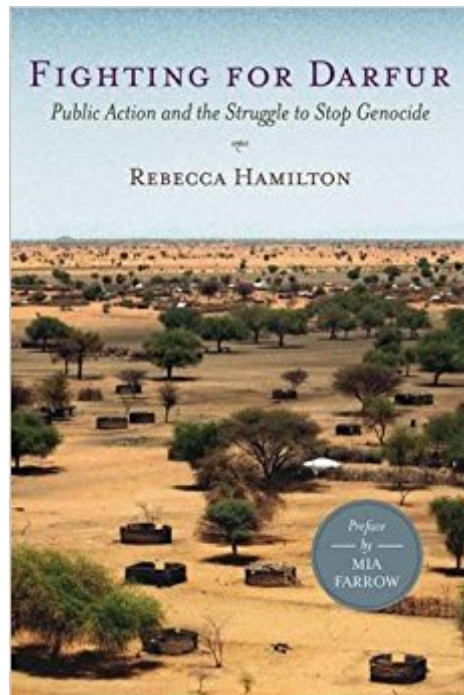




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Fighting For Darfur: Public Action And The Struggle To Stop Genocide



Synopsis

Around the world, millions of people have added their voices to protest marches and demonstrations because they believe that, together, they can make a difference. When we failed to stop the genocide in Rwanda in 1994, we promised to never let such a thing happen again. But nine years later, as news began to trickle out of killings in western Sudan, an area known as Darfur, the international community again faced the problem of how the United Nations and the United States government could respond to mass atrocity. Rebecca Hamilton passionately narrates the six-year grassroots campaign to draw global attention to the plight of Darfur's people. From college students who galvanized entire university campuses in the belief that their outcry could save millions of Darfuris still at risk, to celebrities such as Mia Farrow, who spurred politicians to act, to Steven Spielberg, who boycotted the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, Hamilton details how advocacy for Darfur was an exuberant, multibillion-dollar effort. She then does what no one has done to date: she takes us into the corridors of power and the camps of Darfur, and reveals the impact of ordinary people's fierce determination to uphold the mantra of "never again." Fighting for Darfur weaves a gripping story that both dramatizes our moral dilemma and shows the promise and perils of citizen engagement in a new era of global compassion.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

'My deepest conviction is that we have both a responsibility to remember and a responsibility to protect. Genocide is not inevitable or unstoppable - unless we choose to let it happen.' - Mia Farrow, from the Foreword 'Rebecca Hamilton is the model of an 'upstander,' one who raises her voice and

acts when people - whether near or far, Western or African - are most in need of help.' - LGen. the Honourable Romeo A. Dallaire, author of Shake Hands with the Devil 'A masterful feat of original research and reporting, Fighting for Darfur is an authoritative account of the impact of the first sustained citizens' movement against genocide. With Hamilton's fierce determination to get beyond self-congratulatory slogans and taken-for-granted assumptions about what is required to save lives at risk, she provides insights that will be invaluable for concerned citizens, human rights advocates and policymakers alike for years and years to come. Essential reading for anyone who wants to help build a better world.' -Jody Williams, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, founding coordinator of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines

Rebecca Hamilton is a special correspondent for The Washington Post in Sudan with support from the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting and a fellow at the New America Foundation. In 2007 she was selected as a Global Young Leader on genocide Prevention for spearheading the campaign for Harvard University to divest from companies doing business with Sudan and working with internally displaced populations in Sudan. She worked for the prosecution at the International Criminal Court in The Hague, including work on their historic Darfur cases. Currently a resident of New York, Hamilton is a graduate of Harvard Law School and the Harvard Kennedy School, as a former Open Society fellow.

Having time and energy over the past years organizing support for various causes (some successful, some much less so) I am intrigued with Rebecca Hamilton's experience and her analysis of it in "Fighting for Darfur". Regarding her use of the term "genocide", naming is essential to disseminating one's views about something. If one gets there first and is able to create or control the name it can be very powerful. For example, if one calls the conflict in Darfur genocide inflicted by the regime in Khartoum then not opposing Khartoum makes one implicit in genocide. Organized, large scale slaughter of civilians, while horrifying and immoral, may not call for military intervention that could result in more death and greater destruction. Genocide will always come under the doctrine of Responsibility to Protect (R2P) so what we call it is important. Years ago we used a lot of loaded terms, almost always inaccurately "fascism was the genocide of the day" and in doing so weakened the authority we had developed through organizing. Hamilton is an indefatigable advocate and a good organizer but the "Save Darfur" movement showed how limited first world political organizing can be in trying to deal with Third/Developing world issues.

In *Fighting for Darfur*, author Bec Hamilton, combines inquisition and an investigative eye for complexities of the Darfur crisis in Sudan. With exemplary clarity and thoroughness, Ms. Hamilton offers an incisive historical account and examination of the genocidal crisis in Darfur and the causes and effects of the crisis. This is a remarkably comprehensive engagement and a timely call on our conscience to better understand how we can deal with ethnic conflicts, genocide, and policy choices that have resulted in devastating catastrophe. Ms. Hamilton's exclusive interviews are quite revealing and provocative as she tackles and debates the issues of nationalism, governance, food security; while placing those debates by theorizing about Sudan's future in lieu of its past and present. I have read several books about the Sudan and I covered the region quite a bit as a journalist in the 1990s. This text is one of the most successful contribution to the literature and it shows Hamilton's great adaptability and versatility in covering the region and country as special correspondent for major national media and think tanks. The reviewer, YUSUF KALYANGO, is an Africanist and an international media scholar. He teaches at Ohio University in the E. W. Scripps School of Journalism. He is the author of a book titled "African Media and Democratization: Public Opinion, Ownership and Rule of Law" (2011).

"*Fighting for Darfur*" chronicles the story of the Darfur advocacy movement from its inception to its rise as the one of the most powerful social movements of the previous decade. Hamilton uses her extraordinary access to everyone from former Secretary of State Colin Powell to Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir's chief advisers to supply insider accounts from the U.S. government, the U.N., the International Criminal Court, the Sudanese government, and advocacy organizations like Save Darfur and the Genocide Intervention Network. "*Fighting for Darfur*" is much more than a blow-by-blow account of the movement, however. Throughout the book, Hamilton incisively analyzes the options available to both activists and those in power. It is often sobering. Activists who lacked even a basic knowledge of Sudan's history and politics consistently prioritized peacekeepers over creating conditions for a political settlement that would ensure peacekeepers could actually protect civilians. In the end, they got neither. Although Samantha Power's "A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide" posited that a domestic constituency for international human rights issues could ensure their peaceful resolution, Hamilton persuasively argues that although such a constituency is necessary for bringing such conflicts to the fore, they are insufficient in world where BRIC countries and others provide alternatives to American economic and political support. As someone who participated in the movement, this book is a painful but necessary corrective to the often blithely self-celebratory narratives that activists of all kinds tell themselves,

which all but preclude the possibility of effective action in the future. Activists, Hamilton suggests, need to start thinking more carefully about core principles before gearing up for their next campaign. Despite the word "Darfur" in the book's title, "Fighting for Darfur" has lessons that are applicable to a broader readership, even to those activists working on issues wholly unrelated to human rights. In the same way that histories of the Civil Rights Movement are still studied around the world for lessons on effecting political change, so Hamilton's book provides critical insights that I think will prove salutary for activists of all stripes.

This book is a must-read for "movement builders" in any field - and any foreign policy professional. It is a fascinating, behind-the-scenes look at the US government's decision-making process on Sudan and at the genesis of the mass movement that made Darfur a domestic policy issue in America. Hamilton challenges her former academic mentor (and Pulitzer Prize-winning author) Samantha Power's assertion that a lack of domestic political will for involvement is the barrier to stopping genocide abroad by outlining the growth and influence of the Darfur mass movement and contrasting it with outcomes - or lack thereof - on the ground in Sudan. For those who believe that building a movement is enough - or that every action has an equal and opposite reaction in the world of international politics - this book serves as a necessary deconstruction to those notions, while also providing advocates and policymakers alike with examples of what does and does not actually create real change on the ground.

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