Beasts of No Nation

A very real look at war from the point of view of the fighters themselves, but the start of the movie shows how war and conflict affects civilian lives and how they often are caught up in the conflict/crossfire   
-> No school because of the war  
-> “We will be crushed between the rebels and the army”  
 -> People clamouring to flee, knowing that if they stay their lives might be in danger

In war, the people are only seen as right or wrong? Either you’re for or against either faction. The scene where the commandant asks Agu to shoot the man, but he claims he’s only a university student there to help fix the bridge and begs for his life, but the commandant sees him as a conspirator for the other faction. There’s no middle ground, even the civilians are caught up in the conflict.

The children being forced to fight. One very powerful line was when Agu asked Strika “are you liking war?” and Strika shakes his head. Why are they fighting? The soldiers themselves don’t even know why they are fighting. Especially prominent in the final scene when the soldiers leave the commandant, who sticks strongly to his ideals.

General tone and visuals are very dark/gritty. A lot of earthy tones used.

Hotel Rwanda

A lot of similar themes with Beasts of No Nation, although the film explores it more of the view of civilians caught up in the conflict. Most strikingly the refugee problem caused by war due to civilians not wanting to be caught up in the war.

Interestingly this film highlights the problem with war in non-Western nations, in that the countries that has more power to intervene would tend not to -> no vested interest? One point of the film states that the French supplies the Hutu army – shows that the west are only involved when there are economic benefits to reap, but when it comes to devoting manpower and resources to help prevent conflict from escalating, most countries are not willing.

The reporter telling Paul that even if the world sees the footage of the massacre, they would “continue to eat their dinners” -> the world would be “horrified”, but does nothing more to help, generally apathic.

Blood Diamond

The war aspect is not as prominent as the other two films, feels like the war is merely the setting/pushed as the background of the story. However, some interesting things to note:

* The presence of local militia to protect their homes/villages. This was quite interesting, as it presents another view of civilians caught in the conflict. If they choose not to/cannot run away, they are forced to fight to protect themselves, although they are not aligned with any side of the conflict.
* Touches on the horrors of child soldiers as well, especially in the scene in the orphanage/school.
* Conflict -> exploitation of refugees. Forced to mine for diamonds to supply for the war.

Papers, Please

Interesting game with fictional nations, naming conventions seem to reference Russian/Eastern European countries.

Not much of war, but touches on civil unrest within Arstotzka (EZIC and the local government) as well as tension and conflicts between Arstotzka and other nations (more prominently Kolechia)

More political aspect to it rather than the civil/military aspect – Border control, relationships with other nations, insurgent groups etc

This war of mine

Very focused on the impact of war and conflict within the civilians themselves. Players take the point of view of civilians that are caught up in the war, with limited supplies and having to scavenge for supplies.

One interesting aspect of the game is that other than conditions like “hunger” and “tiredness”, the game also includes “sad” and “depressed”, showing how war can negatively affect the psyche of civilians.

Very real choices – you can choose to help one another or you can attack other people to secure supplies/food/weapons. Shows how people have to resort to desperate measures to survive.

Aesthetics – very dark/gloomy. Fits into the whole narrative or war/conflict.