**<EIA 1700008 Christopher J. Finlay>**If people have a right to rebel against domestic tyranny, wrongful foreign occupation, or colonial rule, then the normative principles commonly invoked to deal with civil conflicts present a problem. While rebels in some cases might justifiably try to secure human rights by resort to violence, the three normative pillars dealing with armed force provide at best only a partial reflection of the ethics of armed revolt. This article argues that (first) the concept of “terrorism” and the ongoing attempt to define it in international law, (second) the laws of war and their application to armed conflict, and (third) the Responsibility to Protect all obscure as much as clarify the problem. Given the prevalence of political oppression and the occurrence of civil conflicts originating in attempts to confront it, there is therefore a pressing need to establish a place for the rights of rebellion in the international normative architecture. **Keywords:** right to rebel; revolution; armed resistance; terrorism; law of war; International Humanitarian Law; Responsibility to Protect; Michael Ignatieff; John Stuart Mill; Syrian civil war