

INTD 497 – Fall 2021  
3 credit hours

Location: ARTS W-120  
Schedule: WF 2:35–3:55pm

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Office:  
Office hours: W 5:30–7:30pm and by appt.

## Global Human Rights: Activists, Institutions, and Social Movements



### Course Description

Today, the discourse of human rights is as powerful as it is ubiquitous. Yet from a global history perspective, “human rights” are a surprisingly recent phenomenon. What is more, their rise to prominence was no more steady than smooth. This course will introduce you to this contested history. Focusing on “human rights” as both a moral and legal concept, it will trace their origins in humanitarian and rights discourses leading up to the defining 1948 United Nations “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” and the global “breakthrough” of human rights in the 1970s. It will then turn to a series of milestones in the global history of human rights, with attention to cases that failed to shape their conceptualization and implementation as much as the ones that did. Finally, it will examine a selection of case studies in the global history of human rights.

By uncovering the “jumps and discontinuities” that characterize the global history of human rights, this course makes a case for bringing history into dialogue with political and legal theory. Doing so helps situate ideas within their historical context. It also reveals how historical events and processes not only shaped the concept, but also informed the enactment, of human rights. Accordingly, this course will pay as much attention to practice as to theory, and so will turn the spotlight on the activists, institutions, and social movements that enabled human rights to go “global.”

## Course Readings and Materials

**myCourses:** All course readings and materials will be available online through myCourses

## Course Format

**Lectures** will give you a chronological and thematic overview of the global history of human rights, along with the conceptual framework for understanding these.

**Course readings and materials** will provide you with in-depth analyses of (readings) and historical perspectives on (documents) key aspects of the events and processes covered in lectures. You will be expected to work through the course readings and materials assigned for each week *ahead* of that week's scheduled class meetings.

A portion of in-class time will be dedicated to **class activities and discussion** aimed at enabling you to 1. clarify and solidify your comprehension of assigned readings and course materials, and 2. draw connections between these and lecture content.

## Assignments

- Midterm Exam: 30%
- Final Project Proposal: 10%
- Final Project
  - Human Rights Report: 40%
  - Human Rights Campaign: 10%
- Participation: 10%

### Personal Statement:

Due: **Wednesday, September 15 by 11:59pm**

To help me, your T.A., and your classmates get to know you, write 100-250 words about yourself: your preferred name and pronouns, and anything else you'd like to share (ex. where you call home, your non-academic interests, something surprising about you, etc.). Please also share why you're taking this class (including topics and countries you're most interested in) and whether you have any previous academic or activist experience with human rights.

Your personal statement will count toward your participation grade.

### Take-Home Midterm Exam: 30%

Due: **Sunday, October 10 by 11:59pm**

Short essay format. Will cover content from weeks 1-5.

### Final Project Proposal: 10%

Due: **Sunday, November 14 by 11:59pm**

Outline and Annotated Bibliography.

Length: 2-3 pages double-spaced, 12 pt. font

### Final Project: 50%

Due: **Monday, December 6 by 11:59pm**

Human Rights Report (40%)

Human Rights Campaign Design (10%)

Length: 12-15 pages double-spaced, 12 pt. font

### Participation: 10%

In addition to your personal statement, your participation grade will reflect attendance and active involvement in discussion of the course readings and materials.

**\* Extension and Late Assignment Policy \***

**Extensions** will be granted only in exceptional circumstances (medical, family, or other emergencies) and you may be asked to provide documentation in support of your request. Last-minute requests are strongly discouraged – if you're struggling with any aspect of the course, I encourage you to reach out to me sooner rather than later.

5% (out of 100%) will be deducted from your assignment grade for every day it is late. Assignments will not be accepted and will earn a grade of 0% more than 5 days after the deadline.

## Part I. Toward Global Human Rights

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### Week 1. Introduction and Defining “Global Human Rights”

**Dates** Wednesday, September 1  
Friday, September 3

#### Readings

- Steve J. Stern and Scott Straus, “Embracing Paradox: Human Rights in the Global Age,” in *The Human Rights Paradox: Universality and its Discontents*, edited by Steve J. Stern and Scott Straus (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2014), 3-28.
- Makau Mutua, *Human Rights: A Political and Cultural Critique* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 154-157. (Conclusion)

#### Documents

- United Nations General Assembly, “The Universal Declaration of Human Rights” (1948), <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>
  - United Nations General Assembly, “International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights” (1966), <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/ccpr.pdf> (*skim*)
  - United Nations General Assembly, “International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights” (1966), <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/cescr.pdf> (*skim*)
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### Week 2. Humanity and Rights Before Human Rights

**Dates** Wednesday, September 8  
Friday, September 10

#### Readings

- Lynn Hunt, “The Paradoxical Origins of Human Rights,” in *Human Rights and Revolutions*, edited by Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom et. al., 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2007), 3-20.
- Jenny S. Martinez, “The Anti-Slavery Movement and the Rise of International Non-Governmental Organizations,” in *The Oxford Handbook of International Human Rights Law*, edited by Dinah Shelton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 222-249.

## Documents

- Rudyard Kipling, “The White Man’s Burden: The United States and the Philippine Islands [1899]” *Modern History Sourcebook*, <https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/mod/Kipling.asp>
  - Edward D. Morel, “The Black Man’s Burden [1903]” (excerpt): <https://web.viu.ca/davies/H479B.Imperialism.Nationalism/Morel.BlackMansBurden.htm>
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## Week 3. The 1940s and the World War II Conjuncture

→ Personal Statement due Wednesday, September 15 by 11:59pm

**Dates** Wednesday, September 15  
Friday, September 17

## Readings

- Kathryn Sikkink, *Mixed Signals: U.S. Human Rights Policy and Latin America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), 23-47. (Chapter 2. “The Idea of Internationally Recognized Human Rights”)
- G. Daniel Cohen, “The Holocaust and the ‘Human Rights Revolution’: A Reassessment,” in *The Human Rights Revolution: An International History*, edited by Akira Iriye et. al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 53-71.

## Documents

- Ho Chi Minh, “Declaration of Independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, 1945,” in *The Human Rights Reader: Major Political Essays, Speeches, and Documents from Ancient Times to the Present*, edited by Micheline R. Ishay (New York: Routledge, 2007), 324-325.
  - M. K. Gandhi, “A Letter Addressed to the Director-General of Unesco by Mahatma Gandhi,” in *Human Rights: Comments and Interpretations*, edited by UNESCO (New York: Columbia University Press, 1949), 18.
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## Week 4. The 1960s and Decolonization

**Dates** Wednesday, September 22  
Friday, September 24

### Readings

- Steven L. B. Jensen, *The Making of International Human Rights: The 1960s, Decolonization, and the Reconstruction of Global Values* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 102-137.

### Documents

- African National Congress (ANC), “The Freedom Charter [1955],” <http://www.sahistory.org.za/article/freedom-charter>
- Kwame Nkrumah, “Speech on Decolonization at the United Nations, 1960,” in *The Human Rights Reader: Major Political Essays, Speeches, and Documents from Ancient Times to the Present*, edited by Micheline R. Ishay (New York: Routledge, 2007), 325-326.
- United Nations General Assembly, “International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination [1965],” <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/cerd.pdf>

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## Week 5. The 1970s and the “Breakthrough” of Global Human Rights

**Dates** Wednesday, September 29  
Friday, October 1

### Readings

- Samuel Moyn, *Human Rights and the Uses of History* (New York: Verso, 2017), 158-187. (Chapter 6. “Human Rights in History”)
- Simon Stevens, “Why South Africa? The Politics of Anti-Apartheid Activism in Britain in the Long 1970s,” in *The Breakthrough: Human Rights in the 1970s*, edited by Jan Eckel and Samuel Moyn (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 204-225.

### Documents

- Nelson Mandela, “Acceptance and Nobel Lecture, 10 December 1993,” <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/1993/mandela/26130-nelson-mandela-nobel-lecture-1993/>
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## Part II. Milestones in Global Human Rights

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### Week 6. Amnesty International and the Global Campaign Against Torture

→ Take-Home Midterm due Sunday, October 10 by 11:59pm

**Dates** Wednesday, October 6  
Friday, October 8

#### Readings

- Barbara Keys, “Anti-Torture Politics: Amnesty International, the Greek Junta, and the Origins of the Human Rights ‘Boom’ in the United States,” in *The Human Rights Revolution: An International History*, edited by Akira Iriye et. al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 201-221.

#### Documents

- Amnesty International, “Situation in Greece: Report by Amnesty International [1968],” <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/204000/eur250011968en.pdf>
  - James Becket, *Barbarism in Greece: A Young American Lawyer’s Inquiry into the Use of Torture in Contemporary Greece, with Case Histories and Documents* (New York: Walker, 1970), vii-xiv, 1-27, 59-65.
  - Amnesty International, “Report on Allegations of Torture in Brazil” (1974), <https://library.brown.edu/create/wecannotremainsilent/wp-content/uploads/sites/43/2012/11/amnestyreport.pdf>
  - Film: *Brazil: A Report on Torture*, directed by Haskell Wexler and Saul Landau (1971), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6aUu-zGGg08>
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### Week 7. No Class

**Dates** Wednesday, October 13: *Fall Reading Break*  
Friday, October 15: *Tuesday Schedule*

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## Week 8. Eastern European Activists

**Dates** Wednesday, October 20  
Friday, October 22

### Readings

- Robert Horvath, “‘The Solzhenitsyn Effect’: East European Dissidents and the Demise of the Revolutionary Privilege,” *Human Rights Quarterly*, 29: 4 (November 2007): 879-907.
- Robert Brier, “Adam Michnik’s Understanding of Totalitarianism and the West European Left: A Historical and Transnational Approach to Dissident Political Thought,” *East European Politics & Societies* 25:2 (May 2011): 197-218.

### Documents

- Charter 77, “Declaration of Charter 77,” *Making the History of 1989*, Item #628, <http://chnm.gmu.edu/1989/items/show/628>

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## Week 9. Latin American Social Movements

**Dates** Wednesday, October 27  
Friday, October 29

### Readings

- Brenda Elsey, “‘As the World Is My Witness’: Transnational Chilean Solidarity and Popular Culture,” in *Human Rights and Transnational Solidarity in Latin America*, edited by Jessica Stites Mor (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013), 177-208.
- Marysa Navarro, “The Personal is Political: Las Madres de Plaza de Mayo,” in *Power and Protest: Latin American Social Movements*, edited by Susan Eckstein (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989), 241-258.

### Documents

- Maria and Matthew Posner, “Testimonies of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, 1996” in *Sources for Latin America in the Modern World*, ed. Nicola Foote (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 273-278.
  - “The International Press and the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo: the Other Side of the 1978 World Cup,” <http://papelitos.com.ar/nota/la-prensa-internacional-y-las-madres-de-plaza-de-mayo>
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## Week 10. Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect

**Dates** Wednesday, November 3  
Friday, November 5

### Readings

- Samantha Power, *A Problem from Hell: America in the Age of Genocide* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), xi-xxi, 87-154. (Preface and Chapter 6. Cambodia: “Helpless Giant”)

### Documents

- Philip Gourevitz, “After the Genocide,” *The New Yorker*, 18 December 1995, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1995/12/18/after-the-genocide>
- United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect, “When to Refer to a Situation as Genocide,” <http://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/publications-and-resources/GuidanceNote-When%20to%20refer%20to%20a%20situation%20as%20genocide.pdf>
- Kofi Annan, “Secretary-General Presents his Annual Report to General Assembly [20 September 1999],” <https://www.un.org/press/en/1999/19990920.sgsm7136.html>

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## Week 11. Human Rights Trials

→ Take-Home Midterm due Sunday, November 14 by 11:59pm

**Dates** Wednesday, November 10  
Friday, November 12

### Readings

- Ellen Lutz and Kathryn Sikkink, “The Justice Cascade: The Evolution and Impact of Foreign Human Rights Trials in Latin America,” *Chicago Journal of International Law* 2:1 (Spring 2001): 1-33.
- Patrick Vinck and Phuong N. Pham, “Consulting Survivors: Evidence from Cambodia, Northern Uganda, and Other Countries Affected by Mass Violence,” in *The Human Rights Paradox: Universality and its Discontents*, edited by Steve J. Stern and Scott Straus (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2014), 107-124.

## Documents

- Amnesty International, “How General Pinochet’s Detention Changed the Meaning of Justice,” 16 October 2003, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2013/10/how-general-pinochets-detention-changed-meaning-justice/>
- *Granito: How to Nail a Dictator*, directed by Pamela Yates, Peter Kinoy and Paco de Onis (2011; Brooklyn: Skylight Pictures).

## Part III. Case Studies in Global Human Rights

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### Week 12. Women’s Human Rights

**Dates** Wednesday, November 17  
Friday, November 19

#### Readings

- Marina Prieto-Carrón, Marilyn Thomson and Mandy Macdonald, “No More Killings! Women Respond to Femicides in Central America,” *Gender & Development* 15:1 (March 2007): 25-40.
- Paulina García-Del Moral, “The Murders of Indigenous Women in Canada as Femicides: Toward a Decolonial Intersectional Reconceptualization of Femicide,” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 43: 4 (2018): 929-954.

#### Documents

- Ni Una Menos (Not One Less), “Call to International Women’s Strike (2017),” in *Burn It Down! Feminist Manifestos for the Revolution*, edited by Breanne Fahs (London, New York: Verso Books, 2020).
  - Elisabeth Jay Friedman and Constanza Tabbush, “#NiUnaMenos: Not One Woman Less, Not One More Death!,” NACLA.org, 11 January 2016, <https://nacla.org/news/2016/11/01/niunamenos-not-one-woman-less-not-one-more-death>
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### Week 13. Indigenous Human Rights

**Dates** Wednesday, November 24  
Friday, November 26

#### Readings

- Dinah Shelton, “The Inter-American Human Rights Law of Indigenous Peoples,” *University of Hawai’i Law Review* 35:937 (2013): 937-949, 968-982.
- Shannon Speed, “Gendered Intersections: Collective and Individual Rights in Indigenous Women’s Experience,” in *Human Rights: An Anthropological Reader*, edited by Mark Goodale (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 229-245.

#### Documents

- “African [Banjul] Charter on Human and People’s Rights (Adopted, 1981; Entry into Force, 1986),” in *The Human Rights Reader: Major Political Essays, Speeches, and Documents from Ancient Times to the Present*, edited by Micheline R. Ishay (New York: Routledge, 2007), 533-538.
  - Rigoberta Menchú Tum, “Nobel Peace Prize Lecture” (1992), *The Nobel Prize*, <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/1992/tum/lecture/>
  - Truth and Reconciliation of Canada, “Calls to Action [2012],” [https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/indigenous-people/aboriginal-peoples-documents/calls\\_to\\_action\\_english2.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/indigenous-people/aboriginal-peoples-documents/calls_to_action_english2.pdf)
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### Week 14. Corporations, Human Rights, and the Environment

**Dates** Wednesday, December 1  
Friday, December 3

#### Documents

- “Choc v. HudBay Minerals Inc. & Caal v. HudBay Minerals Inc.,” <http://www.chocversushudbay.com/>
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### Week 15. Final Project

→ Final Project due Monday, December 6 by 11:59pm

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*As the instructor of this course, I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and the [Office for Students with Disabilities](#), 514-398-6009*

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