POLS UN3961. International Politics Seminar:  
Debating Human Rights

Fall 2016 -- meets Thursdays, 10:10–12:00, in 711 International Affairs  
Jack Snyder -- office: 1327 IAB; office hours: Weds. 2:00-4:00.  
jls6@columbia.edu, 854-8290.  

Themes: Debates among social scientists and activists about the circumstances that affect human  
rights outcomes and strategies for strengthening human rights. Although the seminar has no  
prerequisites, it is designed to build on C3001, Introduction to Human Rights. Students who  
have taken C3001 may have already read some of the required readings, and those who have not  
will need to catch up.

Requirements: One paper, about 25 pages. A great deal of flexibility will be allowed regarding  
topics and formats. One possible format is to use case studies to test a theoretically grounded  
argument. Historical cases are appropriate, though their relevance to contemporary issues should  
be explained. Students may do policy options papers, though these should be informed by  
relevant theories. Paper proposals will be discussed in small groups in my office at times to be  
arranged during the third week of October. Rough or partial drafts of your paper will be  
discussed in the first week of December. The final version of the paper is due on December 15.  
Late papers will be penalized.

Readings: Required readings on reserve at Lehman Library or on electronic reserve on  
courseworks. Some but not all supplementary readings are also on reserve. Asterisk (*) indicates  
a paperback ordered at the Book Culture bookstore, 536 W.112 St. Most required articles and  
some individual book chapters are on the Columbia library web course reserves.

September 8. INTRODUCTION AND COURSE OVERVIEW

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, access document and supporting materials at  
http://ccnmtl.columbia.edu/projects/mmt/udhr/  
and Future,” in Human Rights Futures, typescript of introductory chapter (Cambridge  
University Press, forthcoming), all chapters on electronic reserve.

SUPPLEMENTARY:

Samantha Power, A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide, chapter 10 on  
the Rwanda genocide—or read Power, “Bystanders to Genocide: Why the United States Let  

January 29. DEBATING HUMAN RIGHTS

*Aryeh Neier, The International Human Rights Movement: A History (Princeton:  
Samuel Moyn, “Human Rights and the Crisis of Liberalism,” in Human Rights Futures,  
typescript of chapter.


SUPPLEMENTARY:

September 15. MAINSTREAM APPROACHES AND THEIR CRITICS

*Beth A. Simmons, Mobilizing for Human Rights: International Law in Domestic Politics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 12-17 (overview of argument) and Ch. 7, pp. 256-306, on the torture convention.
*Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics (Cornell University Press, 1998), ch. 1, 2, 3, 5.
Christopher Fariss, "Respect for Human Rights has Improved over Time," American Political Science Review (May 2014).

SUPPLEMENTARY:
James Ron and David Crow, “Public Attitudes Towards Human Rights Organizations: Honest Brokers, Imperial Handmaidens, or Counter-Hegemons?” manuscript (ask Snyder).

September 22. THE HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF RIGHTS IDEAS

*Lynn Hunt, Inventing Human Rights, especially introduction, ch. 1 & 2, pp. 15-112
*Samuel Moyn, The Last Utopia, especially chapter 3, pp. 84-119.

SUPPLEMENTARY:

**September 29. CONDITIONS FACILITATING COMPLIANCE**


**SUPPLEMENTARY:**


**October 6. BACKLASH AGAINST RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE**


**SUPPLEMENTARY:**


Goldstone report on alleged war crimes in Gaza at [http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrccouncil/specialsession/9/factfindingmission.htm](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrccouncil/specialsession/9/factfindingmission.htm)


Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Committee Study of the Central Intelligence Agency's Detention and Interrogation Program, [http://www.intelligence.senate.gov/study2014/sscistudy1.pdf](http://www.intelligence.senate.gov/study2014/sscistudy1.pdf)

October 13. CULTURAL UNIVERSALISM AND CULTURAL RELATIVISM


SUPPLEMENTARY:


October 20. RELIGION AND RIGHTS

SUPPLEMENTARY:


Lila Abu Lughod, Do Muslim Women Need Saving? (Harvard).

November 3. NO CLASS. SMALL GROUP MEETINGS.

Meet in small groups with me at a mutually convenient time during the period Oct. 18-Nov. 1 to discuss your term paper proposal. The proposal should be about three pages. Generally speaking, it should state (1) what question you are asking, (2) why it is important for theory and/or policy, (3) what hypothesis you expect to advance, (4) what alternative hypotheses you will address, and (5) what evidence you will examine to prove your argument. Provide footnotes or brief bibliography.


SUPPLEMENTARY:

Gary King, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba, Designing Social Inquiry, widely used social science methods text.

Henry Brady and David Collier, Rethinking Social Inquiry. Qualitative and mixed-methods critique of and amendment to KKV.

November 10. CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS: ELECTIONS AND SELF-DETERMINATION


SUPPLEMENTARY:


Nov. 17. CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS: FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND MEDIA


SUPPLEMENTARY:
Marc Lynch, books, blog posts, etc., on Arab media.

**December 1. ECONOMIC RIGHTS: WOMEN’S AND CHILDREN’S RIGHTS**


SUPPLEMENTARY:
*Shareen Hertel, Unexpected Power* (Cornell), ch. 3-4, pp. 31-85.
Elizabeth Herger Boyle, *Female Genital Cutting: Cultural Conflict in the Global Community* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 2002), chapter 7 (e-book).

**Dec. 8. DEBATING THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT**

SUPPLEMENTARY:


Walzer, Just and Unjust Wars, chapter on humanitarian intervention.


Scott Straus, The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda, ch. 2-6.