Human Rights in Action

We will examine the role played by NGOs and global civil society in international human rights campaigns. We will examine in detail the campaigns to abolish slavery, torture, apartheid, and genocide, to regulate hostilities, and to endow prisoners of conscience and minorities with civil rights and women and children with civil and social rights.

Required Readings:


Course Requirements: Class participation (25%); presentation in class (25%); and research paper (50%). Extra credit is available for reporting on a human rights campaign from the daily press.

Seminar paper schedule:

(a) October 17: submit a paragraph in which you outline the (i) human right to be studied; (ii) NGO(s) under study; (iii) human rights campaign under study.

(b) October 31: bring printed slides to consultation and explain your research project.

(c) November 7 - December 5: (i) email your fellow students and me 1-2 readings to introduce us to your chosen NGO & campaign, one week before your presentation. (ii) Present seminar paper in seminar.

(d) December 5: submit your revised seminar paper (students who present that day, have until the 10th to submit their paper).
Resources:


[https://www.ohchr.org/EN/pages/home.aspx](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/pages/home.aspx) The website of the UN Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights provides access to all UN human rights treaties (instruments) as well as the texts of all treaty monitoring committee reports.


Class Meetings:

October 3: Introduction: Origins, Institutions, Critiques


October 10: Prisoners of Conscience, Global Civil Society, NGOs

Marlies Glasius & Doutje Lettinga, “Global Civil Society and Human Rights,” in Goodhart, pp.147-162.


Brysk, “Historical Repertoires: Attention Must be Paid,” pp.41-54.


**October 17: Trafficking, Women and Children’s Rights**


Becker, “Campaigning to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers,” pp.11-31


**October 24: Media & Lessons**


Brysk, “Constructing Political Will: Another World is Possible,” pp.197-212.

October 31: Consult.

November 7: Student presentations.

November 14: Student presentations.

November 21: Student presentations.

November 28: Student presentations.

December 5: Student presentations.