

Preliminary DRAFT

**PJS 535/LWIC 527
Human Rights Advocacy (3 Units)
Spring Semester 2020**

Mondays, 9:05 to 11:55, KIPJ 247

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Office Hours:

Tuesdays from 10 to 3

Course Description

In the brief span of 60 years, human rights advocates have taken a marginal utopian ideal, and transformed it into a critical component of global discourse, even if dilemmas in practice and gaps in enforcement remain conspicuous. This course examines the actors and organizations behind this remarkable development as well as the vast challenges faced by advocates today. Topics of study will cover the ethical and strategic dilemmas faced by of modern-day human rights advocates; techniques and strategies central to human rights practice, including fact-finding, interviewing, monitoring, litigation, report writing, and media work; and the role of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in transnational legal and policy processes. This course will also examine debates about the ways in which modern human rights advocates are attempting to stretch the discourse to apply it in new contexts, including attempts to link human rights to the environment, corruption, natural resource extraction, and development. The course will contain a substantial critical and academic component, but will also seek to engage students in “real-world” skill building exercises like press release writing, media interviews, and qualitative interviews with victims of and witnesses to human rights violations.

Course Organization and Goals

This course will introduce students to human rights advocacy on three interwoven levels:

First, students will examine the actors, subjects, and tools of the modern human rights movement, as well as critiques coming from left and right. The complexity of actors and influences in the human rights advocacy process—local, national, and international—will be highlighted.

Second, students will engage in a series of role-play and simulated advocacy exercises that will allow them to hone skills essential to real-world human rights advocacy, including interviewing of witnesses and working with and through the media.

Third, students will produce advocacy documents similar to those used in NGOs around the world, requiring engagement in intensive country and issue monitoring throughout the semester with an eye towards the production of op-eds, human rights briefs, and internal strategy and planning memos.

Learning Objectives:

1. Analyze and critique the range of existing advocacy practices in the field of human rights through a combination of research, critical reflection, and practical skill building; Evaluate the tradeoffs, tensions, and debates that surround the choice between different advocacy options.
2. Evaluate the various levels at which human rights advocacy interventions can or need to take place, including the possibly complementary or contradictory roles to be played by local, national, and international actors.
3. Apply and hone the skills necessary to human rights advocacy, including interview skills, planning and executing a human rights mission, effectively working with the media, and annual strategic planning for a human rights campaign.
4. Continue to analyze and evaluate research and advocacy initiatives from the field, so as to foster their own learning and that of others who are committed to being more effective in their work.

Please Note: This syllabus is a road map to get us started, not a final contract carved in stone. The instructor reserves the right to alter requirements and/or course content throughout the semester based on his assessment of student needs and attainment of learning objectives.

Academic Integrity: As part of this class, you are required to read USD's academic integrity policy: http://home.sandiego.edu/~kaufmann/USD_academic_integrity.html. I am also requiring all students to familiarize themselves with what plagiarism means and take this quiz: <http://library.sdsu.edu/guides/tutorial.php?id=28>. It is your job to understand what plagiarism means. Violations of USD's academic integrity policy will be dealt with harshly. I will use turnitin.com on your assignments. This means that if you plagiarize, I will catch it, and you will be sanctioned.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This class is **assignment and participation heavy** due to the practical skill-building component of the class. There is simply no better way to teach the skills involved than by having you practice them. You will also note that **the reading load is not light**. The overall idea is to help you become not just a skilled, but also a critical and self-reflective human rights defender who is grounded in both theory and practice.

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Throughout the semester, many of the assignments will require you to imagine that you are an advocate working for an international NGO that covers a range of human rights and social justice issues. To anchor this in reality, yet provide us with some flexibility, we will imagine that we work for “**Rights Watch,**” a fictitious NGO that is a hybrid of Amnesty International and Oxfam. Please draft your assignments with this role-play identity in mind.

(0) Participation & Attendance

Your participation in the classroom is essential to the success of this course. All reading assignments are to be completed PRIOR to our class each Session. I will regularly “cold-call” students to ask them questions about the readings. Be prepared!

You are expected to thoroughly prepare for and actively engage in weekly discussions, role-plays, debates, and other activities. This means you need to talk, ask questions, and debate issues.

Please make sure you express informed opinions about the subject matter. Ask questions based on your knowledge of the readings, agreeing or disagreeing with the viewpoints of our authors.

You are expected to be in class a few minutes before the start of class so that we may all begin on time with no interruptions.

(1) Country Conditions or Thematic Monitoring

--20% of final grade

--Due prior to the beginning of class on Class 11 (April 20).

In the first two weeks of the semester, each student will need to choose a country or thematic issue that they will monitor over the course of the semester. You will in general be monitoring human rights conditions as well as larger developments that affect human rights conditions in the country in question. The country or theme that you choose is important because you will have to stick with it for the entire semester and several of the assignments will relate to the country or issue you are monitoring. You are generally free to pick your own country or issue, though you should pick one that has relatively good coverage by NGOs/activist communities, the UN, and media since these are the principal sources you will use to do your distance monitoring. You should also consider whether you are going to be able to read much of the information coming out of the country due to language barriers. If not, you will probably not be able to access local newspapers. Students are encouraged to discuss their choice with Prof. Sharp to make sure it's a good fit.

If you have taken the Fall course on International Justice and Human Rights, you are free to continue monitoring the same country as before. Unlike the fall course, however, it

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will be possible for two or more students to monitor the same country, but you must do your work independently! Also, unlike the Fall course, I am open to **social justice projects** that do not have a strictly legalistic international human rights law orientation. For example, you might choose to cover issues of homelessness in the United States, human trafficking in the United States, migrant workers in the United States, or some kind of environmental issue, etc. In such cases, please make sure that you are at least adopting a **structural and justice-oriented lens** to the problem rather than a pure charity-driven approach. Good examples of this approach are Oxfam (which has adopted a “rights-based” approach to questions of poverty and development) and Global Witness (which looks at natural resources and conflict). Also, do not pick an issue that is so narrow that it is unlikely to draw any media coverage in the course of the semester.

Near the end of the semester, students will be required to do a **2-page Briefing Paper** (single spaced) where you summarize and synthesize issues relevant to your country/issue in the preceding period. You will be given a template to use for drafting these reports, so make sure to follow the “house style” of Rights Watch.

You should imagine that these documents will be posted as periodic updates on a human rights NGO’s website. We will call the NGO “Rights Watch,” a fictitious international organization not unlike Amnesty International, but which, like Oxfam, has a mandate to cover both international human rights as well as broader issues of social justice. With this role play in mind, it will be important to draft your monitoring reports for the public eye and **any typos will be heavily penalized.**

It is OK to cover events that go back as far as late 2019. However, keep in mind that when an NGO puts material on a website, they try to keep it as current and newsworthy as possible so that readers will not feel like the report is “yesterday’s news.”

You should endnote your sources in your monitoring reports so that I can see that you are drawing on a wide variety of sources. Using endnotes rather than footnotes will allow you to fill the entire two pages with text. (I will not count a third page with nothing by endnotes against you). You should not try to achieve or stay within the page limit by fussing with the margins, spacing, or font (use 12-point). Do not crowd the document with text—keep it easy for the reader to process.

If you have access, you are welcome to communicate via telephone, email, in person with activists and experts covering your topic and to incorporate this information into your report. Please cite it as necessary. You are not, however, required to do “active monitoring,” and can turn in a report based on “passive monitoring” alone.

Please send your assignments to me as a file (not a google docs link) in Microsoft Word .doc/.docx format so that I can provide feedback using track changes. The title of your file should follow the pattern: Jane Doe Monitoring Assignment.docx.

(2) Press Release

--15% of final grade.

--Due prior to the beginning of class on Class 9 (March 30).

In Class 8, we will discuss press release writing and do a short, group practice activity in class. As a follow-up to this activity, you will be required, individually, to draft a full-length press release based on an issue you wish to react to in the country that you have been monitoring. The issue you react to is up to you. You are to imagine that this press release will be issued in the name of your NGO, Rights Watch. As this is a public document, typos in the final draft will be heavily penalized.

Please send your assignments to me as a file (not a google docs link) in Microsoft Word .doc/.docx format so that I can provide feedback using track changes. The title of your file should follow the pattern: Jane Doe Press Release Assignment.docx.

(3) Op-ed

--15% of final grade.

--Due prior to the beginning of class on Class 12 (April 27).

After we complete our discussion of working with the media in Class 8 (March 23), you will need to start thinking about drafting an op-ed based on human rights problem arising out of the country or theme you are monitoring. You are to imagine that you will be sending the op-ed to the International New York Times. Your op-ed should be **600 to 800 words** and absolutely no longer. As this is a public document, typos in the final draft will be heavily penalized. There won't be a specific in-class tutorial for this assignment. However, materials to help you with this assignment are posted on Blackboard, under Class 7, Working with and Through the Media. It is also helpful to simply read as many op-eds as you can from quality journalistic outlets.

Please send your assignments to me as a file (not a google docs link) in Microsoft Word .doc/.docx format so that I can provide feedback using track changes. The title of your file should follow the pattern: Jane Doe Press Op-Ed Assignment.docx.

(4) Group Oral Research Presentation

--20% of final grade

--Presentations on Class 10 (April 6) and Class 11 (April 20)

Students will team up in a total of **6 groups 2-3 students each** to carry out research into a human rights/social justice advocacy campaign or issue. Research presentations should introduce fellow students to an advocacy topic not otherwise thoroughly covered in class (you might, for example, do a review and critical analysis of the campaign to eradicate landmines, sweatshop labor, the South African divestment movement, etc.) Students

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should choose a topic in consultation with the instructor to make sure that it is acceptable. Be sure that your chief focus is on the campaign/advocacy work and not just an exposition of the underlying human rights problem. That said, the presentation should provide background and context to the human rights problem sufficient to allow the audience to understand the advocacy environment. Drawing upon analysis and comparison of parallel human rights campaigns, your presentation should analyze strengths and weaknesses of the campaign, and extract “lessons learned” for other campaigns. The best presentation will tie the subject of analysis to the broader theoretical issues, debates, and dilemmas in the course. In other words, please don’t just describe, but analyze the campaign. Students are encouraged (but not required) to engage with NGOs and human rights advocates who have been involved in the human rights advocacy issue they are researching, and use telephone or in-person interviews as part of their research.

The oral presentation should be a total of **45 min (35-40 min presentation + 5-10 min Q & A)**. Under no circumstances should you go over 45 min. At the same time, you should try to fill the 45 min, not ending early. This will allow three group presentations during Class 10 (April 6) and three during Class 11 (April 20).

Most students in the past have used powerpoint and other multimedia to help animate their presentation. Please remember that while good powerpoint can be a helpful learning tool, bad powerpoint can be really awful.

When I grade oral presentations, I am generally assigning points based on:

- (A) Whether the presentation provided a generally well-prepared and cogent overview of the topic with professional-grade analysis of strengths, weaknesses, and lessons learned (approximately 60% of the points)
- (B) Whether the presenter exemplified good presentation skills: not mumbling, not remaining locked behind the podium, making eye contact, not speaking too quickly, avoiding excessive reading and/or staring at the screen, etc. Whether the slides were clean and useful/readable for the audience (approximately 30% of the points)
- (C) Whether the presentation showed creativity, or was especially thoughtful or thought provoking. Whether you manage to actually not just cover the bases, but make it interesting and engaging for the audience as well (approximately 10% of the points)

I will generally assign the same grade to all members of a group, so you are all responsible for the overall quality of the powerpoint slides, etc. The one exception would be where a particular team member’s presentation skills are much stronger or weaker than others, in which case their grade might vary a bit from the others.

A Word on Group Presentations: Every year, at least one student will tell me that they dislike group projects, but I continue to include one in this class for a number of reasons. First, because in the “real world” of practice, it is my experience that most work is inevitably group work, with all of the good and bad that comes with it. Second, having you all to work together on projects allows you to get to know each other, which tends to make for better classroom discussions. Finally, learning to teach and present is a skill that frightens a lot of people, but which is incredibly useful across a range of jobs. In the past, some students have expressed a frustration that they would rather listen to me talk than their fellow students. Please take this as a challenge to demonstrate professionalism and subject mastery. You are in effect co-teachers of the class and the more you all put into these presentations, the more we will all get out of it. For the most part, you will all be getting the same grade for your group presentations. This means that you are all responsible for the quality of the powerpoint slides, etc. The one exception is that if a particular student is a really weak presenter, their final grade might be somewhat lower than those in the group who were strong presenters.

(5) Strategy and Planning Document

--30% of final grade.

--Due at the beginning of the final class of the semester, May 11.

As the culmination of your country/issue monitoring throughout the course of the semester, you will draft a 5-7 page (single spaced) internal strategy and planning document to the head of your NGO, Rights Watch, outlining your proposed advocacy goals and strategies for your NGO for the coming year. You should assume that the head of your organization is intelligent and well versed in human rights/social justice issues, but is not necessarily an expert in your country per se. Thus, your memo will need to provide enough background to allow him or her to understand and engage with your proposed strategy for the coming year. Do not assume that you have an army of people to throw at a campaign. Most groups like Amnesty or Oxfam have one or two people covering an issue.

Your memo should NOT exceed 7 single-spaced pages and you should not try to achieve this limit by fussing with the margins, spacing, or font (use 12-point). Learning to write succinctly is a critical skill in the policy world, and one that students do not often get to practice.

Please send your assignments to me as a file (not a google docs link) in Microsoft Word .doc/.docx format so that I can provide feedback using track changes. The title of your file should follow the pattern: Jane Doe Strategy and Planning Assignment.docx.

To Summarize the Assignments and their Due Dates:

Assignment	Due Date
Press Release	Class 9 (March 30)
Group Presentations	Class 10 (April 6) & Class 11 (April 20)
Country Monitoring Report	Class 11 (April 20)
Op-ed	Class 12 (April 27)
Strategy and Planning Document	Class 14 (May 11)

I realize that the graded assignments all fall during the latter portion of the semester and that this creates a bit of a crunch, but the groundwork for almost all of them must be laid with the careful country monitoring that you do throughout the first half of the semester. None of the writing assignments are long (they range from 2-7 pages), but they do require a lot of thought and attention to detail.

ELECTRONICS

More than one study has concluded that taking notes by hand rather than by typing improves learning. When you cannot transcribe but rather have to translate class discussion and lecture into hand-written notes, you are far more likely to retain the information in more detail and for longer. The temptation to multitask while you are on a computer not only reduces your participation but negatively affects those around you.

While I do not prohibit the use of laptops in this class, I encourage you to consider taking notes by hand and either using your computer only to refer to readings if necessary. **All use of electronics for any purpose other than notetaking or referencing readings is prohibited.** If I find laptops to be a consistent distraction in class, I will ban them.

Please know that I have absolutely no tolerance about the use of mobile phones in the classroom. If you have an emergency situation that requires you to check your phone or email during class, please let me know before class.

FOOD

Please limit consumption of food in the classroom to before the beginning of formal classtime or during the break. While I understand that many of you have very challenging schedules, my past experience with students eating meals during class (including full plates of nachos!) is that it is a distraction for the one consuming and those around them. In many cultures, it is considered rude and unprofessional. Exceptions can obviously be made for those with serious medical conditions, but in general the human body should be capable of going up to 90 minutes (the time before our break) without food.

Required Text (To purchase):

- ADAM HOCHSCHILD, KING LEOPOLD'S GHOST: A STORY OF GREED, TERROR, AND HEROISM IN COLONIAL AFRICA (Mariner Books 1998).

COURSE SCHEDULE

Class 1 (Jan 27): Forerunners to the Modern-Day Human Rights Movement

Though the modern-day human rights “movement” began its most dramatic expansion in the 1970s, human rights advocates today are not working on a blank slate. Earlier campaigns against slavery, colonialism, and for women’s rights represent in many ways pioneering efforts in human rights advocacy.

In-Class Activity: Towards the end of class, I will hold a brief discussion on human rights monitoring for those who did not take the Fall International Justice & Human Rights Class.

Readings:

- ADAM HOCHSCHILD, KING LEOPOLD'S GHOST: A STORY OF GREED, TERROR, AND HEROISM IN COLONIAL AFRICA (Mariner Books: New York, 1998).
- Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Historical Precursors to Modern Transnational Advocacy Networks*, in ACTIVISTS BEYOND BORDERS, ADVOCACY NETWORKS IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS (Cornell 1998), pp 39-78.

Class 2 (Feb 3): Growth of the Modern Human Rights NGO

If your goal is social change/social justice, why work for a human rights NGO? How does the model developed by Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch in the 1970s onward differ from what came before? What are its strengths and weaknesses? How does the existence of human rights law shape their approach? To the extent that they constitute a “movement,” is it a movement or a top-down, elite-driven Western imposition? Is it effective? For whom and on behalf of whom do human rights NGOs work? Who is their constituency? To whom are they accountable? What should their relationship be with NGOs in the global south?

In-Class Activity: The readings for this class trace the growth of two of the world’s biggest human rights NGOs, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. For this activity, we will turn to a more recent controversy regarding HRW’s reporting on Israel. For the last hour of class, I will break the class up into three small-discussion groups. Each group will discuss a press release and newspaper articles I assigned related to HRW’s 2006 “Fatal Strikes” report. In addition to trying to sort out and assess some of the arguments on both sides, please try to determine how you would respond to the types of criticisms generated by HRW’s report, both internally, and externally. Are there any “lessons learned” for human rights NGOs or for others? After the small-group discussion, I will ask each group to report back to the class as a whole.

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Required Readings:

- William Korey, *To Light a Candle: Amnesty International and the 'Prisoners of Conscience, in NGOs AND THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS*, pp 159-180.
- Aryeh Neier, *Americas Watch: A Testing by Fire and Summing up*, in *TAKING LIBERTIES*, pp 190-221 & 360-373.
- Alex de Waal, "Genealogies of Transnational Activism" in *ADVOCACY IN CONFLICT*, Alex de Waal, ed. (London: Zed Books, 2015)

- HRW/Israel Articles for activity:
 - Human Rights Watch, "Lebanon/Israel: IDF Fails to Explain Qana Bombing," Press Release, August 2, 2006.
 - Aryeh Neier, "The Attack on Human Rights Watch," *The New York Review of Books*, November 2, 2006.
 - Editorial, "The Credibility Watch," *The New York Sun*, October 19, 2006.
 - Gerald Steinberg, "Watching the Watchers, Part Two," *The New York Sun*, March 20, 2007.
 - Latifah Azan, "Is Human Rights Watch too Close to the US Government?" fpif.org.

Explore:

- <http://www.hrw.org>
- <http://www.amnesty.org/>
- <http://www.globalrights.org>
- <http://www.humanrightsfirst.org>
- <http://www.fidh.org/-english->
- <http://www.freedomhouse.org/>

Note: By the end of class for this session, you should have informed Prof. Sharp of the country or issue that you plan to monitor throughout the semester.

Class 3 (Feb 10): Kony 2012 and the Advocacy v. Badvocacy Debate

What are the promises and pitfalls of new social media? Is it possible for human rights advocacy campaigns to do more harm than good? What makes for good advocacy rather than “badvocacy”? What can advocates do to avoid a “savages, victims, and saviors” mentality and approach? Do the cultural and political origins of human rights discourse fundamentally undermine or at least blunt the impact of human rights advocacy today?

In-Class Activity: Towards the end of class, we will break into groups and attempt to brainstorm strengths, weaknesses, and lessons learned from Kony 2012.

Readings:

- Watch (or re-watch) the Kony 2012 video:
 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y4MnpzG5Sqc>
- Read as much as you find interesting, but you’ll likely have to skim or skip parts of it due to the length of the readings as a whole this session:
 - Amanda Taub, ed., *Beyond #Kony2012: Atrocity, Awareness + Activism in the Internet Age*
- Malcolm Gladwell, “Small Change. Why the Revolution Will Not Be Tweeted,” *The New Yorker*, October 4, 2010.
- Séverine Autesserre, *Dangerous Tales: Dominant Narratives on the Congo and their Unintended Consequences*, *AFRICAN AFFAIRS* (January 2012)
- Makau wa Mutua, *Savages, Victims, and Saviors: The Metaphor of Human Rights*, 42 *HARV. INT’L L. J* 201, 201-245 (2001). (skim)
- Betty Plewes and Rieky Stuart, *The Pornography of Poverty: A Cautionary Fundraising Tale*, in *ETHICS IN ACTION*, pp. 23-37.

Recommended Reading:

- Norimitsu Onishi, “U.S. Support of Gay Rights in Africa May Have Done More Harm Than Good,” *New York Times*, December 20, 2015.

Class 4 (Feb 17): Fact-Finding & Reporting I

Outlining of traditional human rights intervention methodologies, with focus on fact-finding and reporting as a case study, including issues in research methodology, and ethical concerns that arise in the course of fact-finding.

In-Class Activity: The-Four Sentence Exercise. This exercise will require you to brainstorm and sketch out a fact-finding/reporting project involving the country or thematic issues that you are monitoring this semester.

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- Diane Orentlicher, *Bearing Witness: The Art and Science of Human Rights Fact-Finding*, 3 HARV. HUM. RTS. J. 83, 83-135 (1990) [SKIM]
- Richard Wilson, *Representing Human Rights Violations: Social Contexts and Subjectivities*, in HUMAN RIGHTS CULTURE & CONTEXT: ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES (Richard A. Wilson ed., 1997).
- Arthur & Joan Kleinman, *The Appeal of Experience; The Dismay of Images: Cultural Appropriations of Suffering in Our Times*, DAEDALUS, Vol. 125, No. 1 (Winter 1996), pp 1-23).
- Note that this reading provides the context for the interviewing exercise in sessions 5 and 6 and the media exercise in session 8, **so please familiarize yourself with it as it is very helpful for the interviewing simulations:**
 - Dustin Sharp/Human Rights Watch, *Dying for Change; Brutality and Repression by Guinean Security Forces in Response to a Nationwide Strike*, Vol. 19, No. 5(A), April 2007.

Recommended Reading:

- Amanda Murdie & David Davis, *Shaming and Blaming: Using Events Data to Assess the Impact of Human Rights NGOs*, 56 INT'L STUDIES Q. 1 (2012)
- Anjan Sundaram, *We're Missing the Story; The Media's Retreat from Foreign Reporting*, New York Times, July 25, 2014.

Class 5 (Feb 24): Interviewing Skills

Discussion of human rights fieldwork, the role of interviews in human rights research, and interviewing survivors of and witness to violence.

Activity: In-class interview simulation exercises.

Readings:

- KEN METZLER, CREATIVE INTERVIEWING (Allyn & Bacon, 1997), pp.15-23.
- ROBERT WEISS, LEARNING FROM STRANGERS (Maxwell Macmillan International, 1994), pp 73-81.
- David Spark, *Getting People to Talk*, in INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING: A STUDY ON TECHNIQUE (Focal Press, 1999), pp.74-83
- Dermot Groome, *Interviewing Witnesses*, in THE HANDBOOK OF HUMAN RIGHTS INVESTIGATIONS (CreateSpace, second edition, 2011).
- Amnesty International, *Suggestions for Interviews*, in UKWELI: MONITORING AND DOCUMENTING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN AFRICA (Amnesty International and CODESRIA, 2000).

Class 6 (March 9): Fact-Finding and Reporting II

Special concerns that arise when dealing with economic, social, and, cultural rights.

In-Class Activity: Wrap-up of interviewing simulations for first hour of class.

- Ken Roth, *Defending Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: Practical Issues Faced by an International Human Rights Organization*, 26 Hum. Rts. Q. 63 (2004).
- Curt Goering, *Amnesty International and Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights*, in ETHICS IN ACTION, pp 204-217.
- Eitan Felner, *A New Frontier in Economic and Social Rights Advocacy? Turning Quantitative Data into a Tool for Human Rights Accountability*, 9 SUR INT'L J. HUM. RTS. 109, 109-153 (2008).
- Chris Albin-Lackey/Human Rights Watch, *Chop Fine: The Human Impact of Local Government Corruption and Mismanagement in Rivers State, Nigeria*, Vol. 19, No. 2(A), January 2007. (Read the Executive Summary and Recommendations).

Recommend Readings

- Center for Economic and Social Rights, *Human Rights and Poverty: Is Poverty a Violation of Human Rights?*, Human Rights Insights No. 1.
- Chris Albin-Lackey, "Corruption, Human Rights, and Activism: Useful Connections and Their Limits," in Dustin Sharp (ed.) JUSTICE AND ECONOMIC VIOLENCE IN TRANSITION (New York, Springer: 2013).

Explore:

- <http://www.oxfamamerica.org/>
- <http://www.hrw.org/en/category/topic/economic-social-and-cultural-rights>
- <http://www.cesr.org/>

**Class 7 (March 16): Working with and Through the Media:
Media Interviews & Press Releases**

Brief discussion of the centrality of media work to human rights advocacy followed by an in-class simulation.

In-Class Activity: In-class advocacy roll-play simulations. The simulated media interviews will refer back to the facts presented in the “Dying for Change” report you read for session four. Please re-familiarize yourself with the facts of that report, if necessary. We will not have time in class for you to do so.

Readings:

- Center for Community Change, *How to Tell and Sell your Story* (1999), 11-20, 23-28, 42-51.
- Anna Husarska, “Conscience Trigger”: *The Press and Human Rights*, in *REALIZING HUMAN RIGHTS: MOVING FROM INSPIRATION TO IMPACT* (Samantha Power ed., 2000), pp 337-350
- ACLU media tips.
- ICTJ, How to Write a Press Release.
- Sample press releases.

Class 8 (March 23): Litigation as an Advocacy Strategy

Under what circumstances is litigation and/or the lodging of formal complaints an effective strategy? When may it be counter productive? What might advocates do to enhance the impact of human rights litigation?

In-Class Activity: For the first half of class, we will continue with the media interview simulations we began last week.

Readings:

- Dustin Sharp, *Pragmatism and Multidimensionality in Human Rights Advocacy*, 40(3) *HUM. RTS. Q.* (2018): 499-520.
- Read, or review if you read it in the fall:
 - Kathryn Sikkink, Introduction, in *THE JUSTICE CASCADE: HOW HUMAN RIGHTS PROSECUTIONS ARE CHANGING WORLD POLITICS*, pp 1-28.
- Just skim this article, but make sure you understand and can articulate the central argument. In other words, what is the danger of “backlash” and how might it occur?
 - Laurence Helfer, *Overlegalizing Human Rights: International Relations Theory and the Commonwealth Caribbean Backlash Against Human Rights Regimes*, 102 *COLUM. L. REV.* 1832, 1832-1911 (2002).

Explore:

- Open Society Justice Initiative, <http://www.justiceinitiative.org/>
- HRW International Justice Program, <http://www.hrw.org/doc/?t=justice>
- Redress, <http://www.redress.org/>
- Center for Justice and Accountability, <http://www.cja.org/>
- International Rights Advocates, <http://www.iradvocates.org/>
- Coalition for the International Criminal Court, <http://www.iccnw.org/>
- Center for Constitutional Rights, <http://www.ccr-ny.org/>

Class 9 (March 30): Bringing it Back Home: Human Rights in the United States

What does it mean to do “human rights advocacy” in the United States? Why has there been a historic split between “human rights” and “civil rights” in this country?

In-Class Activity: Students will be broken into groups. Each group should discuss what they consider to be the three or four biggest human rights problems either inside the United States, or for which the US Government is otherwise directly responsible. Imagining that you work for the US division of Amnesty International, each group should make a rough sketch of what a 2020 advocacy campaign centered around their top-issue might look like. At the end of the activity, each group will present its ideas to the class as a whole.

Readings:

- BRINGING HUMAN RIGHTS HOME VOL I, Preface, (Cynthia Soohoo, Catherine Albisa, and Martha Davis eds, Praeger 2008), pp ix-xii.
- Carol Anderson, “A Hollow Mockery”: *African Americans, White Supremacy, and the Development of Human Rights in the United States*, in BRINGING HUMAN RIGHTS HOME VOL 1, pp 75-101.
- Cynthia Soohoo, *Human Rights and the Transformation of the “Civil Rights” and “Civil Liberties” Lawyer*, in BRINGING HUMAN RIGHTS HOME VOL II, pp 71-104.
- Catherine Albisa, *First-Person Perspectives on the Growth of the Movement*, in BRINGING HUMAN RIGHTS HOME VOL II, pp 49-70.
- Cynthia Soohoo, Introduction to Vol III, in BRINGING HUMAN RIGHTS HOME VOL III pp xv-xxii.
- Greg Asbed, *Coalition of Immokalee Workers: “!Golpear a Uno Es Golpear a Todos!” To Beat One of Us Is to Beat Us All!*, in BRINGING HUMAN RIGHTS HOME VOL III, pp 1-24.
- Human Rights Watch, 2019 World Report (events of 2018), USA Chapter.
- Center for Economic and Social Rights, Fact Sheet No. 11, United States.

Assignment Due for Class 9: Students are to turn in their completed press release prior to the beginning of class.

Class 10 (April 6): Student Group Presentations

Class 11 (April 20): Student Group Presentations

Assignment Due for Class 11: Students are to turn their country monitoring report prior to the beginning of class.

Class 12 (April 27): Extractives/Natural Resources & Rights-Based Development Advocacy

In this session, we will examine ways in which human rights advocates are stretching the discourse to look at human rights abuses occurring at the intersection of development, the environment, and natural resources extraction. Is human rights discourse the right “fit” for these situations? As a human rights advocate, how would you approach the advocacy challenges presented by the Chad-Cameroon pipeline project?

In-Class Activity: Students will be broken into groups. Each group should brainstorm a list of major poverty/development/social justice issues in the world today. Examples might include US cotton subsidies and their impact on poor West African farmers, sweatshop labor, the impact of multi-national corporations in a certain sector, etc. **Please browse the websites below for some further ideas prior to class.** Imagining that you have come together as part of a partnership between Oxfam, Amnesty International, and Global Witness, each group should make a rough sketch of what a 2020 advocacy campaign centered around their top-issue might look like. At the end of the activity, groups will present its ideas to the class as a whole, though we may not have time for every group to present.

Readings:

- Paul Nelson & Ellen Dorsey, *New Rights Advocacy; Changing Strategies of Development and Human Rights NGOs* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2008), pp. 13-43.
- Peter Rosenblum, *Pipeline Politics in Chad*, CURRENT HISTORY, May 2000, pp 195-199
- Sebastian Mallaby, *Fighting Poverty, Hurting the Poor*, FOREIGN POLICY, Sep-Oct 2004, pp 50-58.
- Dustin Sharp, *Requiem for a Pipedream; Oil, the World Bank, and the Need for Human Rights Assessments*, 25 EMORY INTERNATIONAL LAW REVIEW 379 (2011).
- Explore the following websites:
 - <http://www.hrw.org/topic/esc-rights>
 - <http://www.oxfam.org/>
 - <http://www.globalwitness.org/>
 - <http://www.amnesty.org/en/human-rights/en/demand-dignity>
 - <http://eitransparency.org/>
 - <http://www.kimberleyprocess.com/>

Assignment Due for Class 12: Students are to turn in their completed op-ed prior to the beginning of class. Materials to help you with this assignment are posted on Blackboard, under Class 7, Working with and Through the Media.

Class 13 (May 4): Activism Beyond and in Tension with the NGO

Looking back at the class and readings as a whole, do you think NGOs are part of the problem? Have they killed activism? What are the strengths and weaknesses of their often conservative and professionalized approach to social change? What can human rights NGOs learn from “unruly activism” and social movements? What are the best ways for NGOs to adapt to a rapidly changing “Neo-Westphalian” World?

Readings:

- Comment posted in response to Civicus.org blog post “An open letter to our fellow activists across the globe: Building from below and beyond borders,” August 6, 2014.
- Sabine Lang, “The NGOization” of Civil Society,” in *NGOS, CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE*, Sabine Lang (Cambridge University Press 2013).
- Doutje Lettinga and Femke Kaulingfreks, *Clashing Activisms: International Human Rights Organizations and Unruly Politics*, *JOURNAL OF HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICE* (advance access 2015).
- Jack Snyder, “Empowering Rights through Social Movements,” in *HUMAN RIGHTS FUTURES*.

Recommended Readings:

- Matthew Evans, *Trade Unions as Human Rights Organizations*, *Journal of Human Rights Practice* (advance access 2015).
- “We Wish Nadia and Masha Well – But They’re No Longer Part of Pussy Riot,” *The Guardian*, February 6, 2014.
- Micah White, “Without a Path from Protest to Power, The Women’s March will End up Like Occupy,” *The Guardian*, January 19, 2017.
- Dustin Sharp, “Human Rights Fact-Finding and the Reproduction of Hierarchies,” in Philip Alston and Sarah Knuckey (eds.), *THE TRANSFORMATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS FACT-FINDING* (Oxford University Press, 2017)
- Stephen Hopgood, “The Endtimes of Human Rights,” in *DEBATING THE ENDTIMES OF HUMAN RIGHTS; ACTIVISM AND INSTITUTIONS IN A NEO-WESTPHALIAN WORLD*, Doutje Lettinga & Lars van Troost, eds (Amnesty International, 2014).
- Sally Engle Merry & Peggy Levitt, “The Vernacularization of Women’s Human Rights,” in *HUMAN RIGHTS FUTURES*

In-Class Activity: In class, you will be broken up into three groups:

- The first group will act as a group of consultants hired by the executive director of Human Rights Watch to study, learn from, and propose organizational changes based on the strengths and weakness of unruly/non-traditional/non-NGO activism.

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In essence, he wants to know how Human Rights Watch should be “modernized” to appeal both to “millennials” and more global (non-Western) audiences.

- The second group will represent a group of long-term employees of Human Rights Watch opposed to any kind of serious change to the way things have been done. In essence, your job is to argue the strengths of more traditional human rights NGO activism.
- The third group will act as the board of HRW and will be tasked with leading the debate and asking probing questions of both sides with a view to figuring out what strategic course to chart over the next 10 years.

Note: Depending on class size, we may have to run this activity as a small group discussion rather than as a formal role-play debate.

Class 14 (May 11): Working in Hostile Environments, Stress & Burnout

What kind of security risks are associated with human rights fieldwork and how can human rights defenders stay safe? What, if anything, can activists committed to working on social justice issues do over the long-term to avoid chronic stress and burnout?

In-Class Activity: Meditation Training

Readings:

- United Nations High Commission for Refugees, Staff Welfare Unit, *Managing the Stress of Humanitarian Emergencies* (2001).
- Nancy B. Roof/Center for Psychology and Social Change, *The Impact of War on Humanitarian Service Providers: A Workbook on Secondary Traumatic Stress and Burnout* (1994).
- Human Rights Watch, *Mission Security Memos, Guinea and Côte d’Ivoire*.
- Cher Weixia Chen and Paul Gorski, *Burnout in Social Justice and Human Rights Activists: Symptoms, Causes and Implications*, JOURNAL OF HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICE (Advance Access, 2015).
- Anna Stolley Persky, “Mindfulness in the Legal Profession,” *Washington Lawyer* (March 2015).
- Mark Sisson, “15 Alternatives to Sitting Meditation,” *Marksdailyapple.com*, November 10, 2015.

Assignments Due for Class 14: Students are to turn in their Strategy and Planning Document prior to the beginning of class.