

Politics 352
HUMAN RIGHTS & GLOBAL CHANGE
(Fall 2012)

University of San Francisco
Kalmanovitz Hall 163

Professor Robert Elias
TR 9:55-11:40 am

Required Readings

David FORSYTHE, Human Rights in International Relations (3rd Edition)
William FELICE, The Global New Deal: Economic & Social Human Rights (2nd Edition)
Juan MENDEZ, Taking A Stand: The Evolution of Human Rights
James PECK, Ideal Illusions: How the U.S. Coopted Human Rights
Nicholas GILBY, No-Nonsense Guide to the Arms Trade (2nd Edition)
Jonathan BARKER, No-Nonsense Guide to Terrorism (2nd Edition)

Course Outline

INTRODUCTION: WHAT ARE HUMAN RIGHTS? (21, 23, 28, 30 August)

(A) Bringing Repression to Life

READ: Baraheni, God's Shadow (excerpts)(Blackboard)

FILM: *CLOSET LAND* (95) (Monday, 27 August)(MONDAY SHOWING)

(B) Historical & Ideological Perspectives: Common Ground?

(1) Origins, Evolution and Content

(2) Differences – Political, Economic, Cultural, Religious

(3) Universalism vs. Relativism

READ: FORSYTHE, ch. 1

(C) Causes of Repression: Human Nature, Institutions, Systems?

FILM: *IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER* (133) (Week of 3 September)(VIEW ONLINE)

CASE STUDY PROPOSALS DUE (6 SEPTEMBER)

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: VICTIMIZERS OR GUARDIANS? (4,6,11,13,18 Sept)

(A) Order Versus Justice: States Versus Peoples

READ: FORSYTHE, ch. 2

(B) Rights Covenants: National, Regional & International Law

READ: FORSYTHE, ch. 3

FELICE, ch. 1,3

Lacquer, Human Rights Reader, 197-203,215-233(skim 203-306)(Blackboard)

FILM: *NUREMBERG* (174) (Monday, 10 September)(MONDAY SHOWING)

(C) Supranationals: Governments, Law & Enforcement

READ: FORSYTHE, ch. 4,5

MENDEZ, ch. 6,8,9

FILM: *GLOBALIZATION: NEW RULERS (53)* and *WAR BY OTHER MEANS (52)* (Week of 17 September)(VIEW ONLINE)

INTL RELATIONS: VICTIMIZERS OR GUARDIANS? (continued) (4,6,11,13,18 September)

- (D) Transnationals: A Clash of Interests?
 - (1) Non-Governmental Human Rights Organizations
 - (2) Multinational Corporations
 - (3) Universities
 - (4) Religious Institutions
 - (5) Mass Media
- READ: FORSYTHE, ch. 7,8

TAKE-HOME ESSAY I DUE (2 OCTOBER)

RIGHTS VIOLATIONS: A WORLD OF SUFFERING (20,25,27 September; 2,4 October)

- (A) The Political Economy of Repression
 - READ: FELICE, ch. 2

FILM: *ORWELL ROLLS IN HIS GRAVE (103)* (Week of 24 September)(VIEW ONLINE)

- (B) Political Repression: Tyranny, Torture, Killings & Detention
 - READ: MENDEZ, ch. 1-5, 10
- (C) Economic Repression: Poverty, Underdevelopment, Ecocide
 - READ: FELICE, ch. 4,7

FILM: *SLAVERY: GLOBAL INVESTIGATION (80)* (Week of 1 October)(VIEW ONLINE)

- (D) Global Apartheid: Sex, Race and Ethnicity
 - READ: FELICE, ch. 5,6

FILM: *JUSTICIA NOW (40)* and *INVISIBLE CHILDREN (55)* (Week of 8 October)(VIEW ONLINE)

NO CLASS: FALL BREAK (9 OCTOBER)

EXPORTING REPRESSION (11,16,18,23,25 October)

- (A) Rhetoric of Humanitarianism
 - READ: FORSYTHE, ch. 6

FILMS: *PLAN COLOMBIA (57)* and *FLYING THE FLAG (50)* (Week of 15 October) (VIEW ONLINE)

- (B) Imperial Reality: Varieties of Intervention
 - READ: PECK, Intro., ch. 1-5

FILM: *WAR ON DEMOCRACY (94)* (Week of 22 October)(VIEW ONLINE)

- (C) War and the Arms Trade
 - READ: GILBY, complete
 - MENDEZ, ch. 7

FILM: *HIJACKING CATASTROPHE (64)*(Week of 29 October)(NO MONDAY SHOWING)

TERRORISM AND HUMAN RIGHTS (30 October; 1,6,8 November)

(A) What Causes Terrorism?

FILM: *SHOCK DOCTRINE* (82) (Week of 5 November)(VIEW ONLINE)

(B) Group, State, and Market Terrorism

READ: BARKER, Introduction, ch. 1-4

(C) Fighting Terrorism

READ: PECK, ch. 6

BARKER, ch. 5

FILM: *OF LOVE AND SHADOWS* (104) (Monday, 12 November)(MONDAY SHOWING)

CASE STUDY PRESENTATIONS: Day One (13 November)

(A) Reports on Non-Governmental Organizations/Activists, Rights Problems, Nations

READ: Own research/investigation, with assistance of professor

CASE STUDY PRESENTATIONS: Day Two (15 November)

**FILMS: *RWANDAN NIGHTMARE* (40) (Monday, 19 Nov.) (MONDAY SHOWING) and
SRI LANKA'S KILLING FIELDS (48) (View Online)**

CASE STUDY PRESENTATIONS: Day Three (20 November)

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY (22 NOVEMBER)

FILM: *LONG NIGHT'S JOURNEY INTO DAY* (95) (Monday, 26 November)(MON. SHOW)

CASE STUDY PRESENTATIONS: Day Four (27 November)

**FILMS: *BRINGING DOWN A DICTATOR* (56) (Monday, 3 December)(MONDAY
SHOWING) and *PALESTINE-ISRAEL 101* (32)(View Online)**

POLITICAL ACTION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS & GLOBAL CHANGE (29 Nov; 4 December)

(A) Politics of Human Rights

READ: FORSYTHE, ch. 9

(B) What Is To Be Done?

READ: FELICE, ch. 8

MENDEZ, ch. 11

CASE-STUDY PAPER DUE (10 DECEMBER)

TAKE-HOME ESSAYS II DUE (13 DECEMBER)

COMMUNICATIONS

- (1) Office: 276 Kalmanovitz Hall (2A Annex)
- (2) Office Hours: T, Th 12-1 pm, and by Appointment
- (3) Phone: eliasr@usfca.edu (best contact); 422-6349 (Office)

ELECTRONICS

Laptops, cell phones and other electronic devices should be turned OFF during class. If you feel the need to text, call or surf, please leave class to do so.

LEARNING OUTCOMES - Students will be able to:

- (1) Understand and describe the role of political science in the social sciences
- (2) Assess the interdisciplinary literature on international law, human rights and global politics, emphasizing political questions and social science methods/theories. Students will be able to understand the meaning/origins of international human rights norms/standards
- (3) Analyze explanations of human behavior, relations or institutions. Students will be able to understand the nature and sources of repression, victimization, and human rights violations, and how can they be explained as forms of human interaction and organization.
- (4) Understand the structure of the international human rights legal system, including governmental and non-governmental institutions on the global, national, and local levels. Students will be able to describe the political economy and organizational structure of human rights decision making, using tools of social science analysis
- (5) Employ social science knowledge to explore questions of political, civil, economic, social, cultural, and environmental justice, with an appreciation and respect for human diversity (including issues of race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality). Students will be able to distinguish between relative and universal human rights standards
- (6) Articulate a critical perspective for evaluating the international human rights system, including its legal, political and economic foundations
- (7) Use tools of legal analysis and argumentation to address human rights controversies, such as terrorism, humanitarian intervention, cultural imperialism, & U.S. foreign policy
- (8) Understand and promote social responsibility. Students will examine case studies of human rights violations and activism, focusing on activists and movements. Students will learn to apply standards of justice in evaluating international conflicts, and will be encouraged to champion just outcomes in the international system in the future. Students will be able to explore their relationship to oppression wherever it occurs.
- (9) Communicate social science knowledge by learning how to evaluating research findings, policy decisions, and the structural characteristics of the international human rights system and the global structures in which it operates

RESOURCES

- (1) Guest Speakers – Considerable human rights work is being done around us, some originating on campus, and much more in the surrounding communities. I'll invite in various human rights activists and practitioners to tell you about their work
- (2) Library Reserve - Here you will find Walter Lacquer, The Human Rights Reader, which you should consult (skim) to get a feel for the international law/covenants on human rights.
- (3) ***Films*** – Films are extremely important to this course. You should consider the

movies in the REQUIRED FILM SERIES as **assigned readings**. I also have an extensive library of additional movies on human rights problems, activists, and organizations. I encourage you to make use of these films, either to satisfy your curiosity or to help you prepare your papers or presentations. A list of the available films will be distributed by request.

(4) Us - We need to help each other keep abreast of human rights developments. We might want to begin each class with a short discussion of some current human rights issue; please take some responsibility for raising these issues.

(5) Alternative Media - you owe it to yourself to break, at least for one semester, the habit of relying on conventional American media for how you understand the world. Contrary to the commercials ("Read Time and Understand"), if you rely on only Time (or its twins, Newsweek, the Times (either one), the Chronicle, etc), you probably won't really understand at all. For relevant periodicals that provide an alternative perspective, I recommend New Internationalist, Peace Review (which we produce here at USF) Z Magazine, The Nation, The Utne Reader, The Progressive, Mother Jones, In These Times, Tikkun, Sojourners, Ms. Magazine, On the Issues, New Political Science, Multinational Monitor, and Catholic Worker. In addition, consult websites such as these: Foreign Policy in Focus, Truthout, Counterpunch, Altnet, TomPaine, and Huffington Post.

REQUIREMENTS

The readings have been selected to challenge and provoke you with a variety of images, perspectives and unconventional ideas. They also explore an active, engaging subject matter: global repression and how to overcome it. Thus, completing the readings might be easier than usual since they address some of the most pressing issues of our time. The readings will not be regurgitated in class lectures or presentations, but they are essential to the course and the assignments. Readings must be completed in time for our class discussions.

Besides completing the readings, ALL of the following are required:

(A) Class Participation	5% (Attendance, Oral Contributions)
(B) Case Study Proposal	0% (Sign-Up)(Due 6 September)
(C) Film Series/Reports	20% (Attendance, 10 One-Page Reports)
(D) Take-Home Essay I	10% (One 5-6 pg. Essay)(Due 2 October)
(E) Case Study Presentation	10% (Oral Report)(13, 15, 20, 27 Nov)
(F) Case Study Paper	15% (One 8 pg. Essay)(Due 10 December)
(G) Take-Home Essays II	<u>40%</u> (Four 5-6 pg. Essays)(Due 13 Dec.)
	100%

(1) Class Participation

(A) Oral/Attendance - You're REQUIRED to attend EACH class. Before class, you should read and think about the assignments so you can make some contribution during class time. We'll try to create a setting where participation is informal and non-threatening. There are no "right" answers, so don't be afraid to speak out. I'd appreciate talking to anyone who feels uncomfortable participating; perhaps your fears can be alleviated (as did mine when I was an undergraduate)

(2) Video Series/Reports

(A) Attendance - Alongside the course, a weekly Video Series will run (schedule and several viewing options will be distributed). Many will be available for you to view online; others will be shown on Monday evenings, outside class. Viewing these videos is REQUIRED, and the material they contain should be incorporated into the papers you write in response to the Take-Home Essay Questions (see below).

(B) Reports – For at least **ten (10)** of the videos, students must complete **1-page reports** (on forms I'll provide). Reports should be submitted as soon as possible after the film showings.

(3) Take-Home Essays I and II - a set of several questions for each, focusing on the course's broad issues and themes, will be distributed **2 weeks prior to their due dates**. You will please answer **1 question** (of your choice) for Take-Home Essays I, and **4 questions** (of your choice) for Take-Home Essays II, with well-written essays of **5-6 typed pages each**. The essays should be based on the relevant course readings and discussions (which must be used and cited specifically), and your own ideas; outside sources are unnecessary. Since you'll be given plenty of time to complete these essays, you're expected to submit them on time. Late Essays I will be downgraded; late Essays II will not be accepted.

(4) Case Study Presentation/Paper - as noted on the course outline, we'll be examining various Non-Governmental Human Rights Organizations/Activists/Movements, which will involve library investigations of national and international NGOs/Activists/Movements or field investigations of Bay Area NGOs/Activists/Movements. Since the prior course materials will have adequately examined human rights problems/tragedies, we'll use these case studies instead to focus on Human Rights Success Stories.

You must prepare an oral presentation and written paper. You will work in a team of 2 people to investigate an NGO/Activist/Movement (chosen from a list I will provide). You'll be asked to jointly give your report to the class in a short, informal presentation of 10 minutes (5 minutes for each team member). You'll be evaluated on your group research/investigation and oral presentations, and on your individual, written (**8 pps.**) **paper**. While you should collaborate with your teammate on your **oral report**, you **MUST** write your **paper INDEPENDENTLY** from your teammate. Please choose a theme as soon as possible; your written case study **proposal** is due **6 September**

(NOTE: In an exceptional case, I will consider approving an investigation of a Specific Rights Problem or of a troubling National Human Rights Record, as long as the problem or record has not been significantly examined already in the course, the readings, or the videos)

BLACKBOARD

Blackboard, the online course shell, will be used periodically for this course. By enrolling in the course, you should be automatically enrolled at Blackboard. I'll prompt you when relevant materials appear there.

I'm very happy to have you in the class; I look forward to working with you throughout the semester. I'll contribute as much as I can to making this both a thought-provoking and stimulating subject matter. This will work best if you fulfill your own responsibility to take the course seriously, and to contribute as much as you can. Take advantage of this opportunity; be "active" learners.

As a Jesuit institution committed to *cura personalis*—the care and education of the whole person—USF has an obligation to embody and foster the values of honesty and integrity. USF upholds these standards from all members of the academic community. All students are expected to know and adhere to the University's Honor Code. You can find the full text of the Code online at www.usfca.edu/fogcutter

NOTE: INCOMPLETES ARE STRONGLY DISCOURAGED

***PLAGIARISM IS A SERIOUS ACADEMIC OFFENSE, WHICH IS EASILY DETECTED
PLEASE DON'T JEOPARDIZE YOUR GRADE & UNIVERSITY STANDING***

**IT'S INAPPROPRIATE TO SUBMIT THE SAME OR SIMILAR PAPERS FOR MORE
THAN ONE COURSE; CHOOSE YOUR TOPICS SO THEY DO NOT OVERLAP**