

Social Movements in World History: The History of Human Rights

HIST 4369-001
MWF, 10:10-11:05
HPR 251
3 Credit Hours

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Office Hours:
Mondays and Wednesdays, 11:15AM-12:15PM
Fridays, 8:30-9:30 AM
Or by Appointment

This course explores social movements from a comparative perspective in order to consider the historical role of popular, grassroots, and other types of social actors and movements and their impact on historical processes.

Course Description

This course explores social movements in world history, focusing on them through the lens of human rights. Incorporating social history, intellectual history, cultural history, political history, diplomatic history, and legal history, it considers how societies and cultures have historically conceptualized what constitutes “human rights,” from ancient times to the present. It juxtaposes various schools of thought on human rights with historical phenomena of human rights struggles. In the process, this course will use debates over human rights, the history of human rights violations, and the activities of various individuals and organizations to defend human rights, to understand the ways in which individuals and groups shape basic definitions of humanity, rights, justice, and truth in the past and present. Finally, this course will focus on sharpening critical thinking skills through readings, discussions, and written exercises, exposing students to the history and methodologies of regions and fields with which they may not be familiar, as well as allowing them to better learn and understand the broader tools historians and other scholars employ in their work.

Course Objectives

- To understand various schools of thought on, and definitions of, human rights throughout history
- To trace the causes, motivations, and effects of modern human rights movements
- To understand the ways in which a variety of different groups shape history in different ways across different geographic and temporal landscapes.

- To develop an ability to analyze and think critically about events employing a wide variety of historical analyses, including political history, social history, cultural history, and transnational history.
- To develop an ability to analyze a wide variety of primary sources, including government documents, personal journals, fiction, art, music, film, and speeches.
- To aid students in developing and expressing their own ideas and interpretations of history in a variety of ways, both through written word and broader oral discussions and presentations.

Texts

For the semester, students are expected to purchase and read the books listed below.

Marrus, Michael. *The Nuremberg War Crimes Trial, 1945-1946: A Documentary History*. Second Edition. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2018.

Ung, Loung. *First They Killed My Father: A Daughter of Cambodia Remembers*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2006.

Sattamini, Lina Penna. *A Mother's Cry: A Memoir of Politics, Prison, and Torture under the Brazilian Military Dictatorship*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2010.

Hatzfeld, Jean. *Machete Season: Killers in Rwanda Speak*. Translated by Linda Coverdale. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006.

Sack, Jon. *La Lucha: The Story of Lucha Castro and Human Rights in Mexico*. New York: Verso Books, 2015.

Zabus & Hippolyte. *The Shadows*. New York: Dark Horse Books, 2021.

In addition to these items, you will be expected to read selections of primary documents periodically. These items will be available on Canvas, and students will be able to access them online.

Course Requirements

Learning is a process, and the interactions, stories, and discussions we share in the classroom are one of the more rewarding parts of that process. Therefore, student ***attendance and participation is required***. Attendance and participation will make up 15% of the student's final grade. Additionally, students are expected to complete weekly readings; given the nature of a short summer course, students in Summer I are expected to read around 200+ pages of readings a week across the five weeks of class. Discussions sections between students and the professor will be a regular feature of the course, and so they must complete the assigned readings outside of the classroom. Should it become apparent that students are unprepared for discussion, pop quizzes will become a regular feature of the course; the grades on the quizzes can and will factor into the student's final grade.

Nor will students be limited to discussing the books and online readings. Indeed, writing is an essential part of historical study and analysis. Students will write a single 3200-3500 word research essay in this course that will draw on primary and secondary sources. This paper is worth 30% of students' final grade and is **due at 9:00 AM on Monday, December 2**. Students will have some choice in this essay, selecting **one** of four options:

- **A case study of a historical instance of human rights** – In this option, students will select a case study in human rights in history, using primary research to provide a narrative and analysis of a moment of the history of human rights. This option focuses on how human rights and human rights movements have operated in historical practice. [A non-exhaustive list of topics is available at the end of the syllabus.]
- **A conceptual analysis** – In this option, students use analysis of primary sources to provide a conceptual consideration of definitions, applications, and/or violations of human rights in history, using case studies to articulate how ideas of human rights have operated in the past. This option focuses on how human rights have been conceptualized, talked about, and codified in history.
- **A case study of a human rights organization** – In this option, students will focus on an organization – be it international (e.g., the United Nations Human Rights Commission; the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights; the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights; the European Court of Human Rights; etc.) or a Non-Governmental Organization [NGO] (e.g., Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the World Council of Churches, Refugee Council, etc.), exploring the history of that institution, its organizational structure and development, its actions in human rights, its accomplishments and/or limitations, and its role in the history of human rights
- **A policy piece** – In this option, students will construct a policy piece making recommendations on human rights in an area they feel is worthy of attention from a human rights perspective. In crafting this policy, students will be expected to provide a historical background of the general topic (e.g., human trafficking); articulate the reason for new policy; and provide a new policy vision that addresses the issue, drawing on primary research in the legal and conceptual realm. This option focuses on human rights issues of the past and how to address them going forward.

To prepare for the paper, students will also submit a **paper proposal and bibliography**. The proposal should be 250-300 words, and should do the following: contextualize your topic; frame your approach; point to the questions/issues your paper will explore/address. The bibliography should have **at least five unique primary sources and five secondary sources**. This proposal will be due **Monday, September 23** and is worth 5% of your final grade. Students are also strongly encouraged to meet with librarian Sarah Norrell (snorrell@uttyler.edu) to discuss their projects; she can help you find sources and resources. Since we will be reading and discussing documents (as well as themes that they reveal) from

these readings in class throughout the course, students should be adequately prepared for this assignment.

Additionally, students will present on their research topic in the last week of class. These presentations should be 10-15 minutes in length and include visual materials. This presentation will be worth 15% of the final grade.

Students will also have two exams during the semester, a mid-term (20%) and a final (20%). Both of these exams will be available on Canvas. These exams will incorporate elements from the readings as well as the lectures, and will require students to demonstrate both a familiarity with and an ability to analyze concepts and practical experiences of human rights issues.

Due Dates

The following are deadlines for this course:

Monday, January 31:	Paper Proposal and Bibliography
Monday, February 21:	Midterm Exam due
Monday, April 18:	Final Paper
Wednesday, April 27:	Final Exam due

Grades

As outlined above, grades will be determined based upon the following percentages:

Paper Proposal	5%
Paper Assignment	25%
In-Class Paper Presentation	15%
Mid-term Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
<u>Attendance and Participation</u>	<u>15%</u>
TOTAL	100%

The grading scale will be the standard grading scale: A (90-100), B (80-89), C (70-79), D (60-69), and F (<60)

Attendance and Makeup Policy

Students must make every effort to be in class regularly. As outlined above, attendance in the class is **mandatory**, and for every three unexcused absences, a student's **final** grade will drop by a full letter (10% of the total grade). In cases of **emergency** (i.e., serious illness, family emergencies, etc.), however, an absence may be excused and an assignment possibly made up. The student should make sure to consult with the professor as soon as possible in order to provide advance warning of absences where possible. Students must also provide

documentation in order for an absence to be excused, and it remains the professor's prerogative to determine what is or is not an excusable absence.

Additionally, students who are tardy will be counted as absent every time they are tardy after **two** (2) tardy arrivals. It is the professor's prerogative to determine whether an absence can be excused, and all excused absences must be properly documented. Attendance and Participation make up 15% of the final grade. If it becomes clear that students are not doing the assigned readings, quizzes will become a regular feature of the course and will factor into the Attendance and Participation grade as well.

Students also must put forth every effort to submit their assignments on time. Each day an assignment is late will result in a reduction of one-letter grade from the assignment. Assignments more than one week late will not be accepted, and the student will receive an **automatic zero** for the assignment. In the event a student needs a paper extension due to serious illness, family emergency, etc., they must make every effort to speak with the professor in advance, keeping in mind that paper extensions remain the professor's prerogative.

Syllabus Notice

The instructor reserves the right to alter the syllabus; however, students will be given ample warning to any possible changes.

Course Schedule

PART I – DEFINING HUMAN RIGHTS ACROSS HISTORY

Week 1: Defining Human Rights

Monday, January 10 – Introduction

Wednesday, January 12 – What *Are* Human Rights?

Friday, January 14 – Concepts of Human Rights from Antiquity to the 1700s

Week 2: Philosophizing Human Rights (1700s BCE-1700s CE)

Readings: Primary Sources in Human Rights [Available on Canvas]

Monday, January 17 – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – **NO CLASS**

Wednesday, January 19 – Defining Rights in the Enlightenment

Friday, January 21 – Historical Notions of Human Rights

Discussion of Primary Sources available on Canvas

Week 3: Creating Human Rights (1776/89-1890s)

Readings: Primary Sources Human Rights [Available on Canvas]

Monday, January 24 – Progress and Retreat on Rights in the 19th Century

Wednesday, January 26 – Nation, Sovereignty, and Humanity, 1899-1919

Friday, January 28 – Towards International Human Rights in the 20th Century

Discussion of Primary Sources available on Canvas

Week 4: Mobilizing Around Human Rights (1899-1945)

Monday, January 31 – Fits and Starts: Defining Human Rights in the Interwar Period

Paper proposal and bibliography due

Wednesday, February 2 – From War & Genocide to the United Nations: World War II and Human Rights

Friday, February 4 – Defining Human Rights in the 20th Century

Discussion of Primary Sources available on Canvas

PART II – CASE STUDIES IN HUMAN RIGHTS

CASE STUDY 1 – The Holocaust and Human Rights [Europe]

Week 5

Readings: The Nuremberg War Crimes Trials

Monday, February 7 – Understanding the Holocaust

Wednesday, February 9 – Defining Rights in the Wake of the Holocaust, 1945-1948

Friday, February 11 –

Week 6

Readings: The Nuremberg War Crimes Trials [continued]

Monday, February 14 – In-class film – *Night and Fog* and excerpts from *Shoah*

Wednesday, February 16 – In-class film – excerpts from *Shoah*

Friday, February 18 – Memory, Human Rights, and the Holocaust

In-Class Discussion of the films and of The Nuremberg War Crimes Trials

Midterm Exam opens at noon on Friday, February 18; Exam due by 11:59PM on Monday, February 21

CASE STUDY 2 – Human Rights and Cold War Ideologies [Asia]

Week 7

Readings: First They Killed My Father

Monday, February 21 – Decolonization and Human Rights in the Cold War

Wednesday, February 23 – The Perils of Ideology (I): Human Rights and Ideology in Asia's Cold War – The Indonesian Massacres of 1965-66

Friday, February 25 – The Perils of Ideology (II): Human Rights and Ideology in Asia's Cold War: Cambodia, China, and the Koreas, 1950s-1980s

Week 8

Readings: First They Killed My Father [continued]

Monday, February 28 – In-Class Film – *The Look of Silence*

Wednesday, March 2 – In-Class Film – *The Look of Silence*

Friday, March 4 – Human Rights in the Cold War

In-Class Discussion of First They Killed My Father and The Look of Silence

Week 9 – Spring Break [No Class]

CASE STUDY 3 – Individual Action and Human Rights [Latin America]

Week 10

Readings: A Mother's Cry

Monday, March 14 – Human Rights, "Subversion," and Authoritarianism in Latin America, 1960s-1970s

Wednesday, March 16 – The Rise of Global Human Rights Networks and Activism, 1960s-1970s

Friday, March 18 – Networks of Resistance: Human Rights Organizing in Latin America, 1960s-1970s

Week 11

Readings: A Mother's Cry [continued]

Monday, March 21 – In-Class Film – *State of Siege*

Wednesday, March 23 – In-Class Film – *State of Siege*

Friday, March 25 – Speaking Out – Human Rights Demands in the 1970s-1980s

In-Class Discussion of A Mother's Cry and State of Siege

CASE STUDY 4 – Atrocity and Everyday Life in Post-Cold War Human Rights [Africa]

Week 12

Readings: Machete Season

Monday, March 28 – Human Rights Struggles in Decolonized Africa, 1950s-1970s

Wednesday, March 30 – Human Rights and the End of the Cold War

Friday, April 1 – The Limits of International Human Rights in the 1990s

Week 13

Readings: Machete Season [continued]

Monday, April 4 – In-Class Film – *7 Days in Kigali*

Wednesday, April 6 – In-Class Film – *Srebrenica: Autopsy of a Massacre*

Friday, April 8 – Everyday Actors and Human Rights Violations

In-Class Discussion of Machete Season and films

CASE STUDY 5 – Human Rights at the End of the 20th and into the 21st Centuries [North America]

Week 14

Readings: La Lucha and The Shadows

Monday, April 11 – Human Rights Questions and Debates in the 21st Century

Wednesday, April 13 – Are there limits to Human Rights?

Friday, April 15 – Borders and Human Rights

In-Class Discussion of La Lucha

Week 15: What Have We Learned, and Where Do We Go?

Readings: The Shadows

Monday, April 18 – Student Presentations

FINAL PAPER DUE

Wednesday, April 20 – Student Presentations

Friday, April 22 – Student Presentations

Finals Week

Student Presentations [TBA]

Final exam due by 8:00 AM on Wednesday, April 27