

Seven Questions on...

Human Rights

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Editor's note: "Seven Questions On..." is a new regular feature in *Passport* that will ask scholars in a particular field to respond to seven questions about their field's historiography, key publications, influences, etc. It is designed to introduce the broader SHAFR community to a variety of perspectives for a given field, as well as serving as a primer for graduate students and non-specialists. **AJ**

1. What drew you to this field and inspired you to focus on your specific area of the history of human rights?

Carl Bon Tempo: In the early 2000s, I was writing my dissertation on American refugee policies during the Cold War, and specifically working on a chapter about the 1970s. Again and again, in the primary documents, "human rights" came up in relation to refugees. I figured I ought to know something about the history of human rights if I was going to understand what I was seeing in the documents—so I started reading the secondary literature. And what struck me, almost immediately, was how little deep historical scholarship had been conducted about the human rights moment that occurred in the 1970s. I filed away this historiographic gap—I had to finish the dissertation. And then I had to turn the dissertation into a book. But in about 2007, I returned to that field of human rights history, just as it was beginning to take off.

I think my interests fit in well with those scholars in 2007, but I also was interested in something a little different. Many of the works of human rights history that appeared in the first decade of the 2000s can be broadly situated in what we were then calling "The U.S. and the World" scholarship. I wanted to change the focus a bit with my work, examining how human rights ideas and language shaped politics (in its broadest definition) in the United States, during the 1980s. This reflected how I defined myself as a scholar: a historian of twentieth-century American politics who was interested in the United States' relations with the world. All of this helps explain (what I hope is) the pithy title of my project: "human rights at home."

Theresa Keeley: As long as I can remember, I've been interested in human rights, although I would not have used that term. As a kindergartner, I heard about the hunger strikers at our local Irish Center, I was taught anticommunist songs at my Catholic Ukrainian school, and I listened as my dad explained César Chávez and the United Farm Workers as we passed by the grapes while grocery shopping. In the days before DVR, I watched what my dad picked. When it wasn't a Philly sports team losing, it was lots of civil rights and Kennedy documentaries. I remember what must have been the first airing of *Eyes on the Prize*. As a teen, I became active in environmental issues. In college, I gravitated toward research papers about state violence. (I am clearly not making a case for myself as someone

who is fun at parties.) After college, I won a fellowship to spend a year abroad exploring the relationship between the Catholic Church, human rights, and the state in Poland and in Northern Ireland. In Kraków, I spoke to people and their families involved in the Solidarity movement. As a human rights worker in Derry, I advocated for those whose loved ones were killed by the British security forces. I also spent time speaking to men jailed for IRA activities. Upon my return to the United States, I helped coordinate a civil disobedience campaign that highlighted the humanitarian impact of the U.N. Security Council sanctions on Iraqis after the First Gulf War. Then, as a public interest lawyer, I pushed for housing as a human right, equal treatment for the LGBTQ+ community, and equal educational opportunities for women and girls. I applied to grad school in history after I realized to my surprise that I enjoyed teaching, as I often taught clients how to represent themselves in court and lawyers new ways to represent their clients. At night, I was spending my free time reading books like *King Leopold's Ghost*, *The Burning Tigris*, and *I've Got the Light of Freedom*. Once in grad school, human rights were a natural fit, but I do not remember if I framed my application in that way.

Michael Cotey Morgan: I was drawn to contemporary history because I wanted to understand why the world is the way that it is. The idea and practice of human rights have been central to global politics since the end of the Cold War, so it seemed essential to figure out where they came from, how they acquired such influence, and why so many governments continued to abuse them. The history of human rights also offered a way to get at some of the biggest questions of international history, including why wars break out, how countries can build lasting peace, and the relationship between legitimacy and power.

Rasmus Søndergaard: I came to human rights history through a longstanding interest in the role of ideas in U.S. foreign relations. For my MA degree, I had written a thesis on Bill Clinton's foreign policy strategy of Democratic Enlargement, focusing on the influence of Wilsonianism and Democratic Peace Theory. As a graduate student looking for a dissertation topic for my Ph.D. back in 2013, I was pulled toward the field of human rights by the cascade of fascinating new books on human rights history emerging at the time.

Two factors—one practical and one historiographical—led me to focus on my specific area: how relations between the Reagan administration and members of Congress shaped U.S. human rights policy in the 1980s. First, a congressional fellowship in the House Foreign Affairs Committee in 2012 spurred my interest in how individual members of Congress can shape foreign policy. Second, an influential body of scholarship, highlighting the breakthrough or rediscovery of human rights in the 1970s, made me curious about what

happened to human rights as the Cold War flared up in the following decade before coming to a sudden end.

2. Which scholars do you see as having laid the groundwork for the study of the history of human rights?

CBT: Maybe it is useful here to think in terms of generations. I tend to think of the founding generation of the current scholarship as including Paul Lauren's *The Evolution of International Human Rights: Visions Seen* (1998), Lynn Hunt's *Inventing Human Rights* (2007), and the seminal articles from the late Kenneth Cmiel in the *Journal of American History* ("The Emergence of Human Rights Politics in the United States" from 1999) and the *American Historical Review* ("The Recent History of Human Right" from 2004). These works crafted and crystallized some important narratives about the history of human rights and displayed vividly how the field could sustain multiple approaches—and indicated some of the work still to be done.

The next generation appeared shortly thereafter, highlighted by three works: Elizabeth Borgwardt's *A New Deal for the World: America's Vision for Human Rights* (2007), Samuel Moyn's *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (2012), and Barbara Keys' *Reclaiming American Virtue: The Human Rights Revolution of the 1970s*. Borgwardt and Keys both asked fundamental questions about how and why human rights came to shape U.S. foreign relations, but used very different chronologies and stories to do so. Moyn's stunning and provocative account historicized the political project inherent in the very idea of human rights, ultimately revealing a wellfounded skepticism about that project. Moyn did that rare thing: produce a short readable book with which everyone has to grapple.

TK: There are some excellent historiographies of human rights, including one by Sarah B. Snyder. I, however, was not introduced to the field in that way or in that order. Instead, two different kinds of experiences during grad school were key in shaping my scholarly understanding of human rights.

My reading in grad school and how I placed books in conversation with one another influenced my thinking. As part of a class on Latin American history, I read two books not by historians that profoundly impacted me: Francisco Goldman's *The Art of Political Murder: Who Killed the Bishop?* and Marguerite Feitlowitz's *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture*. Feitlowitz's discussion of how human rights violations warped the meaning of language in Argentina blew me away. Around the same time for another class, I was reading Mary Louise Roberts's *Civilization Without Sexes: Reconstructing Gender in Postwar France, 1917-1927*. Together, these two works prompted me to think about the role of language in advocacy campaigns, in states' attempts to craft narratives, including to hide human rights abuses, and in collective memory. The lawyer in me was also drawn to thinking about the power of discourse. A little later, I read Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* and Penny Von Eschen's *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957*. Together, the two books encouraged me to consider how human rights advocates imagined an alternative to the status quo and in the process, built connections across states that often challenged the way political boundaries were set up.

The other key influence was my attendance at the 2011 SHAFR Summer Institute, "Freedom and Free Markets: Globalization, Human Rights, and Empire." Under the guidance of Carol Anderson and Thomas Zeiler, we discussed scholarship, including the work of SHAFR scholars such as Barbara Keys, Samuel Moyn, Roland

Burke, and Vanessa Walker, listened to guest speakers, visited archives, and reviewed each other's work. Overall, the institute underscored the need for me to think about human rights in context with other factors.

MCM: Many names come to mind. In thinking about the history of human rights in general, I'd highlight the work of—among others—Richard Tuck on natural law; Lynn Hunt on the 18th century; Mary Ann Glendon, Johannes Morsink, and William Korey on the Universal Declaration; and AW Brian Simpson on the European Convention. In surveying the whole sweep of modern history, Paul Gorden Lauren's *Evolution of International Human Rights* articulated what one could call the orthodox interpretation of the subject, which subsequent scholars have attacked from various angles. On American foreign policy in particular, the foundational books and articles include those of Elizabeth Borgwardt on the 1940s; Carol Anderson and Mary Dudziak on the civil rights movement; Kenneth Cmiel on the 1970s; and Samantha Power on genocide.

RS: With historians as relative latecomers to the field of human rights, several nonhistorians have helped lay the groundwork on which historians have since built. For my own research, I have found the work of David Forsythe and Kathryn Sikkink particularly useful. Turning to historians, it is difficult to overlook Samuel Moyn whose influence on the field of human rights history has been immense. Narrowing the scope to historians working specifically on human rights in U.S. foreign relations, I would highlight scholars like Elizabeth Borgwardt, Sarah B. Snyder, Barbara J. Keys, and Mark Philip Bradley. Yet, this is by no means a comprehensive list.

3. Discuss how the field has evolved to include different approaches to analyzing the history of human rights.

CBT: If we continue with my generations scheme, then I think we see today in the current crop of scholarship how many different approaches have found purchase in the field. There are too many scholars to mention, so the names I offer here are by no means complete, but they also are representative. Vanessa Walker's *Principles in Power* explores U.S. foreign policy towards Latin America in the 1970s and early 1980s, easily mixing U.S. foreign relations, American politics, and NGO-based activism. Jana Lipman's *In Camps* looks at the human rights activism coming out of refugee camps across Southeast Asia from the 1970s through the 1990s. In her story, Vietnamese refugees, and the larger Vietnamese diaspora, emerge as activists shaped human rights principles and ideas to their own ends. Finally, Jessica Whyte's fascinating *The Morals of the Market: Human Rights and the Rise of Neoliberalism* smartly shows how a group of economic thinkers in the 1940s and 1950s crafted a definition of human rights consonant with, and in fact integral to, their faith in neoliberalism. Whyte argues that this marriage between human rights and neoliberalism persists to this day, though she wisely notes that other definitions of human rights of course also remain in play.

What stands out to me in these three works are the ways human rights history intersects with other vibrant subfields. Walker's book is maybe the most "traditional" if one thinks about it as a study of foreign relations even in the capacious way that most define that field today. Lipman's work also finds homes in the historiography of immigration and in critical refugee studies. Whyte's book joins the effort of many historians over the last two decades to understand the rise of freemarket thinking and neoliberalism. In my view, these connections are all a sign of the health of human rights history and the variety of approaches our colleagues are taking.

TK: I do not see the field as developing in a straight line. If my experience is any indication, I would bet that scholars have come to the field in different ways. For example, many human rights historians focused on Latin America cite political scientists Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink's 1998 book, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. While working on my first project, I relied on sociologists Christian Smith's *Resisting Reagan: The U.S. Central America Peace Movement* and Sharon Nepstad's *Convictions of the Soul: Religion, Culture, and Agency in the Central America Solidarity Movement* and anthropologist Lesley Gill's *The School of the Americas: Military Training and Political Violence in the Americas*.

I see some big questions that many works have addressed. These include when did human rights become an important or influential force in international relations? When and where were there human rights campaigns? What counts as "human rights?" What is the difference between civil rights and human rights? How did individuals or groups advocate for human rights? In analyzing these questions, scholars have taken different approaches, and what I am listing here is by no means exhaustive. Some scholars have focused on the relationship between civil rights and human rights in the United States and how and why U.S. discourse often separates the two (Carol Anderson, Mary Duziak); the relationship between women's rights and human rights (Emily Rosenberg, Kelly Shannon, Katherine Marino); human rights, international institutions, and law (Elizabeth Borgwardt); religious actors as human rights advocates (Lauren F. Turek, Michael J. Cangemi) or as working against others' human rights (Melanie McAlister in her most recent book); human rights as intellectual history (Samuel Moyn); how U.S. government actors engaged in human rights activism or responded to human rights abuses (Simon Stevens, Sarah B. Snyder, Rasmus Sinding Søndergaard); LGBTQ+ rights and human rights advocacy (Laura Belmonte); musicians as human rights advocates or music as a way to promote human rights (Alan McPherson, William Michael Schmidli); sports and human rights (Eric J. Morgan, Barbara Keys); how Americans understand human rights and how that shapes their response to abuses abroad (Mark Bradley); how Americans' understanding of what their nation should be influences human rights activism (Barbara Keys); advocating for human rights as they concern economics or through economic measures, such as boycotts (Tehila Sasson, Paul Adler); transnational activism (James N. Green, Roger Peace, William Michael Schmidli); organizations' efforts regarding human rights (Brian S. Mueller); the Helsinki effect and human rights in the former Soviet Union (Sarah B. Snyder, Robert Brier); human rights and self-determination (Bradley R. Simpson); the language of human rights (Patrick William Kelly); responses to human rights violations by the military (Brian Drohan); and transnational justice (Debbie Sharnak).

MCM: In the last decade or so, new analytical approaches and new methods have transformed the field. Revisionist works—above all, Samuel Moyn's *The Last Utopia*—challenged orthodox interpretations. Rather than telling a story of cumulative and inexorable progress towards stronger protections for basic freedoms, revisionists have emphasized discontinuities, false starts, and lost opportunities, raising questions about how and why the contemporary idea of human rights first emerged. Scholars are still working in both the orthodox and revisionist modes, but we may soon see attempts to produce a postrevisionist synthesis.

The field has also expanded to include a wider range of countries and actors. Older scholarship tends to focus on the transAtlantic liberal tradition, usually starting in the Enlightenment (sometimes with a nod to older ideas of

natural law) and culminating in the development of the United Nations, European Union, and their associated institutions, with a particular focus on the politicians, diplomats, and lawyers who negotiated the treaties and drafted the statutes. Of course, this story is essential to any understanding of global human rights, but historians have started to look beyond it. Their efforts have yielded important insights into the influence of civil society and nonstate actors; the ways that anticolonial activists harnessed Western ideas of human rights to fight for decolonization; and alternative human rights traditions, especially in the communist world and global south. For excellent examples of these new approaches, see the work of Jennifer Amos, Roland Burke, Cindy Ewing, Adom Getachew, Bonny Ibhawoh, Steven Jensen, Elizabeth Kerley, Ned Richardson-Little, and Sarah Snyder—to name just a few.

RS: From an initial concern with determining the origins of human rights, the field has broadened considerably in its focus and approaches. This evolution has enriched the field by encompassing a wider set of actors, geographical regions, time periods, and a broader range of specific human rights to name but a few of the most obvious. Historians have also expanded the archival foundation of the field by, among other things, introducing non-U.S. archives that have helped improve our understanding of how U.S. human rights policy has been perceived from the outside.

4. What are some of the challenges faced by scholars working in the field?

CBT: I'm going to come at this question from my own perspective, as someone thinking about human rights in the context of domestic politics and political culture. And here one of the challenges I face is the prevalence of "rights" talk among Americans throughout history. Think of the African American quest for "civil rights," or the movement for "gay rights," or President Roosevelt's 1944 "economic bill of rights," or the activism at the heart of the battle for "women's rights." Or even just the term "political rights," which is almost ubiquitous in U.S. history. The challenge is figuring out how—or if—these formulations of rights relate to, or are a part of, "human rights." In other words, what is the overlap between rights talk generally and human rights specifically in U.S. history? The answer, of course, lies in deeply contextualizing the individuals and organizations who use these terms and trying to understand the meaning of "human rights" in that same historical context. As we all know, all of this harder to do in practice than it sounds in theory!

TK: I see many challenges, but I will focus on two. First, for the historian studying human rights, it can be emotionally draining and fraught. Human rights history is often depressing. Even when advocates are successful in exposing harm and pushing for change, they are reacting to something horrible. I've had sleepless nights processing things I've read and I did not even live through the experience! Truthfully, for me, the work has become harder in the midst of COVID on an emotional level.

Second, I see challenges concerning resources and voice. More privileged scholars may have resources to travel to archives in other countries. Another issue is how scholars can be compassionate and mindful as they research other people's hardships. How might scholars have conversations about this and how might graduate students feel better prepared before they confront situations like this? In my research, there were situations in which people were willing to speak to me, but only off the record. They worried about potential repercussions, including their safety. Some

were Central Americans, while others were U.S. and Irish citizens. I preserved their desire for anonymity. But I wonder, how much does the story become about the storyteller and not the person who lived it? Is it just replicating power dynamics that these human rights advocates fought against in the first place?

MCM: Human rights is a powerful but slippery concept, and it's connected to almost every field of inquiry. The first challenge is therefore conceptual: to pin down exactly what people meant when they talked about "human rights," and to illuminate their unspoken assumptions. In thinking about foreign relations, there's the additional challenge of distinguishing between the rhetoric of rights, the underlying concept, and specific policies. In many cases, decisionmakers used the same vocabulary to refer to different things, or they took refuge in ambiguity in order to paper over their disagreements. At the height of the Cold War, for instance, Soviet and American leaders could both insist that they remained committed to human rights, but they understood that term very differently.

The second challenge is disciplinary. The best books in the field bring together a range of different subjects, including diplomacy, law, and philosophy, and draw on insights from political history, intellectual history, cultural history, and social history. Finally, there's a geographic and linguistic challenge. The modern history of human rights—like modern international history in general—transcends national frontiers, so it's difficult to write about it from the perspective of a single country, even one as powerful as the United States.

RS: I would argue, that a key challenge is to determine what to include and what to leave out of the field of human rights history. Historians have done a remarkable job of unearthing the different vernaculars of human rights across time and space. However, there is always a risk of applying the human rights concept anachronistically when examining history through the prism of human rights from the vantage point of the present. While human rights language is ubiquitous today, this was not always the case, and some policy issues that are framed in human rights terms today were not necessarily so in the past. As the field continues to expand, it is worth considering what belongs under the human rights umbrella and what might better be examined through other frameworks or concepts.

Another crucial challenge is how to parse the motivations behind the adoption of human rights language by policymakers and other political actors. In other words, when are human rights invoked purely for political gain, when is the commitment sincere, and when might it be a mixture of both? A general challenge for any historian, the issue of motivations seems particularly challenging for historians of human rights because of the concept's malleability, which has seen it stretched and distorted in innumerable ways. Finally, on a more practical level, archival access remains a challenge for scholars working on human rights beyond the Cold War.

5. What are some of the significant questions in the field that you feel need to be addressed in greater detail or, alternatively, which questions need to be reconsidered by contemporary scholars?

CBT: In general, I'm very happy with the state of the literature; my colleagues have taught me so much in recent years and on topics and events that I had not considered. I'm especially pleased with work that is taking the human rights history of Africa seriously, with work that is moving beyond the human rights "breakthrough" of the 1970s,

as one edited collection described it, and with work that is connecting various aspects of life in the U.S. to human rights history. One area/period that I suspect will be very fertile ground for historians of human rights in the coming years is the early 2000s. My sense is that two defining phenomena of that era—the War on Terror and the surging antineewcomer sentiment in American society (and accompanying government policies)—are related and, in fact, grew as they drew energy from each other. Human rights historians are especially well-placed and trained to explore the links between these two important episodes.

TK: I wonder about so many questions. How did activists overlap in their campaigns and when were campaigns internally divided? (I am reminded of Robert Surbrug's *Beyond Vietnam*.) How did politicians attempt to divide advocates? How did race, class, and gender influence campaigns, as Judy Tzu-Chun Wu analyzes in *Radicals on the Road*? When and how did movements for human rights outside the United States or movements to address U.S. violations of human rights abroad connect with movements to push for greater human rights inside the United States? What happens if the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is decentered as the focus of activism or understanding of human rights? Do only those who used the term "human rights" qualify as human rights advocates in the eyes of scholars? Where is the line between humanitarianism and human rights? Ever since I read Petra Goedde's *The Politics of Peace: A Global Cold War History*, I often think about how peace interacts with human rights. Where do antiwar advocates fit with human rights advocates, as Van E. Gosse's work always prompts me to consider? (With this barrage of questions, it is probably no surprise that my research tends to move in ten different directions simultaneously.)

MCM: The idea of human rights doesn't exist in a vacuum, and its relationship to other fundamental concepts—such as sovereignty, self-determination, and national security—has enormous consequences. When we talk about the rise of human rights in the late 20th century, we need to think about how they fit with the constellation of principles that define the global order. Since strengthening one of these principles sometimes requires sacrificing another, we should also consider which ideas lost ground as human rights advanced, and why. This approach would move beyond linear narratives of rise and fall, and instead give us a richer understanding of the shifting terrain of the whole international system, with human rights as just one component.

Historians could also move from the macro to the micro. Rather than charting the long trajectory of human rights over several decades, there's a need for a closer examination of the concept at specific moments in time. One could, for example, apply the methods of the Cambridge school to particular thinkers or documents, and situate them in their wider intellectual context. Which sources inspired them? What were they reacting against? How exactly did they understand the concept of a right, and where did it come from?

Finally, just as Isaiah Berlin emphasized the importance of the counter-Enlightenment, historians could also think about the opponents and skeptics of human rights, including those who doubted the idea, and those who questioned its application in international affairs. Investigating these rival approaches (whether positivist, realist, fascist, or other) can give us a richer understanding of the concept itself.

RS: Despite a gradual expansion to examine a wider range of human rights, the cluster of economic, social, and cultural rights has received significantly less attention than civil and

political rights. As I have argued elsewhere, the deliberate downgrade of economic and social rights in U.S. foreign policy since the 1980s is a largely untold story that is worthy of further research. Relatedly, the link between human rights and neoliberalism has recently been the subject of growing scholarly attention but how this relationship has shaped U.S. foreign policy merits further consideration. Finally, more could be done to examine American attention to human rights through an ‘intermestic approach’ that acknowledges the interconnectedness of domestic politics and foreign policy. I sense that addressing these areas in greater detail would help us better understand the limitations and failures of U.S. human rights policy from the late Cold War to the present.

6. For someone wanting to start out in the history of human rights, what 5-8 books do you consider to be of seminal importance—either the “best” or the most influential titles?

CBT: The works I’ve mentioned already all fall into the “best” or influential categories. If someone was starting to read in the field I would encourage them to pair some of these works together: Moyn and Hunt; Borgwardt and Keys; Lipman and Walker. Such pairings reveal a more panoramic view of human rights history, but also—and this is more important, I think—the points of tension in the narratives that historians have crafted.

TK: There are so many great books. Instead, I’ll mention different kinds of work that have helped me think about human rights. For someone new to human rights, I recommend starting with two edited volumes: *The Human Rights Revolution: An International History* and *The Routledge History of Human Rights*. Both will introduce the novice reader to different ways of doing human rights as well as to different scholars. The reader can then branch out from there.

One book I return to as a model for human rights scholarship and as a resource for teaching is Carol Anderson’s *Eyes Off the Prize*. She explains how and why the NAACP narrowed its campaign from human rights to civil rights. The book underscores not only why civil rights and human rights are often separate conversations in the United States, but also how this division is often reflected in scholarship as well. Anderson highlights the need to consider how advocates fashion campaigns within a specific context and how these will not all be stories of triumph. You can never go wrong with a wellwritten book, and Anderson’s unique writing style can be a great way for grad students to think about how to find their own voice in writing.

I also encourage someone new to human rights to consult primary sources. The Digital National Security Archives (DNSA) site, located at www.nsarchive.gwu.edu, contains many declassified documents that have human rights implications. SHAFRite Bradley Simpson, for example, was part of the National Security Archive’s Indonesia/East Timor documentation project, which worked to declassify U.S. government documents concerning Indonesia and East Timor. The project aimed to foster efforts for greater transparency and accountability, especially regarding human rights abuses during Indonesian President Suharto’s reign. Finally, I recommend reading firsthand accounts by survivors of human rights abuse and/or advocates for human rights.

MCM: Lauren’s *Evolution of International Human Rights* and Moyn’s *Last Utopia* make a useful pair, because they epitomize two compelling but divergent approaches to the subject. Jan Eckel’s *The Ambivalence of Good* offers an

uptodate synthesis of the global history of rights during the Cold War. Michael Barnett’s *Empire of Humanity* provides an excellent overview of the related but distinct idea of humanitarianism. Elizabeth Borgwardt’s *A New Deal for the World* and Francine Hirsch’s *Soviet Judgment at Nuremberg* examine American and Soviet ideas of human rights and crimes against humanity against the backdrop of the Second World War and its aftermath. Daniel J. Sargent’s *A Superpower Transformed* analyzes the politics of human rights as one part of the broader challenge of globalization during the 1970s. Barbara J. Keys’s *Reclaiming American Virtue* shows how human rights gained currency in American domestic politics during the same decade.

RS: This is a tough question because there are so many worthy candidates, as I am sure the responses by my fellow scholars will reveal. Having said that, I would highlight the following for the reasons listed in parentheses:

Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia* (An impressive and provocative book and certainly among the most influential in the field. A natural starting point.)

Jan Eckel, *The Ambivalence of Good* (For a comprehensive survey of human rights politics in the second half of the twentieth century and a synthesis of the existing scholarship.)

Barbara J. Keys, *Reclaiming American Virtue* (For the American rediscovery of human rights in the 1970s in the aftermath of Vietnam.)

Steven L.B. Jensen, *The Making of International Human Rights* (For an account of the Global South’s role in shaping human rights during decolonization in the 1960s.)

Sarah B. Snyder, *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War* (For the role of human rights in ending the Cold War and the importance of transnational human rights activism.)

Lauren F. Turek, *To Bring the Good News to All Nations* (For the relationship between human rights and religion in American foreign relations.)

7. For someone wanting to teach a course on the history of human rights or add human rights to an existing course on U.S. foreign relations, what core readings and/or media would you suggest?

CBT: My strategy for adding elements to a preexisting course, at least for the first time, is to use standalone articles or chapters so that I can mix in the new theme within the existing structure of the course and its narrative. With that strategy, I’d rely on two collections of essays that feature some of the best scholars working in this subfield: *The Breakthrough: Human Rights in the 1970s* (2015) and *The Human Rights Revolution: An International History* (2012). Another approach that demonstrates the stakes in both human rights history and contemporary human rights thinking is to pair Sam Moyn’s latest work, *Humane: How the United States Abandoned Peace and Reinvented War*, with some of thoughtful and critically engaging reviews of the book that have come not only from historians but also journalists, lawyers, and human rights activists. The point is not to focus so much on the book, but on the lively conversation that ensued after its publication.

TK: There are a few approaches that have helped me to illustrate how activism works, how activists have engaged with Congress, and how U.S. foreign policy has impacted individuals. Because many of my students are savvy social media users, it can be difficult for them to understand and appreciate activism preinternet. Two articles that have sparked lively debates are Kenneth Cmiel’s “The Emergence of Human Rights Politics in the United States” and Barbara

Keys's "The Telephone and Its Uses in 1980s U.S. Activism." I've even drawn phone trees on the board! In terms of seeing activism in action, however, nothing has generated more conversation than *Have You Heard from Johannesburg: From Selma to Soweto*. Many of my students know a fair amount about the U.S. civil rights movement but are unfamiliar with the antiapartheid movement. They enjoy watching college students' activism, seeing the connections between the antiapartheid and civil rights movements in the United States, and as students in Kentucky, they always comment on Mitch McConnell's stance regarding apartheid.

Many of my students don't understand the process of lobbying and how congressional hearings can play a role in highlighting human rights abuses. I have successfully used hearings to examine how members of Congress talked about human rights violations in Northern Ireland and in Central America in the 1970s. I assign students different parts of a hearing with guided reading questions. Every time I do so, I hold my breath, waiting for complaints. Each time, to my surprise, it has not happened. Because my students are not generally familiar with congressional hearings, they appreciate something new. I use the opportunity to discuss how congressional committees work, how someone becomes a witness, and the theatrical aspect of hearings. We also talk about hearings as a resource for scholars. I complement the discussion by sharing my experiences working with NGOs to lobby Congress, write witness testimony, and collaborate with members of Congress.

Finally, for some of my students, it can be difficult even painful to consider the negative impacts of U.S. actions. To invite these conversations, I assign first person accounts. Two pieces that have most successfully opened up discussions are Ariel Dorman's "The Other 9/11" and Andrew Lam's "Letter from a Vietnamese to an Iraqi Refugee."

MCM: There are plenty of vivid primary sources that would grab almost any undergraduate's attention. Henry Kissinger's 1975 "Moral Foundations of Foreign Policy" speech and Jimmy Carter's 1977 Notre Dame commencement address, for example, highlight different ideas about the place of human rights in US foreign policy, and could set up a classroom debate about the meaning of détente and the role of human rights in the end of the Cold War.

Alternatively, one could assign a vivid work of narrative history. Philippe Sands's *EastWest Street*, about the Nuremberg trials, and Gary Bass's *The Blood Telegram*, about the Bangladesh War of Independence, turn abstract concepts into gripping stories. By turns tragic and inspiring, they demonstrate that the history of human rights involves the highest possible stakes for individuals and entire countries alike.

RS: I should start by noting that my teaching experience is exclusively from teaching human rights history and U.S. foreign relations to non-Americans at Danish and Swedish universities. Moreover, I no longer have teaching obligations in my current position. That being said, I found Clair Apodaca's *Understanding U.S. Human Rights Policy: A Paradoxical Legacy* to be a good, concise intro level book to U.S. human rights policy for undergraduates. Another good survey, more suitable for graduate students, is Joe Renouard's *Human Rights in American Foreign Policy: From the 1960s to the Soviet Collapse*. For those looking to include the UN perspective in their course, I highly recommend Roger Normand and Sarah Zaidi's *Human Rights at the UN: The Political History of Universal Justice* as the best comprehensive option available. For the broader international historiography of the field, Stefan Ludwig Hoffmann's take on the genealogies of human rights in his introduction to the edited volume *Human Rights in the Twentieth Century* remains a good starting point. For the historiography on human rights in U.S. foreign relations, Sarah Snyder's "Human Rights and U.S. Foreign Relations: A Historiographical Review," published in *Passport*, offers a succinct overview. Finally, any of the books mentioned under question 6 would be excellent choices for relevant graduate level courses.