Inequality and Human Rights

The University of Texas School of Law
Fall 2015
Unique 29100 LAW 397S
Unique 59920 PA 388K

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Course Description

This seminar will study various forms of and theories about ever-growing inequalities both within and between countries, and their implications for human rights law, policy and advocacy. Existing inequalities powerfully determine who is in a position to avoid harm and even reap profits from human rights violations. In addition to examining the nature and extent of existing inequalities, this seminar will consider whether and how human rights approaches might adequately respond to those inequalities, exacerbate them, or both.

The seminar will be organized around the visits of leading scholars and practitioners in the fields of inequality and human rights who will come to the Law School to present their research. Students will spend two weeks considering work by each speaker. In the first week, we will meet in a traditional seminar format to discuss the speaker’s work. In the second week, the speakers will present their work in a public forum, and will engage in dialogue with seminar students, as well as with others in the university community who choose to attend the talk. Students will thus have the opportunity both to participate in critical discussion of the work in a small setting and to observe and contribute to a conversation with the authors in a broader audience.

Students are expected to participate actively in class discussions, write short critical papers in response to the readings for the seminar, and write a longer essay on a topic related to the themes that arise during the semester.

The seminar is open to law students as well as to non-law graduate and professional students with relevant background.
Recordings of the lectures are available on the Rapoport Center for Human Rights and Justice’s website: https://law.utexas.edu/humanrights/

Schedule

August 31 (in class discussion): *Inequality and Human Rights: An Introduction (I)*

Readings:


September 7: No Class (Labor Day Holiday)

September 8: Optional but recommended opportunity:

Robert Reich, Chancellor’s Professor of Public Policy, UC Berkeley, and former Secretary of Labor in the Clinton Administration, will be presenting the LBJ Liz Carpenter Distinguished Lecture **in the Lady Bird Auditorium from 7pm**. He will discuss his forthcoming book: *Saving Capitalism - For the Many, Not the Few.*

You might also be interested in his film, *Inequality for All*, which will be available on reserve in the Law School library or on Netflix for those with a subscription.

September 14 (in class discussion): *Inequality and Human Rights: An Introduction (II)*

Readings:

- James Galbraith, “Inequality: Should We Care?” *What Everyone Needs to Know About Inequality* (forthcoming).
Optional Additional Readings:


September 21 (in class discussion): A New Greek Tragedy?: Inequality, Human Rights and Democracy

Readings:


Optional Additional Readings:

**September 28 (public lecture): A New Greek Tragedy?: Inequality, Human Rights and Democracy?**

- James Galbraith, Lloyd M. Bentsen Jr. Chair in Government/Business Relations and Professor of Government, LBJ School of Public Affairs, UT Austin
- Philomila Tsoukala, Professor, Georgetown University Law Center
- Alvaro Santos, Professor, Georgetown University Law Center

**October 5 (in class discussion): Croesus' World: Human Rights in the Age of Inequality**

Readings:


Optional Additional Readings:


**October 12 (public lecture): Croesus' World: Human Rights in the Age of Inequality**

Samuel Moyn, Professor of History and Law, Harvard University
October 19 (in class discussion): Right to Development After the Collapse of Development

Readings:


Optional Additional Readings:


October 26 (public lecture): Right to Development After the Collapse of Development

- Balakrishnan Rajagopal, Associate Professor of Law and Development, Department of Urban Studies and Planning, Founding Director, Program on Human Rights and Justice, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Founder, Displacement Research and Action Network

November 2 (in class discussion): This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate

Readings:


Optional Additional Readings:


**November 11 (public lecture): This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate**

**NOTE:** *this lecture takes place on a Wednesday, not Monday*

• Naomi Klein, Puffin Foundation Writing Fellow, The Nation Institute; C.L. and Henriette Cline Visiting Professor in the Humanities, UT Austin

**November 16 (in class discussion): The Sustainable Development Goals: A Course Correction?**

Readings:


Additional Optional Readings:

- “Sustainable Development Goals,”
- “Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform,”
- “MDGs Further Reading,” Taylor & Francis,
  <http://explore.tandfonline.com/content/est/mdg/further-reading>.
- “Results of the list of indicators reviewed at the second IAEG-SDG meeting,” (2015),

**November 23 (public lecture): The Sustainable Development Goals: A Course Correction?**

- Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, Vice-Chair of the UN Committee on Development Policy; Professor of International Affairs, The New School

**November 30:** Mini-conference: student paper presentations

**December 2:** Mini-conference: student paper presentations

**Speaker Biographies**

**James Galbraith**

James Galbraith is Lloyd M. Bentsen Jr. Chair in Government/Business Relations and Professor of Government at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin, where he directs the Inequality Project. Galbraith served in several positions on the staff of the U.S. Congress, including executive director of the Joint Economic Committee. Recently, he served as informal advisor to Yanis Varoufakis, Greek Finance Minister (February through July 2015). He has authored or co-edited six books and two textbooks, most recently *The End of Normal: The Great Crisis and the Future of Growth* (2014). Galbraith writes frequently for
policy magazines and the general press, and is a senior scholar of the Levy Economics Institute. Galbraith also serves as chair of the Board of Economists for Peace and Security. He received an AB from Harvard University, an MA and MPhil from Yale University, and a PhD in economics from Yale University.

Philomila Tsoukala


Alvaro Santos


Samuel Moyn

Samuel Moyn is Professor of Law and History at Harvard University, and researches and writes in the fields of human rights and humanitarian law, legal history, European intellectual history, and political theory. In addition to authoring numerous articles and book chapters in both history and law, he has written several books, including *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (2010), *Human Rights and the Uses of History* (2014) and, most recently, *Christian Human Rights* (2015). He is editor of the interdisciplinary journal *Humanity*, co-editor of *Modern Intellectual History* and holds editorial positions at several other publications. In 2008, he was awarded the Guggenheim Fellowship. Before joining the faculty at Harvard in 2014, Moyn was a member of the history faculty at Columbia University. Moyn received a BA from Washington University, a JD from Harvard Law School and an MA and PhD from the University of California, Berkeley.
Balakrishnan Rajagopal

Balakrishnan Rajagopal is Associate Professor of Law and Development at the Department of Urban Studies and Planning and Founding Director of the Program on Human Rights and Justice at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He is also Founder of the Displacement Research and Action Network. Rajagopal is recognized as a leading participant in, and founder of, Third World Approaches to International Law. He has practiced law in both India and the United States and has also worked extensively with the UN, the World Commission on Dams, and other international organizations, agencies and NGOs in advancing human rights issues. In 1997, he was awarded Cambodia’s highest civilian award for a non-national – the Royal Order of Sahametrei – by King Norodom Sihanoul in recognition of his work in that country as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. He has published numerous articles in leading law journals and is the author of International Law from Below: Development, Social Movements and Third World Resistance (2003) and co-editor of Reshaping Justice: International Law and the Third World (2008). Rajagopal received an LLB from the University of Madras, India, an LLM from Washington College of Law, and an SJD from Harvard Law School.

Naomi Klein

Naomi Klein is an award-winning journalist, syndicated columnist, and author. Her most recent book, This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. The Climate (2014), advances the theory that the climate crisis challenges us to abandon the core “free market” ideology of our time, restructure the global economy, and remake our political systems. Her previous works include international bestsellers The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism (2007) and No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies (1999). Klein is a contributing editor for Harper’s Magazine, reporter for Rolling Stone and writes a syndicated column for The Nation and The Guardian. In 2004, her reporting from Iraq for Harper’s won the James Aronson Award for Social Justice Journalism. In 2014 she received the International Studies Association’s IPE Outstanding Activist-Scholar award, and in 2015 she received The Izzy Award honoring outstanding achievement in independent journalism and media. She holds an honorary Doctor of Civil Laws from the University of King’s College, Nova Scotia.

Sakiko Fukuda-Parr

Sakiko Fukuda-Parr is Professor of International Affairs at the New School and Vice Chair of the United Nations Committee on Development Policy. She is a development economist who has published widely on a broad range of development policy-related issues including poverty, gender, technology, capacity development and agriculture. Her current research projects include the role of economic policy in realizing the right to food and the political economy of the Millennium Development Goals. Fukuda-Parr started her career at the World Bank working on agricultural projects before moving to the UN Development Programme (UNDP), where she worked on aid coordination in Africa. Between 1995 and 2004 she was director and lead author of the UNDP Human Development Reports. She is very widely published and has this year released her co-authored book, Fulfilling Social and Economic Rights (2015), and two books she co-edited, The MDGs, Capabilities and Human Rights: The Power of Numbers to Shape Agendas (2015) and Critical and Feminist Perspectives on Financial and Economic Crisis.
(2015). Fukuda-Parr received a BA from Cambridge University, an MALD from the Fletcher School at Tufts University and an MA in Economics from Sussex University.