

Studying Human Rights

Todd Landman

Essay Questions

1. In what ways does the absence of agreed foundations for human rights affect building a social science of human rights?
2. What are the main categories of human rights and what are their similarities and differences?
3. In what ways are all human rights indivisible, mutually reinforcing, and interdependent? In what ways are they not?
4. Why should we think of human rights as having positive *and* negative dimensions?
5. What are the main kinds of international actors that can have an impact on human rights?
6. What are the main kinds of domestic actors that can have an impact on human rights?
7. In what ways can multinational corporations have an impact on human rights?
8. How can rationalist, structuralist, and culturalist theories help us understand human rights problems?
9. How do the different ontological assumptions of different social theories affect their ability to provide explanations for human rights problems?
10. What are the different ways of measuring human rights?
11. Why has it been more difficult to develop measures for economic and social rights than civil and political rights?
12. Why does method matter for studying human rights?
13. What different comparative methods are available for studying human rights?
14. What are the methodological trade-offs associated with different methods?
15. What is the evidence-inference continuum in social science methods and in what ways is it important for the study of human rights?
16. What have the global comparative studies on human rights shown?
17. What kinds of analytical statements about human rights problems do global comparative studies make?
18. What is missing from the global comparative analysis of human rights?
19. Why is data analysis important for the work of truth commissions?

20. What is the dominant feature of truth commissions that presents such a challenge for estimating the number of human rights violations?
21. How has the use of additional sources of information helped truth commissions estimate human rights violations?
22. Why is it important for a truth commission to have an accurate estimate of the true nature and extent of human rights violations?
23. What is the fundamental problem of causal inference and why is it important for studying human rights?
24. What are the four types of human rights impact assessment?
25. How is the regression model appropriate for human rights impact assessment?
26. How does qualitative comparative analysis differ from the regression model in human rights impact assessment?