

Human Rights and Ideologies Assignment
Due Wednesday April 25, 2012
10 Points

Brief Assignment Requirements

1. Choose a human rights abuse that involves children in Africa.
2. Research the human rights abuse using Google, Academic Search Premier, Lexis/Nexis, and the websites listed below.
3. Write a 3-4 page essay that discusses what you learned about the human rights abuse in relationship to the issues that we have covered in the class (see below).

Sources to Consider

1. Amnesty International's Web Site
2. Human Rights Watch's Web Site
3. Google Searches – especially look for
4. Relevant Videos (Google video search, Witness.org, Youtube, library collection, etc.)
5. Other sources...

Your essay should address several of the following:

1. Summarize the human rights issue – be sure to focus on one specific country in Africa, and focus on children's rights.
 - a. Discuss the causes of the abuse, including the social-cultural-political-economic context, etc.
 - b. How is it currently being addressed? Are there specific groups fighting against the problem? What is the government doing about it?
 - c. Discuss any first-hand accounts of victims and/or perpetrators.
2. Relate your issue to the material we have covered in the course so far. **Choose one or two ideologies to focus on.** You may want to consider the following issues:
 - a. What would be the root causes of the problem according to your ideology?
 - b. Who is culpable according to different ideologies? (*mens rea*, *actus reus*, etc.)
 - c. What about the state? Does the state have any affirmative duty to do something about the abuse? Would they in U.S. law?
 - d. How can you, philosophically, judge this to be a violation of human rights? Think of cultural relativism, higher law, Plato, etc.
 - e. How would liberalism address this human rights abuse?
 - i. Discuss such issues as rights, certainty, consent, etc.
 - ii. Discuss human rights treaties that might be applicable. In the context of your abuse, how does the Convention on the Rights of the Child differ from the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child?
 - f. How would either Marxism or Postmodernism approach your issue?
 - i. If you choose Marxism, you should discuss such concepts as: class, means of production, communism, labor, etc. class consciousness, ideology, imperialism, historical materialism, etc.
 - ii. If you choose postmodernism, you should discuss such issues as systems, cultural relativism, myths of responsibility, death of God, etc.
3. Be sure to relate this to the discussions in my chapter on ideologies and human rights, especially, postmodernism, deconstruction, cauterization, voices of the marginalized Other, deductive, inductive, and concrete universalisms, etc.

4. Children's Rights: Study the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. Choose two or three of the substantive rights that you think your country is currently violating and that are most important for development in your country.
 - a. Prepare a two-three paragraph case to be submitted to the African Committee on the Rights and Welfare of the Child on why you think your country is in violation of those rights. Be sure to read the Wikipedia entries on the Charter and the Committee.
 - b. If your country is found in violation of the Charter, the Committee can order almost any form of reparations including the implementation of development projects, educational initiatives, etc. Write 2 paragraphs or so on what innovative reparations that you would request from the Committee.