

Human Rights in Pittsburgh and the World: Commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Dialogue series organized by the Pitt Human Rights Working Group

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Human Rights in Pittsburgh and the World:

Assessing Human Rights Impacts, Limitations, and Prospects at the 70th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Wednesday September 19, 2018 4:30PM Alcoa Room

As the Trump administration flaunts international human rights standards in its treatment of immigrant families and in its recent withdrawal from the UN Human Rights Council, cities around the country—including Pittsburgh—have been stepping up to declare their commitments to global human rights by signing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and by joining a growing global “Human Rights Cities” movement. As we recognize the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, this panel reflects on shifts in global human rights strategies that have been working to “bring human rights home” in cities around the world and to advance thinking about global human rights principles. Panelists will provide insights into global and local work for human rights and explore how community-based human rights initiatives might support work in our city and elsewhere to realize the vision of the UDHR authors. They will also identify some of the key obstacles and opportunities for achieving dignity and justice for all people.

Speakers Noble Maseru, Director, Pitt Center for Health Equity- Health as a Human Right
Leigh Patel, Associate Dean of Equity and Justice, University of Pittsburgh School of Education
Dawn Plummer, Director, Pittsburgh Food Policy Council; Jackie Smith, Department of Sociology & Pittsburgh Human Rights City Alliance; Carlos Torres, Director, City of Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations; Moderator: Michael Goodhart [[Local media coverage Pitt News](#)]

Cities, Human Rights, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals:

Linking Grassroots & Global October 3, 2018 4:30PM

This panel features leading national human rights advocate and scholar, Joshua Cooper, with commentary from Pittsburgh’s Chief Resilience Officer, Grant Ervin and Local educator and organizer, Michelle King. Joshua Cooper is political science lecturer at University of Hawaii-West Oahu. He teaches advocacy at the International Training Center on Teaching Peace and Human Rights in Geneva, Switzerland as well as the University of New South Wales Diplomacy Training Program in the Asia-Pacific region and the Oxford University Training Program for Unrepresented Diplomats at the United Nations. He is the U.S. Human Rights Network Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Task Force Co-Chair, coordinating the national campaign for the review of the U.S. human rights record between local and global forums. Cooper participated in the negotiation and adoption of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and in reviews of U.S. human rights compliance at the UN Human Rights Committee, the UN Committee on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), and the UN Committee Against Torture (CAT). He is currently focusing on implementation of the UPR recommendations and SDGs at the local and state levels to realize human rights at home in Hawai’i.

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Human Rights and Information Access in a Digital World

Tuesday October 30, Noon-1:00PM, Hillman Library Room 272

The United Nations has [recognized internet access as a basic human right](#). This moderated roundtable event aims to foster conversations about different approaches to ensuring the public access to information. Perspectives from the social sciences, law, and information technology will shape the dialogue about how human rights thinking about communications and technology has evolved since 1948 when the UDHR was signed. What does the right to the internet mean in practice? How do movements like the Open Access movement help advance the realization of this right? Why is this right important for democracy, social cohesion, and human rights? How does the human right to internet access relate to our work as researchers, learners, and citizens?

A roundtable discussion featuring: Sheila Corral, Professor, Department of Information Culture and Data Stewardship, School of Computing and Information, Michael Madison, Professor of Law, and Jackie Smith, Department of Sociology.

Democracy for Social Emancipation: Lessons from Around the World Gianpaolo Baiocchi, New York University, Friday November 9 12:30-2:00PM

What does it mean for the people to actually rule? Formal democracy is an empty and cynical shell, allowing the nationalist Right claims to advance its anti-democratic project in the name of ‘the People’. How can human rights defenders respond in a way that is true to both radical egalitarianism and the desire to transform the real world? Gianpaolo Baiocchi discusses his new book, *We, the Sovereign: Radical Futures*, which draws from his work with social movements from Latin America, Southern Europe, and other parts of the world to examine how popular struggles are creating new forms of democratic participation aimed at making political parties and state institutions instruments of social emancipation. He argues that the ‘people’ must build on this explosive, creative energy to become truly ‘sovereign’ and to form a collective ‘we’ that is capable of deepening democracy and expanding its boundaries. *This event is part of the 2018 Pittsburgh Housing Summit, which addresses the human right to housing in Pittsburgh and beyond (www.housingsummitpgh.org)

Advancing Health Equity, Racial Justice, and the Human Right to Health: Social Policy Perspectives on Public Health, Wednesday February 13, 4:30PM,

Thornburgh Room, Hillman Library (*Part of the Global Studies Center’s Ferguson Voices Exhibit and program on racial justice in global perspective*)

At its 2018 annual meeting, the American Public Health Association adopted [12 new policy statements](#) on the most pressing public health concerns. The statements relate to child mortality, environmental health, gun violence, refugees, police violence and food security—all areas in which we find significant racial disparities. This panel features **Dr. Tiffany Gary-Webb**, Associate Professor in Pitt’s Graduate School of Public Health, and other experts exploring the implications of this effort of health professionals to confront inequality and racism and its health impacts. Panelists will consider the role of scholars and practitioners in advancing health equity in these areas as well as the wider lessons for advancing human rights today. **Panelists: Monica Ruiz**, Executive Director, Casa San Jose; **Heath Cabot**, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, University of Pittsburgh

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Rights Make Might: *Global Human Rights and Minority Social Movements in Japan*

Monday February 18, 2019 4:00PM, Posvar Hall Room 4130

[Kiyoteru Tsutsui](#) examines how international human rights encouraged local mobilization of minority groups in Japan, showing the power of the global human rights regime to transform politics in particular locales. He reveals how human rights activism helped build transnational ties and empowered minority groups to mobilize indigenous identities in ways that challenge national discourses about citizenship and rights. **Kiyoteru Tsutsui** is Professor of Sociology, Director of [the Center for Japanese Studies](#) and Director of [the Donia Human Rights Center](#) at the University of Michigan.

Globalized Authoritarianism and Its Effects:

Regimes, Refugees, & Resistance Thursday February 21 4:00PM, 2432 Posvar Hall

A Panel Presentation and Q&A featuring: **Sidney Tarrow**, Professor Emeritus at Cornell University, **Wendy Pearlman**, Associate Professor of Political Science at Northwestern University, and **Jackie Smith**, Professor of Sociology at Pitt. Panelists will offer insights on contemporary political polarization and its relationship to broader social and political processes. Tarrow is author of over a dozen books, he is a renowned scholar of social movements and transnationalism and has recently written about the War on Terror's effects on mobilization. Pearlman is Associate Professor of Political Science at Northwestern University and a Middle East and diaspora expert. Smith's research addresses relationships between economic globalization and conflict.

Economic Human Rights: It's Time for a New Social Contract!

Cathy Albisa is co-founder and Executive Director, [National Economic and Social Rights Initiative](#),

Tuesday March 19. Homewood [Community Engagement Center](#), 622 N Homewood Ave

The National Economic and Social Rights Initiative is advancing a nation-wide call for a "[New Social Contract](#)" in this country to defend our economy, democracy and climate from threats posed by extreme concentrations of wealth in a few hands and economic development that prioritizes economic growth over maintaining the infrastructure, goods and services that families and neighborhoods need to thrive. A New Social Contract *flips the script on this abusive economy* and advances comprehensive, transformative, community-led solutions that protect human rights, build equitable systems for everyone and deepen our democracy. Learn about this initiative and how it can connect with struggles for human rights, democracy, and racial and economic justice in our city!

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Redefining the American Social Contract:

From Social Exclusion to Equity and Rights Cathy Albisa, Executive Director,
[National Economic and Social Rights Initiative](#), Wednesday March 20 12:00-1:30PM, 109 Barco Law
Building

As we commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, we face the realization that the human rights system is facing an existential crisis. Human rights are more important than ever and under great threat. But the human rights framework has historically avoided engaging with core economic and political systemic questions. Despite formal recognition of many human rights, hunger, housing instability, poor educational outcomes, lack of access to healthcare, abusive poverty jobs, state and private violence, and lack of access to clean water are all at epidemic proportions and dramatic racial disparities. Today it is core systemic questions—how capital and finance (and debt) are organized, what structural arrangements underlie our economy, our relationship to land and resources and more—that have become the focus of grassroots movements, especially those led by young people. These broader movements have embraced community driven solutions to our multiple crisis that arguably hold the key to deep systemic change. Can these solutions add up to a [New Social Contract for America](#) driven by human rights values? Will our movements usher in a new post-neoliberal era? And if so, what do human rights lessons of history have to say to guide us?

**[International Day of Remembrance](#) of Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic
Slave Trade** Monday March 25 12:00-1:00PM, African Heritage Room, 330 Cathedral
of Learning

Join the Global Studies Center as we create a space for supported reflection and meditation in remembrance of those who suffered and died as a result of slavery and the slave trade. We invite all members of the University community to take part.

The Human Right to Water:

Threats from Privatization in Pittsburgh and the World, Thursday April 4 12:00
Noon, 4130 Posvar Hall

[Emanuele Lobina](#), Department of International Business and Economics, University of Greenwich, and Public Services International. Lobina provides a global look at the forces shaping today's heightened debate around access to water. How are pressures to privatize water utilities impacting cities around the world—including Pittsburgh? ; *Panelists* are representatives from [Pittsburgh's Our Water Campaign](#) who attended the International Water Rights Convening in Lagos, Nigeria