

American Politics and Human Rights

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U.S. History & Human Rights

1. Read the U.S. [Declaration of Independence](#) (1776) and the American [Bill of Rights](#) (1791)

Question for short class discussion or short written essay: Do you see these documents as embodying or articulating human rights concepts?

2. Now read the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) (1948)

Follow up discussion or written essay question: how do the U.S. documents compare to the UN document, and does reading the UN document affect the degree to which you see the U.S. document as representing human rights concepts?

American Administrations & Human Rights

1. Listen to three podcasts from American media regarding the [Obama](#) (12 min 13 sec), [Biden](#) (30 min 50 sec) & [Trump](#) (36 min 32 sec) administrations and their relations with human rights.

Questions for class discussion or short written essay:

- a. What do the experts in these podcasts say about the Obama, Biden and Trump administrations relations with human rights?
- b. Was there anything that surprised you about their analyses?
- c. In light of what you heard, what strikes you as the key similarities or differences between the administrations?

A Trump View of Human Rights?

1. Human rights have been part of the culture wars in the United States. At the end of the first Trump Administration, his Department of State commissioned a report on inalienable rights. Trump himself also addressed human rights in one of his speeches to the UN. Read about those [here](#) and [here](#).

Four Questions:

1. What was *The New York Times*’ “1619 Project”?
2. What rights has the Trump Administration said it is prioritizing?
3. What does the Trump Administration say about human rights fit into its view of international affairs?
4. What sense do you make of the Trump Administration’s view of human rights?