

SOCIAL JUSTICE RESEARCH PAPER TOPICS

IMPORTANT HUMAN RIGHTS RESOLUTIONS

- 1948 UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- 2008 UN Resolution on Human Rights and Climate Change
- 2008 Organization of American States Resolution on Human Rights and Climate Change in the Americas

ACTIVISM

- Non-governmental Organizations [NGOs]: are they positive agents for change?
- Student activism

ANTHROPOLOGY

- Traditional lifestyle of an aboriginal community
- Cultural differences and values
- Rights of indigenous populations

BUSINESS

- Business Leaders Initiative on Human Rights BLIHR [United Nations]
- Child labor
- Domestic workers—illegal immigrants; fair wages and treatment
- Effects of Globalization
- Fair Trade
- Corporate social responsibility in trans-national corporations
- Human rights risk management in foreign investment—how a particular project might impact the traditional lifestyle of an aboriginal community
- Environmental standards differ globally
- Operating in zones of conflict
- Socially responsible business practices: sustainability of resources
- Sweatshops
- Workers' rights—migrant labor

CATHOLIC SOCIAL JUSTICE

- Access to food, clean water and shelter: a matter of justice
- Community: promotion of the common good, e.g. education
- Development of poor countries in an effort to alleviate human misery
- Dignity of the human person from creation: abortion; euthanasia; the death penalty
- Family-friendly economic policy—where does the US stand in this regard?
- Global responsibility for alleviation of economic inequality
- Human dignity: how poverty affects human rights
- Marginalization of the poor
- Pacifism, disarmament
- Rights and their corresponding social responsibilities

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

Exploitation of children
Child soldiers in Uganda
Child workers enslaved on chocolate farms in Ivory Coast
Child workers in India
Human trafficking – prostitution
Right to free education
Right to adequate healthcare

CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change inequitably impacts developing countries
Help is needed to adapt to climate change—technology, policy, etc.
Effect of sea level rise to small island nations, e.g. Maldives; Vanuatu
Enable the most vulnerable states and populations to become more resilient to climate change by *mitigation and adaptation*

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Challenges of terrorism: extraordinary rendition, torture and unlawful detention
Crime victims
Death penalty / capital punishment
Human trafficking
Police powers and human rights
Prisoners' rights
Racial profiling

DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Access to information—censorship; lack of technology
Access to technology takes international support
Guidance needed in adaptation of new energy sources/fuels—environmental impact assessments needed
Non-governmental Organizations [NGOs]: are they positive agents for change?
Role of private companies in technology transfer—will technology transfer advance or impede human rights protection?

ECONOMICS

Economics and human rights: in conflict or complementary?
Is economics at the service of human dignity?
Food and nutrition
Global commerce and its effect on local populations
Pharmaceuticals—equal access in all communities?
Poverty and inequality

EDUCATION

Access to education: minority groups, the poor, refugees, migrant workers, and others
Censorship of textbooks; rewriting history

Children with disabilities
Corporal punishment
The "Digital Divide": access to technology
Discrimination against girls or non-citizens
"Free or fee?" The right to free and compulsory primary education
Freedom from indoctrination
Global differences in attitudes towards the right to education
Impact of child labor or early marriage on education of children
Language of instruction
Impact of illiteracy on society

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Globalization vs. local ethnic identity
Indigenous populations
Forest-dependent economies in the Amazon
Bushmen of Southern Africa
Arctic peoples and climate change:
The Inuit of North America—legal battle: right to property being lost through global warming
Landfills—proximity to the homes of the poor
Industrial air pollution – how it often affects the poorest and most vulnerable

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Freedom of the press
Government censorship
Hate speech
Prisoners of conscience
"Reporters Without Borders" Reporters killed, jailed in
Africa, China, Russia, Turkey, Korea, Belarus, Mexico, etc.

GENOCIDE / ETHNIC CLEANSING

Holocaust; Armenia; Cambodia; Rwanda; Kosovo; Darfur

GEOGRAPHY and SOCIAL JUSTICE

Landfills—proximity to the homes of the poor
Industrial air pollution – how it often affects the poorest and most vulnerable

GLOBAL WARMING

Carbon emissions trading—long-term effects on poorest countries—research needed
"Harm caused at a distance" —poorer countries need legal protections
Wealthy countries have responsibility to mitigate climate change and aid in adaptation abroad

GLOBALIZATION

Globalization vs. local ethnic identity
Exploitation of local citizens
Inequality in world politics

Impact on human rights—does it lead to an unequal distribution of wealth?

HEALTH

Access to food, clean water and shelter: a matter of justice

Access to adequate healthcare

Medical experimentation

Rights of the disabled and the mentally ill

HISTORY

Theories and movements in the field of Human Rights

History and development of the idea in Western political thought

Non-Western attitudes towards human rights

Nuremburg and Tokyo war crimes trials

Post-Soviet human rights

Colonialism and human rights

Apartheid

Slavery

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

Geneva Convention

Truth commissions

Universal jurisdiction

INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM

Ecotourism: leave no footprints; low impact; "green" hostelry

Globalization of industry: how it impacts local populations

LITERATURE of Human Rights

Writings of survivors, victims, witnesses – plays, novels, poetry, stories

Imagery and symbolism

MATH & SCIENCE

Average wages worldwide

Bioethics: Biology and human values

Environmental justice

Fair trade, e.g., coffee and chocolate

Health professionals and human rights

Technology: absence of, in developing world

MINORITY RIGHTS

Women, workers, racial/ethnic groups, the elderly, children, LGBTs, the disabled, the poor, immigrants

PERSECUTION

Argentina's "disappearances"

Cultural differences and values
Homelessness
Immigrants' rights
Persecution on account of political opinion or social group
Race prejudice around the world

PSYCHOLOGY

Aggression and violence
Causes and consequences of genocide
Conduct of research with human subjects—ethics
Conflict resolution
Consequences of detention on refugees
Duty and responsibility of the individual to the community
Ethics: interrogation of political detainees
Evil: personality and human cruelty
Impact of apathetic bystanders
Peace psychology
Human behavior toward the idea of climate change
Motivation: strategies to overcome inaction

REFUGEES

Internally displaced persons
Victims of disasters: Earthquakes; Floods; Fires
Hurricane Katrina and rights of African Americans
The children of war: Uganda's Lord's Resistance Army
Persecution on account of political opinion or social group

SOCIAL WORK

Access to social services
Cultural competence
Homelessness
Inequalities in treatment
Rights of indigenous populations
Social policies
Violence against Native American women

SOCIOLOGY

Access to education: minority groups, the poor, refugees, migrant workers, and others
The "Digital Divide": access to technology
Domestic workers—illegal immigrants; fair wages and treatment
Development of poor countries in an effort to alleviate human misery
Exploitation of local citizens
Global differences in attitudes towards the right to education
Globalization—does it lead to an unequal distribution of wealth?

Globalization vs. local ethnic identity
Impact of child labor or early marriage on education of children
Impact of illiteracy on society
Marginalization of the poor
Non-governmental Organizations [NGOs]: are they positive agents for change?
Poverty and inequality

HEALTH

Access to adequate healthcare
Right to adequate healthcare
Medical experimentation
Rights of the disabled and the mentally ill
Homelessness (should also be cross-listed under Social Work)
Race prejudice around the world

SPORT and HUMAN RIGHTS

Gender equity
Paralympics
Race equity
Sport and protest

UNITED NATIONS

Declaration of Human Rights 1948 – Internationalizing of human rights
How far can it go in protecting human rights?
Humanitarian intervention – Does it work without weapons?

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Access to credit and marketing arrangements
Crimes against women
Discrimination in health research
Domestic violence
Equal pay for equal work
Religious differences in attitudes towards women
Shari'a: rights of women in a modern Islamic state
Women's cooperatives

WORKERS' RIGHTS

Clothing industry workers worldwide: sweatshops
Fair wages
Gender equity: equal pay for equal work
Migrant workers – exploitation
The right to form unions
Slavery – Florida's tomato workers