

Oct 2nd, 4:00 PM - 5:30 PM

International Organizations as Normative Agenda Setters: Social Influence and Reputational Costs in the effects of the International Human Rights Regime


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Anaya-Muñoz, Alejandro and Ponce, Aldo F., "International Organizations as Normative Agenda Setters: Social Influence and Reputational Costs in the effects of the International Human Rights Regime" (2015). *The Social Practice of Human Rights: Charting the Frontiers of Research and Advocacy*. 1.

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The Social Practice of Human Rights: Charting the Frontiers of Research and Advocacy

2015 Conference of the University of Dayton Human Rights Center

Oct. 1-3, 2015, Dayton, Ohio

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Research Panel: Case Studies in Human Rights Activism

Presenter: Alejandro Anaya-Muñoz and Aldo F. Ponce

Title: International Organizations as Normative Agenda Setters: Social Influence and Reputational Costs in the effects of the International Human Rights Regime

Note: This is a work in progress; do not cite or distribute.

Abstract: This paper focuses on the question of how International Organizations (IOs) influence states. In particular, we assess the role of the mechanism of social influence in shaping states' normative (discursive) behavior, by looking at the "reporting procedure" of the Human Rights Committee (HRC) of the United Nations (UN). Our study finds that in the definition of the substantive content of their "periodic reports," states follow the human rights agenda set by the HRC in its "concluding observations." In this sense, we provide systematic evidence that shows that, through social influence, even poorly "legalized" IOs can have an influence over state (discursive) practices.

Biography: Alejandro Anaya-Muñoz is a professor-researcher at the Division of International Studies of the Center for Research and Teaching in Economics (CIDE), Mexico. He also is director of CIDE's new campus, in Aguascalientes, Mexico, and was a Mexico Public Policy Scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, D.C. (Summer 2007 and Summer 2012).

His publications on human rights and cultural diversity in Mexico include three books and numerous chapters and articles in journals such as the *Human Rights Quarterly*, the *Journal of Latin American Studies*, the *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, the *International Journal of Human Rights* and the *Journal of Human Rights*.

His most recent publication is *Derechos Humanos en y desde las Relaciones Internacionales [Human Rights in International Relations]* (Mexico, CIDE, 2014). He is the leading researcher of the database "International Human Rights Recommendations to Mexico" (www.recomendacionesdh.mx).