Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time: Modeling the Changing Standard of Accountability

Christopher J. Fariss

Department of Political Science, Pennsylvania State University
Have Levels of Political Repression Changed?

“Repression” or “Abuse of Physical Integrity Rights”

- Arrests and political imprisonment, beatings and torture, extrajudicial executions and killings, mass killings, and disappearances

“Improvements in the respect of physical integrity rights”
Have Levels of Political Repression Changed?

Current indicators of political repression imply that human rights practices remain stagnant.

This pattern persists according to several widely used datasets despite the spread of human rights norms, better monitoring by private and public agencies, and the increasing prevalence of electoral democracy.
Contested Empirical Pattern

CIRI

Political Terror Scale

Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time
The pattern reflects a systematic change in the way reporting agencies, like Amnesty International and the US State Department, encounter and interpret information about human rights abuses.
“The Standard of Accountability”

- A set of expectations that state behavior is measured against
Mechanisms for changes in the standard of accountability:

1. Information
2. Access
3. Classification
That is, these are the strategies used by observers and activists to reveal, understand and ultimately change repressive practices for the better.
Theory

Information:

Gather accurate information about credible allegations of repression
**Access:**

Broaden the coverage of information gathering campaigns with the help of other NGOs
Classification:

Continually press governments to reform through naming and shaming campaigns, even after real reforms are implemented to reduce more egregious rights violations by those governments.
Why is this important?
Implications for Quantitative Human Rights Scholarship

Abouharb and Cingranelli (2006); Apodaca (1998); Apodaca and Stohl (1999); Armstrong (2009); Bueno De Mesquita et al. (2005); Bell, Clay and Murdie (2012); Blanton (1994); Blanton (1999); Blanton (2000); Blanton (2005); Blanton and Blanton (2007a); Blanton and Blanton (2007b); Blanton and Blanton (2009); Carey (2006); Carey (2007); Cingranelli and Filippov (2010); Cingranelli and Richards (1999a); Cingranelli and Richards (1999b); Cingranelli and Richards (2010); Davenport (2010); Davenport and Armstrong (2004); Demirel-Pegg and Moskowitz (2009); Fariss (2010); Gartner and Regan (1996); Gibney (1988); Gibney, Dalton and Vockell (1992); Gibney and Stohl (1988); Hafner-Burton (2005b); Hafner-Burton (2005a); Hafner-Burton (2008); Hafner-Burton (2013); Hafner-Burton and Ron (2009); Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui (2005); Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui (2007); Hafner-Burton, Tsutsui and Meyer (2008); Hathaway (2002); Hathaway (2003); Hathaway (2007); Hollyer and Rosendorff (2011); Keith (1999); Keith (2002); Keith and Poe (2004); Keith, Tate and Poe (2009); Kim and Sikkink (2010); Landman and Carvalho (2009); Lebovic (2005); Lebovic and Voeten (2006); Meernik, Krueger and Poe (1998); Meernik and Poe (1996); Milner, Poe and Leblang (1999); Moore and Shellman (2004); Moore and Shellman (2006); Moore and Shellman (2007); Neumayer (2003b); Neumayer (2003a); Neumayer (2005b); Neumayer (2005a); Neumayer (2005c); Poe (1991); Poe (1992); Poe and Meernik (1995); Poe et al. (1994); Poe, Rost and Carey (2006); Poe and Tate (1994); Poe, Tate and Keith (1999); Poe et al. (2000); Regan (1995); Richards and Gelleny (2007); Ron, Ramos and Rodgers (2005); Rosenblum and Salehyan (2004); Rottman, Fariss and Poe (2009); Salehyan and Rosenblum (2008); Schnakenberg and Fariss (2013); Simmons (2009); Vreeland (2008); Walker and Poe (2002); Wood (2008); Wood (2010); Wood and Gibney (2010); Zanger (2000)
Difference in the Data

Evidence from Specific Cases (many sources)
- Truth Commission Reports
- News Reports
- Surveys
- Expert Opinion

Evidence from Country Reports (two sources)

Improvement in Respect ⟷
No Change in Respect →
**Difference in the Data**

**Event-Based Data**
- **Quantitative counts**
  - Many different measures
  - Many different sources
  - Case specific coverage

**Good for comparing the same case over time**

**Comparisons across cases are problematic**

**Reports-Based Data**
- **Standardized ordered categories of abuse**
  - Common sources
  - Full coverage

**Good for comparing across cases in a given time period**

**Comparisons across time are problematic**

Christopher J. Fariss
Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time
Links an unobservable theoretical construct with multiple observed outcomes

1. intelligence with correct and incorrect test answers

2. ideology with “yea” and “nay” roll call votes

3. repression with categorical values of repression coded from human rights documents and events based sources
Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time
Research Design: Model Comparison

I compare two alternative latent variable models:

1. Dynamic standard of accountability
2. Constant standard of accountability

The standard of accountability is operationalized as the baseline probability of being coded at given level of repression.

All other parameters, country-year observations and data values are the same.
From Theory to Model Parameterization

Latent Variable Estimation

Easy as regression

The dynamic standard model allows $\alpha$ to vary at the system level over time for certain repression variables $y_j$.
From Theory to Model Parameterization

**Latent Variable Estimation**

\[ y \sim \alpha + \beta \times x \]

A simple model to estimate when \( x \) is observed becomes a more complicated model when \( x \) must be estimated.

\( x \) is repression
From Theory to Model Parameterization

Latent Variable Estimation

\[ y \sim \alpha + \beta \star \theta \]

\( x \) becomes a latent variable represented by \( \theta \) when it is estimated.
### Latent Variable Estimation

\[ y \sim \alpha + \beta \times \theta \]

\( \theta \) is the estimated “true” or “latent” variable
From Theory to Model Parameterization

**Latent Variable Estimation**

\[ y \sim \alpha + \beta \times \theta \]

\[ \uparrow \]

\( y \) is the observed variable the coded level of repression
From Theory to Model Parameterization

Latent Variable Estimation

\[ y \sim \alpha + \beta \cdot \theta \]

\[ \uparrow \quad \uparrow \]

\( y \) is caused by the “true” level of repression \( \theta \)
From Theory to Model Parameterization

Latent Variable Estimation

\[ y \sim \alpha + \beta \ast \theta \]

\(\alpha\) is the intercept or the baseline probability of observing a given level of \(y\)

it represents the “difficulty” in being coded at certain level of repression
From Theory to Model Parameterization

Latent Variable Estimation

\[ y \sim \alpha + \beta \ast \theta \]

\( \beta \) is the slope or the strength of the relationship between the “true” level of repression \( \theta \) and the observed level of repression \( y \). It represents the ability of the test to “discriminate” between the repressiveness of different country years.

Christopher J. Fariss

Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time
### Latent Variable Estimation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$y_1$</th>
<th>$\sim$</th>
<th>$\alpha_1 + \beta_1 * \theta$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$y_2$</td>
<td>$\sim$</td>
<td>$\alpha_2 + \beta_2 * \theta$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...</td>
<td></td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$y_J$</td>
<td>$\sim$</td>
<td>$\alpha_J + \beta_J * \theta$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\theta$ is the same for every regression
Results: Interpreting the Latent Variable

Latent Physical Integrity Estimates

More Abuse  More Respect

Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time
Results: Model Differences Across Time

Estimated Yearly Average of Two Dynamic Latent Physical Integrity Variables

Latent Physical Integrity

-0.50
-0.25
0.00
0.25
0.50
0.75

More Abuse
More Respect

Dynamic Standard of Accountability
Constant Standard of Accountability

Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time
Results: Visualizing Latent Repression $\theta$

Guatemala

Dynamic Standard of Accountability
Constant Standard of Accountability

Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time
Results: Visualizing Latent Repression $\theta$

Argentina

Dynamic Standard of Accountability
Constant Standard of Accountability

Latent Physical Integrity
More Abuse
More Respect

Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time
Results: Visualizing Latent Repression $\theta$

China

*Dynamic Standard of Accountability*
*Constant Standard of Accountability*

Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time
Results: Visualizing Latent Repression $\theta$

Hungary

Dynamic Standard of Accountability
Constant Standard of Accountability

Latent Physical Integrity

More Abuse More Respect


-3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time
Results: The Changing Standard of Accountability

Latent Physical Integrity Estimates

Probability of Frequent Torture

More Abuse

More Respect

Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time
Results: The Changing Standard of Accountability

Latent Physical Integrity Estimates

Probability of Frequent Torture
More Abuse More Respect

-4 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3 ...

1981
1982
1983
1984
1985
1986
1987
1988
1989
1990
1991
1992
1993
1994
1995
1996
1997
1998
1999
2000
2001
2002
2003
2004
2005
2006
2007
2008
2009
2010

0.152
0.877

Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time
Results: The Changing Standard of Accountability

Probability of Frequent Torture (Latent Repression=0)

Christopher J. Fariss
Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time
Results: The Changing Standard of Accountability

Probability of Frequent Torture (Latent Repression=-1)

Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time
Results: The Changing Standard of Accountability

Probability of Frequent Torture (Latent Repression=1)

Year
Probability


Christopher J. Fariss
Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time
Results: The Changing Standard of Accountability

Latent Physical Integrity Estimates

Probability of Frequent Imprisonment

- More Abuse
- More Respect

Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time
Results: The Changing Standard of Accountability

Latent Physical Integrity Estimates

Probability of Frequent Imprisonment

More Abuse  More Respect

-4 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4

0.46 0.481


Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time
Results: The Changing Standard of Accountability

Probability of Frequent Imprisonment (Latent Repression=0)

Year
Probability
0.0 0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8 1.0

Christopher J. Fariss
Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time
Results: The Changing Standard of Accountability

Christopher J. Fariss

Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time
Results: The Changing Standard of Accountability

Probability of Frequent Imprisonment (Latent Repression=1)

Year


Christopher J. Fariss

Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time
Results: The Changing Standard of Accountability

- More Abuse
- More Respect

Disagreement between estimates increases each year.
Results: The Convention Against Torture

Linear Model Coefficients for Ratification of the Convention Against Torture

Model Coefficient (Dynamic Standard DV)

Model Coefficient (Constant Standard DV)

Difference Between Estimates

DV=Latent Physical Integrity
Conclusion

• Improvements in the respect for physical integrity rights

• The changing standard of accountability masked this change

• A new picture of global repression levels emerges from the dynamic standard model

• This difference has implications for our understanding of the relationship between levels of repression and certain institutions

Christopher J. Fariss

Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time
What’s Next?

- Replications

- Estimate counts and rates of the different physical integrity abuses

- Test the theoretical mechanisms that influence the standard of accountability
  - Content analysis of reports (quality mechanism)
  - Experiments (subject view mechanism)
  - Micro-level data for specific countries and time periods (access mechanism)

- Extend the model to include other rights
Thank You!

Questions?
See the following paper for more details about the content presented in these slides. Fariss, Christopher J. “Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time: Modeling the Changing Standard of Accountability” *American Political Science Review* 108(2):297-318 (May 2014).
Changing Standard in Case Law

There is specific evidence from case law of a rising standard of acceptable treatment, whereby more acts come to be classified as inhuman treatment or torture. For example the European Court of Human Rights, in Selmouni v. France (1999), “consider certain acts which were classified in the past as inhuman and degrading treatment as opposed to torture could be classified differently in future.” That is, inhuman and degrading treatment from a decade ago might be classified as torture by the court today. The court states further “that the increasingly high standard being required in the area of the protection of human rights and fundamental liberties correspondingly and inevitably requires greater firmness in assessing breaches of the fundamental values of democratic societies.” Unfortunately for scholars interested in these changes, the standard of accountability is not directly observable in the human rights reports and is therefore difficult to measure.
## Research Design: Data from Event-Based Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dataset Name and Variable Description</th>
<th>Dataset Citation and Primary Source Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Harff and Gurr Dataset, 1946-1988</strong>&lt;br&gt;- massive repressive events&lt;br&gt;(1 if country-year experienced event 0 otherwise)</td>
<td>Harff and Gurr (1988)&lt;br&gt;historical sources&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Political Instability Task Force (PITF), 1956-2010</strong>&lt;br&gt;- genocide and politicide&lt;br&gt;(1 if country-year experienced event 0 otherwise)</td>
<td>Harff (2003), Marshall, Gurr and Harff (2009)&lt;br&gt;historical sources&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;br&gt;State Department Reports&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;br&gt;Amnesty International Reports&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rummel Dataset, 1949-1987</strong>&lt;br&gt;- genocide and democide&lt;br&gt;(1 if country-year experienced event 0 otherwise)</td>
<td>Rummel (1994, 1995), Wayman and Tago (2010)&lt;br&gt;New York Times&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;, New International Yearbook&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;,&lt;br&gt;Facts on File&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;, Britannica Book of the Year&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;,&lt;br&gt;Deadline Data on World Affairs&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;,&lt;br&gt;Kessing’s Contemporary Archives&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UCDP One-sided Violence Dataset, 1989-2010</strong>&lt;br&gt;- government killing (event count estimate)&lt;br&gt;(1 if country-year experienced event 0 otherwise)</td>
<td>Eck and Hultman (2007), Sundberg (2009)&lt;br&gt;Reuters News&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;, BBC World Monitoring&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;br&gt;Agence France Presse&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;, Xinhua News Agency&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;,&lt;br&gt;Dow Jones International News&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;, UN Reports&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;,&lt;br&gt;Amnesty International Reports&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;,&lt;br&gt;Human Rights Watch Reports&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;,&lt;br&gt;local level NGO reports (not listed)&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>World Handbook of Political and Social Indicators (WHPSI), 1948-1982</strong>&lt;br&gt;- political executions (event count estimate)&lt;br&gt;(1 if country-year experienced event 0 otherwise)</td>
<td>Taylor and Jodice (1983)&lt;br&gt;New York Times&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;, Middle East Journal&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;,&lt;br&gt;Asian Recorder&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;, Archiv der Genenwart&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;br&gt;African Diary&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;, Current Digest of Soviet Press&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

1. Primary Source; 2. Secondary Source
Research Design: Data from Reports-Based Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dataset Name and Variable Description</th>
<th>Dataset Citation and Primary Source Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **CIRI Physical Integrity Data, 1981-2010** | - political imprisonment (ordered scale, 0-2)  
- torture (ordered scale, 0-2)  
- extrajudicial killing (ordered scale, 0-2)  
- disappearance (ordered scale, 0-2) | Cingranelli and Richards (1999a, 2012a,b)  
Amnesty International Reports\(^1\) and  
State Department Reports\(^2\)  
*Amnesty reports take precedence over State Department reports* |
State Department Reports\(^1\) |
| **Ill-Treatment and Torture (ITT), 1995-2005** | - torture (ordered scale, 0-5) | Conrad and Moore (2011)  
Amnesty International (2006)  
Annual Reports\(^1\), press releases\(^1\), and Urgent Action Alerts\(^1\) |
| **PTS Political Terror Scale, 1976-2010** | - Amnesty International scale (ordered scale, 1-5)  
- State Department scale (ordered scale, 1-5) | Gibney, Cornett and Wood (2012)  
Amnesty International Reports\(^1\)  
State Department Reports\(^1\) |

1. Primary Source; 2. Secondary Source
# Research Design: Two Types of Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event-Based Data</th>
<th>Reports-Based Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quantitative counts</strong></td>
<td><strong>Standardized ordered categories of abuse</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Many different measures</td>
<td>• Common sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Many different sources</td>
<td>• Full coverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Case specific coverage</td>
<td><strong>Good for comparing across cases in a given time period</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Good for comparing the same case over time</strong></td>
<td><strong>Comparisons across time are problematic</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comparisons across cases are problematic</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# From Theory to Model Parameterization

**Table:** Summary of Prior Distributions for Latent Variable and Model Level Parameter Estimates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameters</th>
<th>Constant Standard</th>
<th>Dynamic Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>country-year latent variable (first year)</td>
<td>$\theta_{i1} \sim N(0, 1)$</td>
<td>$\theta_{i1} \sim N(0, 1)$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>country-year latent variable (all years)</td>
<td>$\theta_{it} \sim N(\theta_{it-1}, \sigma)$</td>
<td>$\theta_{it} \sim N(\theta_{it-1}, \sigma)$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uncertainty of latent variable</td>
<td>$\sigma \sim U(0, 1)$</td>
<td>$\sigma \sim U(0, 1)$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>event-based variable cut-points (constant)</td>
<td>$\alpha_{jk} \sim N(0, 4)$</td>
<td>$\alpha_{jk} \sim N(0, 4)$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>standards-based variable cut-points (constant)</td>
<td>$\alpha_{jk} \sim N(0, 4)$</td>
<td>— — — — — —</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>standards-based variable cut-points (first year)</td>
<td>— — — — — —</td>
<td>$\alpha_{1jk} \sim N(0, 4)$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>standards-based variable cut-points (all years)</td>
<td>— — — — — —</td>
<td>$\alpha_{tjk} \sim N(\alpha_{t-1,jk}, 4)$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>slope</td>
<td>$\beta_j \sim Gamma(4, 3)$</td>
<td>$\beta_j \sim Gamma(4, 3)$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Predictive Validity Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Lagged Repression Variables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$Y_{t-1}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Harff and Gurr</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>massive repression</td>
<td>0.941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PITF</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>genocide and politicide</td>
<td>0.933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rummel</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>genocide and democide</td>
<td>0.967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UCDP</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>killing</td>
<td>0.786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WHPSI</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>executions</td>
<td>0.661</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Deviance Information Criterion

The model with the smallest DIC is expected to have the greatest out of sample predictive power (Spiegelhalter et al., 2002).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIC</th>
<th>Constant</th>
<th>Dynamic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean deviance penalty</td>
<td>52492</td>
<td>50587</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2535</td>
<td>3119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penalized deviance</td>
<td>55027</td>
<td>53706</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Posterior Predictive Checks

Assess the quality of the model by direct comparison of model predictions between the two competing models.

Predict each of the $j$ items for every country-year $y_{itj}$

$$S_{itj} = \sum_d (y_{itj} - \hat{y}_{itj}^{(d)})^2$$

$d = 1, \ldots, 2000$, posterior replications or predictions.
Posterior Predictive Checks

Proportion of Predicted Observations from the Dynamic Standard Model more Precise than the Constant Standard Model

Greater Precision from Constant Standard Model
Greater Precision from Dynamic Standard Model

Greater Precision from Constant Standard Model
Greater Precision from Dynamic Standard Model

CIRI: Disappearance
CIRI: Killing
CIRI: Imprisonment
CIRI: Torture
PTS: Amnesty
PTS: State
Hathaway: Torture
Conrad & Moore: ITT
Harff & Gurr: Mass-Repression
PITF: Genocide and Politicide
Rummel: Genocide and Democide
UCDP: One-side Killing
WHPSI: Political Executions

Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time
## Predictive Validity Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Lagged Repression Variables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$t^*Y_{t-1}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CIRI Physical Integrity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additive Scale</td>
<td>13088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>political imprisonment</td>
<td>5846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>torture</td>
<td>6234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extrajudicial killing</td>
<td>6069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disappearance</td>
<td>4213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hathaway Torture</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>torture</td>
<td>4241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ill-Treatment and Torture</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>torture</td>
<td>3116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Political Terror Scale</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>8758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amnesty</td>
<td>8102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Christopher J. Fariss

Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time
Example Coding: Torture

The variable measuring torture and other cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment or punishment is as coded as a 0 when this practice occurred frequently in a given year; a score of 1 indicates that torture was practiced occasionally; and a score of 2 indicates that torture did not occur in a given year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coding Score</th>
<th>Number of Instances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>50 or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>From 1 to 49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Zero</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Christopher J. Fariss

Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time
... the Guatemalan press frequently reports discoveries of bodies evidencing torture. In most instances it has not been possible to establish who the perpetrators were. In some cases there is evidence to suggest that elements within the military or security forces have been involved. In recent months, similar evidence suggests that the guerrilla groups have used torture. ...
... many bodies found throughout Guatemala bore signs of torture or postmortem mutilation. Such treatment, however, is not necessarily evidence of security force involvement: gangs and other criminals, as well as guerrillas, all use torture. There were, nevertheless, many credible reports of torture and mistreatment by security forces. There were also credible reports of the use of excessive force by police at the time of arrest and of abusive treatment by army personnel, civil defense patrols, military commissioners, and police of persons in rural areas. ...
... there were credible reports of torture, abuse, and other mistreatment by members of the PNC during the year. These complaints typically involved the use of excessive force during arrests, interrogations, or other police operations. Criminal Investigative Service (SIC) detectives continued to torture and beat detainees during interrogation to obtain forced confessions. The Government and the PNC showed decreased willingness to investigate, prosecute, or otherwise punish officers who committed abuses. ...
Guatemala

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Torture Section</th>
<th>Full Document</th>
<th>Torture Coding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>3,930</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>562</td>
<td>5,768</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>3,669</td>
<td>32,064</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Information Paradox” (Keck and Sikkink, 1998; Clark and Sikkink, 2010)
Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time
### The Changing Standard of Accountability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Difficulty Cut-Points</th>
<th>Coefficient [95%CI]</th>
<th>$R^2$ [95%CI]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CIRI: torture</strong></td>
<td>$\alpha_{t,1}$</td>
<td>0.1239 [0.1123, 0.1357]</td>
<td>0.8626 [0.7998, 0.9135]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\alpha_{t,2}$</td>
<td>0.1641 [0.1501, 0.1782]</td>
<td>0.8809 [0.8297, 0.9257]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CIRI: killing</strong></td>
<td>$\alpha_{t,1}$</td>
<td>0.0695 [0.0548, 0.0841]</td>
<td>0.5711 [0.4142, 0.7125]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\alpha_{t,2}$</td>
<td>0.1299 [0.1168, 0.1433]</td>
<td>0.8459 [0.7760, 0.9005]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CIRI: imprisonment</strong></td>
<td>$\alpha_{t,1}$</td>
<td>0.0107 [-0.0003, 0.0213]</td>
<td>0.0726 [0.0011, 0.2557]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\alpha_{t,2}$</td>
<td>0.0013 [-0.0093, 0.0121]</td>
<td>0.0040 [0.0000, 0.0478]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CIRI: disappearance</strong></td>
<td>$\alpha_{t,1}$</td>
<td>0.0291 [0.0122, 0.0462]</td>
<td>0.1748 [0.0346, 0.3802]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\alpha_{t,2}$</td>
<td>0.0331 [0.0196, 0.0462]</td>
<td>0.3013 [0.1257, 0.5011]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PTS: Amnesty</strong></td>
<td>$\alpha_{t,1}$</td>
<td>-0.0656 [-0.0840, -0.0481]</td>
<td>0.3242 [0.1883, 0.4773]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\alpha_{t,2}$</td>
<td>-0.0721 [-0.0848, -0.0588]</td>
<td>0.6034 [0.4693, 0.7236]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\alpha_{t,3}$</td>
<td>-0.0850 [-0.0988, -0.0715]</td>
<td>0.6402 [0.5233, 0.7484]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\alpha_{t,4}$</td>
<td>-0.0580 [-0.0758, -0.0406]</td>
<td>0.4310 [0.2469, 0.6070]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PTS: State</strong></td>
<td>$\alpha_{t,1}$</td>
<td>-0.2224 [-0.2392, -0.2054]</td>
<td>0.8949 [0.8516, 0.9314]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\alpha_{t,2}$</td>
<td>-0.2087 [-0.2253, -0.1931]</td>
<td>0.9132 [0.8744, 0.9449]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\alpha_{t,3}$</td>
<td>-0.2050 [-0.2247, -0.1854]</td>
<td>0.8443 [0.7852, 0.8928]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\alpha_{t,4}$</td>
<td>-0.1141 [-0.1417, -0.0879]</td>
<td>0.4180 [0.2955, 0.5354]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hathaway: torture</strong></td>
<td>$\alpha_{t,1}$</td>
<td>-0.2278 [-0.2717, -0.1837]</td>
<td>0.8154 [0.6853, 0.9089]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\alpha_{t,2}$</td>
<td>-0.0618 [-0.0933, -0.0303]</td>
<td>0.3878 [0.1172, 0.6716]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\alpha_{t,3}$</td>
<td>-0.0809 [-0.1133, -0.0489]</td>
<td>0.5280 [0.2504, 0.7691]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\alpha_{t,4}$</td>
<td>-0.1198 [-0.1651, -0.0765]</td>
<td>0.5701 [0.3039, 0.7976]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ITT: torture</strong></td>
<td>$\alpha_{t,1}$</td>
<td>0.0153 [-0.0245, 0.0564]</td>
<td>0.0166 [0.0000, 0.1589]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\alpha_{t,2}$</td>
<td>0.0249 [-0.0147, 0.0649]</td>
<td>0.0324 [0.0001, 0.2019]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\alpha_{t,3}$</td>
<td>0.0248 [-0.0141, 0.0633]</td>
<td>0.0433 [0.0001, 0.2538]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\alpha_{t,4}$</td>
<td>-0.0239 [-0.0647, 0.0152]</td>
<td>0.0709 [0.0003, 0.4115]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\alpha_{t,5}$</td>
<td>0.0084 [-0.0361, 0.0530]</td>
<td>0.0397 [0.0001, 0.3626]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Political Terror Scale

- **Level 1**: Countries under a secure rule of law, people are not imprisoned for their view, and torture is rare or exceptional. Political murders are extremely rare.

- **Level 2**: There is a limited amount of imprisonment for nonviolent political activity. However, few persons are affected, torture and beatings are exceptional. Political murder is rare.

- **Level 3**: There is extensive political imprisonment, or a recent history of such imprisonment. Execution or other political murders and brutality may be common. Unlimited detention, with or without a trial, for political views is accepted.

- **Level 4**: The practices of level 3 are expanded to larger numbers. Murders, disappearances, and torture are a common part of life. In spite of its generality, on this level terror affects those who interest themselves in politics or ideas.

- **Level 5**: The terrors of level 4 have been expanded to the whole population. The leaders of these societies place no limits on the means or thoroughness with which they pursue personal or ideological goals.
Guatemala

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Torture Section</th>
<th>Full Document</th>
<th>Torture Coding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>3,930</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>562</td>
<td>5,768</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>3,669</td>
<td>32,064</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time
### Implications: Quantitative Human Rights Scholarship

#### Citation Count for the Top 5 Quantitative Human Rights Articles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Citations</th>
<th>Article</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 264       | Poe and Tate (1994)  
             “Repression of Human-Rights to Personal Integrity in the 1980s - A Global Analysis”  
| 229       | Hathaway (2002)  
             “Do human rights treaties make a difference?”  
             *Yale Law Journal* 111(8):1935-2042 |
| 175       | Poe, Tate, and Keith (1999)  
             “Repression of the human right to personal integrity revisited: A global cross-national study covering the years 1976-1993”  
| 141       | Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui (2005)  
             “Human rights in a globalizing world: The paradox of empty promises”  
| 117       | Davenport (1995)  
             “Multi-Dimensional Threat Perception and State Repression: An Inquiry into Why States Apply Negative Sanctions”  

*Source: The Web of Science*


Christopher J. Fariss

Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time


