

# המחלקה לפוליטיקה וממשל

## הסמינר המחלקתי

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## Neo-Imperialists, Honest Brokers, or Counter-Hegemons? Human Rights NGOs and Public Opinion

Some international relations theorists believe human rights organizations (HROs) are geopolitically neutral ("honest brokers"), and are broadly perceived as such by global publics. This reputation, they say, is an important source of HROs' global credibility and influence. Others, however, argue that HROs are either very close to the U.S. government ("imperial handmaidens"), or very much opposed ("counter-hegemons"), and that global publics have taken note. To investigate, we conducted face-to-face interviews with 9,380 respondents in six countries and four world regions. In three Latin American countries (Colombia, Ecuador and Mexico), our polls were nationally representative of adults, while in India, Nigeria, and Morocco, our polls were representative of adults residing in select major urban areas and their environs. We asked about attitudes towards the U.S. government, human rights, and local and international human rights organizations. Overall, we find strong support for the "counter-hegemonic" argument, low-to-modest support for the "honest broker" thesis, and no support at all for the "imperial handmaiden" claim. Across four world regions, people view HROs either as bulwarks against U.S. global power or, in far fewer cases, as honest brokers, not as allies of the official U.S. policy apparatus.

**Chair:** Prof. Neve Gordon