

Audrey L. Comstock

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EDUCATION

Cornell University

Ph.D., Department of Government

2015(expected)

M.A., Government

2012

Major Field: International Relations, Minor Field: Comparative Politics

University at Albany, State University of New York

B.A. in Political Science Honors

2009

- *Summa Cum Laude*
- Study Abroad Program: Hong Kong, China, 2006

POSITIONS

Visiting Scholar

2014-

Browne Center for International Politics

University of Pennsylvania

International Law and Policy Fellow

2014-

Department of History and Politics

Drexel University

International Research Fellow

2013-2014

The Williams Institute,

UCLA School of Law

DISSERTATION

Title: Re-Examining International Legal Engagement: Treaty Actions and Human Rights Law

Committee: Matt Evangelista (chair), Peter Katzenstein, and Sarah Kreps

Summary: This project examines the untapped area of international legal engagement and the dynamic ways that states use treaty actions as a means of communication. Whether actions are supportive or contentious, states reinterpret treaty law through these legal actions. Existing literature has largely overlooked the variety of treaty actions by only focusing on one type of action: ratification. Historically, however, states have pursued 11 primary treaty actions and up to 19 additional legal actions. This project focuses on two central questions: 1) What explains when and why states engage with treaty law 2) What effect, if any, does engagement have on compliance levels? I argue that domestic legal culture helps to explain a state's international legal identity, in turn explaining how it engages with law and what the engagement means for compliance. I use a multi-methods

approach to address these questions. First, I collect the treaty actions made towards each of the nine core United Nations human rights treaties. Statistical analyses identify 1) the determinants of the timing of state treaty actions and 2) the role treaty actions have in compliance levels with treaty law. Drawing from the cases of the United States, Canada, and the Netherlands, I examine the role of domestic law and society on international legal behavior. In the end, treaty actions become communicative as states use them to reinterpret international law and challenge other states' interpretations of law.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

- International law
- International organizations
- Human rights / Humanitarian law
- Language and law
- Compliance in times of conflict
- International LGBT laws and practices

ADDITIONAL TRAINING

Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), University of Michigan Ann Arbor, MI Workshop on Categorical Analysis (July 2013)

United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) United Nations New York, NY

- Workshop on the Structure, Retrieval and use of UN Documentation (August 2012)
- Seminar on International Treaty Law and Practice (November 2012)

Writing 7101: A Seminar on Writing and Teaching, spring 2011

John S. Knight Institute for Writing in the Disciplines, Cornell University Ithaca, NY
A six-week seminar on teaching college level writing within a disciplinary context

Cornell Statistics Counseling Unit Workshops, Cornell University Ithaca NY

- Introduction to Multilevel Modeling (March 2011)
- Introduction to Bayesian Statistical Modeling (April 2011)

Workshop on Conducting Research in Non-American Archives

The Institute for European, Russia and Eurasian Studies, The Elliot School of International Relations, The George Washington University Washington, D.C. (March 2011)

WORKING PAPERS/PROJECTS

Using Sexuality for Signaling in the International Arena: The United States and LGBT Rights (With Scott Barclay) (Part of a proposed symposium under consideration at Law & Social Inquiry)

Gay Rights, Foreign Aid, and Africa

Signing to Signal, Ratifying to Cement: Human Rights Treaties and Compliance Behavior

Domestic Legal Culture and Treaty Action Behavior: A Look at Human Rights Treaties

Global Economic Development and LGBT Inclusion – funded as part of the USAID LGBT Global Development Partnership (with Lee Badgett and Sheila Nezhad)

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Audrey L. Comstock “Domestic Legal Culture and Treaty Action Behavior: A Look at Human Rights Treaties” to be presented at the American Society of International Law Midyear Meeting and Research Forum, November 2014.

Audrey L. Comstock “Gay Rights, Foreign Aid, and Africa” to be presented at the American Political Science Association Meeting, August 2014

Audrey L. Comstock “Gay Rights, Foreign Aid, and Africa” presented at the Western Political Science Association Meeting, April 2014

Audrey L. Comstock “Levels of Commitment: Human Rights Treaties and Compliance Behavior” presented at the International Studies Association Meeting, March 2014

Audrey L. Comstock “Re-Examining Compliance: Treaty Actions and the UN CAT” presented at the Midwest Political Science Association Meeting, April 2013

Audrey L. Comstock and Scott Barclay “International and Domestic Legal Disjuncture: The United States and LGBT Politics within the United Nations” presented at the Midwest Political Science Association Meeting, April 2013

Audrey L. Comstock and Scott Barclay “Does Established Domestic Law Translate into International Legal Support? State Positions Towards United Nations LGBT Policies, presented at the Western Political Science Association Meeting, March 28, 2013

Audrey L. Comstock “Re-examining Compliance: What do Reservations and Other Acts of Legal Engagement Mean for Compliance with Human Rights Treaties?” presented at the Mid-Atlantic Law and Society Association, October 2012.

Audrey L. Comstock “Law as a Communicative Signal: International Legal Signaling, Economic Sanctions, and Human Rights” presented at the American Political Science Association, September 2011.

Audrey L. Comstock, “Hard Rocks, Soft Law? Regulating Conflict Diamonds with the Kimberley Process,” presented at International Studies Association Meeting March, 2011 (Nominated for the Best Graduate Student Paper Award of the African Politics Conference Group (from APSA, ISA, ASA 2010/2011))

Audrey L. Comstock, “Do Natural Resources Hinder NGOs? Examining the Determinants of NGO Creation and Testing the Group Formation Effect”, presented at International Studies Association Meeting March, 2011

Audrey L. Comstock, “Trends in Treaty Commitment and Compliance: Distinguishing Signatory and Ratification Behavior in UN Human Rights Treaties,” presented at International Studies Association Meeting, February 2009.

Audrey L. Comstock, “The Evolving Role of the NGO: Monitoring, Informing, and Coordinating the Human Rights Regime with Information Technology,” presented at International Studies Association Meeting, February 2009.

Audrey L. Comstock, “Signing Rights Away: The Impact of United Nations Human Rights 1981-2006” presented at Western Political Science Association Meeting, March 2008.

AWARDS AND GRANTS

2014	International Law and Policy Fellowship, Drexel University Conference Travel Support, UCLA School of Law
2013	International Research Fellowship, UCLA School of Law Cornell Graduate School Conference Travel Grant Summer Research Funding, Government Department, Cornell University Methodological Training Funding, Cornell University
2012	Law and Society Association Membership 2012-2013 awarded by the American Bar Foundation Dean’s Merit Fellowship, University of California, Irvine Law (\$30,000) (declined) Dean’s Scholarship, Indiana University Maurer School of Law (\$24,000) (declined)
2011	Summer research funding, Government Department, Cornell University American Political Science Association Graduate Student Travel Grant Best Graduate Student Paper Award of the African Politics Conference Group (nominated) Lawrence S. Finkelstein Prize, International Organizations Section of the International Studies Association (nominated)
2010	Summer research funding, Government Department, Cornell University
2009-2010	Summer research funding, Government Department, Cornell University
2009-2010	Sage Fellowship for Graduate Study at Cornell University
2009	Presidential Award for Undergraduate Research, University at Albany
2008	Conference travel award: Department of Political Science, University at Albany Conference travel award: Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy, University at Albany
2007	Undergraduate Supervised Research Award, University at Albany
2006	Adelaide Schmid, ’38 Endowed Research Fund Award, University at Albany
2005-2009	Clark Foundation Scholarship, regionally competitive four-year scholarship
2005-2009	Presidential Scholar Award, University at Albany

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

American Political Science Association	International Studies Association
American Society of International Law	Law and Society Association
Midwest Political Science Association	Western Political Science Association

LANGUAGE AND COMPUTER SKILLS

- Statistical: Microsoft Excel, STATA, Stat Transfer
- Language: intermediate proficiency in French, translating from French

PROSPECTIVE COURSE OFFERINGS

- Introduction to International Relations
- Introduction to Comparative Politics
- International Human Rights
- International Organizations
- International Law and International Relations
- Introduction to Research Design

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- Fall 2011 Instructor. Government 182. Introduction to International Relations. A writing-intensive section for advanced undergraduates. Course Supervisor: Peter Katzenstein. Evaluation 4.3/5.0
- Spring 2011 Teaching Assistant, Government 393 Introduction to Peace and Conflict Studies. Taught by Sarah Kreps.
- Fall 2010 Teaching Assistant. Government 181 Introduction to International Relations. Taught by Peter Katzenstein. Evaluation 4.55/5.0