Friday Seminar Series

Keeping Rights at Home: How British Ideas about Law Affect Compliance with the European Court of Human Rights

Zoë Jay, University of Tasmania

The United Kingdom’s relationship with the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) has been historically fraught. This seminar examines this relationship with a view to understanding how the UK’s conceptions of the role of law and human rights protection, both domestically and in Europe, shape its willingness to comply with ECtHR judgments. It argues that the UK maintains a sense of a uniquely ‘British’ – as opposed to ‘European’ – legal culture, based on principles of parliamentary sovereignty, the common law, and a tradition of protecting rights that dates back to the 1215 Magna Carta. This perception permeates the UK-ECtHR relationship and contributes to a belief that human rights are better protected ‘at home’ than by Europe. To this end, the UK case demonstrates that the normative influences motivating states to obey international law are more nuanced than current theoretical explanations of compliance can account for.

Zoë Jay is a PhD Candidate in International Relations in the School of Social Sciences at the University of Tasmania. Her research focuses on compliance with international human rights law, and the relationship between norms, political interest and national and European identities.

When     Friday 19 August 2016, 1.00pm to 2.00pm
Where     Room 346 Humanities Building, Sandy Bay Campus

This free seminar is presented by the Institute for the Study of Social Change and the School of Social Sciences. All welcome.