

Inventing Human Rights A History Lynn Hunt

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On the Spirit of Rights

The Philosophy of Human Rights brings together an extensive collection of classical and contemporary writings on the topic of human rights, including genocide, ethnic cleansing, minority cultures, gay and lesbian rights, and the environment, providing an exceptionally comprehensive introduction. Sources include authors such as Aristotle, Cicero, Thomas Aquinas, Confucius, Hobbes, Locke, Kant, Marx, Gandhi, Hart, Feinberg, Nussbaum, the Dalai Lama, Derrida, Lyocard and Rorty. Ideal for courses in human rights, social theory, ethical theory, and political science, each reading; begins with a brief introduction, and is followed with study questions and suggested further readings.

Inventing Human Rights: A History

The Architecture of Concepts proposes a radically new way of understanding the history of ideas. Taking as its example human rights, it develops a distinctive kind of conceptual analysis that enables us to see with precision how the concept of human rights was formed in the eighteenth century. The first chapter outlines an innovative account of concepts as cultural entities. The second develops an original methodology for recovering the historical formation of the concept of human rights based on data extracted from digital archives. This enables us to track the construction of conceptual architectures over time. Having established the architecture of the concept of human rights, the book then examines two key moments in its historical formation: the First Continental Congress in 1775 and the publication of Tom Paine's Rights of Man in 1792.

Arguing that we have yet to fully understand or appreciate the consequences of the eighteenth-century invention of the concept “rights of man,” the final chapter addresses our problematic contemporary attempts to leverage human rights as the most efficacious way of achieving universal equality.

Human Rights

Richardson-Little exposes the forgotten history of human rights in the German Democratic Republic, placing the history of the Cold War, Eastern European dissidents and the revolutions of 1989 in a new light. By demonstrating how even a communist dictatorship could imagine itself to be a champion of human rights, this book challenges popular narratives on the fall of the Berlin Wall and illustrates how notions of human rights evolved in the Cold War as they were re-imagined in East Germany by both dissidents and state officials. Ultimately, the fight for human rights in East Germany was part of a global battle in the post-war era over competing conceptions of what human rights meant. Nonetheless, the collapse of dictatorship in East Germany did not end this conflict, as citizens had to choose for themselves what kind of human rights would follow in its wake.

Inventing Wine: A New History of One of the World's Most Ancient Pleasures

Between the 1960s and the 1980s, the human rights movement achieved unprecedented global prominence. Amnesty International attained striking visibility with its Campaign Against Torture; Soviet dissidents attracted a worldwide audience for their heroism in facing down a totalitarian state; the Helsinki Accords were signed, incorporating a "third basket" of human rights principles; and the Carter administration formally gave the United States a human rights policy. *The Breakthrough* is the first collection to examine this decisive era as a whole, tracing key developments in both Western and non-Western engagement with human rights and placing new emphasis on the role of human rights in the international history of the past century. Bringing together original essays from some of the field's leading scholars, this volume not only explores the transnational histories of international and nongovernmental human rights organizations but also analyzes the complex interplay between gender, sociology, and ideology in the making of human rights politics at the local level. Detailed case studies illuminate how a number of local movements—from the 1975 World Congress of Women in East Berlin, to antiapartheid activism in Britain, to protests in Latin America—affected international human rights discourse in the era as well as the ways these moments continue to influence current understanding of human rights history and advocacy. The global south—an area not usually treated as a scene of human rights politics—is also spotlighted in groundbreaking chapters on Biafran, South American, and Indonesian developments. In recovering the remarkable presence of global human rights talk and practice in the 1970s, *The Breakthrough* brings this pivotal decade to the forefront of contemporary scholarly debate. Contributors: Carl J. Bon Tempo, Gunter Dehnert, Celia Donert, Lasse Heerten, Patrick William Kelly,

Benjamin Nathans, Ned Richardson-Little, Daniel Sargent, Brad Simpson, Lynsay Skiba, Simon Stevens.

The Invention of Humanity

In this timely study of the historical, ideological, and formal interdependencies of the novel and human rights, Joseph Slaughter demonstrates that the twentieth-century rise of “world literature” and international human rights law are related phenomena. Slaughter argues that international law shares with the modern novel a particular conception of the human individual. The Bildungsroman, the novel of coming of age, fills out this image, offering a conceptual vocabulary, a humanist social vision, and a narrative grammar for what the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and early literary theorists both call “the free and full development of the human personality.” Revising our received understanding of the relationship between law and literature, Slaughter suggests that this narrative form has acted as a cultural surrogate for the weak executive authority of international law, naturalizing the assumptions and conditions that make human rights appear commonsensical. As a kind of novelistic correlative to human rights law, the Bildungsroman has thus been doing some of the sociocultural work of enforcement that the law cannot do for itself. This analysis of the cultural work of law and of the social work of literature challenges traditional Eurocentric histories of both international law and the dissemination of the novel. Taking his point of departure in Goethe’s *Wilhelm Meister*, Slaughter focuses on recent postcolonial versions of the coming-of-age story to show how the promise of human rights becomes legible in narrative and how the novel and the law are complicit in contemporary projects of globalization: in colonialism, neoimperialism, humanitarianism, and the spread of multinational consumer capitalism. Slaughter raises important practical and ethical questions that we must confront in advocating for human rights and reading world literature—imperatives that, today more than ever, are intertwined.

Not Enough

Through vivid histories drawn from virtually every continent, Weitz describes how, since the 18th century, nationalists have struggled to establish their own states that grant human rights to some people. At the same time, they have excluded others through forced assimilation, ethnic cleansing, or even genocide.

The Last Utopia

This book uncovers how human rights gained meaning and power for Americans in the 1940s, the 1970s and today.

Making Sense of Human Rights

Human rights have become one of the most important moral concepts in global political life over the last 60 years. Charles Beitz, one of the world's leading philosophers, offers a compelling new examination of the idea of a human right.

The Breakthrough

Defended by a host of passionate advocates and organizations, certain standard human rights have come to represent a quintessential component of global citizenship. There are, however, a number of societies who dissent from this orthodoxy, either in general or on particular issues, on the basis of political necessity, cultural tradition, or group interest. *Human Rights in World History* takes a global historical perspective to examine the emergence of this dilemma and its constituent concepts. Beginning with premodern features compatible with a human rights approach, including religious doctrines and natural rights ideas, it goes on to describe the rise of the first modern-style human rights statements, associated with the Enlightenment and contemporary antislavery and revolutionary fervor. Along the way, it explores ongoing contrasts in the liberal approach, between sincere commitments to human rights and a recurrent sense that certain types of people had to be denied common rights because of their perceived backwardness and need to be "civilized". These contrasts find clear echo in later years with the contradictions between the pursuit of human rights goals and the spread of Western imperialism. By the second half of the 20th century, human rights frameworks had become absorbed into key global institutions and conventions, and their arguments had expanded to embrace multiple new causes. In today's postcolonial world, and with the rise of more powerful regional governments, the tension between universal human rights arguments and local opposition or backlash is more clearly delineated than ever but no closer to satisfactory resolution.

That the World May Know

A World Made New tells the dramatic story of the struggle to build, out of the trauma and wreckage of World War II, a document that would ensure it would never happen again. There was an almost religious intensity to the project, championed by Eleanor Roosevelt under the aegis of the newly formed United Nations and brought into being by an extraordinary group of men and women who knew, like the framers of the Declaration of Independence, that they were making history. They worked against the clock, the brief window between the end of World War II and the deep freeze of the cold war, to forget the founding document of the modern rights movement. A distinguished professor of international law, Mary Ann Glendon was given exclusive access to personal diaries and unpublished memoirs of key participants. An outstanding work of narrative history, *A World Made New* is the first book devoted to this crucial moment in Eleanor Roosevelt's life and in world history.

Inventing Human Rights

"A fascinating historiographical essay. . . . An unusually lucid and inclusive explication of what it ultimately at stake in the culture wars over the nature, goals, and efficacy of history as a discipline."—Booklist

The Idea of Human Rights

1 The dominant discourse

The Human Rights Revolution

Literature has been essential to shaping the notions of human personhood, good life, moral responsibility, and forms of freedom that have been central to human rights law, discourse, and politics. The literary study of human rights has also recently generated innovative and timely perspectives on the history, meaning, and scope of human rights. The Cambridge Companion to Human Rights and Literature introduces this new and exciting field of study in the humanities. It explores the historical and institutional contexts, theoretical concepts, genres, and methods that literature and human rights share. Equally accessible to beginners in the field and more advanced researches, this Companion emphasizes both the literary and interdisciplinary dimensions of human rights and the humanities.

Seeing the Myth in Human Rights

"We are living through the endtimes of the civilizing mission. The ineffectual International Criminal Court and its disastrous first prosecutor, Luis Moreno-Ocampo, along with the failure in Syria of the Responsibility to Protect are the latest pieces of evidence not of transient misfortunes but of fatal structural defects in international humanism. Whether it is the increase in deadly attacks on aid workers, the torture and 'disappearing' of al-Qaeda suspects by American officials, the flouting of international law by states such as Sri Lanka and Sudan, or the shambles of the Khmer Rouge tribunal in Phnom Penh, the prospect of one world under secular human rights law is receding. What seemed like a dawn is in fact a sunset. The foundations of universal liberal norms and global governance are crumbling."—from *The Endtimes of Human Rights* In a book that is at once passionate and provocative, Stephen Hopgood argues, against the conventional wisdom, that the idea of universal human rights has become not only ill adapted to current realities but also overambitious and unresponsive. A shift in the global balance of power away from the United States further undermines the foundations on which the global human rights regime is based. American decline exposes the contradictions, hypocrisies and weaknesses behind the attempt to enforce this regime around the world and opens the way for resurgent religious and sovereign actors to challenge human rights. Historically, Hopgood writes, universal humanist norms inspired a sense of secular religiosity among the new middle classes of a rapidly modernizing Europe. Human rights were the product of a particular worldview

(Western European and Christian) and specific historical moments (humanitarianism in the nineteenth century, the aftermath of the Holocaust). They were an antidote to a troubling contradiction—the coexistence of a belief in progress with horrifying violence and growing inequality. The obsolescence of that founding purpose in the modern globalized world has, Hopgood asserts, transformed the institutions created to perform it, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross and recently the International Criminal Court, into self-perpetuating structures of intermittent power and authority that mask their lack of democratic legitimacy and systematic ineffectiveness. At their best, they provide relief in extraordinary situations of great distress; otherwise they are serving up a mixture of false hope and unaccountability sustained by “human rights” as a global brand. The Endtimes of Human Rights is sure to be controversial. Hopgood makes a plea for a new understanding of where hope lies for human rights, a plea that mourns the promise but rejects the reality of universalism in favor of a less predictable encounter with the diverse realities of today’s multipolar world.

The Human Rights Dictatorship

"Meticulously researched history...look[s] at how wine and Western civilization grew up together." —Dave McIntyre, Washington Post Because science and technology have opened new avenues for vintners, our taste in wine has grown ever more diverse. Wine is now the subject of careful chemistry and global demand. Paul Lukacs recounts the journey of wine through history—how wine acquired its social cachet, how vintners discovered the twin importance of place and grape, and how a basic need evolved into a realm of choice.

Writing History in the Global Era

"A definitive account of the history of human rights told from the perspective of those struggling to obtain them. Using the Enlightenment, industrialization, war, national self-determination, and globalization as lenses through which to look at their evolution, Ishay brings both historical context and conceptual acuity to modern debates about the role of human rights in a multicultural world. Her encompassing and compassionate approach issues in a book equally valuable to scholars, students, and citizens."—Benjamin Barber, University of Maryland, author of Jihad vs. McWorld "This well-written book, chock-full of knowledge, presents a history of the idea, or ideas, of human rights through the prism of the author's thoughtful views on key controversies that bedevil human rights discourse to this day."—Professor Sir Nigel Rodley, Chair, University of Essex Human Rights Centre; Member, (UN) Human Rights Committee "The first account of human rights as embedded in the history of political theory, relating it to the basic issues of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. Erudite and non-dogmatic, Ishay reaches beyond individual human rights to issues of economic, cultural and national rights, and shows how the campaign for human rights was instrumental in bringing down oppressive regimes in the last decades Humane and generous in its approach, brilliant in its conception and presentation."—Shlomo Avineri, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Christian Human Rights

This fully revised and extended edition of James Nickel's classic study explains and defends the conception of human rights found in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and subsequent human rights treaties. Combining philosophical, legal, and political approaches, Nickel addresses questions about what human rights are, what their content should be, and whether and how they can be justified.

Human Rights in World History

For much of history, strangers were seen as barbarians, seldom as fellow human beings. The notion of common humanity had to be invented. Drawing on global thinkers, Siep Stuurman traces ideas of equality and difference across continents and civilizations, from antiquity to present-day debates about human rights and the “clash of civilizations.”

A World Divided

Human rights offer a vision of international justice that today's idealistic millions hold dear. Yet the very concept on which the movement is based became familiar only a few decades ago when it profoundly reshaped our hopes for an improved humanity. In this pioneering book, Samuel Moyn elevates that extraordinary transformation to center stage and asks what it reveals about the ideal's troubled present and uncertain future.

History

Leading historian Lynn Hunt rethinks why history matters in today's global world and how it should be written. Globalization is emerging as a major economic, cultural, and political force. In *Writing History in the Global Era*, historian Lynn Hunt examines whether globalization can reinvigorate the telling of history. She looks toward scholars from the East and West collaborating in new ways as they share their ideas. She proposes a sweeping reevaluation of individuals' active role and their place in society as the keys to understanding the way people and ideas interact. Hunt also reveals how surprising new perspectives on society and the self offer promising new ways of thinking about the meaning and purpose of history in our time.

The Ethics of Invention: Technology and the Human Future

(unseen), \$12.95. Donnelly explicates and defends an account of human rights as universal rights. Considering the

competing claims of the universality, particularity, and relativity of human rights, he argues that the historical contingency and particularity of human rights is completely compatible with a conception of human rights as universal moral rights, and thus does not require the acceptance of claims of cultural relativism. The book moves between theoretical argument and historical practice. Rigorous and tightly-reasoned, material and perspectives from many disciplines are incorporated. Paper edition Annotation copyrighted by Book News, Inc., Portland, OR

A World Made New

What can we do to prevent more atrocities from happening in the future, and to stop the ones that are happening right now? That the World May Know tells the powerful and moving story of the successes and failures of the modern human rights movement. Drawing on firsthand accounts from fieldworkers around the world, the book gives a painfully clear picture of the human cost of confronting inhumanity in our day.

The Endtimes of Human Rights

Seeing the Myth in Human Rights explores the role of myth in the creation and propagation of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Drawing on records, publications, and speeches from the Declaration's creators as well as current scholarship on human rights, Jenna Reinbold sees the Declaration as an exemplar of modern mythmaking.

The French Revolution and Human Rights

The Routledge Companion to Literature and Human Rights provides a comprehensive, transnational, and interdisciplinary map to this emerging field, offering a broad overview of human rights and literature while providing innovative readings on key topics. The first of its kind, this volume covers essential issues and themes, necessarily crossing disciplines between the social sciences and humanities. Sections cover: subjects, with pieces on subjectivity, humanity, identity, gender, universality, the particular, the body forms, visiting the different ways human rights stories are crafted and formed via the literary, the visual, the performative, and the oral contexts, tracing the development of the literature over time and in relation to specific regions and historical events impacts, considering the power and limits of human rights literature, rhetoric, and visual culture Drawn from many different global contexts, the essays offer an ideal introduction for those approaching the study of literature and human rights for the first time, looking for new insights and interdisciplinary perspectives, or interested in new directions for future scholarship. Contributors: Chris Abani, Jonathan E. Abel, Elizabeth S. Anker, Arturo Arias, Ariella Azoulay, Ralph Bauer, Anna Bernard, Brenda Carr Vellino, Eleni Coundouriotis, James Dawes, Erik Doxtader, Marc D. Falkoff, Keith P. Feldman, Elizabeth Swanson Goldberg, Audrey J. Golden, Mark Goodale, Barbara Harlow,

Wendy S. Hesford, Peter Hitchcock, David Holloway, Christine Hong, Madelaine Hron, Meg Jensen, Luz Angélica Kirschner, Susan Maslan, Julie Avril Minich, Alexandra Schultheis Moore, Greg Mullins, Laura T. Murphy, Hanna Musiol, Makau Mutua, Zoe Norridge, David Palumbo-Liu, Crystal Parikh, Katrina M. Powell, Claudia Sadowski-Smith, Mark Sanders, Karen-Magrethe Simonsen, Joseph R. Slaughter, Sharon Sliwinski, Sidonie Smith, Domna Stanton, Sarah G. Waisvisz, Belinda Walzer, Ban Wang, Julia Watson, Gillian Whitlock and Sarah Winter.

The Routledge Companion to Literature and Human Rights

Human rights in Australia have a contested and controversial history, the nature of which informs popular debates to this day.

Philosophy of Human Rights

The age of human rights has been kindest to the rich. Even as state violations of political rights garnered unprecedented attention due to human rights campaigns, a commitment to material equality disappeared. In its place, market fundamentalism has emerged as the dominant force in national and global economies. In this provocative book, Samuel Moyn analyzes how and why we chose to make human rights our highest ideals while simultaneously neglecting the demands of a broader social and economic justice. In a pioneering history of rights stretching back to the Bible, *Not Enough* charts how twentieth-century welfare states, concerned about both abject poverty and soaring wealth, resolved to fulfill their citizens' most basic needs without forgetting to contain how much the rich could tower over the rest. In the wake of two world wars and the collapse of empires, new states tried to take welfare beyond its original European and American homelands and went so far as to challenge inequality on a global scale. But their plans were foiled as a neoliberal faith in markets triumphed instead. Moyn places the career of the human rights movement in relation to this disturbing shift from the egalitarian politics of yesterday to the neoliberal globalization of today. Exploring why the rise of human rights has occurred alongside enduring and exploding inequality, and why activists came to seek remedies for indigence without challenging wealth, *Not Enough* calls for more ambitious ideals and movements to achieve a humane and equitable world.

Rooted Cosmopolitans

While the idea of human rights and humanitarian assistance has ancient roots_evidence can be seen in such examples as the Ten Commandments, the Bhagavad Gita, and the teachings of Confucius and Socrates_it wasn't until the 1800s that the first modern humanitarian and human rights organizations came to be. The 19th century saw the beginning of the abolitionist movement, the forming of a variety of women's suffrage organizations, the formation and consolidation of

national labor unions, and the founding of the Red Cross. This was followed by the inextricably intertwined story of war, persecution, violence, and the growth of human rights and humanitarian organizations in the 20th century. Bearing witness to some of the most horrific and blatant violations of human dignity, the 20th century also beheld the first sustained global efforts to promote human rights at the international level. The second edition of the Historical Dictionary of Human Rights and Humanitarian Organizations thoroughly revises the first edition, following major new developments in the arena of human rights since its publication, including the emergence of terrorism and international responses to it; the establishment of an international criminal court; the evolution of regional human rights bodies in Africa, Europe, and Latin America; and the proliferation of new non-governmental organizations and foundations dedicated to the promotion of human rights. This is accomplished through a chronology, an introduction, appendixes, photographs, a bibliography, and hundreds of cross-referenced dictionary entries covering many of the key treaties, agreements, and definitions of human rights concepts; important humanitarian organizations, whether private, governmental, national, or international; and significant persons and events. This realistic assessment of the advances in protection of human rights and the major difficulties still facing them is an excellent tool for students, practitioners, and libraries.

Human Rights and the Uses of History

We live in a time when the most appalling social injustices and unjust human sufferings no longer seem to generate the moral indignation and the political will needed both to combat them effectively and to create a more just and fair society. If God Were a Human Rights Activist aims to strengthen the organization and the determination of all those who have not given up the struggle for a better society, and specifically those that have done so under the banner of human rights. It discusses the challenges to human rights arising from religious movements and political theologies that claim the presence of religion in the public sphere. Increasingly globalized, such movements and the theologies sustaining them promote discourses of human dignity that rival, and often contradict, the one underlying secular human rights. Conventional or hegemonic human rights thinking lacks the necessary theoretical and analytical tools to position itself in relation to such movements and theologies; even worse, it does not understand the importance of doing so. It applies the same abstract recipe across the board, hoping that thereby the nature of alternative discourses and ideologies will be reduced to local specificities with no impact on the universal canon of human rights. As this strategy proves increasingly lacking, this book aims to demonstrate that only a counter-hegemonic conception of human rights can adequately face such challenges.

Human Rights, Inc.

In this extraordinary work of cultural and intellectual history, Professor Hunt grounds the creation of human rights in the changes that authors brought to literature, the rejection of torture as a means of finding out truth, and the spread of

empathy over the centuries.

The Concept of Human Rights in Africa

This volume explores the place of human rights in history, providing an alternative framework for understanding the political and legal dilemmas that these conflicts presented, with case studies focusing on the 1940s through the present.

The Cambridge Companion to Human Rights and Literature

“A tour de force.”—Gordon S. Wood, New York Times Book Review How were human rights invented, and how does their tumultuous history influence their perception and our ability to protect them today? From Professor Lynn Hunt comes this extraordinary cultural and intellectual history, which traces the roots of human rights to the rejection of torture as a means for finding the truth. She demonstrates how ideas of human relationships portrayed in novels and art helped spread these new ideals and how human rights continue to be contested today.

The History of Human Rights

Exploring the issue of rights and citizenship, Revolutionary France, French Revolution and Human Rights uses original translations and commentary of both debates and legislation that led to the French development of the modern concept of human rights.

The World Reimagined

Human Rights: Politics and Practice is an introduction to human rights that goes beyond a purely legal perspective to look at theoretical issues and practical approaches. Bringing together leading experts, it is up to date with cutting edge research in a constantly evolving field.

Historical Dictionary of Human Rights and Humanitarian Organizations

A series of reflective and critical essays explores the perspectives of leading theorists of human rights, building on the postwar human rights discourse in his acclaimed *The Last Utopia* to challenge intellectual views about humanitarian intervention.

Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice

By the end of the eighteenth century, politicians in America and France were invoking the natural rights of man to wrest sovereignty away from kings and lay down universal basic entitlements. Exactly how and when did “rights” come to justify such measures? In *On the Spirit of Rights*, Dan Edelstein answers this question by examining the complex genealogy of the rights regimes enshrined in the American and French Revolutions. With a lively attention to detail, he surveys a sprawling series of debates among rulers, jurists, philosophers, political reformers, writers, and others, who were all engaged in laying the groundwork for our contemporary systems of constitutional governance. Every seemingly new claim about rights turns out to be a variation on a theme, as late medieval notions were subtly repeated and refined to yield the talk of “rights” we recognize today. From the Wars of Religion to the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, *On the Spirit of Rights* is a sweeping tour through centuries of European intellectual history and an essential guide to our ways of thinking about human rights today.

Inventing Human Rights: A History

Traces the history of human rights from the origins of the concept in the eighteenth-century American Declaration of Independence and French Declaration of the Rights of Man, through their momentous eclipse in the nineteenth century, to their culmination as a principle with the United Nations' proclamation of 1948.

The Architecture of Concepts

A stunningly original look at the forgotten Jewish political roots of contemporary international human rights, told through the moving stories of five key activists. The year 2018 marks the seventieth anniversary of two momentous events in twentieth-century history: the birth of the State of Israel and the creation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Both remain tied together in the ongoing debates about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, global antisemitism, and American foreign policy. Yet the surprising connections between Zionism and the origins of international human rights are completely unknown today. In this riveting account, James Loeffler explores this controversial history through the stories of five remarkable Jewish founders of international human rights, following them from the prewar shtetls of eastern Europe to the postwar United Nations, a journey that includes the Nuremberg and Eichmann trials, the founding of Amnesty International, and the UN resolution of 1975 labeling Zionism as racism. The result is a book that challenges long-held assumptions about the history of human rights and offers a startlingly new perspective on the roots of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

If God Were a Human Rights Activist

We justify our actions in the present through our understanding of the past. But we live in a time when politicians lie brazenly about historical facts and meddle with the content of history books, while media differ wildly in their reporting of the same event. Frequently, new discoveries force us to re-evaluate everything we thought we knew about the past. So how can any certainty about history be established, and why does it matter? Lynn Hunt shows why the search for truth about the past, as a continual process of discovery, is vital for our societies. History has an essential role to play in ensuring honest presentation of evidence. In this way, it can foster humility about our present-day concerns, a critical attitude toward chauvinism, and an openness to other peoples and cultures. History, Hunt argues, is our best defense against tyranny. Introducing Polity's Why It Matters series; in these short and lively books, world-leading thinkers make the case for the importance of their subjects and aim to inspire a new generation of students.

Human Rights in Twentieth-Century Australia

We live in a world increasingly governed by technology—but to what end? Technology rules us as much as laws do. It shapes the legal, social, and ethical environments in which we act. Every time we cross a street, drive a car, or go to the doctor, we submit to the silent power of technology. Yet, much of the time, the influence of technology on our lives goes unchallenged by citizens and our elected representatives. In *The Ethics of Invention*, renowned scholar Sheila Jasanoff dissects the ways in which we delegate power to technological systems and asks how we might regain control. Our embrace of novel technological pathways, Jasanoff shows, leads to a complex interplay among technology, ethics, and human rights. Inventions like pesticides or GMOs can reduce hunger but can also cause unexpected harm to people and the environment. Often, as in the case of CFCs creating a hole in the ozone layer, it takes decades before we even realize that any damage has been done. Advances in biotechnology, from GMOs to gene editing, have given us tools to tinker with life itself, leading some to worry that human dignity and even human nature are under threat. But despite many reasons for caution, we continue to march heedlessly into ethically troubled waters. As Jasanoff ranges across these and other themes, she challenges the common assumption that technology is an apolitical and amoral force. Technology, she masterfully demonstrates, can warp the meaning of democracy and citizenship unless we carefully consider how to direct its power rather than let ourselves be shaped by it. *The Ethics of Invention* makes a bold argument for a future in which societies work together—in open, democratic dialogue—to debate not only the perils but even more the promises of technology.

Telling the Truth about History

In *Christian Human Rights*, Samuel Moyn asserts that the rise of human rights after World War II was prefigured and inspired by a defense of the dignity of the human person that first arose in Christian churches and religious thought in the years just prior to the outbreak of the war. The Roman Catholic Church and transatlantic Protestant circles dominated the

public discussion of the new principles in what became the last European golden age for the Christian faith. At the same time, West European governments after World War II, particularly in the ascendant Christian Democratic parties, became more tolerant of public expressions of religious piety. Human rights rose to public prominence in the space opened up by these dual developments of the early Cold War. Moyn argues that human dignity became central to Christian political discourse as early as 1937. Pius XII's wartime Christmas addresses announced the basic idea of universal human rights as a principle of world, and not merely state, order. By focusing on the 1930s and 1940s, Moyn demonstrates how the language of human rights was separated from the secular heritage of the French Revolution and put to use by postwar democracies governed by Christian parties, which reinvented them to impose moral constraints on individuals, support conservative family structures, and preserve existing social hierarchies. The book ends with a provocative chapter that traces contemporary European struggles to assimilate Muslim immigrants to the continent's legacy of Christian human rights.

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