CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-47277-7 — Human Rights in Twentieth-Century Australia
Jon Piccini
Frontmatter
More Information

Human Rights in Twentieth-Century Australia

This groundbreaking study understands the "long history" of human rights in Australia from the moment of their supposed invention in the 1940s to official incorporation into the Australian government bureaucracy in the 1980s. To do so, a wide cast of individuals, institutions and publics from across the political spectrum are surveyed who translated global ideas into local settings and changed meanings of a foreign discourse to suit local concerns and predilections. These individuals created new organisations to spread the message of human rights or found older institutions amenable to their newfound concerns, adopting rights language with a mixture of enthusiasm and opportunism. Governments, on the other hand, engaged with or ignored human rights as its shifting meanings, international currency and domestic reception ebbed and flowed. Finally, individuals understood and (re-)translated human rights ideas throughout this period: writing letters, books or poems and sympathising in new, global ways.

Jon Piccini is a historian at Australian Catholic University. He wrote *Global Radicals: Transnational Protest, Australia and the 1960s* (2016), which looks at Australian protest movements in the transnational "Sixties", and edited a collection of essays entitled *The Far Left in Australia since 1945* (2018).

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-47277-7 — Human Rights in Twentieth-Century Australia
Jon Piccini
Frontmatter
More Information

Human Rights in History

Edited by

Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, University of California, Berkeley
Samuel Moyn, Yale University, Connecticut

This series showcases new scholarship exploring the backgrounds of human rights today. With an open-ended chronology and international perspective, the series seeks works attentive to the surprises and contingencies in the historical origins and legacies of human rights ideals and interventions. Books in the series will focus not only on the intellectual antecedents and foundations of human rights but also on the incorporation of the concept by movements, nation-states, international governance and transnational law.

A full list of titles in the series can be found at:
www.cambridge.org/human-rights-history

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE
Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-47277-7 — Human Rights in Twentieth-Century Australia
Jon Piccini
Frontmatter
More Information

Human Rights in Twentieth-Century Australia

Jon Piccini
Australian Catholic University

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
New Delhi – 110025, India

79 Anson Road, #06–04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108472777
DOI: 10.1017/9781108659192

© Jon Piccini 2019

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2019

Printed in the United Kingdom by TJ International Ltd., Padstow, Cornwall

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Names: Piccini, Jon, author.
Title: Human rights in twentieth-century Australia / Jon Piccini.
Description: Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, 2020. | Series: Human rights in history | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2019018397 | ISBN 9781108472777
Subjects: LCSH: Human rights – Australia – History – 20th century. | Civil rights – Australia – History – 20th century.
Classification: LCC JC599.A8 P53 2020 | DDC 323.0994/0904–dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2019018397

ISBN 978-1-108-47277-7 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-47277-7 — Human Rights in Twentieth-Century Australia
Jon Piccini
Frontmatter
More Information

For Teena

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-47277-7 — Human Rights in Twentieth-Century Australia
Jon Piccini
Frontmatter
More Information

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-47277-7 — Human Rights in Twentieth-Century Australia
Jon Piccini
Frontmatter
More Information

Contents

Acknowledgements *page* viii

Introduction: Bereft of Words 1

1 Inventing Rights 21

2 Cold War Rights 53

3 Experimental Rights 86

4 Whose Rights? 119

5 Implementing Rights 153

Epilogue: Cascade or Trickle? 188

Index 203

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-47277-7 — Human Rights in Twentieth-Century Australia
Jon Piccini
Frontmatter
More Information

Acknowledgements

While perhaps a worn cliché, that it takes a village to make a book has certainly been true in my experience. This book began life in the dying days of my doctoral studies at the University of Queensland (UQ) in 2013, as I considered what became of the transnational 1960s social movements my thesis had explored when their passions ebbed in the late 1970s. My chance discovery of Samuel Moyn's then recently published provocation *The Last Utopia* both provided a partial answer to this question and drove me in the direction of what was then becoming the burgeoning field of human rights historiography.

After several post–PhD years in the wilderness, it was back at UQ that I received a postdoctoral fellowship in 2016 and an Early Career Research Award in 2018, providing the necessary time and funding to turn this project from vague idea to (almost) finished product. All those employed at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences' Research Office, and in particular Rachel Smith, were instrumental in ensuring my project was appropriately translated into the language of the Grant Writing Industrial Complex. Thanks must also go to Australian Catholic University, and in particular Michael Ondaatje and Maggie Nolan, for recognising this book and its author as worthy of support in the form of an ongoing lectureship in 2019, during which the rougher edges of the manuscript have been ironed out.

This book pulled together multiple seemingly disconnected archives, facilitated by the patience of numerous librarians and repository staff. Diligent archivists at the State Library of New South Wales, the State Library of Victoria, the National Library of Australia, the National Archives of Australia, the Fryer Library at the University of Queensland and the Bodleian Library at Oxford University deserve many thanks. Particularly helpful has been the digitisation work undertaken by the National Library of Australia via its Trove website, the National Archives and the State Library of Victoria, endeavours which are not only state of the art in archival practice but infinitely helpful in an era of smaller, more competitive research grants.

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE
Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-47277-7 — Human Rights in Twentieth-Century Australia
Jon Piccini
Frontmatter
More Information

In proposing this book to the esteemed publishers at Cambridge University Press, and in particular the Human Rights in History series, I knew that my chances were slim. It was as such a delight to hear such positive initial feedback from the series' editors, Samuel Moyn and Stefan Ludwig-Hoffman, followed by more detailed readings from three anonymous reviewers. Their kind, instructive words have done much to shape the final manuscript, while the work of Cambridge University Press staff, particularly Michael Watson and Lisa Carter, has ensured it stayed to deadline (my lateness notwithstanding). The editors and anonymous reviewers at *Journal of Australian Studies* and *Australian Historical Studies*, where sections of Chapters 3 and 4 have appeared in extended form, are also owed a great deal of thanks for allowing me to workshop and troubleshoot my emerging ideas.

It is my many wonderful colleagues, comrades and friends who are owed most of the intellectual debt for this project. Opportunities to present drafts of this work in diverse forums – including twice at the Australian Historical Association's annual meetings and at conferences of the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History and the Australia New Zealand Law and History Society – have been invaluable. Invitations from Amanda Nettelbeck to her "Civil and Human Rights in Australia" symposium in Dublin, Ireland, and from Madeleine Chaim to a workshop on Australian histories of international law at La Trobe University in Melbourne were particularly helpful, not only in terms of the comments and guidance received but also because they demonstrated that I was doing something right.

Unendingly giving of their time and intellects have been those esteemed scholars who have voluntarily read drafts of this manuscript throughout its germination. Jane Lydon, Kate Darian-Smith, Michelle Arrow, Jessica Whyte, Madeleine Chaim, Lisa Featherstone, Konstantina Tzouvala, Frank Bongiorno and Dirk Moses have each gone above and beyond the call of duty in carefully and thoughtfully reading chapters. My research mentors at the University of Queensland, Chris Dixon in 2016 and then Anna Johnston during the "crunch years" of 2017–18, have however put in the lion's share of labour, not just reading but seemingly endlessly discussing the ideas herein over numerous cups of coffee. The support and encouragement I have received from mentors and collaborators within the Australian historical profession has been truly awe-inspiring, and I can only hope to return in kind the generosity which I have experienced. Any errors herein, however, are entirely my responsibility.

Beyond readership, numerous friends have passed on helpful guidance and comments over the years, including Dave Eden, Evan Smith, Ana Stevenson, Gemmia Burden, Kate Ariotti, Elizabeth Humphreys and

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE
Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-47277-7 — Human Rights in Twentieth-Century Australia
Jon Piccini
Frontmatter
More Information

Simon Copland. This is in no way a thorough list, which would no doubt require a further volume, a fact which speaks to the necessarily collective nature of all intellectual endeavour. Last, and certainly not least, I want to thank my family. Teena's love has gotten me through the peaks and troughs of tumultuous post–PhD life, while her intellectual rigour and targeted questioning has informed this book in so many ways. My son Francis, despite his preference for more vividly illustrated books than this one, always inspires me to work harder and do better. Without both of them, none of this would have been possible.

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org