

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-48132-8 — The Cambridge Companion to Human Rights and Literature
Edited by Crystal Parikh
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO
HUMAN RIGHTS AND LITERATURE

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 researchers, this *Companion* emphasizes both the literary and interdisciplinary dimensions of human rights and the humanities.

Crystal Parikh is Professor of Social and Cultural Analysis and English at New York University. In addition to numerous essays and articles, Professor Parikh has published *Writing Human Rights: The Political Imaginaries of Writers of Color* (2017), which was the recipient of the Association for Asian American Studies Award for Outstanding Achievement in Humanities and Cultural Studies: Literature. She is also the author of *An Ethics of Betrayal: The Politics of Otherness in Emergent U.S. Literature and Culture* (2009), which was awarded the Modern Language Association Prize in United States Latina and Latino and Chicana and Chicano Literary Studies, and co-edited with Daniel Y. Kim, the *Cambridge Companion to Asian American Literature* (2015). Professor Parikh is the Director of the Asian/Pacific/American Institute at New York University.

A complete list of books in the series is at the back of this book.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-48132-8 — The Cambridge Companion to Human Rights and Literature
Edited by Crystal Parikh
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-48132-8 — The Cambridge Companion to Human Rights and Literature
Edited by Crystal Parikh
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

THE CAMBRIDGE
COMPANION TO
HUMAN RIGHTS
AND LITERATURE

EDITED BY
CRYSTAL PARIKH
New York University



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
 978-1-108-48132-8 — The Cambridge Companion to Human Rights and Literature
 Edited by Crystal Parikh
 Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

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/9781108481328

DOI: 10.1017/9781108698511

© Cambridge University Press 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: Parikh, Crystal, editor.

Title: The Cambridge companion to human rights and literature / edited by Crystal Parikh.

Other titles: Human rights and literature

Description: New York: Cambridge University Press, 2019. |

Series: Cambridge companions to literature |

Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2019000686 | ISBN 9781108481328 (hardback) |

ISBN 9781108722209 (paperback)

Subjects: LCSH: Human rights in literature. | Law in literature. |

State, The, in literature. | Social justice in literature. | Humanitarianism in literature.

Classification: LCC PN 56.H79C36 2019 | DDC 809/.933581-dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2019000686>

ISBN 978-1-108-48132-8 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-108-72220-9 Paperback

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.

... If we go on, we might stop
in the street in the very place
where someone disappeared
and the words Come with us! we might
hear them. If that happened, we would
lead our lives with our hands
tied together ...

–Carolyn Forché, “San Onofre, California”

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-48132-8 — The Cambridge Companion to Human Rights and Literature
Edited by Crystal Parikh
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

CONTENTS

<i>Notes on Contributors</i>	page ix
<i>Chronology of Major Works and Events, 1215–2018</i>	xiii
SARONIK BOSU AND HEBA JAHAMA	
Introduction	I
CRYSTAL PARIKH	
PART I GENEALOGIES AND CONTEXTS	
1 Recounting History, Locating Precursors for Human Rights	13
SARAH WINTER	
2 Humanitarianism's Way in the World: On Missionary and Emergency Imaginaries	27
KERRY BYSTROM AND ELENI COUNDOURIOTIS	
3 Literature, Human Rights, and the Cold War	42
ANDREW HAMMOND	
4 Human Rights in the Vernacular: Translating and Inventing Rights Outside the State	58
DAVID PALUMBO-LIU	
PART II FASHIONING METHODS	
5 Law and Literature, the Procedural and the Performative	75
AUDREY J. GOLDEN	
6 Human Rights Modes and Media	88
LIEVE GIES	
	vii

CONTENTS

7	Remembering the Forgetting: Human Rights Literature and Memory Work	100
	CATHY J. SCHLUND-VIALS	
8	Queering Human Rights: The Transgender Child	114
	WENDY S. HESFORD AND RACHEL A. LEWIS	
PART III GENERIC REPRESENTATIONS		
9	Narrating the Human Person	129
	SUNNY XIANG	
10	The Dramas of Human Rights: Documentary Theater and Performance	141
	BRENDA G. WERTH	
11	Poetic Justice and the Idea of Poetic Redress	154
	RAJEEV S. PATKE	
12	Truth-Telling: Reportage and Creative Nonfiction	167
	JAMES DAWES	
13	Visualizing the World: Graphic Novels, Comics, and Human Rights	178
	CHARLOTTA SALMI	
PART IV WRITING HUMAN RIGHTS		
14	Perpetrators, Victims, and Beneficiaries: The Subjects of Human Rights	193
	ELIZABETH SWANSON	
15	Routing Emotions, Forming Humans: Affect, Aesthetics, Rhetoric	206
	GREG A. MULLINS	
16	Beyond Sovereignty: Reimagining Vulnerability and Security	217
	ALEXANDRA S. MOORE	
	<i>Select Bibliography</i>	233
	SARONIK BOSU AND HEBA JAHAMA	
	<i>Index</i>	239

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

SARONIK BOSU is a doctoral student in the Department of English, New York University. He received his BA degree from the University of Calcutta, and his MA and MPhil degrees from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

KERRY BYSTROM is Associate Professor and Associate Dean of the College at Bard College Berlin, a Liberal Arts University. Her publications include *Democracy at Home in South Africa* (2016), *The Global South Atlantic* (co-edited with Joseph R. Slaughter, 2018), and the special issue of *Journal of Human Rights*, “Humanitarianism and Responsibility” (co-edited with Glenn Mitoma, 2013).

ELENI COUNDOURIOTIS is Professor of English and Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies at the University of Connecticut. Her scholarship focuses on the engagement of literature with history in the postcolonial novel and human rights narratives. She is the author of *Claiming History: Colonialism, Ethnography and the Novel* (1999) and *The People’s Right to the Novel: War Fiction in the Postcolony* (2014), which offers a literary history of the war novel in sub-Saharan Africa in the context of humanitarianism. In other work, she has addressed how literary texts complicate philosophical definitions of human dignity, and explored the testimony of rape victims, the figure of the child soldier, the narrative contours of histories of the human rights movement, and refugee narratives.

JAMES DAWES teaches literature and human rights at Macalester College. He is the author of *The Novel of Human Rights* (2018), *Evil Men* (2013), *That the World May Know: Bearing Witness to Atrocity* (2007), and *The Language of War* (2002).

LIEVE GIES is a senior lecturer in the Department of Media and Communication at the University of Leicester. Her main research interests are in the area of media representations of the law. She is author of *Law and the Media: The Future of an Uneasy Relationship* (2008) and *Mediating Human Rights: Media, Culture and Human Rights Law* (2014).

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

AUDREY J. GOLDEN is Assistant Professor of English at Simmons University where her research focuses on contemporary global Anglophone literature and international human rights law. She has published in *Law, Culture and the Humanities*, *Antipodes: A Global Journal of Australian/New Zealand Literature*, *The Routledge Companion to Literature and Human Rights*, and the *Wake Forest Law Review*.

ANDREW HAMMOND is a senior lecturer in English Literature at the University of Brighton. He is the author of over 30 academic articles and nine book-length studies, including *The Novel and Europe: Imagining the Continent in Post-1945 Fiction* (edited, 2016), *British Fiction and the Cold War* (2013), *Global Cold War Literature: Western, Eastern and Postcolonial Perspectives* (edited, 2012) and *British Literature and the Balkans: Themes and Contexts* (2010).

WENDY S. HESFORD is Professor of English at The Ohio State University, with affiliate appointments in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and Comparative Studies. She is the author of *Framing Identities: Autobiography and the Politics of Pedagogy* (1999) and *Spectacular Rhetorics: Human Rights Visions, Recognitions, and Feminisms* (2011). She is co-editor of two collections with Wendy Kozol, *Haunting Violations: Feminist Criticism and the Crisis of the "Real"* (2001) and *Just Advocacy? Women's Human Rights, Transnational Feminisms, and the Politics of Representation* (2005), and co-editor with Adela C. Licona and Christa Teston of *Precarious Rhetorics* (2018). She is working on her third monograph, *Violent Exceptions: Children's Human Rights and Humanitarian Rhetoric*. She has held Visiting Scholar appointments at Columbia University's Center for the Study of Human Rights, the Vulnerability and Human Condition Initiative at Emory School of Law, and the Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition at Yale University.

HEBA JAHAMA is a PhD student in the department of English at New York University. She holds a BA from The College of New Jersey.

RACHEL A. LEWIS is an Associate Professor in the Women and Gender Studies Program at George Mason University. Her research and teaching interests include transnational feminisms, human rights, immigration, and disability studies. She has published articles in *Feminist Formations*, *Sexualities*, *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, *Social Justice*, and *Women & Music: A Journal of Gender and Culture*.

ALEXANDRA S. MOORE is Professor of English and Co-Director of the Human Rights Institute at Binghamton University. Her most recent monograph is *Vulnerability and Security in Human Rights Literature and Visual Culture* (2015), and she has also co-edited several volumes: *Witnessing Torture: Perspectives of Survivors and Human Rights Workers* (with Elizabeth

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Swanson, 2018); *The Routledge Companion to Literature and Human Rights* (with Sophia A. McClennen, 2015); *Teaching Human Rights in Literary and Cultural Studies* (with Elizabeth Swanson Goldberg, 2015); *Globally Networked Teaching in the Humanities* (with Sunka Simon, 2015); and *Theoretical Perspectives on Human Rights and Literature* (with Elizabeth Swanson Goldberg, 2011).

GREG A. MULLINS is Academic Dean at The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington. He is also a Member of the Faculty at Evergreen, where he teaches queer studies and literature. His research centers on the cultural practices of human rights, and on literary engagements with the cultural politics of rights. He is the author of *Colonial Affairs* (2002). His essays on human rights and literature have been published in, among other places, *ALH*, *Callaloo*, *MELUS*, *Peace Review*, and *The Routledge Companion to Human Rights and Literature*.

DAVID PALUMBO-LIU is the Louise Hewlett Nixon Professor and Professor of Comparative Literature at Stanford University. He is the author and editor of numerous books, including *The Deliverance of Others* (2012). He is currently working on a book entitled *Speaking Out of Place*. His writings have also appeared in *The Nation*, the *Guardian*, *Truthout*, *Jacobin*, *Salon*, *The Washington Post* and other venues. In 2018, he served as the President of the American Comparative Literature Association.

CRYSTAL PARIKH is Professor of English and Social and Cultural Analysis, and Director of the Asian/Pacific/American Institute at New York University. In addition to numerous articles and essays, she has published *An Ethics of Betrayal: The Politics of Otherness in Emergent U.S. Literature and Culture* (2009) and *Writing Human Rights: The Political Imaginaries of Writers of Color* (2017). She is also the co-editor of *The Cambridge Companion to Asian American Literature* (2015).

RAJEEV S. PATKE is Professor of English at the National University of Singapore and the inaugural Director of the Division of Humanities at Yale-NUS College, Singapore. He has published the following books: *Poetry and Islands: Materiality and the Creative Imagination* (2018), *Modernist Literature and Postcolonial Studies* (2013), *The Concise Routledge History of Southeast Asian Writing in English* (with Philip Holden, 2010), *Postcolonial Poetry in English* (2006), and the *Long Poems of Wallace Stevens: An Interpretative Study* (1985, rpt. 2009).

CHARLOTTA SALMI is a lecturer in Postcolonial and Global Literature at Queen Mary University of London. She received her DPhil from the University of Oxford in 2013 and finished a British Academy postdoctoral research fellowship at the University of Birmingham in 2017. Her postdoctoral project explored how global graphic narratives represent different forms of violence, and she has various publications – on graphic human rights narratives, comics collectives, and the

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

graphic protest novel – stemming from this research. She is currently working on a book on comics and the state, in particular their use by and for social movements.

CATHY J. SCHLUND-VIALS is Professor of English and Asian/Asian American Studies at the University of Connecticut. She is also the Associate Dean for Humanities and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in UConn's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. In addition to numerous articles, book chapters, and edited collections, she is the author of two monographs: *Modeling Citizenship: Jewish and Asian American Writing* (2011) and *War, Genocide, and Justice: Cambodian American Memory Work* (2012). Her current research involves mapping military excess, rights violation, and US imperialism in twentieth- and twenty-first-century comics and video games.

ELIZABETH SWANSON is Professor of English at Babson College in Wellesley, MA. Author of *Beyond Terror: Gender, Narrative, Human Rights* (2007), she has co-edited with Alexandra Schultheis Moore *Witnessing Torture: Perspectives from Torture Survivors and Human Rights Workers* (2018), *Teaching Human Rights in Literary and Cultural Studies* (2015), and *Theoretical Perspectives on Human Rights and Literature* (2011), along with many articles and book chapters on the subject of literature and human rights.

BRENDA G. WERTH is Associate Professor of Latin American Studies at American University in Washington, DC. Her research interests include Latin American theater and film, performance, memory studies, and translation. She is author of the book *Theater, Performance, and Memory Politics in Argentina* (2010) and co-editor (with Paola Hernández and Florian Becker) of *Imagining Human Rights in Twenty-First Century Theater: Global Perspectives* (2013).

SARAH WINTER is Professor of English and Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies at the University of Connecticut, Storrs. She is also the director of the Research Program on Humanitarianism at the UConn Human Rights Institute. She is the author of *The Pleasures of Memory* (2015) and *Freud and the Institution of Psychoanalytic Knowledge* (2011). Her current book project, *A Judgment on Behalf of Humanity: Habeas Corpus and Human Rights*, was supported by a NEH Fellowship in 2016–2017.

SUNNY XIANG is an assistant professor of English and an affiliate faculty of Ethnicity, Race, and Migration at Yale University. She is currently completing a book that examines Asian self-representation during the long Cold War. Her work can be found in the *Journal of Asian American Studies*, *Comparative Literature*, *PMLA*, *post45*, and other publications.

CHRONOLOGY OF MAJOR WORKS AND EVENTS, 1215–2018

SARONIK BOSU AND HEBA JAHAMA

- 1200–1500 The Iroquois Constitution creates the Confederacy of Five Nations amongst indigenous peoples in North America
- 1215 Magna Carta signed between King John of England and rebel barons, granting the latter several rights such as that to justice through a fair trial
- 1500–1900 Transatlantic slave trade operating in triangular system between Europe, West Africa, and the Americas
- 1651 Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*
- 1679 Habeas Corpus Act strengthens common-law writ of *habeas corpus*, a safeguard against unlawful detention; Parliament of England, London
- 1689 Subsequent to the Glorious Revolution, the English Bill of Rights outlines a set of civil rights and highlights King James II's legal violations, including the suspension of laws without Parliamentary approval; Parliament of England, London
- 1689 John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*
- 1776 US Declaration of Independence, citing man's right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," declares American colonies free from allegiance to the British Crown; Continental Congress, Philadelphia
- 1787 Three-Fifths Compromise reached at the US Constitutional Convention, stating that every three out of five slaves would be counted as a person in determining each state's number of seats in the House of Representatives
- 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen, a charter of civil rights resulting from the French Revolution; National Constituent Assembly, Paris
- 1791 Thomas Paine, *Rights of Man*

CHRONOLOGY OF MAJOR WORKS AND EVENTS, 1215–2018

- 1791 US Bill of Rights ratified as ten constitutional amendments guaranteeing civil liberties; Constitutional Convention, Philadelphia
- 1791–1804 Haitian Revolution leads to independent state and emancipation of enslaved population in former French colony St. Domingue
- 1792 Mary Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Women*
- 1797 Immanuel Kant, “The Doctrine of Right” in *The Metaphysics of Morals*
- 1807 Slave Trade Act abolishes slave trade throughout British colonies; Parliament of the United Kingdom, London
- 1833 Slavery Abolition Act abolishes slavery in most of the British Empire; Parliament of the United Kingdom, London
- 1844 Karl Marx, “On the Jewish Question”
- 1852 Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*
- 1857 *Dred Scott v. Sanford* declares that persons of African descent, whether free or slaves, are not American citizens; US Supreme Court, Washington, DC
- 1862 Henry Dunant, *A Memory of Solferino*
- 1863 International Committee of the Red Cross founded by Henry Dunant in Geneva, Switzerland
- 1863 Emancipation Proclamation issued as executive order by US President Abraham Lincoln, liberating 3.5 million enslaved African Americans
- 1864 First of four Geneva Conventions establishes wartime protections for medical personnel, including all persons identified by the Red Cross symbol
- 1865–1870 Reconstruction Amendments to the US Constitution abolish slavery, establish citizenship rights and prohibit voting discrimination; subsequent to Reconstruction, southern states institute Jim Crow laws mandating racial segregation in public spaces
- 1884–1885 Major European powers negotiate and institute claims to territory in Africa at the Berlin Conference, a process also known as the “Scramble for Africa”
- 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* ruling upholds racial segregation under “separate but equal” doctrine; US Supreme Court, Washington, DC
- 1899 First Hague Convention extends the principles of the Geneva Convention to maritime warfare

CHRONOLOGY OF MAJOR WORKS AND EVENTS, 1215–2018

- 1903 W.E.B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk*
- 1904 Congo Reform Association founded to address King Leopold II's labor abuses in the Congo Free State
- 1904–1908 German empire conducts ethnic cleansing in Southwest Africa, present-day Namibia, exterminating an estimated 75 percent and 50 percent of the Herero and Nama populations, respectively, in what is considered the first genocide of the twentieth century
- 1905–1967 Australian government forcibly transfers children of mixed-descent, especially those born to Aboriginal mothers and white fathers, to government institutions; these kidnapped children come to be known as the Stolen Generations
- 1907 Second Hague Convention expands upon treaties of the first but fails to reach agreement on limitation of armaments
- 1909 The term “satyagraha” is coined by Mohandas Gandhi as a spiritual form of nonviolent resistance.
- 1915–1917 Young Turks government of the Ottoman Empire conducts genocide against Armenian population, resulting in the deaths of over one million Armenians
- 1917 Russian Revolution overthrows Tsarist government and puts Bolshevik Party, led by Vladimir Lenin, in power
- 1918 In a speech to US Congress, President Woodrow Wilson outlines his Fourteen Points for a post-World War I peace settlement, including the right to self-determination
- 1919 Paris Peace Conference results in establishment of the League of Nations with 42 founding members
- 1920 19th Amendment to US Constitution grants women the right to vote across the federation; US Congress, Washington, DC
- 1920–1922 Non-cooperation movement, led by Mohandas Gandhi, established to campaign for Indian self-rule
- 1932–1945 An estimated 200,000 women and girls, known as comfort women, forced into sexual slavery in military brothels across Japanese-occupied territories
- 1936–1938 Persecution and repression of Communist Party in Soviet Great Purge, with victims executed or sent to Gulag labor camps
- 1937–1938 Imperial Japanese forces conduct massacre against soldiers and civilians in Chinese capital Nanjing, killing up to an estimated 300,000 Chinese citizens and sexually assaulting tens of thousands of women

CHRONOLOGY OF MAJOR WORKS AND EVENTS, 1215–2018

- 1941–1945 Nazi Germany conducts Holocaust, exterminating two-thirds of the European Jewish population (an estimated six million) along with ethnic Poles, homosexuals, Romani people, and other political opponents
- 1942–1945 Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, US government forcibly relocates 120,000 Japanese-Americans to internment camps
- 1944 Representatives from China, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States meet to draft a proposal for the world organization that comes to be known as the United Nations at the Washington Conversations on International Peace and Security Organization (also known as the “Dumbarton Oaks Conference”)
- 1945 Charter of the United Nations establishes international organization with 50 signatories; United Nations Conference on International Organization, San Francisco
- 1945 US drops atomic bombs on Japanese cities Hiroshima and Nagasaki with a death toll of over 100,000, becoming the first and only country to detonate nuclear weapons in combat
- 1945 Korean Peninsula divided between Soviet and US occupation at the 38th parallel
- 1945–1946 Nuremberg Trials held by Allied forces to prosecute Nazi leaders after World War II
- 1947 British India is partitioned into two independent nations of India and Pakistan, leading to the dispossession and displacement of more than 15 million people
- 1947 Anne Frank, *The Diary of Anne Frank*
- 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)
- 1948 Al-Nakba, or Palestinian Exodus, displaces majority of Palestine’s Arab population during and after the Arab-Israeli war
- 1949 George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*
- 1949 Geneva Convention adopted, updating two previous treaties and outlining principles of international law with regard to warfare
- 1949 Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act, the first of a series of apartheid laws which institutionalized racial segregation and discrimination against South Africa’s non-white majority; Parliament of South Africa, Cape Town

CHRONOLOGY OF MAJOR WORKS AND EVENTS, 1215–2018

- 1950–1953 War between North Korea and South Korea, the former backed by China and the latter by the UN, resulting in a military stalemate and the establishment of the Korean Demilitarized Zone
- 1950–1954 US Senator Joseph McCarthy leads campaign persecuting alleged members of the Communist Party on accusations of treason and espionage
- 1951 Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*
- 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees
- 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling declares segregation in public schools unconstitutional; US Supreme Court, Washington, DC
- 1954–1975 Vietnam War between Viet Cong and South Vietnam, also a proxy conflict in the Cold War, results in estimated three million deaths; increased American involvement in the war is met with widespread demonstrations across the United States
- 1955 The Bandung Conference, the first large-scale meeting of independent Asian and African nations, gathers 29 countries in Bandung, Indonesia
- 1956 Elie Wiesel, *Night*
- 1958 Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*
- 1960 UN Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples calls for an end to colonial rule and affirms rights to self-determination; UN General Assembly, New York
- 1960–1996 A 36-year civil war between leftist guerilla groups and government military forces in Guatemala, following a coup (backed by the US Central Intelligence Agency) against the democratically elected president, Jacobo Arenz; more than 200,000 people are killed before peace accords are signed, the majority of them Mayans
- 1961 Amnesty International, a non-governmental organization advocating for human rights, founded in London
- 1961 First conference of non-aligned countries, a milestone for the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Belgrade
- 1961 Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*
- 1964–1968 Civil rights legislation, including the Voting Rights Act of 1965, passes through US Congress, outlawing discrimination in employment, public accommodations, and elections

CHRONOLOGY OF MAJOR WORKS AND EVENTS, 1215–2018

- 1965 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
- 1965–1966 Following an attempted coup by the September 30 Movement, the Indonesian government conducts a purge targeting alleged communists; estimates of the death toll range from one to three million
- 1966 International Bill of Human Rights adopted, incorporating the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- 1966–1976 Cultural Revolution, led by Communist Party Chairman Mao Zedong to reinvigorate Chinese communism, results in widespread violence and persecution
- 1967–1970 Nigerian Civil War erupts after unilateral secession of Biafra; during a military blockade imposed by the Nigerian government, an estimated two million Biafrans die of starvation
- 1968 Martin Luther King Jr., civil rights leader and proponent of civil disobedience, assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee
- 1971 Bangladesh, previously East Pakistan, becomes an independent nation, following a military crackdown and genocide by the state of West Pakistan, now the Islamic Republic of Pakistan
- 1972 Tutsi-led military in Burundi commits genocide against Hutu majority, killing an estimated 5 percent of the country's population
- 1973 Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago*
- 1975–1979 Khmer Rouge, ruling Communist Party in Cambodia, commits genocide, killing an estimated two million Cambodians
- 1976–1983 Military junta in Argentina targets political dissidents for detention or execution in a campaign of state terrorism, causing the disappearance of an estimated 30,000 citizens; in 1977, a movement of women known as the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo begins to hold weekly vigils for the disappeared
- 1977 US President Jimmy Carter declares human rights to be a cornerstone of American foreign policy
- 1978 Human Rights Watch, a non-government organization for human rights research and advocacy, founded in New York City

CHRONOLOGY OF MAJOR WORKS AND EVENTS, 1215–2018

- 1979 Popular movement culminates in Iranian Revolution, overthrowing the Persian monarchy and leading to the establishment of an Islamic Republic
- 1979 Permanent People's Tribunal, an international human rights tribunal, founded in Bologna
- 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- 1980 Art Spiegelman, *Maus*
- 1981 First clinical observation of HIV/AIDS by the US Center for Disease Control, ensuing global epidemic disproportionately affects populations in Sub-Saharan Africa; higher incidence among homosexual men and intravenous drug users results in widespread stigmatization and discrimination
- 1981 African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights establishes protection of human rights across the African continent; Organization of African Unity, Nairobi
- 1981 Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief resolves to end religious intolerance; UN General Assembly, New York
- 1983 Rigoberta Menchú, *I, Rigoberta Menchú*
- 1983–2009 Civil war waged between the Sri Lankan government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, who sought to create a sovereign Tamil state in the north and east of the island
- 1984 United Nations Convention against Torture defines and prohibits torture and inhumane punishment; UN General Assembly, New York
- 1985 Claude Lanzmann, *Shoah*
- 1987 Toni Morrison, *Beloved*
- 1987–1993 First Intifada, Palestinian popular uprising to resist Israeli occupation in the West Bank and Gaza
- 1989 Chinese government cracks down on student-led demonstrations at Tiananmen Square in Beijing, causing hundreds of fatalities
- 1989 Convention Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries outlines rights of indigenous peoples and responsibilities of each government to indigenous populations; International Labour Organization, Geneva
- 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- 1989 Fall of the Berlin Wall initiates German reunification, marking symbolic end to the Cold War

CHRONOLOGY OF MAJOR WORKS AND EVENTS, 1215–2018

- 1990 After 27 years in prison, Nelson Mandela, the leader of the movement to end apartheid in South Africa, is released from prison
- 1990 Chile establishes Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the first of a number of truth commissions created in various countries to investigate human rights abuses
- 1990 International Convention on Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICMRW)
- 1990–1991 Gulf War waged by American-led coalition against Iraq in retaliation for Iraqi invasion of Kuwait
- 1992–1995 Ethnic conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including ethnic cleansing of Bosnian Muslims and Croats
- 1993–present Hundreds of women and girls reported missing or killed in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico
- 1994 Zapatistas stage rebellion in Chiapas, Mexico protesting neoliberal economic policies and the signing of NAFTA
- 1994 Rwandan Genocide by Hutu-majority government against Tutsi population leads to the death of over 800,000 civilians
- 1996 Hearings begin for the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, assembled to investigate human rights abuses during apartheid and make recommendations toward restorative justice
- 1998 Founding of the International Criminal Court, which sits in The Hague, Netherlands.
- 1998 Antjie Krog, *Country of My Skull*
- 2000–2005 Second Intifada, Palestinian uprising provoked by Israeli politician Ariel Sharon's visit to Temple Mount
- 2001 Terrorist attacks of 9/11 target World Trade Center and the Pentagon, killing almost 3,000 Americans and catalyzing the US War on Terror
- 2002 US President George W. Bush establishes military detention camp at Guantánamo Bay to house suspected members of terrorist group al-Qaeda; controversy and condemnation by international organizations ensue over torture of detainees and other human rights violations
- 2002 Rome Statute, ratified in 1998, enters into force, establishing the International Criminal Court
- 2003 Ethnic cleansing of non-Arabs carried out in Darfur by Sudanese government, resulting in hundreds of thousands

CHRONOLOGY OF MAJOR WORKS AND EVENTS, 1215–2018

- of casualties and International Criminal Court's indictment of President Omar al-Bashir
- 2004 News breaks of torture and abuse at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq by US Army and CIA personnel
- 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- 2008 Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd issues official apology for mistreatment of Aboriginal peoples, particularly the Stolen Generations
- 2008 Truth and Reconciliation Commission established in Canada to address abuses related to Indian residential schools
- 2010–2011 Arab Spring begins in Tunisia, erupting into widespread revolutionary demonstrations in Libya, Egypt, Yemen, Syria, and Bahrain; these were met with authoritarian crackdowns
- 2011–present Syrian Civil War begins as President Bashar al-Assad's response to civil unrest, resulting in protracted conflict, widespread displacement, and a refugee crisis
- 2011 Human Rights Council Resolution 17/19 affirms LGBT rights and expresses concern over violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity; Human Rights Council, Geneva
- 2012 *Kony2012*, a film produced by Invisible Children, Inc., garners viral response and support for campaign against Ugandan militia leader Joseph Kony, but also solicits criticism from Ugandan government for misrepresentation
- 2012 Joshua Oppenheimer, *The Act of Killing*
- 2013 #BlackLivesMatter movement established to campaign against racial inequality in response to several high-profile killings of unarmed black civilians by US law enforcement
- 2014 News breaks of massive surveillance of civilians by US government, based on documents leaked by whistleblower Edward Snowden
- 2015 Mohamedou Ould Slahi, *Guantánamo Diary*
- 2015–present Migrants, primarily asylum-seekers and economic refugees from West Asia, the Middle East, and Africa, attempt to reach Europe by crossing the Mediterranean Sea, with thousands having died or gone missing along the way
- 2017–present Following latest outbreak of violence, nearly 700,000 Rohingya people flee from sectarian conflict in Myanmar

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-48132-8 — The Cambridge Companion to Human Rights and Literature
Edited by Crystal Parikh
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)
