HUMAN RIGHTS BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Articles on Human Rights


From the author supplied abstract: This article considers recent debates and conflicts between the Holy See and secular voices at the United Nations with regard to sexual and
reproductive health and rights, and the language of gender. While recognising that Pope Francis has ushered in a more conciliatory and open approach to such issues, deep differences still remain over the nature and extent of rights in relation to issues of sexuality, procreation and gender. The author asks if the language of dignity rather than rights might afford a better perspective from which to approach these issues. Focusing in particular on the maternal capacity of the female body, the author explores the concept of dignity in Catholic social teaching, in engagement with Martha Nussbaum's feminist interpretation of Amartya Sen's capabilities approach. The author argues that the shared Aristotelian perspectives of Nussbaum and Catholic social teaching contribute to a rich dialogue between the two, but ultimately the Catholic understanding of dignity surpasses that of any secular theory of human rights or dignity, including that of Nussbaum, because it makes human dignity ontological and not dependent on either citizenship or rights.

Beattie teaches at the University of Roehampton, London.


Looks at the evolving understandings of gender, sexual and reproductive rights as these have surfaced since the watershed 1994 International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo. Special attention is given to a critique of the roles the Holy See played in these various conferences and consultations, looking also to the de facto political alliances between supporters of the Holy See’s discourse and that of the American Christian right.


Recent discussion concerning multiculturalism, pluralism, globalization of ethics and the prospects for a "common morality" all provide a challenging context for critical ethical
reflection on the notions of the common good as these are found in various cultural and religious traditions. This article investigates the possibility of enriching our liberal Western notion of the common good from a cross-cultural perspective afforded by Confucianism and what might be called the Confucian notion of the "common good," even though the precise terminological equivalent is not found in the Confucian literature or philosophical tradition. An original exposition of the notion of the common good exegeted from the Confucian canon is presented and discussed in reference to the Confucian cardinal virtues, the notion of the chün-tzu (paradigmatic moral individual); the four cardinal virtues of jen, yi, li, and chih; an understanding of community as fiduciary; and the moral force of the notion of the T'ien-ming or Mandate of Heaven.


This section contains a large number of titles on this theme in the East Asian context. Many of the works listed also contain a brief annotation.


Investigates the key aspects of the Confucian virtue ethics in relation to the notions of the chün-tzu (Superior Person), the Five Relationships of society, the particular Confucian virtues of jen (benevolence) and li (propriety), the moral vision of the tao (Way), and the understanding of the t'ien-ming (Mandate of Heaven). The thesis of the article is that the moral matrix provided by the web of social relationships is what allows the Confucian ethics of virtue to function well.


Considers different Asian conceptions of human rights by analyzing selected speeches of Asian leaders on the subject.


Droogers, André F. "Cultural Relativism and Universal Human Rights?" In Human Rights and Religious Values: An Uneasy Relationship?, ed. Abdullahi A. An-Na'im, Jerald D. Gort,


Discusses conceptions and approaches to human rights in Japan, Taiwan, South Korea (which he calls a consensual model), and contrasts this to North Korea and mainland China (which he calls the Communist model). In turn these models are contrasted with a Western liberal model which Hsiung terms as being essentially "adversarial" in its conception and practice.


Kausikan is the Permanent Representative of Singapore to the United Nations.


This article is available electronically via _ftp://ftp.cac.psu.edu/pub/jbe/vol2/keown.txt_.


Entire April issue dedicated to this theme. Articles on the 1789 French Constitution, the 1948 United Nations Declaration of Universal Rights, Europe and the Gospel, The Torah, etc.


Milltown Studies 42 (Winter 1998).

Several articles on human rights in the Roman Catholic theological context, papers and responses from a conference.


Briefly traces the development of human rights through three historical movements centering respectively on liberty, equality, and fraternity (solidarity), and notes that in each era anthropologists, ethicists, and missionaries have developed a particular rhetoric for human rights. In the current era of post-modern globalization human rights rhetoric grapples with legitimate ethnic and cultural sovereignty on one hand, and universal ethical concerns which ought to be enshrined in human rights common to all peoples.


Author supplied abstract: In late 2015, an increase in the number of infants born with microcephaly in poor communities in northeast Brazil prompted investigation of antenatal Zika infection as the cause. Zika now circulates in 69 countries, and has affected pregnancies of women in 29 countries. Public health officials, policymakers, and international organizations are considering interventions to address health consequences of the Zika epidemic. To date, public health responses have focused on mosquito vector eradication, sexual and reproductive health services, knowledge and technology including diagnostic test and vaccine development, and health system preparedness. We summarize responses to date and apply human rights and related principles including nondiscrimination, participation, the legal and policy context, and accountability to identify shortcomings and to offer suggestions for more equitable, effective, and sustainable Zika responses.


Ray is the Neal F. and Ila A. Fisher Professor of Systematic Theology at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary.

A concise overview of various types of "rights" and then concludes that denying services in the public domain to LGBT individuals could not be supported even by the so-called right to religious freedom.

Reiff is an affiliated researcher in legal and political philosophy at the University of California, Davis.


Argues that concern for the poor is found in all major religions, and can thus help support a universal concern for the rights of the poor and marginalized. Soko looks not only at Judeo-Christianity, but also at Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Hinduism, and Islam.


*From the author supplied abstract:*  “This article is an attempt to negotiate the spaces between a number of problematic positions concerning Hinduism and human rights through the close study of one particular text, the Rajadharmaparvan of the Mahabharata.  By examining safeguards and provisions for subjects articulated in the text’s discourse of kingly duty, it engages with some of the arguments forwarded in the theoretical literature on human rights.  Here it interrogates, in particular, the idea that Hinduism is distinctively incompatible with these norms in a way other historical or cultural traditions are not.  The article concludes by asking whether it is possible to counter Eurocentric tendencies in global debates without furthering illiberal agendas within local ones.  Discussing the appropriation of ‘Raj dharma,’ and the texts that deal with it, by the Hindu Right, it briefly outlines some recent moves in human rights theory that help facilitate the reclamation of a rich and plural textual heritage.

**KEYWORDS:**  Mahabharata, human rights, history of human rights, Hindu nationalism, just war, religions, Hinduism


Consider contributions of Jeffrey Stout’s  Democracy and Tradition to the field of comparative ethics.


Article done for the Festschrift for James M. Gustafson made up of contributions from his former students.


Argues that the discourse on human rights has become inverted and appropriated by globalizing economic forces.  What is needed is a concrete focus on the experiences of suffering of the poor, especially in the non-Western areas of the world, if the legitimate goals of human rights are to be realized.  This will require a change in the sort of discourse with which human rights has been largely carried out up to the present.  This article is a revised version of a paper presented at the Seventh International Conference of North-South Philosophical Dialogue, held at the Central American University in San Salvador from 27-30 July 1998.

Wilfred is Professor in the School of Philosophy and Religious Studies of the University of Madras, India.


Suggests that "the human rights factor is no ethical panacea for the problems of conflict-ridden societies of the Third World. The inadequacy and limits of this universal human rights system, which in a way appears like an ethical Esperanto, are evident when confronted with other approaches to the universal." p. 214.

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**Books on Human Rights**


Two Catholic moralists, Francisco de Vitoria (1483-1546) and Domingo de Soto (1494-1560), examined the condition of the Indians in the New World. Both claimed to be followers of Thomas Aquinas. Stephen Brett compares and contrasts their teaching on *jus naturale*, *jus gentium*, and *dominium* with that of Thomas and points out their shift, following Occham, from a metaphysical foundation to a system of legal "titles." This rupture of metaphysics and law had tragic consequences for the question of slavery and "exact an incalculable price in human suffering."


Discussion from 1993 meeting in Bangkok which resulted in the Bangkok Declaration, in which the participants, while accepting the concept of universal standards in human rights, declared that these standards must take into account unique Asian regional and cultural differences, economic development issues, and the principles of national sovereignty.


“Drinan surveys the world from a human rights stand point between 1945 and early 2001. He chronicles successes and failures, names names, assesses nations’ efforts toward peace building, and dares to predict a positive future. He paints an inspiring trajectory and invites the reader to dream of a future in which all may live to exercise the rights with which they were born. Today his canvas appears to have been somewhat naively designed.
Still, the merits of the book are numerous because of Drinan’s careful thinking about both his experiences and his studies.” From the review by Moni McIntryre in 2006 on Catholic Books Review at http://catholicbooksreview.org/2006/drinan.htm.


Supports the mother's right to abortion and the individual's right to euthanasia.


Reviewed by Annelies Moors (University of Amsterdam) in the Journal of the American Academy of Religion (JAAR) lfx083 (Published: 13 February 2018) https://doi.org/10.1093/jaarel/lfx083

From the Moors JAAR review: “Farris aims to understand ‘the surprising intersection among nationalists, feminists, and neoliberals,’ who all ‘invoke women’s rights to stigmatize Muslim men in order to advance their own political objectives’ (3). The common denominator amongst these various political actors is that ‘gender relations in the West are more advanced and must be taught to Muslim women’ to rescue them from their patriarchal cultures (7). To name this convergence, Farris introduces the term femonationalism.


Contains an article by Sumner Twiss on Confucianism and human rights.


Harrelson, Walter. *The Ten Commandments and Human Rights*. Macon GA: Mercer University Press, 1997. Harrelson argues that the ten commandments are important not only for Jews and Christians, but for all who seek to find or to reaffirm a moral foundation for their life and for the life of their children, their religious community, and their society.


From the promotional advertisement: Hogan defends human rights language while simultaneously reenvisioning its future. Avoiding problematic claims about shared universal values, Hogan draws on the constructivist strand of political philosophy to argue for a three-pronged conception of human rights: as requirements for human flourishing, as necessary standards of human community, and as the basis for emancipatory politics. In the process, she shows that it is theoretically possible and politically necessary for theologians to keep faith with human rights. Indeed, the Christian tradition—the wellspring of many of the ethical commitments considered central to human rights—must embrace its vital role in the project.

Hogan is vice provost/chief academic officer and a professor of ecumenics at Trinity College Dublin.

Reviewed by Kate Ward in Theological Studies 78/3 (September 2017): 754-755.


Considers the Church's tradition on human rights in the international context.

Human Rights Bibliography


While some critics contend that the concept of universal human rights reflects the West's anticommunitarian, self-centered individualism, which disproportionately focuses on individual autonomy, Howard counters this claim through a review of both left and right, Western and Third World communitarian views.


Includes the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and Optional Protocols.


From the promotional advertisement: This book develops a philosophical conception of human rights that responds satisfactorily to the challenges raised by cultural and political critics of human rights, who contend that the contemporary human rights movement is promoting an imperialist ideology, and that the humanitarian intervention for protecting human rights is a neo-colonialism. These claims affect the normativity and effectiveness of human rights; that is why they have to be taken seriously. At the same time, the same philosophical account dismisses the imperialist crusaders who support the imperialistic use of human rights by the West to advance liberal culture. Thus, after elaborating and exposing these criticisms, the book confronts them to the human rights theories of John Rawls and Jürgen Habermas, in order to see whether they can be addressed. Unfortunately, they are not. Therefore, having shown that these two philosophical accounts of human rights do not respond convincingly to those the postcolonial challenges, the book provides an alternative conception that draws the understanding of human rights from local practices. It is a multilayer conception which is not centered on state, but rather integrates it in a larger web of actors involved in shaping the practice and meaning of human rights. Confronted to the challenges, this new conception offers a promising way for addressing them satisfactorily, and it even sheds new light to the classical questions of universality of human rights, as well as the tension between universalism and relativism.
Fidèle Ingiyimbere is from Burundi but did his graduate work in philosophy and theology at Centre Sèvres, the Université Catholique d’Afrique Centrale-Institut Catholique de Yaoundé-Cameroon, Hekima University College in Nairobi-Kenya and MA, STL and a PhD degrees from Boston College. His research covers areas of phenomenology and political-social questions, with special attention to the African context.


Argues that the rise of human rights and universal human dignity should be understood best as a process of the sacralization of the person. Joas treats three broad historical issues to illustrate his thesis: the origins of human rights declarations in the late 18th century (with special attention given to the 1948 UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights), and the processes that led to the abolition of justification for torture and slavery. Joas is quite familiar with both philosophical and sociological approaches, and privileges the work of Durkheim and Talcott Parsons. Joas concludes that the “sacralization of the person” can best support human rights if supported by institutions and civil society, as well as supported through rational argumentation and instantiated in everyday practices and traditions.

Joas is professor of sociology at the University of Chicago and permanent Fellow the Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies in the School of History.


Part 1 (chs. 1-4) looks descriptively at how the professions of law and psychology approach the issue of harsh interrogation, i.e. techniques which go beyond what is allowed in the usual criminal justice or military code interrogations. Part 2 (chs. 5-10) turns to normative considerations and virtue theory on the relationships between professional roles and moral responsibility. Lauritzen concludes that the serious questions raised by professionals regarding post-9/11 “enhanced interrogation techniques” may ultimately provide not only “caution” but also hope as well. Versions of Chs 4 and 9 had been published previously in *Journal of Religious Ethics* and *Soundings*.

Reviewed by James T. Bretzke, S.J. in *Theological Studies*.

Lauritzen is professor of religious ethics at John Carroll University.

Machan argues that personal basic rights to life, liberty, and property can be grounded in an ethics of classical egoism.


*From the promotional blurb:* The book takes on a set of questions suggested by the worldwide persistence of human rights abuse and the prevalence of victims' stories in human rights campaigns, truth commissions, and international criminal tribunals: What conceptions of victims are presumed in contemporary human rights discourse? How do conventional narrative templates fail victims of human rights abuse and resist raising novel human rights issues? What is empathy, and how can victims frame their stories to overcome empathetic obstacles and promote commitment to human rights? How can victims' stories be used ethically in the service of human rights? The book addresses these concerns by analyzing the rhetorical resources for and constraints on victims' ability to articulate their stories and by clarifying how their stories can contribute to enlarged understandings of human rights protections and deepened commitments to realizing human rights. It theorizes the normative content that victims' stories can convey and the bearing of that normative content on human rights. Throughout the book, published victims' stories-including stories of torture, slavery, genocide, rape in wartime, and child soldiering-are analyzed in conjunction with philosophical arguments. This book mobilizes philosophical theory to illuminate victims' stories and appeals to victims' stories to enrich the philosophy of human rights.


Reviewed by Samuel Moyn in *Journal of Church and State*, csy009, https://doi.org/10.1093/jcs/csy009 (Published: 12 March 2018)

*From Moyn’s Review*: As its title indicates, Johannes Morsink’s new book takes stock of the grounding and prospects of human rights ideals in the face of what people often call “the return of religion.” He starts by claiming that, given its Holocaust origins, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 reflected secular assumptions—a common agreement transcending all faith commitments and requiring none in particular and, in fact, no faith of any kind. I think he proves his case, but scants the reasons why human rights were compatible with so many religions at the time and sidesteps the considerable recent debate about whether “secular” ideals are ever that distant from religious and especially Christian ones.


Discusses the idea of human rights, whether they are ineliminably religious, whether are universal or relative, and whether they are absolute and/or incommensurable.


Contains five papers on various aspects of the interplay between religion and contemporary efforts to come to greater global consensus and respect for human rights.


[From the publisher’s announcement]: What are human rights? Can theology acknowledge human rights discourse? Is theological engagement with human rights justified? What place should this discourse occupy within ethics? Regan seeks to answer these questions about human rights, Christian theology, and philosophical ethics. The main purpose of this book is to justify and explore theological engagement with human rights. Regan illustrates how that engagement is both ecumenical and diverse,
citing the emerging engagement with human rights discourse by evangelical theologians in response to the War on Terror. The book examines where the themes and concerns of key modern theologians—Karl Rahner, J. B. Metz, Jon Sobrino, and Ignacio Ellacuría—converge with the themes and concerns of those committed to the advancement of human rights. Regan also critically engages with the “disdain” for rights discourse that is found in the postliberal critiques of John Milbank and Stanley Hauerwas.

Ethna Regan is a lecturer in theology at the Mater Dei Institute of Education, Dublin City University in Ireland.


Thirteen essays representing inter-religious and inter-cultural approaches to the foundation, meaning, and application of human rights.


Seeking a way out of today's bewildering rush of rights claims, the author provides a systematic account of the nature and foundations of rights.  The book seeks to elucidate what political freedom is and demonstrates why it should be protected by rights.  Smith's thesis is that rights are teleological: respect for freedom is necessary for individuals' flourishing or eudaimonia.  Smith illustrates how many alleged rights would actually undermine that objective, and she holds that the assumption that conflicts between rights are inevitable is false by seeking to demonstrate how such conflicts are theoretically incoherent and practically self-defeating.

The book introduces readers to those characteristics and topics of international law that are vital to topics of public international law that are vital to understanding human rights issues. It stresses throughout the relationship among human rights norms, processes, and institutions, as well as relationships between international and internal orders.


Also contains the 1993 Bangkok Declaration as Appendix 1, pp. 204-207.


Central issue of morality and law, beginning with an analysis of rights developed in the first part of the 20th century by Wesley Hohfeld, a professor of law at Yale, and then elaborates on the implications of this analysis for contemporary moral philosophy.


*From the publisher’s advertisement:* This book provides the first overview of the global movement of children's rights. It introduces readers to child rights in their theoretical, historical, cultural, political, and practical complexity. In the process, it examines key controversies about cultural relativism, globalization, power, gender, class, family relations, and more.


Examines human rights under four categories of poverty (and hunger-making systems), militarism (and war-making systems), ecological abuse (desert-making systems), and patriarchy (domination systems).

White is a retired United Methodist bishop and the chairman of the Episcopal Initiatives Committee which developed *In Defense of Creation*.


In this book, the author attempts to answer whether national constitutions or international human rights treaties be interpreted as prohibiting discrimination against gays, lesbians, and bisexuals. The author examines three of the most commonly used arguments in favor of such an interpretation: sexual orientation is an "immutable status", sexual orientation is a "fundamental choice" (or part of "privacy"), and sexual orientation discrimination is sex discrimination.


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Web-Resources Related to Human Rights


From the Web-site’s Statement of Purpose: This database is a research tool for investigating the connections between international human rights and Catholic social teaching. It searches theological and legal documents simultaneously, returning results in such a way that users are able to compare these bodies of thought side by side. While the main focus is comparative research, the database also serves as an unparalleled resource for those interested more generally in documents from one or the other domain.