



# International Human Rights: Universalism Versus Relativism (Classics of the Social Sciences)

*Alison Dundes Renteln*

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Are human rights universal? Universalists and cultural relativists have long debated this question. In *INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS*, Alison Dundes Renteln reconciles the two positions and argues that, within the vast array of cultural practices and values, it is possible to create structural equivalents to rights in all societies. She poses that empirical cross-cultural research can reveal universal human rights standards, then demonstrates it through an analysis of the concept of measured retribution.

*INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS* is a classic socio-legal study of the incompatibility and possible reconciliation of competing views of cultural relativism and absolute fundamental human rights. It features prodigious research and insight that has often been cited by academics and human rights lawyers and activists over two decades. Originally published in the Sage Publications' *Frontiers of Anthropology Series*, the book is now available in print and ebook formats from Quid Pro Books.

This republication adds a new preface by the author and a new foreword by Professor Tom Zwart of Utrecht University. As Zwart notes, "The book caused quite a splash when it was first published, because its author asked many important questions which had not been raised before. She challenged some of the normativist assumptions which characterized the field.... All those involved in human rights research and practice owe a debt of gratitude to Renteln for writing this pioneering book.... Fortunately, this wonderful book, through its re-issue, will remain a very important reference text for decades to come, to be enjoyed by the next generations of students of human rights."

The new ebook edition features proper digital formatting, active Contents, linked endnotes, and even embedded pagination from the print editions for ready citation, referencing, and classroom assignment. Updated UN organizational charts are included in a new appendix.

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