

statute table are of high quality and facilitate easy navigation. Hanks and Cass have succeeded admirably in updating and refining this important volume. *Australian Constitutional Law: Materials and Commentary* is ideal as a companion to a more detailed textbook of constitutional law, but it can stand on its own as a fine introductory handbook.

*James Upcher\**

### **Prisoners As Citizens: Human Rights in Australian Prisons**

**David Brown and Meredith Wilkie (eds)**

**The Federation Press, 2002, pp 384, \$49.50**

This text provides a comprehensive analysis and discussion of a wide range of the human rights issues faced by prison inmates in Australia. The editors, David Brown and Meredith Wilkie, have included 17 articles, each written by a different author. Each article contributed constitutes a chapter within the text. The articles selected come from a wide range of authors, including such academics as Greta Bird (Associate Professor and Director of the National Centre for Cross Cultural Studies in Law and Director of Research at Southern Cross University) and Jenny Green (Sydney University of Technology). However, other professionals such as Anne Warner (President of Sisters Inside) and Tony Woodyatt (legal and social policy researcher) have also contributed commentary. The variety of sources included in *Prisoners As Citizens* ensures that a diverse range of viewpoints is presented.

The text is divided into three parts: Prisons and Prisoners; Regulating Prisons and Prisoners' Rights; and finally, Citizenship and Rights. Parts 1 and 2 each contain five articles, however, part 3 is lengthier, containing seven articles. In addition to the analysis and commentary provided by the various authors, this text is also interspersed with passages written by prisoners themselves, establishing a direct dialogue with the reader in describing their experiences. This adds a more personal touch to *Prisoners As Citizens*.

The compilation of this text was jointly initiated by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission and the Australian Human Rights Centre at the University of New South Wales. However, the acknowledgments provided clearly indicate that the views

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expressed within the articles should not be conferred upon either the Commission or the Centre.

Although all the articles included deal with the common theme of the democratic and human rights to be afforded to Australian prisoners, each chapter has a unique focal point. In Part 1 of the text, these foci include the rights of indigenous prisoners and those prisoners who speak English only as a second language or suffer from an intellectual disability. The text draws its name, *Prisoners As Citizens*, from the article contributed by Vivien Stern, Senior Research Fellow at the International Centre for Prison Studies at King's College. This chapter provides an interesting contrast with the other articles contributed in presenting a European perspective on the issues discussed.

Issues such as the effect of the media on prisoners and prison reform, segregation, the right of prisoners to vote and the application of international human rights law to prisoners in Australia are also examined. Despite the variety of foci, the text appears to be primarily concerned with alerting the public to general issues of 'decency and social justice'<sup>1</sup> faced by prisoners. The central idea of viewing prisoners as 'citizens' is clearly evident by the title of this book.

The text provides a useful insight to a wide range of readers. The definitions and concepts dealt with are explained clearly and concisely using simple language to facilitate understanding. Case examples and statute extracts are also provided and each chapter is divided into clear sections with headings, and contains diagrams and numerous practical examples to assist analysis. However, while comprehensive, the articles are by no means simplistic. Each chapter provides constructive, scholarly analysis on the issues dealt with. This text is highly successful in giving due recognition to the criminological and political issues needing attention in relation to Australian prison inmates. Although principally aimed at academics and students, this text is likely to appeal to any member of the public with an interest in issues of human rights.

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