

Garth was one of the few student-friendly lecturers (outside the jurisprudence and criminology departments) I recall at the Law School in the mid-sixties. He gave some lectures in public law and implanted the idea that law could serve to batter down closed doors and to hold the government to account – that it could be used as a weapon for social progress.

He made us alive to the potential of international law, and I published in *Blackacre* '68 an important article he wrote on the subject of human rights in South Africa, which explained the importance of using international standards to combat racism – “*immoral, dangerous and evil*”, as he described apartheid, but also illegal. His thinking was behind the battles fought against the Springbok tours in 1970-71, culminating in Don Bradman’s decision in 1972 to stop Australia playing cricket with racially selected teams.

Garth was keen to improve the quality of legal teaching and the student experience. He believed that you did not need first-class honours to be a good law teacher: he argued the case in *Blackacre* '70 and was able to prove it when he recruited some outstanding teachers for the University of New South Wales. He was open to new ideas – the first, I think, to embrace “open book” exams, and he encouraged us to demand a course in ‘poverty law’. I reconnected with him when I lectured at UNSW a few years later, and he was most helpful when we were setting up the Redfern Law Centre.

I saw him from time to time thereafter, usually in respect of his concerns over indigenous rights in the South Pacific. He was always inspiring, and with a practical wisdom about what could be achieved.

I look back on Garth as a seminal figure of law teaching in the sixties, one of the first lawyers to recognise the importance of fighting racism and, in his teaching work, of making the learning of law an interesting and even enjoyable experience.

Geoffrey Robertson QC