



Rejecting Refugees: Political Asylum in the 21st Century

Carol Bohmer, Amy Shuman

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Many nations recognize the moral and legal obligation to accept people fleeing from persecution, but political asylum applicants in the twenty-first century face restrictive policies and cumbersome procedures. So, what counts as persecution? How do applicants translate their stories of suffering and trauma into a narrative acceptable to the immigration officials? How can asylum officials weed out the fake from the genuine without resorting to inappropriate cultural definitions of behaviour?

Using both in depth accounts by asylum applicants and interviews with lawyers and others involved, this book takes the reader on a journey through the process of applying for asylum in both the United States and Great Britain. It describes how the systems address the conflicting needs of the state to protect their citizens from terrorists and the influx of hordes of unwelcome economic migrants, while at the same time adhering to their legal, moral and treaty obligations to provide safe haven for those fleeing persecution.

Rejecting Refugees is an insightful and fresh evaluation of the obstacles asylum applicants face and the cultural, procedural, and political discrepancies in the political asylum process. This makes it ideal reading to students and scholars of political science, international relations, sociology, law and anthropology.

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