

“Where once the United States saw itself—and the world saw it—as the savior of oppressed peoples, the United States is now seen as the leading rogue state. In fact, the grounds for American moral hubris were always shaky. How could the United States be a champion of human rights in the world when for two centuries, the fundamental rights embedded in the U.S. constitution, in U.S. political culture, and in U.S. laws had never been widely honored?”

—from the foreword by **FRANCES FOX PIVEN**

“An important book. ... The contributors recap the relevant international standards and show the *systematic*, not merely accidental, failure of the United States to comply with these norms. And they admirably insist not only that international human rights apply to the United States but that this country in particular must be held to the highest level of performance.”

—from the postscript by **JACK DONNELLY**

Most Americans would be surprised to learn that their government has declined to join most other nations in UN treaties addressing inadequate housing, poverty, children’s rights, health care, racial discrimination, and migrant workers. Yet this book documents how the United States has, for decades, declined to ratify widely accepted treaties on these and many other basic human rights. Providing the first comprehensive topical survey, the contributors build a case and specific agendas for the nation to change course and join the world community as a protector of human rights.

Contributors to this volume are prominent social scientists who take topics that are standard fare in sociology, such as inadequate housing, children living in poverty, and inadequate health care, and instead of dwelling on these as social problems, lay out the case for human rights—that is, for example, housing is a human right, children have rights to economic security, all have rights to health care, all have rights to be free from discrimination, and so on.

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THE **Leading Rogue State**

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## The U.S. and HUMAN RIGHTS

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