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The Leading Rogue State

The United States and Human Rights

edited by **Judith Blau, David L. Brunσμα, Alberto Moncada, and Catherine Zimmer**

Introduction by **Frances Fox Piven**; Prologue by **Jack Donnelly**

Published in collaboration with **Sociologists without Borders**

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

—from the prologue by **Jack Donnelly**

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

—from the foreword by **Frances Fox Piven**

It has been over six decades since the United States closed its borders to international human rights laws and agreements, and of course a great deal has happened in those intervening six decades. Most significant is that more of the world’s people embrace the language of human rights and articulate their aspirations in those terms. Americans do not because the U.S. government arrogantly disregards international human rights treaties, declarations, and conventions. Even when the U.S. has

occasionally ratified a human rights treaty, it includes a statement that legally exempts the U.S. from the treaty provisions. It is not therefore a legal party to human rights treaties on civil and political rights, elimination of racial discrimination against racial minorities, and against women, the rights of the child, and the rights of migrant workers.

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 housing, and so on.

Judith Blau, Professor at the University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill, and **Alberto Moncada**, President of Sociologists without Borders, have collaborated on three previous books on human rights. **David L. Brunσμα** is Associate Professor of Sociology/Black Studies at the University of Missouri. **Catherine Zimmer** is Adjunct Professor of Sociology at the University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill.

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