



Humanitarianism Contested: Where Angels Fear to Tread (Routledge Global Institutions)

Michael Barnett, Thomas G. Weiss



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This book provides a succinct but sophisticated understanding of humanitarianism and insight into the ongoing dilemmas and tensions that have accompanied it since its origins in the early nineteenth century. Combining theoretical and historical exposition with a broad range of contemporary case studies, the book:

- provides a brief survey of the history of humanitarianism, beginning with the anti-slavery movement in the early nineteenth century and continuing to today's challenge of post-conflict reconstruction and saving failed states
- explains the evolution of humanitarianism. Not only has it evolved over the decades, but since the end of the Cold War, humanitarianism has exploded in scope, scale, and significance
- presents an overview of the contemporary humanitarian sector, including briefly who the key actors are, how they are funded and what they do with their money
- analyses the ethical dilemmas confronted by humanitarian organization, not only in the abstract but also, and most importantly, in real situations and when lives are at stake
- examines how humanitarianism poses fundamental ethical questions regarding the kind of world we want to live in, what kind of world is possible, and how we might get there.

An accessible and engaging work by two of the leading scholars in the field, *Humanitarianism Contested* is essential reading for all those concerned with the future of human rights and international relations.

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