Contracting Human Rights
Crisis, Accountability, and Opportunity

Elgar Studies in Human Rights

Edited by Alison Brysk, Distinguished Mellichamp Professor of Global Governance and Michael Stohl, Professor of Communication, University of California, Santa Barbara, US

By chronicling the continuing contest over the reach, range, and regime of rights, Contracting Human Rights analyzes the way forward in an era of many challenges. This multidisciplinary book contributes to building understanding of the maturation of human rights, from a dissident doctrine to a dynamic parameter of global governance and civil society. Through an examination of both global and local challenges to human rights, including loopholes, backlash, accountability, and new opportunities to move forward, this book analyzes trends across multiple-issue areas.

‘Brysk and Stohl bring together a diverse set of voices and perspectives in questioning long-held assumptions about the progressive expansion of international human rights norms and enforcement mechanisms. This book is essential reading for anyone interested in the long-term impact of the so-called war on terror on international human rights and anyone concerned with the future of human rights.’
– Michael Goodhart, University of Pittsburgh, US

‘In turbulent times for human rights, this volume explores why promotion and protection of rights is stalled or thwarted in a range of issue areas, in multiple countries and regions, and at varying levels of governance. Particularly impressive are the range of topics covered across the individual chapters, the depth of evidence marshalled, and the uniformly urgent call to move beyond conventional explanations.’
– Shareen Hertel, University of Connecticut, US

‘Contracting Human Rights is an exciting collection of essays covering topics from refugee rights and the International Criminal Court to corporate responsibilities, LGBT and women’s rights, and beyond. The authors show how human rights can be blocked by resistance, counter-mobilization, and the reassertion of state sovereignty. Yet they also show that there are still means to reinforce human rights rather than give in to a politics of fear. Well worth reading, and a superb collection for classroom use.’
– Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann, Professor Emeritus, Wilfrid Laurier University, Canada and Research Chair in International Human Rights, 2003-16

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