Human Rights and U.S. Foreign Policy

Prevarications and Evasions

Human Rights and U.S. Foreign Policy provides a comprehensive historical overview and analysis of the complex and often vexing problem of understanding the formation of U.S. human rights policy. The proper place of human rights and fundamental freedoms in U.S. foreign policy has long been debated among scholars, politicians, and the American public. Clair Apodaca argues that the history of U.S.human rights policy unfolds as a series of prevarications that are the result of presidential preferences, along with the conflict and cooperation among bureaucratic actors. Through a series of chapters devoted to U.S. presidential administrations from Richard Nixon to the present, she delivers a comprehensive historical, social, and cultural context to understand the development and implementation of U.S. human rights policy. For each administration, she pays close attention to how ideology, bureaucratic politics, lobbying, and competition affect the inclusion or exclusion of human rights in the economic and military aid allocation decisions of the United States. She further demonstrates that from the inception of U.S. human rights policy, presidents have attempted to tell only part of the truth or to reformulate the truth by redefining the meaning of the terms "human rights," "democracy," or "torture," for example. In this way, human rights policy has been about prevarication. Human Rights and U.S. Foreign Policy is a key text for students, which will appeal to all readers who will find a historically informed, argument driven account of the erratic evolution of U.S. human rights policy since the Nixon Administration.



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