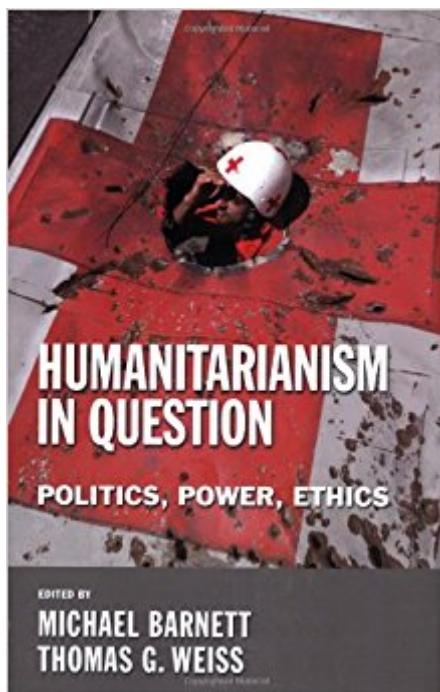


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# Humanitarianism In Question: Politics, Power, Ethics (Cornell Paperbacks)



## Synopsis

Years of tremendous growth in response to complex emergencies have left a mark on the humanitarian sector. Various matters that once seemed settled are now subjects of intense debate. What is humanitarianism? Is it limited to the provision of relief to victims of conflict, or does it include broader objectives such as human rights, democracy promotion, development, and peacebuilding? For much of the last century, the principles of humanitarianism were guided by neutrality, impartiality, and independence. More recently, some humanitarian organizations have begun to relax these tenets. The recognition that humanitarian action can lead to negative consequences has forced humanitarian organizations to measure their effectiveness, to reflect on their ethical positions, and to consider not only the values that motivate their actions but also the consequences of those actions. In the indispensable Humanitarianism in Question, Michael Barnett and Thomas G. Weiss bring together scholars from a variety of disciplines to address the humanitarian identity crisis, including humanitarianism's relationship to accountability, great powers, privatization and corporate philanthropy, warlords, and the ethical evaluations that inform life-and-death decision making during and after emergencies. Contributors: Michael Barnett, University of Minnesota; Craig Calhoun, New York University; James D. Fearon, Stanford University; Laura Hammond, SOAS, University of London; Peter J. Hoffman, Hunter College; Stephen Hopgood, SOAS, University of London; Peter Redfield, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; Jennifer C. Rubenstein, Princeton University; Jack Snyder, Columbia University; Janice Gross Stein, University of Toronto; Thomas G. Weiss, CUNY Graduate Center

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## Customer Reviews

"This is a superb survey of the rise and challenges of international humanitarianism assistance. The book chronicles the remarkable post-Cold War emergence of a global system of humanitarian reliefÂ—a system complete with doctrines, organizations, and extensive field operations. But it is also a system under stress, working increasingly with little guidance or support in war-torn societies . . . . The authors in this collection step back from these developments to ask first-order questions about the purposes and principles of humanitarianism. . . . This book will long be an essential guide to the theory and politics of global humanitarianism."Â—G. John Ikenberry, Foreign Affairs

"This is one of the finest collections of essays on humanitarianism I have read in a very long time: refreshingly devoid of political correctness, focused on the real world dilemmas aid agencies face, and written with the clarity, thorough research, and critical thinking too many in the aid community have avoided for too long."Â—Andrew Natsios, Georgetown University, and Senior Fellow, Hudson Institute

"As the world faces ever-increasing demands for humanitarian assistance and the expansion of aid programs, humanitarianism faces a crisis about what it is and does. This excellent collection of essays by leading scholars raises fundamental questions about the nature of humanitarian aid and its current dilemmas. Lucid, thoughtful, and provocative, this is essential reading for understanding the humanitarian project and its shifting relationship to politics."Â—Sally Engle Merry, New York University

"By providing sharp analyses of most of the critical issues facing humanitarian agencies today, *Humanitarianism in Question* will force such organizations to think beyond the confines of their business. This book will be obligatory reading for courses on emergencies and on humanitarian action and has much to offer readers interested in the shape of modern warfare, those who study the politics of globalization, and those who are concerned with terrorism."Â—Peter Walker, Rosenberg Professor of Nutrition and Human Security and Director of the Feinstein International Center, Tufts University

"This exciting and much-needed book comes at the right time and will help set an important agenda in the studyÂ—and conductÂ—of humanitarian efforts. The editors make a wide-ranging case that humanitarianism has come of age as an area of study in its own right akin to the subfields such as strategic studies or political economy, and the contributors substantiate this with thoughtful consideration of the implications and dilemmas of humanitarianism in its myriad

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Opens your eyes to the world of aide organizations

The book has been an interesting read.

This is a great book!! Was the text for a grad school class about International Development - fantastic insight but multiple authors.. highly recommended.

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