



Human Rights and Gender Violence: Translating International Law into Local Justice (Chicago) Series in Law and Society)

Sally Engle Merry

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Human rights law and the legal protection of women from violence are still fairly new concepts. As a result, substantial discrepancies exist between what is decided in the halls of the United Nations and what women experience on a daily basis in their communities. *Human Rights and Gender Violence* is an ambitious study that investigates the tensions between global law and local justice.

As an observer of UN diplomatic negotiations as well as the workings of grassroots feminist organizations in several countries, Sally Engle Merry offers an insider's perspective on how human rights law holds authorities accountable for the protection of citizens even while reinforcing and expanding state power. Providing legal and anthropological perspectives, Merry contends that human rights law must be framed in local terms to be accepted and effective in altering existing social hierarchies. Gender violence in particular, she argues, is rooted in deep cultural and religious beliefs, so change is often vehemently resisted by the communities perpetrating the acts of aggression.

A much-needed exploration of how local cultures appropriate and enact international human rights law, this book will be of enormous value to students of gender studies and anthropology alike.



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