Walker / Maxwell

Shaping the Humanitarian World

Providing a critical introduction to the notion of humanitarianism in global politics, tracing the concept from its origins to the twenty-first century, this book examines how the so called international community works in response to humanitarian crises and the systems that bind and divide them. By tracing the history on international humanitarian action from its early roots through the birth of the Red Cross to the beginning of the UN, Peter Walker and Daniel G. Maxwell examine the challenges humanitarian agencies face, from working alongside armies and terrorists to witnessing genocide. They argue that humanitarianism has a vital future, but only if those practicing it choose to make it so. Topics covered include: - the rise in humanitarian action as a political tool - the growing call for accountability of agencies - the switch of NGOs from bit players to major trans-national actors - the conflict between political action and humanitarian action when it comes to addressing causes as well as symptoms of crisis. This book is essential reading for anyone with an interest in international human rights law, disaster management and international relations.

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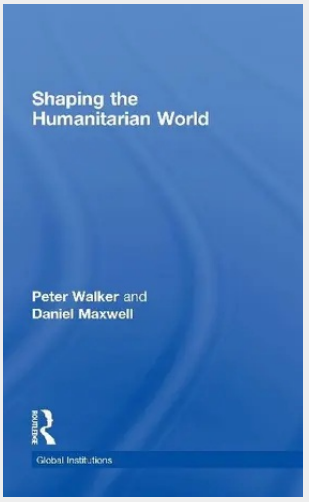

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