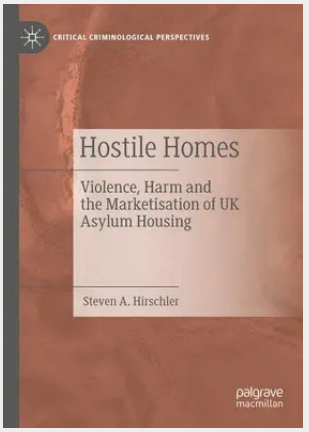
Hirschler

Hostile Homes

Violence, Harm and the Marketisation of UK Asylum Housing



This book explores the ways in which the state and private security firms contribute to the direct and structural harm of asylum seekers through policies and practices that result in states of perpetual destitution, exclusion, and neglect. By synthesising historic and contemporary public policy, criminological and sociological perspectives, political philosophy, and the direct experiential accounts of asylum seekers living within dispersed accommodation, this text exposes the complex and co-dependent relationship between the state's social control aims and neoliberal imperatives of market expansion into the immigration control regime. The title borrows from former Home Secretary Theresa May's pronouncement that the UK government aimed to foster a 'hostile environment' in its response to illegal immigration. While the Home Office later attempted to rebrand its hostile environment policy as a 'compliant environment', this book illustrates how aggressive approaches toward the management of asylum-seeking populations has effectively extended the hostile environment to those legally present within the UK. Through an examination of the expanded privatisation of dispersed asylum housing and the UK government's reliance on contracts with private security firms like G4S and Serco, this book explores the lived realities of hostile environments as asylum seekers' accounts reveal the human costs of marketised asylum accommodation programmes.

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