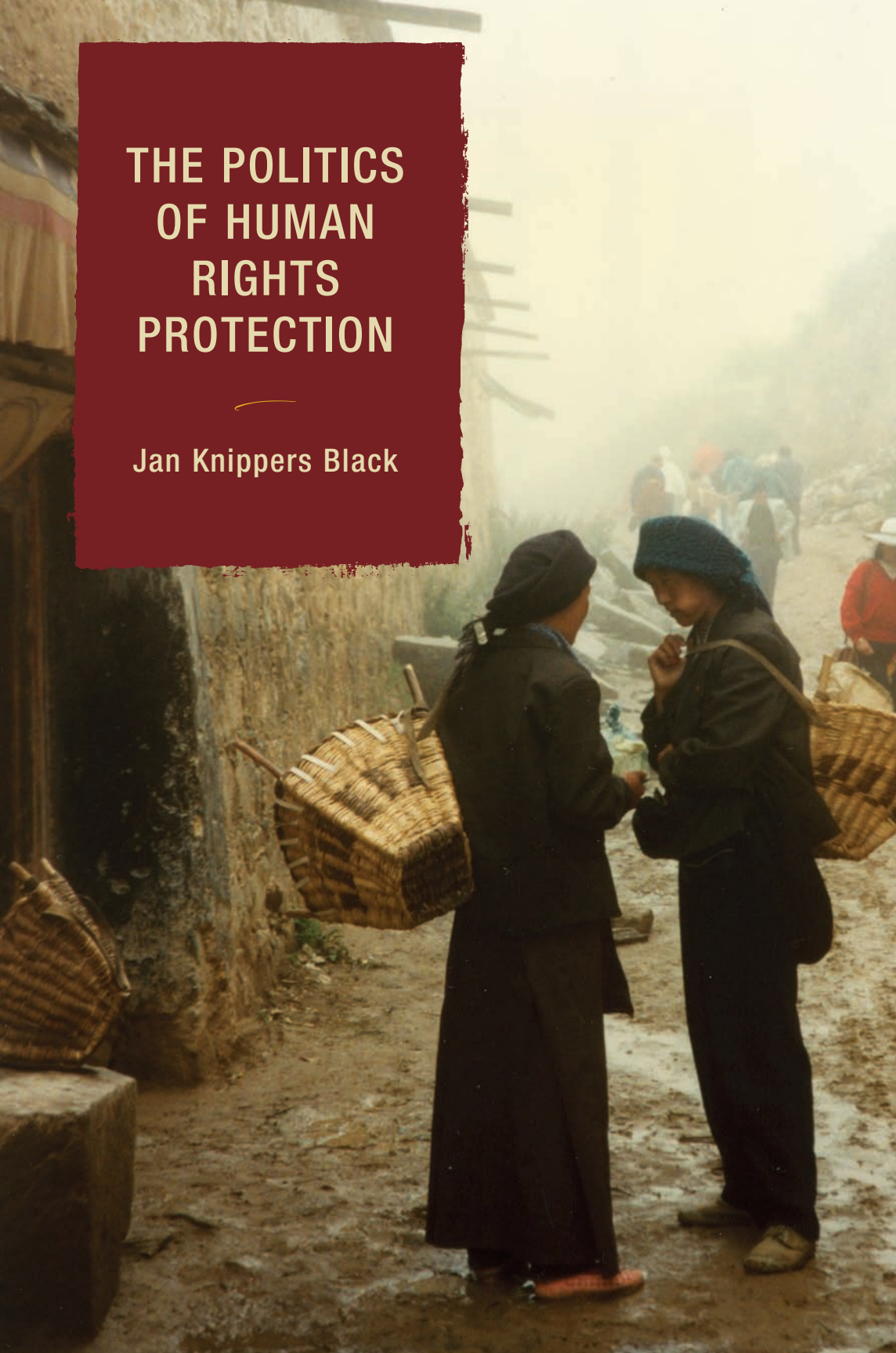


# THE POLITICS OF HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION

Jan Knippers Black



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This book is dedicated to my former students, working all around the world—making policy, making trouble for tyrants, making dreams come true—in short, making the world a more hospitable place for people and other living things. They have been and continue to be my source of inspiration and of hope.



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# Preface

As this book goes to press, the United States and the world face a great crisis—that is, a turning point, a time of danger and of promise. We are threatened with ever-expanding wars and with their attendant threats to civil and human rights; with dramatic growth in income and asset gaps and their attendant shocks and deepening desperation for the beleaguered majority; with deteriorating relations between *Homo sapiens* and other living things, between humanity and its would-be supportive environment, and between people who have the luxury of staying put or of living where they wish and those who are uprooted and displaced.

In 2008, however, another outcome for this crisis seems possible—a turn in a different direction—toward peace and general, equitable prosperity; toward social responsibility for our offspring and their habitat; and toward reconstruction of our essential protective legal and institutional foundations, along with deconstruction of physical and attitudinal walls that imprison and divide. We can and must build bridges instead of walls. But no change in leadership can bring about such a sea change in social direction unless it is built upon and swept along by a massive and sustained mobilization of those who care enough to dare to understand and to act.

The mobilization, or collective activism, I speak of must be global. Living in the whole world, as I chose early on to do, may no longer be a matter of choice. The accelerated globalization of the last two decades has meant that, more than ever before, we are all in this together. Our fates are intertwined and interdependent. That means global in the sense of embracing not only all states, but also all peoples, and not only addressing the rights of all peoples, but also hearing the voices of all peoples. Surely we have learned by now that we dare not place blind faith in leaders and “experts.”

In the United States, the word *international* has taken on a peculiar connotation: It has come to mean foreign, reflecting, perhaps, a long-standing assumption that we are somehow above and beyond—insulated from the vicissitudes that affect others. That being the case, some readers will find it discomfiting that with respect neither to the abusers of human rights nor to the abused is this book about some distant “other.”

Growing up at the knee of a Tennessee legislator and judge whose commitment to intellectual honesty and to the public interest would have been rare anywhere, I learned that loyalty to country or to any other social construct implied assuming responsibility for correcting a course that was leading to disaster. Any such redirection calls first for taking a clear-eyed measure of where we are, in itself a major challenge in a country where self-contradictory thinking is encouraged—where it is acceptable to be for peace, but not to be against war.

This book is not written for specialists in some disciplinary sense. On the contrary, it is a call to indiscipline—to crisscross disciplinary walls so as to understand better the connectedness of political, economic, ecological, and cultural impacts on social and individual well-being, and also to challenge authority, including official stories and supposedly reliable sources. I hope that my readers will include the merely curious and that their curiosity will be deepened rather than satiated. But most of all, this book is addressed to the committed, be they students or teachers, advocates, organizers, monitors, service providers, or policymakers, in the hope that it will serve to mitigate blindsiding and to offer firmer grounding for effective strategies for human rights protection.

#### NOTE ABOUT BLACK'S LAWS

“Black’s Laws of Public Affairs and Paradoxes of Development,” epigrams by the author, introduce some chapters and are italicized in the text throughout the book. Other uses of Black’s Laws may be found with chapter headings in *Black’s Inequity in the Global Village*, West Hartford, CT: Kumarian Books, 1999, and as an appendix to *Black’s Development in Theory and Practice: Paradigms and Paradoxes*, 2nd ed., Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999.

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# Acknowledgments

Much of the intellectual ferment that inspired this book was provided by St. Antony's College, Oxford, where I was in residence once again as a senior associate member in 2005. I benefited particularly from the insights of Sir Marrack Goulding, then warden of St. Antony's and previously UN under-secretary-general for peacekeeping and for political affairs. I have benefited also from the generosity of the Joseph and Sheila Mark Fund, making possible a five-continent research agenda, and from the assistance of several of my former students in different phases of the project, among them Petr Lebeda, Mike Danielson, Bill Godnick, Cat Grant, RoniKay O'Dell, and Shadi Singh. As always, I am grateful as well to my husband, Dr. Martin C. Needler, who is my dictionary, my encyclopedia, and my all-purpose support system.



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# 1

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## The Human Rights Perspective and the Need for Impact Assessment

*A meaningful life is the kind you get crucified for.*

—Jan Knippers Black

*Selective respect for human rights is just a matter of choosing sides.*

What are all these suits doing on my bandwagon? In the United States in the 1970s and 1980s, a focus on human rights—like a focus on peace in the 1950s and 1960s—served to brand one as some kind of subversive. For those working in U.S. client states, particularly in South and Central America in those years, being seen as an advocate of human rights was life threatening.<sup>1</sup> So why is it that in the twenty-first century platitudes about human rights slip easily off the tongues of CEOs and presidents, generals, and national intelligence chiefs? Can it be that my bandwagon has been hijacked?

The answer lies in many trenches, among them the successes of intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations in selling the ideal of respect for human rights, and the fact that in the virtual world of the communications revolution the most decisive battles are fought with words rather than bullets. But any explanation must begin with the recognition that *words are prostitutes, for sale to the highest bidder*. If all of us, from the most vulnerable to the least, are singing the same song, it doesn't mean that we are singing in harmony. It may mean that somebody is trying to steal the songbook and change the tune.

It is obligatory now in much of the world to speak of and pay homage to human rights, even as it remains potentially dangerous in much of the world—China and Russia, for example, and in every other decade in the

United States—to be serious about it. The same might be said, of course, of democracy, which is an attribute and bulwark of the larger spectrum of human rights. Such ambivalence, or more often hypocrisy, with respect to human rights is in no way surprising, because rights are at the core of the power game. The struggle to claim rights and the assault against them constitute a presumably unending dialectic process.

At any rate, it is critical that those of us who would speak for the vulnerable be clear about our own terms and concepts, theories and strategies. And we must be continually reassessing threats and opportunities and devising new means of approaching the challenge. Solutions sometimes seem simple, but *to every solution there is a problem; any remedy devised to protect the interests of the less powerful will soon be turned by the powerful to their own advantage.*<sup>2</sup> Thus would-be protectors of the less powerful must be ever more clever and more vigilant to stay ahead of the game.

### A HOLISTIC PERSPECTIVE: GETTING FROM FACTS AND VALUES TO TRUTH

Human rights, as a focus of concern, does not lend itself readily to definition. Definitions are limiting; they draw parameters, put up walls. A human rights focus is liberating; it frees us to think analytically and strategically, outside of all boxes, and it validates and unleashes a passion for caring. I like to think of the human rights perspective as a wide-angle lens—expanding horizons and visibility—allowing the curious mind and the caring soul to wander together, unimpeded by the walls normally erected by disciplines and professions.

The perspective cannot therefore have preordained parameters; it must prepare us to prioritize undertakings for triage—to respond quickly and effectively to those cases wherein our response might prevent torture or save lives in the short run—but also to recognize and name new categories of abuse as they occur and new means of protection as they present themselves.

As so much of what used to be national decision making has been outsourced—removed from the province of government—and as democracy has come to be defined in narrow terms of electoral process, basic social, economic, cultural, and ecological rights increasingly come to be recognized as human rights. It follows then that deprivation of these rights cannot be legitimated by government, no matter the rationale and no matter how such governments may have been conceived. As protection of such rights cannot be entrusted to individual governments, they must be the concern of the international community.

Human rights is a call to action—to prescription and advocacy, organization, mobilization, and coalition building, to rule making, implementation, and adjudication. But for any of that to have utility—to make sense—it must also be underpinned by reliable explanation and prediction. *Action without understanding is at best futile, at worst dangerous to those it is meant to help.*

Human rights is not a discipline, based on a generally accepted body of theory with a finite number of recognized bibles and priests. But it draws upon and feeds back into the humanities and each of the social sciences. Unlike some disciplines, human rights does not have the luxury of seeking theoretical validation in abstract worlds from which threats to real people have been assumed away. On the contrary, human rights activists are committed to attending to the real people hit by real bombs dropped from that abstract world. Nor can human rights activists afford to slip into magic realism to be “given a level playing field” or to imagine “all else being equal.” *The human rights perspective and international human rights regime exist precisely because all else is not equal and because level playing fields are not given; they are won.*

When projected “solutions” turn out not to be, when “failure” turns out to be cover for goals never pursued and outcomes never intended, and “official stories” prove to be lies that result in wholesale slaughter, those scholars committed to the protection of human rights cannot take cover in research “objectivity” and “safe” sources. What is at stake in this endeavor is more important than careerist ambition or job security.

A human rights perspective with respect to information and inspiration is the view from the bottom up. *Whereas security is defined by those who have the most to lose, and “authoritative” commentary comes from those who have the most to hide, a human rights perspective reaches out and pays heed to those who have no spinmeisters, no official spokespersons or public relations teams, no layers of smoke and mirrors between their roles and their realities—and who, incidentally, without us may have no forum.*<sup>3</sup>

Considering the stakes, it is all the more important that we get it right—that our understanding of cause and effect and our assessment of the reliability of sources lead to accurate predictions. The fact that our pursuit is recognized as normative, engaging both facts and values, cuts us no slack; rather it should give us the advantage as well as the obligation of being more readily cognizant of the differences between them. Facts, if true, portray the world as it is. Values portray also the world we aspire to. Our values are not subject to scientific validation, but they do help us understand which facts are important and which may lead us to truth.<sup>4</sup> British novelist Graham Greene has said that novelists have little to do with journalists, as journalists deal in facts; novelists, he said, deal in truth.



## FALLBACK VERSUS FORWARD POSITIONING

Much of the teaching and the literature dealing with human rights to date has been in the field of law, particularly international law. The field is underpinned by an accumulated body of international conventions and treaties and promoted by a large number of partially articulated international or nongovernmental organizations and institutions, constituting what has come to be known as the international human rights regime. Law might be said to be our currency, the way we seek to consolidate or “bank” our gains over the years; it is clearly a necessary element of our endeavor, but it is not sufficient. *There is a great difference between what it takes to deal with perverse individuals in a relatively benign system and to deal with a system that is itself perverse*—a difference that helps explain why a legal approach to human rights protection must be accompanied by a political approach.

The principal limitation of a legal approach is that it constricts the focus to the immediate perpetrator of the offense and the immediate victim, or claimant to damages, usually without taking into account the endorsers of the abuse, the underwriters of the perpetrator, or the ripple effects of the crime. Nor does a legal approach take into account the perversions of the system that continually re-create conditions propitious to abuse. On the rare occasions when allegations of torture come before a court, the accused are ordinarily low ranking. Neither the instigators and enablers of abuse among the policymakers and along the chain of command nor those indirectly victimized by the ripple effect of fear and intimidation are taken into account.

The legal approach also limits categories of wrongdoing, rules of evidence, and the possible remedies to those already provided by law and pertaining to conviction and punishment. But in many cases recognition of human rights (as opposed to civil rights underpinned by state law) and of the threats to such rights is required to generate new legislation or regulatory protections. Moreover, the standards governing legal protection are far more stringent than those that should govern politics and social relationships. The “beyond a shadow of a doubt” unimpeachable evidence of dastardly crime that might be required for conviction and imprisonment should not be required for defeating an incumbent government or even impeaching its leader, let alone for parliamentary censure and media criticism. *But power inequity has become such that smoking-gun evidence of treason or crimes against humanity by the very powerful call for a lot more smoke than would evidence of misdeeds by ordinary citizens. In fact, a “smoking gun” is not likely to be picked up until its owner runs out of ammunition.*

At any rate, to prevent abuse and protect future generations, human rights analysis and strategies must be, at core, political. That is not to belittle the significance of the legal foundation of universal human rights, but simply

to note that recourse to law already on the books should be our fallback rather than our forward position.

It seems that most people, from those having great responsibility—or liability—to students undertaking the study of human rights, are inclined to retreat to the relative ontological safety of law, even though law—whether national or international—is always subject to interpretation and is ineffective with respect to leaders who get away with placing themselves above it. But we dare not shy away from the fuzzy, or poorly demarcated, borders of acceptable human interaction, because that is precisely where clashes are most likely to occur and to prove intractable, resistant to solution.

A proactive approach to protecting human rights must go far beyond identifying and punishing immediate perpetrators of abuse to building understanding of the root causes of human rights violations and bringing our understanding into the quest for solutions. A good place to start in holistic political analysis might be in conceptualizing, or tracking and identifying, the ultimate, base or systemic, cause of abuse. There may be many useful means of expressing it, but for me that cause is best understood as the combination of vulnerability on the one hand, impunity on the other—or taken together, inequality.

Both vulnerability and impunity are perceptual as well as situational. Impunity has more to do with class (and thus power) than with law or with specific roles. Just as the price for political disaster—like war—is rarely paid by those who make and profit from policy decisions, economic disasters rarely redound against those bankers, investors, and other money movers whose decisions bring them on. At lower levels on the food chain, those workers seen as supporters or protectors of the power elite, like police, paramilitary, and other security personnel, also enjoy impunity.

That is not to say that we must achieve absolute equality to diminish abuse, but we must reverse the trend to ever-greater inequality. It is also imperative that we seek to identify and nurture our greatest prospects for protection, beginning with individual recognition of the strength to be found in community, and community recognition of the strength to be found in individuals.

## THE STRATEGIC PROMISE OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

*The more important the decision, the fewer and the less well informed will be those involved in making it.* Logic suggests that “democracies” would be less likely than authoritarian states to decide to go to war. But even in supposed democracies decisions as important as war and peace are not generally made democratically. They are most often made by a tight inner circle of executives on the basis of mistaken, misinterpreted, misrepresented, or outright

prefabricated “intelligence,” then pushed hastily through intimidated legislatures, and sold to unengaged publics by complicitous or opportunistic media. When the outcome proves to be unmitigated disaster, decision makers and their cheerleaders are prone to offer up a plea of collective ignorance.

It was the painful regularity of such a sequence of events that led me to invest in the prospects of human rights impact assessment. In pursuit of better-informed policy and more effective implementation, there is urgent need to move the intervention of human rights activists upstream in the decision-making process; downstream in implementation, follow-up, and seeding for sustainability; and cross-stream—that is, across the great divide between the official world and the real world.<sup>5</sup> For human rights advocates, the first challenge is to identify threats to the peace or vulnerabilities that foretell abuse or neglect and to seek preventive action. Following the lead of environmentalists, we would hope to make it a matter of routine that the decisions of funding agencies and policymakers be informed by human rights impact assessment—that is, open and independent, well-publicized, and publicly debated assessment of how such policies and programs would affect people.

Those who have devoted many years to monitoring human rights violations find it ever more frustrating simply to count bodies after disaster has struck. The claim by official spokespersons and media pundits in those cases, that no one could have foreseen such an outcome, can rarely be substantiated. There are almost always individuals or categories of people—for example, specialists or experienced locals—who see very clearly the possibilities and risks, and perhaps even less-risky alternative courses of action, but are not consulted or heeded by those committed, for their own reasons, to following through on a plan or policy. The point of requiring human rights impact assessments, like environmental ones, would be to ensure that those launching the project are aware of the risks, that their constituencies know that they are aware, and that pressures thus brought to bear allow immediate stakeholders and other concerned parties ordinarily excluded to engage in the policy-planning dialogue and to bring the pressure of public opinion to bear on decision makers. As policies and plans carrying risk to human populations are often drawn up and acted upon with great haste, it is important that information having a bearing on possible outcomes be readily available in a form that is usable to information-overloaded decision makers. It is even more important, perhaps, that individual scholars and activists and organizations and coalitions linking advocates across a broad range of human rights-related issues have timely access to data and analysis relevant to a plan or decision they seek to influence.

There are now several “instruments,” or templates, drawn up over the last decade by European and Canadian human rights centers and, more re-

cently, by UN agencies, and available on their websites, suggesting the steps that might be taken in assessing projected impacts of a variety of categories of policies or projects. Most assume the cooperation of the government or industry involved and assume as well the welcome involvement of other stakeholders—employers, clients, consumers, community members, or taxpayers. Of course, government agencies and corporations that willingly engage in the process are not as a rule the ones we most need to monitor and rein in. Their participation, however, should serve as a model to put pressure on more recalcitrant institutions. Some of these instruments and assessment tools, and the centers employing them, are discussed and listed with their websites in the appendix.

Since the beginning of this century, I have been using for classroom purposes a template, or checklist, of my own design (see box 1.1). I have intentionally kept it very simple so that it might be useful particularly for assessments of past and ongoing policies or projects covering a broad range of topics. The point of such *ex post*, or after the fact, assessments would be, with respect to upcoming decisions, to allow us to repeat actions, or avoid repeating them, *knowingly*, and thus to deny the option of denial to our decision makers.

#### Box 1.1. Human Rights Impact Assessment Checklist

1. Context: General nature of relationships or incentive/disincentive systems conducive to abuse in context to be addressed (e.g., gender relations, workplace, ecosystems).
2. Project, program, or policy (proposed, ongoing, or past) seen as conducive to or protective against abuse and as open to the interjection of human rights criteria. Analysis of cross-pressures affecting planners and policy-makers in the context under consideration and useful points of intercession by human rights facilitators.
3. Actors and conflicts of underlying interests:  
Identity of
  - a. the victims and the vulnerable—direct and indirect, short term and long term, and ripple effects or layers of victimization
  - b. the perpetrators and others culpable—direct and immediate, underwriters, enablers
  - c. other stakeholders
4. Nature of anticipated or observed abuse (if anticipated, how and why—previous comparable cases).
5. Protective documents, institutions, and organizations; international human rights conventions, treaties, declarations, national laws, court case precedents; institutional responsibilities and jurisdictions—World Court, ICC,

(continued)

**Box 1.1.** *(continued)*

UN committees and commissions; intergovernmental or nongovernmental organizations or agencies potentially helpful in prevention, investigation, resolution, or restitution.

6. Alternatives to program or policy in question for meeting objectives or dealing with crises, or ways to amend so as to avoid abuse or to strengthen protections.
7. Lessons learned and foreseen future applicability.
8. Appendix: Political strategies for defeating or revising an offensive project or policy, or of enacting or bringing to fruition a protective policy or project, including particularly communication channels and media placements.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Appended because ideas and suggestions included might accompany reports sent to supportive IGOs and NGOs but not necessarily to policymakers or media.

In addition, I particularly wanted to draw larger and overlapping circles around actors and actions, perpetrators and victims, projects and outcomes so as to emphasize the connectedness of trends for good and ill and the seeming infinity of possible reverberations. My intention, however, is by no means to promote a particular instrument, or research methodology, but rather to promote comprehension of the systematic basis and nature of abuse and of comprehensive proactive preparedness for protection. There is no particular magic in yet another research tool or instrument. The potential for magic lies rather in the changing of mind-set and political strategies from lamentative to preventative.

We do not imagine for a moment that governments, companies, or other decision makers who assume the right or need to engage in questionable operations would be dissuaded by exposure to convincing prediction of negative outcomes. The more effective element should be that of ensuring that decision makers have foreknowledge that such prediction is being widely publicized and that they will be held accountable for their actions or inactions. In other words, the principal objective should be to strip from policymakers and enablers the cover of plausible denial—of claiming that “no one could have foreseen.” Of course, to bring living in the whole world and living in the real, as opposed to the official, world to the popular culture, we must aim ultimately to strip the cover of denial from publics as well.

## THE STRENGTH OF SYMBIOSIS: ALL RIGHTS, ALL PEOPLES

To bring new insight and new depth to our assessment findings, our analysis, and our strategies, this book offers a review of our basic terminological

building blocks. The changing usage, in practice, of concepts as familiar as “human” and “rights” calls for a reopening of seemingly simple questions like: What is a human right? What is an abuse? And what is a protection?

Human rights abuses are not unpredictable or inevitable. But to be prevented, they must be understood. In this book we also stress the organic, or systemic, bases of abuse—of seemingly unrelated circumstances, events, and outcomes—and therefore the interwoven nature of rights and protections.

The most often touted of rights in the global West is the right to “freedom”; but freedom must be more than, in Kris Kristofferson’s immortal lyrics, “another word for nothing left to lose.”<sup>6</sup> If there is a right to life, there must also be a right to those things that sustain and protect it: a right to food and clothing and shelter, to potable water and breathable air, and to medical attention for illness or injury. A right to human dignity must also mean a right to learn about and respect one’s own culture, to choose one’s own companions, and to participate in making the rules that sustain these rights.

Such rights in turn must pertain to all peoples. *Selective respect for human rights is just a matter of choosing sides.* As we shall see, protection requires the drawing of an ever-larger circle, because if any category of people is left outside, vulnerable to persecution, none of us is safe. *Like infectious disease, vulnerability moves up the social pyramid.*

Our claim to these rights is not new, of course. Human rights, broadly interpreted, have been recognized through the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights for more than half a century; and they have been embedded in national law and enshrined in layer upon layer of international legal documents—covenants and conventions, treaties and resolutions. How can it be, then, that asserting and protecting our claims remain such a challenge, that abuses continue to be rampant—that the right to life itself is constantly challenged by high- or low-intensity wars and their collateral damage to other rights and freedoms? How can it be that the right to life continues to be conceptually segregated from the right to earn a living even in an era when family farming and fishing have been overcome by resource pillaging and habitat trashing, when those left without income by downsizing and outsourcing and contraction of the public sector find no safety net to drop into?

It is not so perplexing that there continue to be individuals and agencies who perpetrate unthinkable abuse. But how are we to understand the millions, perhaps billions, of well-meaning, generally well-behaved, people who quietly accept and go along with them? *Of course, a “coalition” of the unscrupulous, the opportunistic, the fearful, the ignorant, and the apathetic makes for an ominous obstacle. But such a coalition is not a “given”; it is a product of the reproductive system of inequity—a tainted product that can and must be recalled.*

## THE MYTH OF EXPERTISE AND THE TRIAD OF TRUMPS

On August 24, 2005, hundreds of billions of dollars and hundreds of thousands of lives after the splashy “shock and awe” launch of a fresh war that has since gone stale, the *New York Times* allowed in an editorial, “Most Americans believed that their country had invaded Iraq to eliminate weapons of mass destruction, but we know now that those weapons did not exist. If we had all known then what we know now, the invasion would have been stopped by popular outcry, no matter what other motives the president and his advisers may have had.”<sup>7</sup> (Actually, there were on one day, February 15, 2002, in the buildup to invasion, more than 10 million people around the world marching through the streets in protest, but George W. Bush dismissed that as a “focus group.”) The outcry might have been greater, of course, had not the *Times* been serving as an echo chamber for the White House.

At any rate, as we shall see throughout the text, popular acceptance, and even embrace, of the idea of inalienable rights continues to come up against the myth of expertise, the pervasiveness of denial, and the triad of trumps. Arguments having to do with the requirements of security, of the economy, and of religion—especially when, as is normally the case, the three pull together—are simply expected to be taken on faith. Blind faith in authority enables everything from faith-based elections and faith-based resource allocation to faith-driven wars.

*The “protection” of an inattentive public may become a protection racket.* I do not suggest here that security, economic, or religious concerns should not be taken seriously. I note, however, that all too often those in a position to do so frame such concerns in a manner that places the security of government leaders or security agencies at odds with that of citizens; the material interests of corporate magnates against those of employees, consumers, and taxpayers;<sup>8</sup> and the dogma of those who create their gods in their own images of omniscience over logic informed by experience.

Trump cards once played stop the game, or at least the conversation. Other face cards, or “leaders,” fall silent because *those who dare to tell the truth run the risk of losing their credibility*. Speaking truth to power, throughout most of history, has been left to the jester. Playing trumps suppresses curiosity and conjures fear—if not of the wrath of gods or enemies or “markets,” at least of looking foolish, blasphemous, or treasonous. Dom Hélder Câmara, Archbishop of Recife, who in the 1960s and 1970s dared to question Brazil’s military dictators, commented, “When I feed the poor, they call me a saint. When I ask why they are poor, they call me a communist.”<sup>9</sup>

Overriding trumps is seldom easy, but the use of impact assessment—that is, truth that matters—to disallow denial and enable self-negating

prophecy brings one more powerful tool to the multifaceted project of mainstreaming human rights.

### NOTES

1. The same may apply, of course, to campaigning seriously for civil rights or democracy. In one of many conversations at St. Antony's College, Oxford University, between 1997 and 2000, Joaquín Villalobos, field commander of the FMLN, the Salvadoran guerrilla army, in the 1980s and early 1990s, told me that his first foray into dissidence was in working with a Catholic lay organization that used the Constitution in teaching literacy to peasants. A number of priests who worked in that campaign were killed by government-sponsored death squads.

2. Black's Law.

3. Investigative journalist Ray Bonner lost his position with the *New York Times* when he reported a massacre in 1981 in the Salvadoran village of El Mozote. Bonner's sources were Salvadoran peasants, including the lone survivor, but *Times* editors chose to credit instead U.S. government sources who claimed the massacre had not happened. Bonner was ultimately reinstated, but *Times* editors are once again wiping egg off their faces after favoring "safe" official sources on Iraq.

4. It is a fact that Vice President Dick Cheney asserted that there were weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) in Iraq in the buildup to the U.S. invasion. In fact, what he said was not true.

5. This is particularly important for transforming relief into development—for learning when and how to let go.

6. Made famous in the 1970s through the vocal renditions of "Me and Bobby McGee" by Janis Joplin.

7. "President Bush's Loss of Faith" (editorial), *New York Times*, August 24, 2005, p. A16.

8. It was announced in January 2008, as the United States was sinking ever more deeply into recession, that Exxon-Mobil's earnings for 2007 had amounted to \$40.6 billion, the highest corporate profit on record for a U.S.-based company.

9. For context, see Jan Knippers Black, *United States Penetration of Brazil*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1977; or Joseph Page, *The Revolution That Never Was: Northeast Brazil, 1955–1964*, New York: Grossman, 1972.



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