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Human Rights or Global Capitalism - Manfred Nowak

The fall of communism in the late 1980s and the end of the Cold War seemed to signal a new international social order built on pluralist democracy, the rule of law, and universal human rights. But the window of opportunity for creating this more just, more equal, and more secure world slammed shut just as quickly as it opened. Rather than celebrate the triumph of democracy over autocracy, or political freedom over totalitarian rule, the West exulted in the victory of capitalism over communism. Neoliberal policies of deregulation and privatization that minimized the role of the state were imposed on the transitional societies of Central and Eastern Europe, as well as economically weak and politically fragile nations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Twenty-five years later, the world reaps the fruits of that market-driven state foundation: inequality; poverty; global economic, food, financial, social, and ecological crises; transnational organized crime and terrorism; proliferating weapons; fragile states.

[Human Rights or Global Capitalism](#) is not simply concerned with the success or failure of neoliberal policies per se or judging whether they are good or bad. Rather, it examines the application of those policies from a human rights perspective and asks whether states, by outsourcing to the private sector many services with a direct impact on human rights—education, health, social security, water, personal liberty, personal security, equality—abdicate their responsibilities to uphold human rights and thereby violate international human rights law. Manfred Nowak explores these examples and outlines the ways in which neoliberal policies contravene the obligations of states to protect the human rights of their people.

Human Rights or Global Capitalism

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Manfred Nowak

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