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Human Rights Overboard: Seeking Asylum in Australia

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Briskman, L., Latham, S., & Goddard, C. (2008). *Human Rights Overboard: Seeking Asylum in Australia* Carlton North, Vic.: Scribe Publications.

Abstract

In 2005, in the wake of the Cornelia Rau scandal, a citizen's inquiry was established to bear witness to events in Australia's immigration-detention facilities. Until then, the federal government had refused to conduct a broad-ranging investigation into immigration detention, and the operations within detention centres had been largely shrouded in official secrecy. The People's Inquiry into Detention (as it came to be called) heard heartbreaking evidence about asylum-seekers' journeys to Australia, their refugee determination process, and their life in and after detention. In total, around 200 people testified to the inquiry, and a similar number of written submissions were received. Human Rights Overboard draws together, for the first time, the oral testimony and written submissions from the inquiry in a powerful and vital book that stands as an indictment of Australia's refugee policy. Clearly and comprehensively presented, the book is a haunting journey guided by voices from every side of the fence: former and current immigration detainees, refugee advocates, lawyers, doctors, psychiatrists, and former detention and immigration staff. Taken together, their stories record a humanitarian disaster that sounds a warning to current and future policy makers, both here and overseas. With a foreword by prominent humanitarian lawyer Julian Burnside, Human Rights Overboard is an essential book that will resonate for years to come.

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Asylum in Australia is governed by statutes and Government policies which seek to implement Australia's obligations under the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, to which Australia is a party. Thousands of refugees have sought asylum in Australia over the past decade, with the main forces driving movement being war, civil unrest and persecution. The annual refugee quota is currently 20,000 people. From 1945 to the early 1990s, more than half a million refugees and other displaced persons Human Rights Overboard: Seeking Asylum in Australia by Linda Briskman, Susie Latham and Chris Goddard, with a foreword by Julian Burnside, Scribe Press, 2008. If I let my inner dictator loose, every person in Australia would be forced to read this book, while listening to the Paul Kelly song "I get a little emotional sometimes". Human Rights Overboard is a collection of the oral testimony and written submissions from the People's Inquiry into Detention, established by the Australian Council of Heads of Schools of Social Work in 2005. The Inquiry was partly in response to the Cor Z-Library Project. Blog. Main Human Rights Overboard: Seeking Asylum in Australia. Human Rights Overboard: Seeking Asylum in Australia. Linda Briskman, Chris Goddard, Susie Latham. In 2005, in the wake of the Cornelia Rau scandal, a citizen's inquiry was established to bear witness to events in Australia's immigration-detention facilities. Until then, the federal government had refused to conduct a broad-ranging investigation into immigration detention, and the operations within detention centres had been largely shrouded in official secrecy. The People's Inquiry into Detention