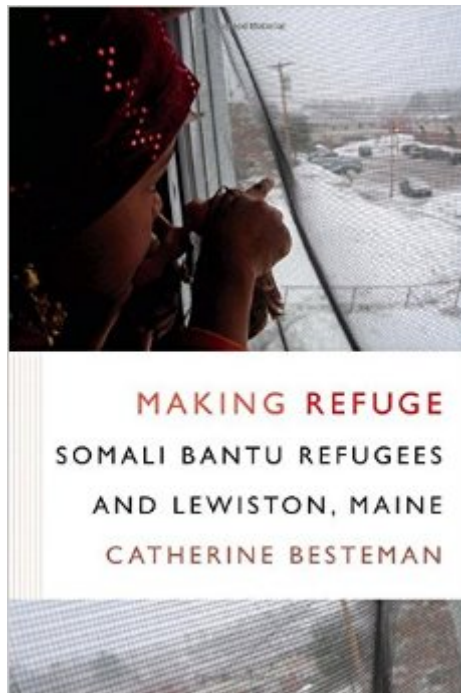


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# Making Refuge: Somali Bantu Refugees And Lewiston, Maine (Global Insecurities)



## Synopsis

How do people whose entire way of life has been destroyed and who witnessed horrible abuses against loved ones construct a new future? How do people who have survived the ravages of war and displacement rebuild their lives in a new country when their world has totally changed? In *Making Refuge* Catherine Besteman follows the trajectory of Somali Bantus from their homes in Somalia before the onset in 1991 of Somalia's civil war, to their displacement to Kenyan refugee camps, to their relocation in cities across the United States, to their settlement in the struggling former mill town of Lewiston, Maine. Tracking their experiences as "secondary migrants" who grapple with the struggles of xenophobia, neoliberalism, and grief, Besteman asks what humanitarianism feels like to those who are its objects and what happens when refugees move in next door. As Lewiston's refugees and locals negotiate coresidence and find that assimilation goes both ways, their story demonstrates the efforts of diverse people to find ways to live together and create community. Besteman's account illuminates the contemporary debates about economic and moral responsibility, security, and community that immigration provokes.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

For anyone who is interested in the story of people who immigrate to the United States, this is a must read. The author knows this subject intimately because of her connection with the Somali Bantu over 25 years. She did a field placement in southern Somalia in 1988, and then lost touch

with the Somali Bantu after the collapse of the Somali government in 1990. By incredible coincidence, she and the Somali Bantus ended up in Maine 25 years later and joyfully reconnected. While this is the story of one group of people from southern Somalia, it is in large part a story about the struggles that other groups of immigrants who, despite numerous, often tragic, obstacles, persevere to provide their families and children with a better life. Professor Besteman challenges a number of the myths about immigrants - that they are passive, that they are helpless victims, that their tragic circumstances leave them unable to cope with their circumstances.

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