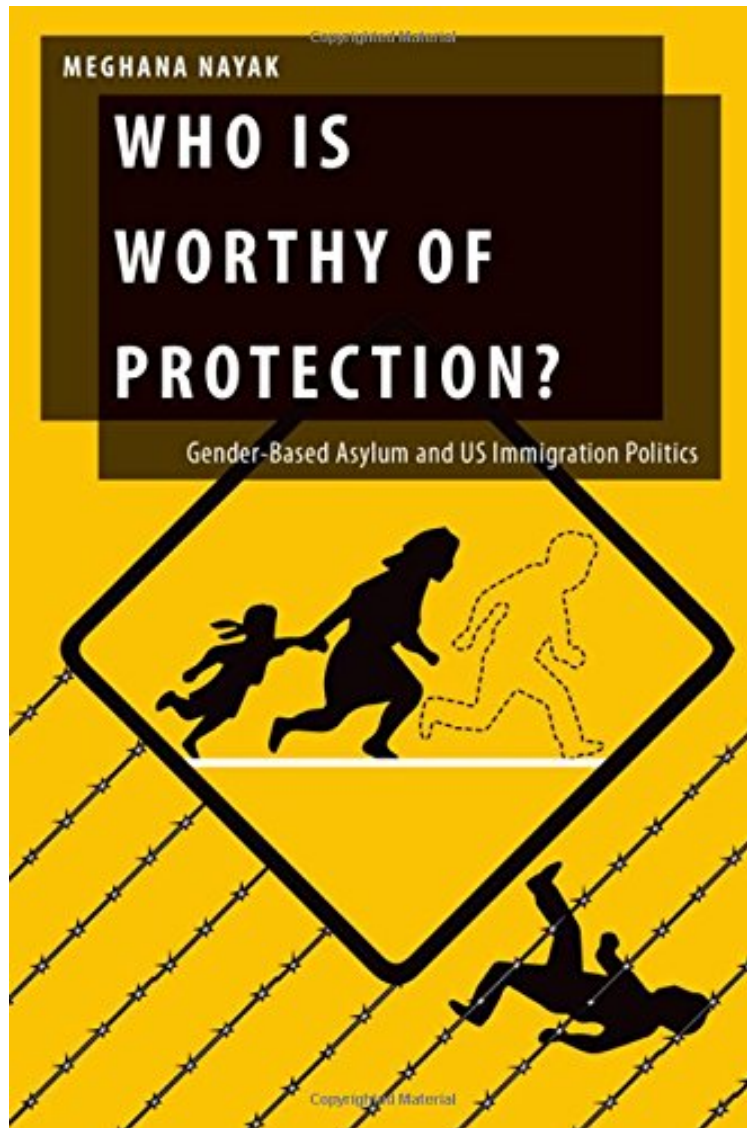


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Who Is Worthy of Protection?: Gender-Based Asylum and U.S. Immigration Politics (Oxford Studies in Gender and International Relations)

Meghana Nayak

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A surprisingly understudied topic in international relations is gender-based asylum. Gender-based asylum offers protection from deportation for migrants who have suffered gender violence and persecution in their home countries. Countries are increasingly acknowledging that even though international refugee law does not include "gender" as a category of persecution, gender violence can threaten people's lives and requires attention. But Meghana Nayak argues that it matters not just that but how we respond to gender violence and persecution. Asylum advocates and the US government have created "frames," or ideas about how to understand different types of gender violence and who counts as victims. These frames are useful in increasing gender-based asylum grants. But the United States is negotiating the tension between the protection and the restriction of non-citizens, claiming to offer safe haven to persecuted people at the same time that it aims to control borders. Thus, the frames construct which migrants are "worthy" of protection. The effects of the asylum frames are two-fold. First, they leave out or distort the stories and experiences of asylum seekers who do not fit preconceived narratives of "good" victims. Second, the frames reflect but also serve as an entry point to deepen, strengthen, and shape the US position of power relative to other countries, international organizations, and immigrant communities. *Who Is Worthy of Protection?* explores the politics of gender-based asylum through a comparative examination of US asylum policy and cases regarding domestic violence, female circumcision, rape, trafficking, coercive sterilization and abortion, and persecution based on sexual and gender identity.