



# Unwelcome Shores

Black Refugees in America

by Bernadette Ludwig

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## DESCRIPTION

*Unwelcome Shores* is an ethnographic study of the Liberian refugee community in Staten Island, New York, home to the largest per capita concentration of Liberians in the U.S., that sheds light on the racialization of Black refugees and the racism they have experienced at every step of their migration journey. In this pioneering study, sociologist Bernadette Ludwig explores how Liberians have responded to such racist exclusions, noting how members of this community reject the informal refugee label once they are resettled in the United States. Liberian migrants often view the label as a liability since the larger general public, the media, and the U.S. government tend to regard Black refugees as an economic and social burden unworthy of assistance. Indeed, Black refugees' humanity is often ignored, Ludwig contends, in favor of overemphasizing presumed barbaric violence, endemic wars, cultural backwardness, and diseases. By detailing the lack of aid and support for Black refugees and describing how Liberian refugees in particular have had to overcome various struggles and barriers in coming to the U.S. and while living here, *Unwelcome Shores* highlights the overarching role of race and anti-Black racism in American society.

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### Paperback

9781978843073, \$39.95

### Hardback

9781978843080, \$130.00

### eBook

9781978843097, \$39.95

**Date:** December 2025

**Pages:** 238



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Bernadette Ludwig is a sociologist and the assistant dean of the Macricostas School of Arts and Sciences at Western Connecticut State University in Danbury. She is also an Affiliated Faculty at the New School's Zolberg Institute on Migration and Mobility in New York City. She is a first-generation immigrant and college graduate. Prior to entering academia, she worked with refugee and immigrant communities in Atlanta, Georgia for several years.

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