



# **Seeking Salaam: Ethiopians, Eritreans, and Somalis in the Pacific Northwest (Samuel and Althea Stroum Books)**

*Sandra Chait*

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Prolonged violence in the Horn of Africa, the northeastern corner of the continent, has led growing numbers of Ethiopians, Eritreans, and Somalis to flee to the United States. Despite the enmity created by centuries of conflict, they often find themselves living as neighbors in their adopted cities, with their children as classmates in school. In many ways, they are successfully navigating life in their new home; however, they continue to struggle to bridge old ethnic divisions and find salaam, or peace, with one another. News from home fuels historical grievances and perpetuates tensions within their communities, delaying acculturation, undermining attempts at reconciliation, and sabotaging the opportunity to reach the American Dream.

In conversations with forty East African immigrants living in Seattle, Washington, and Portland, Oregon, Sandra Chait captures the immigrants' struggle for identity in the face of competing stories and documents how some individuals have been able to transcend the ghosts from the past and extend a tentative hand to their former enemies.

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