An Anthropologist in Political Asylum Court, Part 1

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In this month’s column, Camille McKearnan, the editor of Anthropology News, continues her series on the experiences of anthropologists and researchers—human rights activists—living in political asylum. She shares her reflections on the challenges they face, the impact of their work, and the importance of their contributions to society. This month, she focuses on the experiences of researchers who have been forced to leave their home countries due to political persecution. She highlights the ways in which these researchers continue to contribute to the field of anthropology despite the difficulties they face. Through her columns, McKearnan aims to raise awareness about the importance of preserving the diversity of voices and perspectives in the field of anthropology.
Political Asylum and the Truths of Fort McMurray

In 2004, a trip to Scotland, I found myself in a situation with a man who shared my same experiences. He was a victim of political persecution and had sought asylum. I shared my own story with him, and we bonded over our shared experiences. This was the beginning of a lifelong friendship that continues to this day.

The asylum process was a long and difficult one, but we were able to overcome the challenges and find a place of safety. Today, I work as a human rights advocate and continue to support those who have been displaced by war and persecution. My experiences have given me a unique perspective on the challenges faced by those who seek safety in a new country.

Despite the challenges, I remain hopeful for the future of those who seek asylum. The United States has a proud history of welcoming those who seek refuge from oppression and persecution. I am proud to be a part of this tradition, and I will continue to work towards ensuring that those who seek safety are treated with dignity and respect.