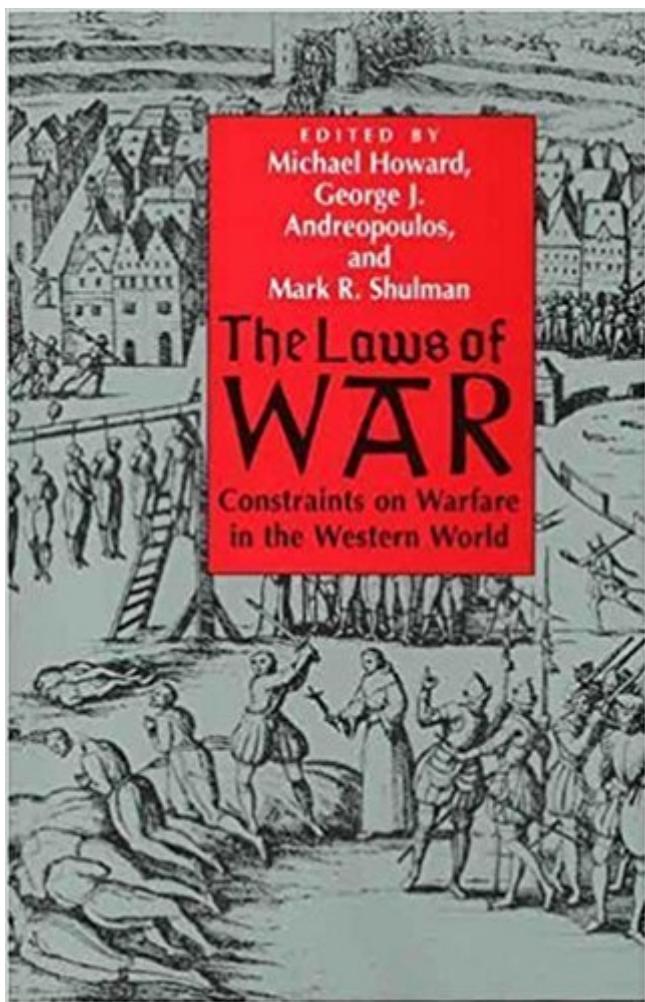


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The Laws Of War: Constraints On Warfare In The Western World



Synopsis

This book explores not only the formal constraints on the conduct of war throughout Western history but also the unwritten conventions about what is permissible in the course of military operations. Ranging from classical antiquity to the present, eminent historians discuss the legal and cultural regulation of violence in such areas as belligerent rights, the treatment of prisoners and civilians, the observing of truces and immunities, the use of particular weapons, siege warfare, codes of honor, and war crimes. The book begins with a general overview of the subject by Michael Howard. The contributors then discuss the formal and informal constraints on conducting war as they existed in classical antiquity, the age of chivalry, early modern Europe, colonial America, and the age of Napoleon. They also examine how these constraints have been applied to wars at sea, on land, and in the air, planning for nuclear war, and national liberation struggles, in which one of the participants is not an organized state. The book concludes with reflections by Paul Kennedy and George Andreopoulos on the main challenges facing the quest for humanitarian norms in warfare in the future.

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Customer Reviews

This thought-provoking collection of original essays, edited and written by American history professors (and one Britain), defines the limitations that Western societies have attempted to impose on themselves in warfare, and the extent to which these attempts have been influenced by the development of new weapons. Adam Roberts's "Land Warfare: From Hague to Nuremberg" focuses on the non-use of poison gas in WWII as one of the successes of voluntary restraint, but he

goes on to note that the introduction of the machine gun, tank, submarine and bomber increased humankind's capacity for destruction. The present century, despite the optimism at the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907, saw the intensification of violence and the adoption of indiscriminate forms of "total" war. Tami Biddle Davis's "Air Power" makes the point that the most effective aerial bombardment campaign in history, Operation Desert Storm, was also the most indiscriminate. As for the Bomb, David Alan Rosenberg's "Nuclear War Planning" argues that nuclear weapons remain largely outside the sphere of international controls. In the concluding piece, "The Laws of War," Paul Kennedy and George Andreopoulos discuss the intersection between human rights and the laws of war, especially in connection with the current debate over "humane intervention." Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The Laws of War: Constraints on Warfare in the Western World explores not only the formal constraints on the conduct of war throughout Western history but also the unwritten conventions about what is permissible in the course of military operations. Ranging from classical antiquity to the present, eminent historians discuss the legal and cultural regulation of violence in such areas as belligerent rights, the treatment of prisoners and civilians, the observing of truces and immunities, the use of particular weapons, siege warfare, codes of honor, and war crimes. The Laws of War concludes with reflections by Paul Kennedy and George Andreopoulos on the main challenges facing the quest for humanitarian norms in warfare in the future. -- Midwest Book Review --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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