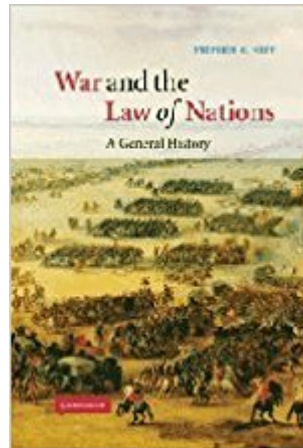




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War And The Law Of Nations: A General History



Synopsis

Tracing war as a legal concept from Roman times through to the twentieth century, Stephen Neff reveals its various roles as a law-enforcement operation, duel between states and a "crime against the peace." He also considers the post World War II definition of war as an international law-enforcement mechanism under U.N. auspices. Although unsuccessful, this attempt did help transform war into a humanitarian, rather than a policy problem. This book interests historians, students of international relations and international lawyers.

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Customer Reviews

"The scope of Neff's project is majestic, and his scholarly rigor in marshalling evidence on the subject of war from antiquity to today's war on terrorism is impressive. The book is written in an engaging manner likely to appeal to both law of war experts and generalists alike. Neff does not oversimplify, however, and handles even complex legal questions in a sophisticated and nuanced manner. He accordingly makes a substantial contribution to our understanding of the phenomenon of war." -- Allen S. Weiner, Stanford Law School *The American Journal of International Law*

"The prize winning book has just been reissued in a paper edition....offered valuable insights into the function of declarations of war, into why states go to war, and into the concepts of neutrality, reprisal, and self-defense....Neff provides a much deeper analysis of the logic of ideas about war than either Kennedy in his short essay (Kennedy 2006) or Bobbitt in his encyclopedic tome (Bobbitt 2002). This book is highly recommended to those interested in either history of ideas, or international law." --Walter J. Kendall, III, John Marshall Law School, Chicago, Illinois, *The Law and*

Politics Book Review"...thorough and interesting commentary, analyses, and examples....arguments and commentary are very convincing,... style clear, straightforward and readable. This book should be required reading for all students of international law, and should be high on the reading list of all others who are interested in international law generally, including academics, legal advisors to governments, and practitioners of public international law. Stephen Neff has done a great service to public international law by writing what is perhaps the only modern and certainly the most comprehensive analysis of the history of the law of war in the context of international law. It should become and belong among the "classics" of international legal literature. --James G. Apple, Co-Editor, International Judicial Monitor and President, International Judicial Academy"...This particular addition to the literature provides a succinct but authoritative account of the history of war...One should consider this book a "must read," for those seeking legal guidance regarding the Laws of War, GITMO, and various "adventures" arising since 9-11...This reader-friendly account fills a gap in a somewhat neglected arena. It vividly summarizes the historical interplay between war and the international limitations on its execution." --ASIL UN21 Interest Group Newsletter [ISSUE #39: May 2009]

This ambitious volume traces war as a legal concept from Roman times through to the twentieth century. Neff demonstrates how war has been seen variously as a law-enforcement operation, as a duel between states and as a 'crime against the peace'. He also considers the post World War II definition of war as an international law-enforcement mechanism under UN auspices. Although unsuccessful, this attempt did help transform war into a humanitarian, rather than a policy, problem. This book will interest historians, students of international relations and international lawyers.

Received in a very timely fashion. An important contribution to the study of the laws of war I am looking to dig into this tome as soon as possible.

This marvelous book should be in any library with collections on international law, international relations, or intellectual history. In just 400 pages, it gives a sweeping overview of the legal concepts that have shaped the law of war from the Middle Ages to the War on Terror. The storyline is simple: medieval "just war" theories gave way to 19th century concepts of war as an instrument of policy, only to be replaced by the UN Charter's treatment of war in terms of aggression and self-defence. Along the way, the book fleshes out this basic story with historical examples and discussions of technical issues such as neutrality, reprisals, and humanitarian law. At all points, legal evolution is

related to changes in the international system. The writing is clear, and the author has a genius for summing up complex topics in a paragraph or two. A gem of a book. Highly recommended. Six stars.

There is already an excellent review, so I will only suggest reading the following books on war in addition to Neff's: a) "War in human civilization" by Azar Gat; b) "War before Civilization. The Myth of the Peaceful Savage", by Lawrence Keeley; c) "How War Began" by Keith F. Otterbein; and d) "War and Peace and War: The Rise and Fall of Empires" by Peter Turchin.

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