

*Paul Hubbard**

War Crimes Law, Volume I

Gerry Simpson (Ed)

Ashgate Publishing, 2004, pp 404, \$475.00 (both volumes)

War Crimes Law Volume I is the first instalment of a second series from the International Library of Essays in Law and Legal Theory. The object of the second series is not only to extend areas of law explored in the first 58-Volume series, but also to present modern essays proposed to be significant and reflecting a variety of perspectives.

In this volume, previously published essays have been collected together and reproduced in their entirety. The featured essays consider many issues relating to war crimes, covering varying yet interconnected topics. Structurally, the volume has ten essays organised under four headings. Each discussion boasts a theoretically aware perspective on the question of war crimes and war crimes tribunals. The Introduction explains the conceptual underpinnings of the structure of the book and the circumstances in which each essay was selected, emphasising that many of the essays chosen are not easily obtainable.

The opening essay 'The Problem of International Criminal Law', originally published in 1950 by Georg Schwarzenberger, offers some interesting criticisms at a time when international criminal law was arguably still emerging. Many of the criticisms Schwarzenberger made have now been proved wrong, however some remain relevant. The essay creates an excellent foundation in which to trace the development of international war crimes law from the 1950s to contemporary times.

Of interest in the volume is Rosalind Dixon's 'Rape as a Crime in International Law: Where to From Here?' The essay aims to put wronged women in the spotlight of international criminal law most interestingly proposing a system of international compensation for victims of gender based crimes.

José E Alvarez provides an intriguing critique of the effectiveness of international tribunals versus prosecution at a national level in 'Crimes of States/Crimes of Hate: Lessons from Rwanda'. In comparison, Mark J Osiel expresses doubt as to the utility of international criminal law as an effective mechanism to respond to massacres in 'Why Prosecute? Critics of Punishment for Mass Atrocity'.

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Robert Cryer's 'The Boundaries of Liability in International Criminal Law, or "Selectivity by Stealth"' contains an interesting discussion of the selective nature of war crimes tribunals and welcomes the creation of the International Criminal Court. The theme of the selectivity of criminal justice is also picked up in the final essay, 'Didactic & Dissident Histories in War Crimes Trials' by Gerry Simpson. Often contemptuous of the selective use of international war crimes tribunals as a method of justice, Simpson suggests sometimes they are used more for historical remembrance or retribution than punishment, and includes a discussion of their potential inability to be free of bias or prejudice.

Much of the discussion in this collection of essays is complex. It is suitable as a focussed research tool, rather than an introductory text. The war crimes theme is continued in the second volume. As such, the first volume provides a promising beginning for an informative series of essays on law and legal theory.

*Julie Lyons**

Bridging the Global Divide on Human Rights

Errol Mendes and Anik Lalonde-Roussy (Eds)

Ashgate Publishing, 2003, pp 390, \$114.95

The issue of universalising human rights was the focus of much international attention during the 1990s, when it appeared destined to replace the former pre-occupation with competing economic worldviews as the issue of international contention.

For those, almost exclusively, developing states that opposed the universality of human rights, two separate lines of argument have been proposed. In the first instance, it is disputed due to the existence of economic inequality between the world's wealthy and poor states, with the admonishment that those persons living in absolute poverty can never enjoy the same rights as those in relative splendour. The second argument relates to cultural relativity, and critics of universality challenge whether it is possible to find common values and standards in relation to human rights due to the existence of significant and diverging cultures, norms and histories. During the 1990s the most common example of such a cultural critique was found in the Asian Values Debate led by Malaysia's Prime Minister, Mahatir Mohammad

The People's Republic of China has played a major role in many of the international debates about universal human rights, including those that

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