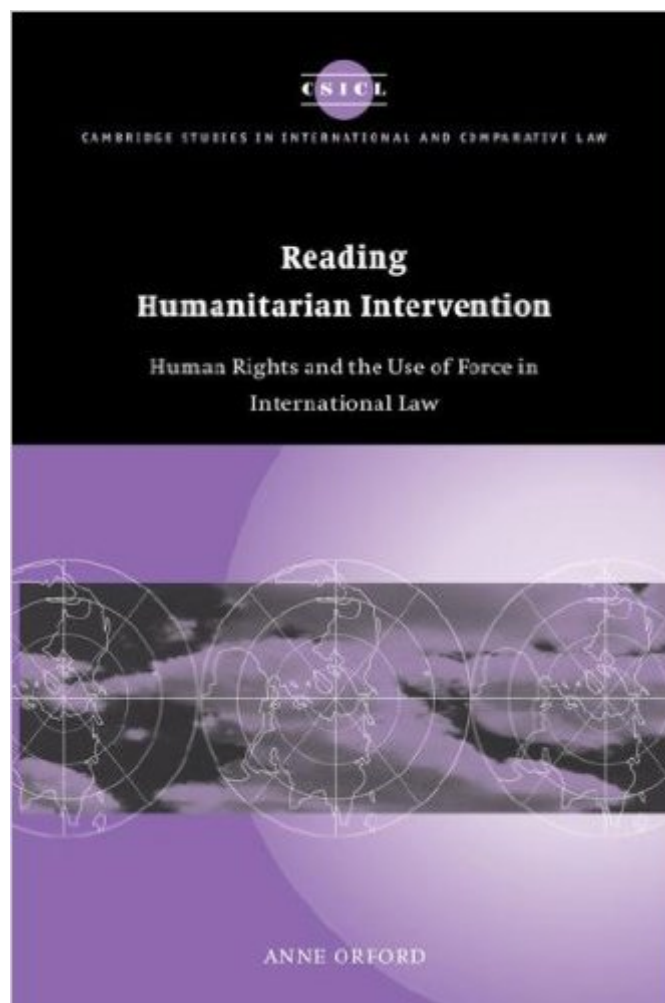


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Reading Humanitarian Intervention: Human Rights And The Use Of Force In International Law (Cambridge Studies In International And Comparative Law)



Synopsis

Humanitarian intervention seemed to promise a world in which human rights would be privileged over national interests or imperial ambitions during the 1990s. This book argues that humanitarian intervention had far more exploitative effects and draws on feminist, postcolonial, legal and psychoanalytic theory to provide an innovative reading of the narratives accompanying humanitarian intervention, a field which has received very little critical analysis. It concludes by considering what has been lost in the transference of concerns from humanitarian intervention to the war on terror.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Anne Orford is Assistant Professor in Melbourne University's Law School. This fine book is good at destroying illusions, but short on proposals for changing things. During the 1990s, advocates of humanitarian intervention promised a world in which democracy, self-determination and human rights would trump national interests and imperial ambitions. Orford examines and refutes claims by governments and international institutions that their use of force for humane ends is good for the peoples that are supposedly being saved. She undermines their claims of prior innocence and selfless intervention. She shows how "The international community is already profoundly engaged in shaping the structure of political, social, economic and cultural life in many states through the activities of, inter alia, international economic institutions. Indeed, intervention in the name of humanitarianism too readily provides an alibi for the continued involvement of those interested in

exploiting and controlling the resources and people of target states."As she notes, "the opposition between collective humanitarian intervention and inactivity is a false one. The international community had already intervened on a large scale in Yugoslavia and Rwanda before the security crises erupted, through the activities of international economic institutions and development agencies." She describes how the IMF `restructured' Yugoslavia by imposing cuts in wages and services. She notes, "the post-intervention administration and reconstruction of territories by the international community in turn entrenches an unjust international economic order and a neo-colonial mode of governance.

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