

Download The Slave Trade And The Origins Of International Human Rights Law

The Slave Trade and the Origins of International Human Rights Law sheds light on a piece of international law that is little known. Martinez, a human rights lawyer and Stanford law school professor explores international courts established in the early 1800s to help bring an end to the slave trade. The Slave Trade and the Origins of International Human Rights Law. Originating in England in the late eighteenth century, abolitionism achieved remarkable success over the course of the nineteenth century. Martinez focuses in particular on the international admiralty courts, which tried the crews of captured slave ships. Professor Jenny Martinez' excellent book, The Slave Trade and the Origins of International Human Rights Law, presents the story of Great Britain's partly successful effort to suppress the Atlantic slave trade while abiding by the limits imposed by international law as it then stood. This brief review will quickly recap some leading features of Professor Martinez' story and then address one of the lessons she suggests can be drawn. Here then, buried in the dusty archives of admiralty courts, ships' logs, and the British foreign office, are the foundations of contemporary human rights law: international courts targeting states and non-state transnational actors while working on behalf the world's most persecuted peoples—captured West Africans bound for the slave plantations of the Americas.