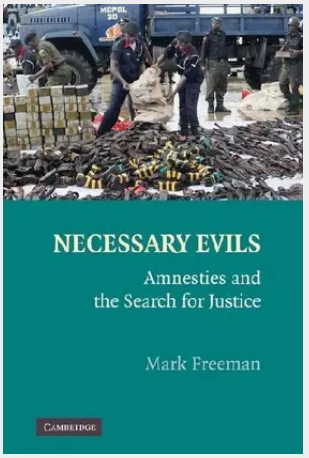
Freeman

Necessary Evils

This book is about amnesties for grave international crimes that are adopted by states in moments of transition or social unrest. The subject is naturally controversial, especially in the age of the International Criminal Court. The goal of this book is to reframe and revitalize the global debate on the subject, and to offer an original framework for resolving amnesty dilemmas when they arise. Most existing literature and jurisprudence on amnesties deal with only a small subset of state practice and sidestep the ambiguity of amnesty's position under international law. This book addresses the ambiguity head on and argues that amnesties of the broadest scope are sometimes defensible when adopted as a last recourse in contexts of mass violence. Drawing on an extensive amnesty database, the book offers detailed guidance on how to ensure that amnesties extend the minimum leniency possible, while imposing the maximum accountability on the beneficiaries.

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