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A World Made New: Eleanor Roosevelt And The Universal Declaration Of Human Rights



Synopsis

Unafraid to speak her mind and famously tenacious in her convictions, Eleanor Roosevelt was still mourning the death of FDR when she was asked by President Truman to lead a controversial commission, under the auspices of the newly formed United Nations, to forge the world's first international bill of rights. *A World Made New* is the dramatic and inspiring story of the remarkable group of men and women from around the world who participated in this historic achievement and gave us the founding document of the modern human rights movement. Spurred on by the horrors of the Second World War and working against the clock in the brief window of hope between the armistice and the Cold War, they grappled together to articulate a new vision of the rights that every man and woman in every country around the world should share, regardless of their culture or religion. A landmark work of narrative history based in part on diaries and letters to which Mary Ann Glendon, an award-winning professor of law at Harvard University, was given exclusive access, *A World Made New* is the first book devoted to this crucial turning point in Eleanor Roosevelt's life, and in world history. Finalist for the Robert F. Kennedy Book Award

Book Information

Paperback: 368 pages

Publisher: Random House Trade Paperbacks; 1st edition (June 2002)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0375760466

ISBN-13: 978-0375760464

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.8 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 18 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #62,201 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #44 in Books > Textbooks > Social Sciences > Political Science > Civil Rights #59 in Books > Law > Constitutional Law > Human Rights #110 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Specific Topics > Human Rights

Customer Reviews

In 1947, in a world recently ripped apart by the Holocaust, a devastating war and mass displacement, the very idea of a Universal Declaration of Human Rights seemed both impossible and supremely necessary. As the specter of the Cold War loomed, a U.N. delegation, chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt, began writing what would become the world's first standard statement of human

rights. Glendon, a professor of law at Harvard University, has written a compelling, at times thrilling account of how Roosevelt and her cohorts argued and cajoled one another through a series of intellectual, political and moral positions, finally hammering out a statement that was acceptable across national, religious and philosophical lines. While Glendon successfully traces the evolution of the document which was ratified on December 10, 1948, after six drafts and much debate by the U.N. General Assembly, she also presents a richly textured portrait of a woman driven to public service while simultaneously grieving for her late husband. Roosevelt's politics were also at issue: at one point, she resigned from the U.N. over the U.S. government's initial disapproval of the creation of Israel. Glendon concludes with a legal analysis of the declaration and a lengthy discussion of its applicability today, when many non-Western nations (such as China) claim that the concept of "universal" human rights precepts precludes an acceptance of cultural differences. Glendon's work is a welcome addition to the realm of international law and to the growing body of literature on Eleanor Roosevelt's role in modern politics. Agents, Lynn Chu and Glen Hartley, Writer's Representatives. Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

When it was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was the first formal statement of what the phrase human rights actually entailed. Glendon (law, Harvard) has written a legislative history of the Declaration covering both the negotiation process and the ratification debates and process during the years 1946-52. The book is based on extensive access to the diaries and unpublished memoirs of many of the participants as they worked with the horrors of World War II fresh in their minds and against the backdrop of the rapidly chilling Cold War. While the content and phrasing of the Declaration are the product of the many fine minds and strong personalities who worked on it, Eleanor Roosevelt is here given full credit for facilitating the process and steering the group to a final agreement that incorporated the best from many cultural and religious traditions. Recommended for academic libraries and broad Roosevelt collections. D Marcia L. Sprules, Council on Foreign Relations Lib., New York Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.

"A World Made New" is an excellent book about "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights" and the "birth process" of this important declaration, as well as Eleanor Roosevelt's important contributions in this process. It seems to be a must to read for everyone interested in "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights", its development processes and/or the key people and contributors towards this declaration. Highly Recommended.

The title is a bit of a misnomer as the book is primarily about the drafting of the Declaration, and much less about Ms. Roosevelt. That said, the work provides great insights into the background of that seminal document and the "perfect storm" of events that allowed it to come to fruition. The sketches of the principals involved give it a welcome dimension of "human interest" value. It is fascinating to consider how the process was buffeted and ways in which the document could have ended up--such as providing rights of the unborn. The book is an easy read, though wonks will appreciate the various drafts of the Declaration in the appendices. The author presents the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as an accomplishment of the first order, and she is right. We are all well advised to hone our appreciation of it. Reading this book is an excellent way to do so. I give it 4 stars because the last chapter is a little weak, and because of the book's misleading premise regarding Eleanor. Don't let that stop you from reading it. It's a rewarding pick.

This is not a light read, but it is well worth the time and effort. You just take it chapter by chapter, as there is a lot to digest. Sometimes you might double back to recall details and dates of developments. It puts a human face to the major Human Rights developments in modern history. It showcases how the civilized world came about - via highly-talented, highly-motivated people who had vision. Their vision has not always been followed in the manner they envisaged.

Glendon does a good job at outlining the subject matter and the historical process of developing the UNHR of 1948.

A friend suggested it -- and it was revelatory! A good read.

book in very good condition

Someday perhaps the United States will comply with the principles of the Declaration of Human Rights.

Superb book on the origins of International Human Rights

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