



RESEARCH2REALITY

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We're All Living in the Wild West Now

An interview with **Jutta Brunnée**, International Lawyer
and **Sarah Mason-Case**, PhD Law Student
University of Toronto

Sarah Mason-Case

I use the frame of international law as the basis for understanding how global actors cooperate with one another to regulate their behaviour.

Jutta Brunnée

Obviously there are many places where international law is active. One thing that pre-occupies me is this particular juncture at which we find ourselves, where there seems to be the rule of law and law under siege in ways that seemed sort of unimaginable maybe even five or ten years ago. And so what I'm interested in is understanding what makes law resilient in the face of these challenges, and what makes it fragile.

For example, you think there are rules on what constitutes an attack on the state that is entitled to defend itself by force, and now it turns out we don't have to use a weapon to attack another state. We could plant a computer virus. And how does that get absorbed into that traditional rule system? Is that possible? In part because the actors that are now capable of doing things that only states used to be able to do, it could be anyone almost, with certain means and certain technologies.

TODAY'S RESEARCH. TOMORROW'S REALITY.



Sarah Mason-Case

Traditionally, international law formed bilateral relationships between individual nation states. But this has changed over time, especially in the 20th century after the Second World War with the growing use of international organizations such as the United Nations system for collective decision making to try to make global policy for peace and security, for human flourishing, and so on. International law, we might say, is created now between corporate actors. There are private and public relationships that are being created through international law.