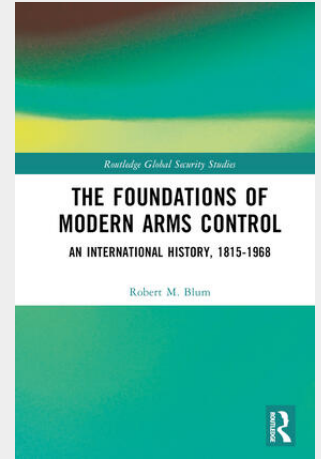Blum

The Foundations of Modern Arms Control

An International History, 1815-1968

This book is an international history of the foundation of modern arms control, highlighting the fact that the instrument is varied, resilient, successful, and enduring. The narrative begins after the Napoleonic wars when newly arisen peace movements focused on arbitration as a path to "ending the war system." It moves on to the international community's embrace of "total and complete disarmament" and then to its acceptance of more limited measures by 1968, including the agreements that remain in force today. The book connects the past to the present of multiple negotiations, successful and failed, and underlines how the peace movement increasingly influenced the national policy of the major Western powers, especially the United States. It also highlights the increasing diversification of arms control players, including women and people of color as well as the countries they represented. Based on original research in multinational records and the latest scholarship, the book illustrates the reasons multilateral arms control remains a key instrument of international relations. The chapters are organized both chronologically and thematically, with the result that they cover different amounts of time in order to encompass a given issue and to capture the development of particular threads. The main narrative evolves into a decadeslong quest for a global treaty on "general and complete disarmament," which otherwise paces the book and shapes its chapters. This book will be of much interest to students of arms control, global governance, peace studies, and International Relations.

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