

Frost, Mervyn, *Ethics in International Relations. A Constitutive Theory*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. Pp. 251. \$ 54.95 (cloth); \$ 18.95 (paper).

This book is a revised version of *Towards a Normative Theory of International Relations* (1986). An introduction and a chapter on Bosnia have been added; references to recent literature are, however, scarce. In the first chapters, Frost argues that normative theory is unavoidable in the study of international relations. This is a thorough discussion and may be useful as course material.

In the main part, Frost develops his own normative theory, the 'constitutive theory', and applies it to two test cases. This complex, strongly Hegelian position is presented very clearly. It is interesting as a theoretical exercise, but has hardly any connection to reality. And, unfortunately, the test cases fail to support his theory. His analysis of the problem of 'terrorist' violence is well written but quite standard; the appeals to the constitutive theory do not add much. The new chapter on Bosnia is highly unconvincing. Moreover, the constitutive theory proves to have unacceptable implications. According to Frost, appeals to human rights were misplaced in wartime Bosnia, because no civil society existed. This may be a consistent Hegelian argument, but I am glad that the international community (after long hesitation) took a different stance.

W.v.d.B.