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### Zero Dark Thirty : a critical evaluation of the legality of the killing of Osama bin Laden under international humanitarian law / Sarah Cunningham

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Abstract:	Using the framework of international humanitarian law, this essay critically evaluates the legality of one particular targeted killing : the operation in which Osama bin Laden was killed. By determining whether the US was participating in an international or non-international conflict against Al-Qaeda; whether bin Laden was a legitimate military target; and whether the operation itself was conducted within the parameters of international humanitarian law, that is whether it satisfied the requirements of distinction, proportionality and (arguably) necessity, this essay reveals the operation was most likely illegal under international humanitarian law. The essay concludes by discussing the inadequacy of international humanitarian law as it applies to targeted killing, and offers some general lessons to be learned from the operation.
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