Leading scholars explore status of international law

uthors Jack L. Goldsmith and Eric A. Posner joined other top international law scholars last fall to discuss and critique *The Limits of International Law*, recently published by Oxford University Press. The symposium was co-sponsored by the *Georgia Journal of International and Comparative Law* and the Dean Rusk Center – International, Comparative and Graduate Legal Studies.

Woodruff Chair Daniel M. Bodansky, who together with Rusk Professor Peter J. Spiro, was instrumental in convening the conference, said *The Limits of International Law* is aimed at a wide audience and has contributed to a healthy debate about the role of international law. "The book articulates a skeptical attitude towards international law held by important members of the [George W.] Bush administration, which needs to be taken seriously, but also

subjected to serious critical analysis," he said.

The book's basic claim, according to Goldsmith, is that international law reflects nothing more than the self-interested action of states. "We take [this] assumption and push the plane as far as it can go and see how much of international law can be explained."

Spiro said it was important to host this forum as this is a time of tremendous ferment in international law, both on the ground and in scholarship. "The book represents a flashpoint among academics confronting the new reach of international law. The symposium discussion was at a high theoretical level, but this is clearly an area in which the theory has important real-world implications."

Commentaries from the conference will be published in the winter edition of the *Georgia Journal of International and Comparative Law*.



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