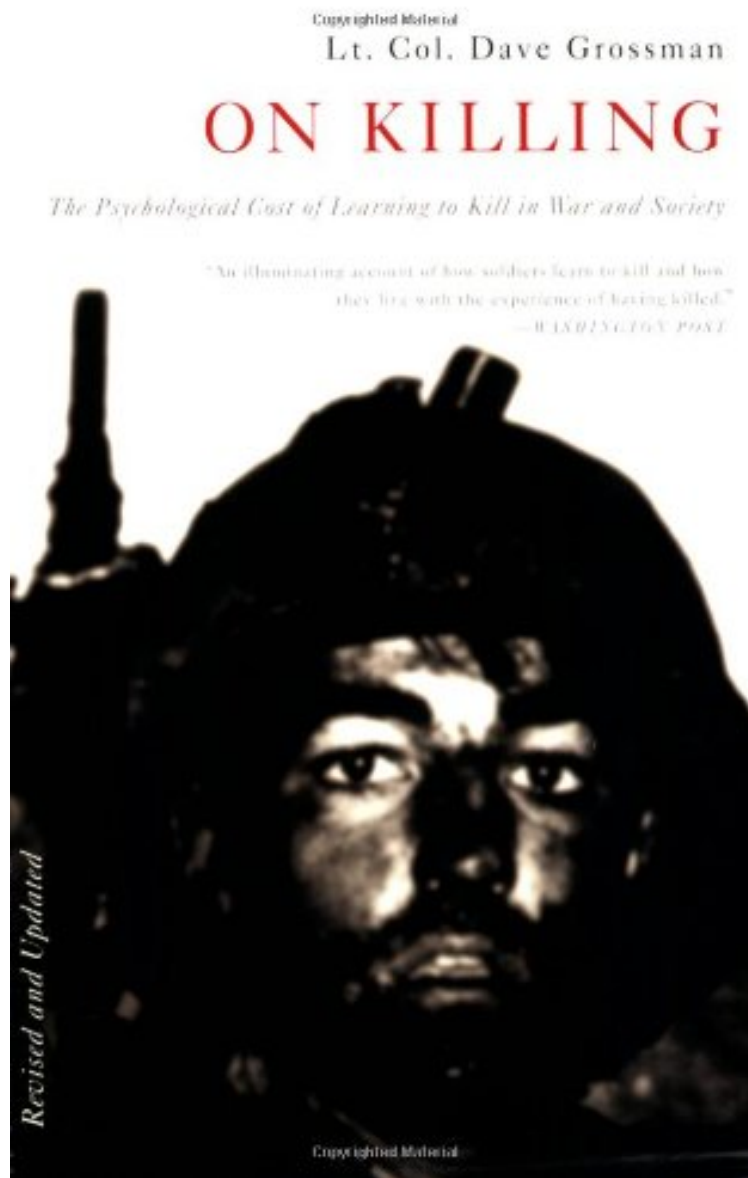


(Free) On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society

# On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society

*Dave Grossman*

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#5008 in Books Dave Grossman 2009-06-22 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.25 x 1.25 x 5.50l, .80 #File Name: 0316040932416 pages On Killing The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society | File size: 54.Mb

**Dave Grossman : On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society:

163 of 167 people found the following review helpful. An important book, especially at this time in our nation. By Jim Kaucher Lt. Col. Grossman's systematic and thoughtful study of why people kill -- and why they do not -- is important. His analysis on the role of conditioning on overcoming the natural resistance to killing another person provides helpful insight into how and why American society has become increasingly violent in recent decades. The last few chapters, which takes the lessons learned in the rest of the book and applies them to American society, ought to be required reading for those who insist on blaming the tools of violence for the existence of violence. Thanks, Lt. Col. Grossman, for studying this topic with such rigor and for explaining your work so cogently. 126 of 129 people found the following review helpful. He Understands And Makes It OK By Conservative Shopper As a police officer I just went through a major shooting incident. As I read this book, Col. Grossman went through it with me. He described to a tee every emotion I experienced. Reading this book was extremely helpful. 35 of 36 people found the following review helpful. Pavlovian Kills by the Military and the Police By Trial Author An excellent explanation about the psychology killing. It is frightening as he explains the Pavlovian conditioning given to modern soldiers and police.

The good news is that most soldiers are loath to kill. But armies have developed sophisticated ways of overcoming this instinctive aversion. And contemporary civilian society, particularly the media, replicates the army's conditioning techniques, and, according to Lt. Col. Dave Grossman's thesis, is responsible for our rising rate of murder among the young. Upon its initial publication, *ON KILLING* was hailed as a landmark study of the techniques the military uses to overcome the powerful reluctance to kill, of how killing affects soldiers, and of the societal implications of escalating violence. Now, Grossman has updated this classic work to include information on 21st-century military conflicts, recent trends in crime, suicide bombings, school shootings, and more. The result is a work certain to be relevant and important for decades to come.

From Publishers Weekly Drawing on interviews, published personal accounts and academic studies, Grossman investigates the psychology of killing in combat. Stressing that human beings have a powerful, innate resistance to the taking of life, he examines the techniques developed by the military to overcome that aversion. His provocative study focuses in particular on the Vietnam war, revealing how the American soldier was "enabled to kill to a far greater degree than any other soldier in history." Grossman argues that the breakdown of American society, combined with the pervasive violence in the media and interactive video games, is conditioning our children to kill in a manner similar to the army's conditioning of soldiers: "We are reaching that stage of desensitization at which the infliction of pain and suffering has become a source of entertainment: vicarious pleasure rather than revulsion. We are learning to kill, and we are learning to like it." Grossman, a professor of military science at Arkansas State University, has written a study of relevance to a society of escalating violence. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Grossman (psychology, West Point) presents three important hypotheses: 1) That humans possess the reluctance to kill their own kind; 2) that this reluctance can be systematically broken down by use of standard conditioning techniques; and 3) that the reaction of "normal" (e.g., non-psychopathic) soldiers to having killed in close combat can be best understood as a series of "stages" similar to the ubiquitous Kubler-Ross stages of reaction to life-threatening disease. While some of the evidence to support his theories have been previously presented by military historians (most notably, John Keegan), this systematic examination of the individual soldier's behavior, like all good scientific theory making, leads to a series of useful explanations for a variety of phenomena, such as the high rate of post traumatic stress disorders among Vietnam veterans, why the rate of aggravated assault continues to climb, and why civilian populations that have endured heavy bombing in warfare do not have high incidents of mental illness. This important book deserves a wide readership. Essential for all libraries serving military personnel or veterans, including most public libraries. Mary Ann Hughes, Neill P.L., Pullman, Wash. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist What makes soldiers kill--or not--animates this intriguing survey by a psychologist and former U.S. Army officer. Grossman reveals that only a fraction of soldiers kill during warfare (and feel revulsion when they do); the rest (about 85 percent in World War II) resist by missing the target or refusing to fire. With an eye to the military command's imperative of overcoming that innate resistance, Grossman quotes numerous anecdotes that exemplify the phenomenon and studies that examine it. With such knowledge, the military has implemented training that gets firing rates up to 90 percent of soldiers, but the psychic cost of blazing away for real is heavy. Individually, a killer goes through thrill-remorse-rationalization stages; socially, the killer needs reassurance and if it is not received, will suffer post-traumatic stress syndrome, characteristic of Vietnam veterans. Grossman concludes his findings of "enabling factors" in killing by identifying them at work in the rampant violence afflicting American society. A book that requires some steely fortitude to finish, but once done, *On Killing* delivers insights on human nature that are both gratifying and repelling. Gilbert Taylor