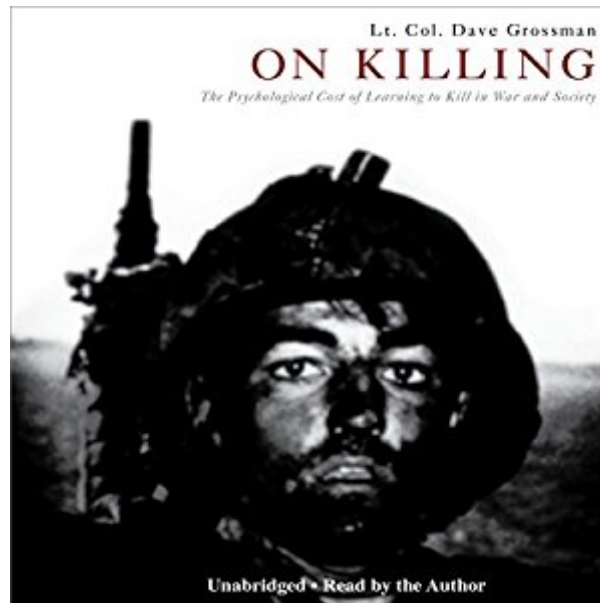


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# On Killing: The Psychological Cost Of Learning To Kill In War And Society



## Synopsis

The good news is that the vast majority of soldiers are loath to kill in battle. Unfortunately, modern armies, using Pavlovian and operant conditioning have developed sophisticated ways of overcoming this instinctive aversion. The psychological cost for soldiers, as witnessed by the increase in post-traumatic stress, is devastating. The psychological cost for the rest of us is even more so: 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 first 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 the soldier, and of the societal implications of escalating violence. Now, Grossman has updated this classic work to include information on 21st-century military conflicts, recent crime rates, suicide bombings, school shootings, and much more. The result is a work that is sure to be relevant and important for decades to come. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is required reading in military leadership courses and extremely insightful. I would strongly recommend this book for any service members (I'm a retired Soldier), law enforcement, or psychologists and clinical social workers (my wife is an LCSW) who work with military or law enforcement. I read this book after my second combat deployment when I had a lot weighing on my mind and it really put things into perspective for me.

A great book that helped me recover from the events on September 11, 2001, for quite a while after the event I had difficulty with average day to day events. A friend in the military sent me this book which helped me to understand that traumatic events leave a scar that will never heal. Understanding this, you come to realize that the human mind is not supposed to see certain horrific events and that it's okay to feel a great sense of loss that will never leave you.

This book has answered many questions I have had since being involved in the Vietnam war (67-68). "Once you have drunk from the dark waters primeval, you can drink no other" sums up the last 44 years of my life. Now I know the 'whats' and the 'whys'. I would highly recommend this to be 'required reading' by therapists or anyone who deals with folks who have taken human life and are haunted by it.

Does your lead character crap his pants? Do your corpses void their bladders? What really happens in PTSD? In this classic book, required reading at the military academies, Quantico and most police forces, Grossman lays out the very real facts of facing the act of killing another human being. And they are serious, long-lasting, and devastating. If your hero kills off a bad guy and walks away whistling--well then you're writing fantasy. Backed with solid fact, Grossman is not some peacenik, he sees soldiers who won't fire at the enemy (about 80% in World War 2) as a PROBLEM and is looking for the cause and the ways to overcome it. There is no rhetoric here, it's all about statistics and facts.

Great book . Tons of great information.

As a college student going into law enforcement I was told to read Dave Grossman's books to supplement my college classes. I chose to read on killing first and it was a great read. Anyone who wants to understand what is placed in our soldiers and LEO'S heads in order to make some of the decisions they do needs to read this.

just wrote another review about war and killing. this book by Grossman is every bit as profound and should be read by just as many people as possible. I have never understood how people - almost always young people - could be trained to kill. I have a pretty good handle on it now, and I don't like it. seems like we, as a people and a society, need to stop and take a good, hard look at what we are doing - to us and others. kinda makes me sick. an incredible book.

A full examination of the process and phenomenon of killing in modern warfare. I was surprised at the conclusions and was intensely interested in the entire book. There is no wonder that this is required read at "War College". Any person who is interested in the military should read this. Any person who wishes to lead men into battle should read this. ANY person who wants to carry a concealed weapon should read this. This book will dispel the myths that Hollywood has foisted upon us. Be prepared to feel as if you were doused with cold water. Learn about this process. it is surprising to say the least.

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