



# **States of Violence and the Civilising Process: On Criminology and State Crime (Critical Criminological Perspectives)**

*Rob Watts*

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## **States of Violence and the Civilising Process: On Criminology and State Crime (Critical Criminological Perspectives) Rob Watts**

This book offers a distinctive and novel approach to state-sponsored violence, one of the major problems facing humanity in the previous and now the twenty-first century. It addresses the question: how is it possible that large numbers of ordinary men and women are able to do the killing, torturing and violence that defines crimes against humanity? In his striking analysis, Rob Watts shows how and why states, of all political persuasions, engage in crimes against humanity, including: genocide, homicide, torture, kidnapping, illegal surveillance and detention.

This book advances a new interpretive frame. It argues against the 'civilizing process' model, showing how both states and social sciences like sociology and criminology have been complicit in splitting 'the social' from 'the ethical' while accepting too complacently that modern states are the exemplars of morality and rationality. The book makes the case that it is possible to bring together in the one interpretative frame, our understanding of social action involving personal motivation and ethical responsibility and patterns of collective social action operating in terms of the agencies of 'the State'. Rob Watts identifies and charts the pathways of action and 'practical' (i.e. ethical) judgements which the perpetrators of these crimes against humanity constructed for themselves to make sense of what they were doing.

At once challenging and highly accessible, the book reveals the policy-making processes that produce state crime as well as showing how ordinary people do the state's dirty work.

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