



Violent Land: Single Men and Social Disorder from the Frontier to the Inner City

David T. Courtwright

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This book offers an explosive look at violence in America--why it is so prevalent, and what and who are responsible. David Courtwright takes the long view of his subject, developing the historical pattern of violence and disorder in this country. Where there is violent and disorderly behavior, he shows, there are plenty of men, largely young and single. What began in the mining camp and bunkhouse has simply continued in the urban world of today, where many young, armed, intoxicated, honor-conscious bachelors have reverted to frontier conditions.

Violent Land combines social science with an engrossing narrative that spans and reinterprets the history of violence and social disorder in America. Courtwright focuses on the origins, consequences, and eventual decline of frontier brutality. Though these rough days have passed, he points out that the frontier experience still looms large in our national self-image--and continues to influence the extent and type of violence in America as well as our collective response to it.

Broadly interdisciplinary, looking at the interplay of biological, social, and historical forces behind the dark side of American life, this book offers a disturbing diagnosis of violence in our society.

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