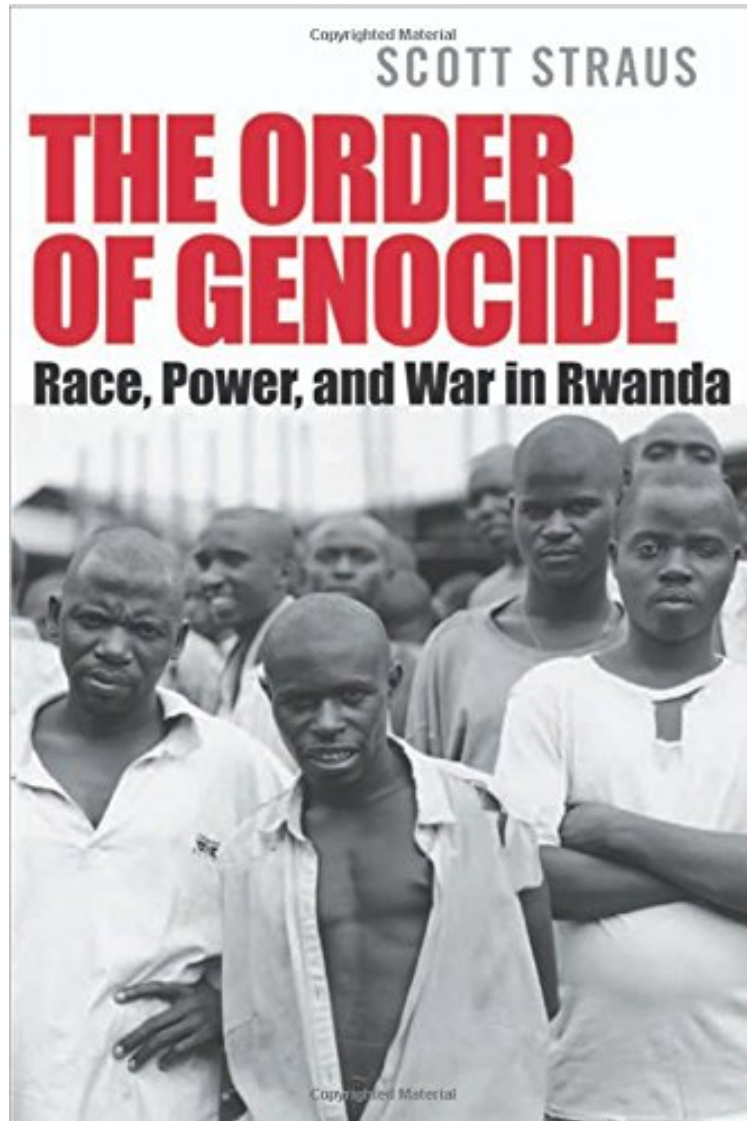


(Download) The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda

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Scott Straus

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Scott Straus : The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By F. Macgregor great book 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Potent and Powerful Book By brenda f. Raw and unforgiving glimpse into the lives of people whose existence is ruled by violence and suffering. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. She was pleased with it By Sc This was a gift for my daughter, who has a Masters degree in Holocaust and Genocide, and is working on

another in Military History. She was pleased with it.

The Rwandan genocide has become a touchstone for debates about the causes of mass violence and the responsibilities of the international community. Yet a number of key questions about this tragedy remain unanswered: How did the violence spread from community to community and so rapidly engulf the nation? Why did individuals make decisions that led them to take up machetes against their neighbors? And what was the logic that drove the campaign of extermination? According to Scott Straus, a social scientist and former journalist in East Africa for several years (who received a Pulitzer Prize nomination for his reporting for the *Houston Chronicle*), many of the widely held beliefs about the causes and course of genocide in Rwanda are incomplete. They focus largely on the actions of the ruling elite or the inaction of the international community. Considerably less is known about how and why elite decisions became widespread exterminatory violence. Challenging the prevailing wisdom, Straus provides substantial new evidence about local patterns of violence, using original research including the most comprehensive surveys yet undertaken among convicted perpetrators to assess competing theories about the causes and dynamics of the genocide. Current interpretations stress three main causes for the genocide: ethnic identity, ideology, and mass-media indoctrination (in particular the influence of hate radio). Straus's research does not deny the importance of ethnicity, but he finds that it operated more as a background condition. Instead, Straus emphasizes fear and intra-ethnic intimidation as the primary drivers of the violence. A defensive civil war and the assassination of a president created a feeling of acute insecurity. Rwanda's unusually effective state was also central, as was the country's geography and population density, which limited the number of exit options for both victims and perpetrators. In conclusion, Straus steps back from the particulars of the Rwandan genocide to offer a new, dynamic model for understanding other instances of genocide in recent history—the Holocaust, Armenia, Cambodia, the Balkans—and assessing the future likelihood of such events.

"Straus examines the 1994 Rwandan genocide through a social science lens . . . and his approach yields interesting new insights. . . . Particularly compelling is his comparison of killers in Rwanda with those of the Holocaust." *Foreign Affairs* "Scott Straus ranks among the finest of the scholars writing in genocide studies. *The Order of Genocide* is fair-minded, important, and rigorous. Drawing on more than two hundred interviews that he conducted with convicted Rwandan killers, and on many other sources, Straus builds a dynamic process model seeking to explain why and how ordinary people could be mobilized to murder their neighbors in the Rwandan genocide." *African Studies* "The Order of Genocide will be an enduring contribution to our understanding of the Rwandan genocide as well as to theories of ethnic violence and genocides more generally. Although his methods and findings will certainly interest scholars of genocides, violent conflicts, and African area studies, Straus does not obscure his work in specialist language." *Nations and Nationalism* "Straus's writing is lucid, the structure of the book is well thought out, and jargon is avoided, making *The Order of Genocide* accessible to anyone interested in the subject. A must-read for those interested in politics and violence." *Journal of Peace Research* "Straus's study is comprehensive, thorough, and cogently and carefully argued. It is altogether an impressive work that is compulsory for specialists and invaluable for students. Straus is a former journalist and his writing is a model of clarity and economy." *Perspectives on Politics* "Straus shows tenacity and courage in explaining the unthinkable—how otherwise ordinary people could imagine, conceive, and carry out genocide." *Genocide Studies and Prevention* "Scott Straus has written a path-breaking book that will command the attention of scholars of the Rwandan genocide and of collective violence. The combination of an engagement with and application of theories of collective violence, a deep knowledge of Rwanda, sophisticated methodology, and extraordinary field research has produced an account that brings us closer than ever to understanding what produced this tragic event. Not only does *The Order of Genocide* rank as one of the best books ever written on the Rwandan genocide, it is a major contribution to comparative politics and theories of violence." Michael Barnett, University Professor of International Affairs and Political Science, Elliott School of International Affairs, The George Washington University "Scott Straus's examination of the Rwanda genocide takes us to a new level of understanding of mass killing as a social and political phenomenon. The author's attention to social-science theory, his extensive use of hundreds of interviews with perpetrators, and his careful analysis of the historical and geographical determinants of the Rwandan events make this book an unusually important contribution to the burgeoning field of genocide studies." Norman M. Naimark, author of *Fires of Hatred: Ethnic Cleansing in 20th Century Europe* "The onset of the Rwandan genocide, its dynamics, and the individual motivations of its perpetrators can be best explained, Scott Straus finds, by the combined effects of an ongoing civil war, high levels of state power (and the attendant social pressure), and the existence of a system of ethnic classification rather than mass feelings of ethnic antipathy, nationalist beliefs, or radio propaganda. With its cogent theorization, multi-method approach, rich micro-level data, and careful attention to causal mechanisms, *The Order of Genocide* is a decisive step forward in the social scientific study of a phenomenon that has been notoriously resistant to systematic approaches." Stathis N. Kalyvas, Arnold Wolfers Professor of Political Science, Director, Program on Order, Conflict, and Violence, Yale University "The Order of Genocide is a real addition to what we know about the Rwandan genocide. Scott Straus describes the local organization of genocide for

example, information on the size of groups of attackers and the roles played by 'elite' and 'thugs.' He also profiles the perpetrators themselves in examining what moved them to act. The quotes from the perpetrators enrich the statistical data enormously and make the book come alive." Alison Des Forges

From the Back Cover

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About the Author

Scott Straus is Professor of Political Science and International Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is the author of *Making and Unmaking Nations: War, Leadership, and Genocide in Modern Africa* and *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda*, both from Cornell. He is coauthor of *Intimate Enemy: Images and Voices of the Rwandan Genocide* and *Africa's Stalled Development: International Causes and Cures*. He is coeditor most recently of *The Human Rights Paradox: Universality and Its Discontents*.