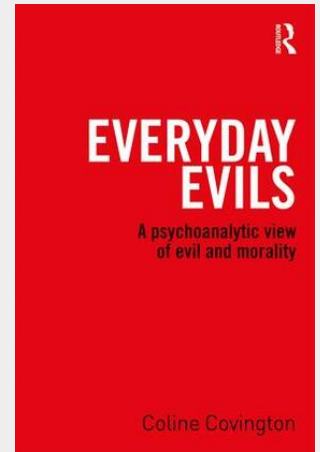


Covington

## Everyday Evils

A psychoanalytic view of evil and morality

Everyday Evils takes a psychoanalytic look at the evils committed by "ordinary" people in different contexts – from the Nazi concentration camps to Stockholm Syndrome to the atrocities publicized by Islamic State – and presents new perspectives on how such evil deeds come about as well as the extreme ways in which we deny the existence of evil. Concepts of group behaviour, morality, trauma and forgiveness are reconsidered within a multi-disciplinary framework. The psychodynamics of dissociation, and the capacity to witness evil acts while participating in them, raise questions about the origin of morality, and about the role of the observing ego in maintaining psychic equilibrium. Coline Covington examines how we demonize the "other" and how violent actions become normalized within communities, such as during the Rwandan genocide and Polish pogroms. The recent attraction of the millenarian theocracy of the Islamic State also highlights our fascination with violence and death. Covington emphasizes that evil comes about through a variety of causes and is highly contextual. It is our capacity to acknowledge the evils we live with, witness and commit that is vital to how we manage and respond to violence within ourselves and others and in mitigating our innate destructiveness. In conclusion, the book addresses how individuals and societies come to terms with evil, along with the problematic concept of forgiveness and the restoration of good. Everyday Evils blends psychoanalytic concepts together with the disciplines of sociology, history, anthropology, philosophy, theology and studies of violence in order to develop a richer, deeper and more comprehensive understanding of evil. Intending to make the unthinkable thinkable, this book will appeal to scholars from across those disciplines, as well as psychoanalysts, psychotherapists and anyone who has ever asked the question: "How could anyone do something like that?"



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