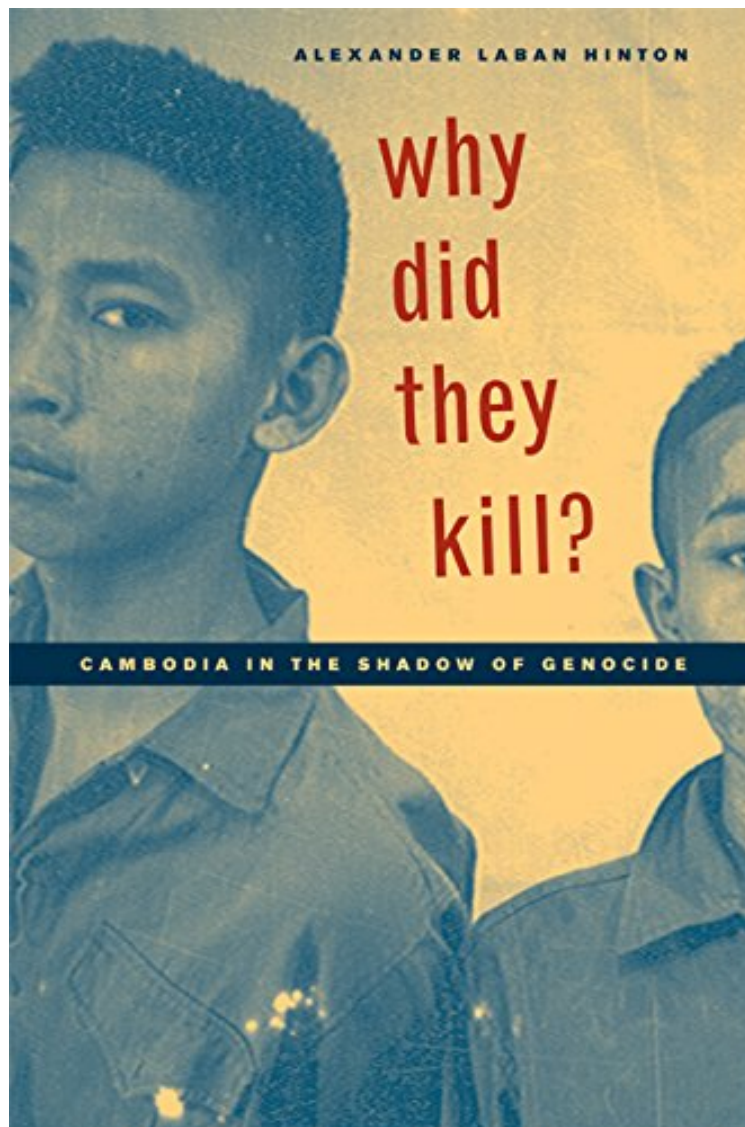


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Why Did They Kill?: Cambodia in the Shadow of Genocide (California Series in Public Anthropology)

Alexander Laban Hinton, Robert Jay Lifton
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#730409 in Books Alexander Laban Hinton 2004-12-06 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.00 x .94 x 6.00l, 1.14 #File Name: 0520241797382 pages Why Did They Kill Cambodia in the Shadow of Genocide California Series in Public Anthropology | File size: 23.Mb

Alexander Laban Hinton, Robert Jay Lifton : Why Did They Kill?: Cambodia in the Shadow of Genocide (California Series in Public Anthropology) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Why Did They Kill?: Cambodia in the Shadow of Genocide (California Series in Public Anthropology):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Thorough research; enlightening view of totalism
By Totalism Researcher
Under the shadow of the holocaust lies the brutal genocide of Cambodia. For any researcher of totalism, whether it be political totalism or bona-fide cults, this book is a must read. Hinton clearly outlines each tenet - the seeds that grew to be catalysts of the genocide.
Dr. Margaret Singer brings a wealth of knowledge to the issue of cults that are indeed in our midst. Because of the radical nature of genocide combined with the excellent presentation by Hinton, one can clearly see the template that cults use to form the foundations of their systematic entrapment of their victims.
2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Top book to read.
By Kathleen Padilla
This was an awesome book to read. It helped me with a paper that I wrote on Cambodia. I would recommend this book to others to read.
21 of 26 people found the following review helpful. Obedience -- last refuge of killer, observer, victim
By Richard Arant
Alexander Hinton obviously put heart and soul into this work. Our intellectual side never ceases trying to understand the beast that lies deep within every human.
The chapter entitled "Manufacturing Difference" touched me most. Today we invent sterile legalistic terms like "person under control" [PUC] and "enemy combatant" [EC] to replace "prisoner" to avert our consciences from the denials of due process. Labels are just as important to us as they are to "evil doers," it appears. The self-imposed and external pressures that influenced the behavior of Khmer Rouge interrogators are described in some depth, and help explain our own recent failures and abuses.
The chapter "Power, Patronage, and Suspicion" is rich with fascinating examples from post Khmer Rouge Cambodia. Upon reflection, we see the same instinct to curry the patronage of powerful political figures is alive and well in today's America. Once again, we start off studying what we assume is a more primitive society only to end up shining a light upon our own human failings. Somehow our own faults are held deeply submerged, probably because of the same instinctive self-defense tools which the "perpetrators" employ when asked, "Why did you kill?"
The leaders of genocide always appear to me to be simple power seekers who have an instinctive sense of the tools of human control. Strange how the "godless" Khmer Rouge and the Taliban "student seekers of God" were so alike. I cannot stare into the vacant eyes of one without thinking of the other. The common perpetrator hides within each of us under the label "cowardice." As David Chandler explained so well in his own masterful work on S-21, when men attach themselves to a bureaucracy they place themselves in a "state of agency" which allows them to do evil for self-interest and self-preservation while evading their own conscience in the process. One who finds himself obedient and "moveable" in terms of his principles is a prime candidate to find in himself the perpetrator of shameful acts.
Along the path of this penetrating study, Alexander Hinton has done a wonderful job annotating the twisted Khmer Rouge terminology which still never fails to send a chill down my spine.
I read "Why did they kill?" trying to use it as a mirror to see if I could recognize my own face. As I feared, some shadows were all too familiar.

Of all the horrors human beings perpetrate, genocide stands near the top of the list. Its toll is staggering: well over 100 million dead worldwide. *Why Did They Kill?* is one of the first anthropological attempts to analyze the origins of genocide. In it, Alexander Hinton focuses on the devastation that took place in Cambodia from April 1975 to January 1979 under the Khmer Rouge in order to explore why mass murder happens and what motivates perpetrators to kill. Basing his analysis on years of investigative work in Cambodia, Hinton finds parallels between the Khmer Rouge and the Nazi regimes. Policies in Cambodia resulted in the deaths of over 1.7 million of that country's 8 million inhabitants--almost a quarter of the population--who perished from starvation, overwork, illness, malnutrition, and execution. Hinton considers this violence in light of a number of dynamics, including the ways in which difference is manufactured, how identity and meaning are constructed, and how emotionally resonant forms of cultural knowledge are incorporated into genocidal ideologies.

From the Inside Flap
"Hinton has traveled to the heart and soul of the Cambodian people."
Youk Chhang, Director, Documentation Center of Cambodia
"In *Why Did They Kill?*, Hinton explores the cultural roots of Khmer Rouge genocidal behavior. Hinton brings extensive fieldwork, wide reading and a compassionate turn of mind to bear on the awful question posed by the title. In the process, he takes us closer to the darkness at the heart of the Khmer Rouge and the darkness inside ourselves. This is a fearless, important and deeply resonant book."
David Chandler, author of *Voices from S-21: Terror and History in Pol Pot's Secret Prison*
"Alex Hinton's bold, unflinching, and ethnographically rich account of the dialectics of genocide is an essential contribution to the anthropology of evil."
Nancy Scheper-Hughes, author of *Death without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil*
"Nowhere else has the bodily, literally visceral, dimension of genocide been so well illustrated. Hinton's study contributes greatly to efforts, which must be continuous for all of us, to combat genocidal forces everywhere."
Robert Jay Lifton, author of *The Nazi Doctors and Superpower Syndrome: America's Apocalyptic Confrontation with the World*
"A riveting analysis of the Cambodian genocide. Using detailed materials and careful arguments, Hinton interweaves the ideological constructions, the cultural dimensions, the mechanisms that manufactured difference and dissolved humanity, and the subjective experiences and meaning-making that engaged the perpetrators, showing how they worked together to make up the process. A remarkable achievement!"
Fredrik Barth, Professor of Anthropology, Boston University/University of Oslo
"Alex Hinton provides an analysis of the Cambodian genocide that for the first time explains the extreme

cruelty of the Khmer Rouge regime as a manifestation of deep structures in Cambodian culture. Hinton's probing field research is in the best tradition of Clifford Geertz, Victor Turner, and the finest cultural anthropologists."Gregory Stanton, President, Genocide Watch