

Police Trauma: Psychological Aftermath of Civilian Combat

John M. Violanti, Douglas Paton



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Police Trauma: Psychological Aftermath of Civilian Combat John M. Violanti, Douglas Paton The police fight a different kind of war, and the enemy is the police officer¹s own civilian population: those who engage in crime, social indignity, and inhumane treatment of others. The result for the police officer is both physical and psychological battering, occasionally culminating in the officer sacrificing his or her life to protect others. This book focuses on the psychological impact of police civilian combat. During a police career, the men and women of police agencies are exposed to distressing events that go far beyond the experience of the ordinary citizen, and there is an increased need today to help police officers deal with these traumatic experiences. As police work becomes increasingly complex, this need will grow. Mental health and other professionals need to be made aware of the conditions and precipitants of trauma stress among the police. The goal of this book is to provide that important information. The book¹s perspective is based on the idea that trauma stress is a product of complex interaction of person, place, situation, support mechanisms, and interventions. To effectively communicate this to the reader, new conceptual and methodological considerations, essays on special groups in policing, and innovative ideas on recovery and treatment of trauma are presented. This information can be used to prevent or minimize trauma stress and to help in establishing improved support and therapeutic measures for police officers. Contributions in the book are from professionals who work with police officers, and in some cases those who are or have been police officers, to provide the reader with different perspectives. Chapters are grouped into three sections: conceptual and methodological issues, special police groups, and recovery and treatment. The book concludes with a discussion of issues and identifies future directions for conceptualization, assessment, intervention, and effective treatment of psychological trauma in policing.

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