



# **Inside West Nile: Violence, History and Representation on an African Frontier (World Anthropology)**

*Mark Leopold*

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West Nile is best known as the home of Uganda's notoriously violent dictator, Idi Amin. But the area's association with violence goes back much further, through the colonial era, when the district was significantly under-developed in comparison with most of Uganda, and to a pre-colonial past characterised by slave-raiding and ivory poaching. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork and archival research in the district capital, Arua town, during the late 1990s, when a low intensity conflict between the government and local rebels became embroiled in wars spilling over from nearby borders with Sudan and Zaire. The author adopts the unconventional approach of moving backwards from the present through successive layers of the past, developing an anthropological critique of the forms of historical representation and their relationship with the human realities of war and violence, in a border area which has long suffered the consequences of being portrayed as a 'heart of darkness'. The book contributes to current debates in political anthropology on issues such as border areas, the local state, and the nature of the 'post-colonial'. It will also be of interest to historians, political scientists, literary and cultural critics, and others working on questions of violence, narrative and memory. Uganda: Fountain Publishers Series editors: Wendy James & N.J. AllenBR>

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