

EVERY MOTHER'S SON IS GUILTY

Policing the Kimberley Frontier of Western Australia 1882-1905

Chris Owen

RRP \$50.00



'EVERY MOTHER'S SON IS GUILTY...'

**Policing the Kimberley Frontier of
Western Australia 1882-1905**

CHRIS OWEN

This is a marvellous contribution by Chris Owen to the understanding of the role the Western Australian police force played in the colonial expansion into the Kimberley district of Western Australia.

Senator Patrick Dodson and Yawuru Elder

In *Every Mother's Son is Guilty*, Chris Owen provides a compelling account of policing in the Kimberley district from 1882, when police were established in the district, until 1905 when Dr. Walter Roth's controversial Royal Commission into the treatment of Aboriginal people was released.

Owen's achievement is to take elements of the pre-existing historiography and test them against a rigorous archival investigation. In doing so a fuller understanding of the complex social, economic and political changes occurring in Western Australia during the period are exposed. The policing of Aboriginal people changed from one of protection under law to one of punishment and control. The subsequent violence of colonial settlement and the associated policing and criminal justice system that developed, often of questionable legality, was what Royal Commissioner Roth termed a 'brutal and outrageous state of affairs'.

Dr Chris Owen has been researching Aboriginal history for over twenty years, garnering research and archive awards. Chris Owen produced the book *"It's still in my heart, this is my country": the Single Noongar Claim History*, which won the 2010 Australian Human Rights Award for Nonfiction and the Margaret Medcalf Award.

Every Mother's Son is Guilty is a significant contribution to Australian and colonial criminal justice history.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Chris Owen is a historian and Honorary Research Fellow in the School of History at the University of Western Australia. His research interests, utilising primarily archival state records, include colonial policing (specifically the Kimberley), Aboriginal policy and governmental administration and the social conditions at the frontiers of colonisation in Western Australia. He lives in Perth, Western Australia with his wife and twin daughters.



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