



Security and Suspicion: An Ethnography of Everyday Life in Israel (The Ethnography of Political Violence)

Juliana Ochs

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In Israel, gates, fences, and walls encircle public spaces while guards scrutinize, inspect, and interrogate. With a population constantly aware of the possibility of suicide bombings, Israel is defined by its culture of security. *Security and Suspicion* is a closely drawn ethnographic study of the way Israeli Jews experience security in their everyday lives.

Observing security concerns through an anthropological lens, Juliana Ochs investigates the relationship between perceptions of danger and the political strategies of the state. Ochs argues that everyday security practices create exceptional states of civilian alertness that perpetuate—rather than mitigate—national fear and ongoing violence. In Israeli cities, customers entering gated urban cafés open their handbags for armed security guards and parents circumnavigate feared neighborhoods to deliver their children safely to school. Suspicious objects appear to be everywhere, as Israelis internalize the state's vigilance for signs of potential suicide bombers. Fear and suspicion not only permeate political rhetoric, writes Ochs, but also condition how people see, the way they move, and the way they relate to Palestinians. Ochs reveals that in Israel everyday practices of security—in the home, on commutes to work, or in cafés and restaurants—are as much a part of conflict as soldiers and military checkpoints.

Based on intensive fieldwork in Israel during the second intifada, *Security and Suspicion* charts a new approach to issues of security while contributing to our appreciation of the subtle dynamics of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This book offers a way to understand why security propagates the very fears and suspicions it is supposed to reduce.

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