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PTSD and the Politics of Trauma in Israel: A Nation on the Couch

Keren Friedman-Peleg, Hebrew University Magnes Press

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A NATION ON THE COUCH

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Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, or PTSD, has long been defined as a mental trauma that solely affects the individual.

However, against the backdrop of contemporary Israel, what role do families, health experts, donors, and the national community at large play in interpreting and responding to this individualized trauma? In *PTSD and the Politics of Trauma in Israel*, Keren Friedman-Peleg sheds light on a new way of speaking about mental vulnerability and national belonging in contemporary Israel. Based on ethnographic fieldwork conducted at The Israel Center for Victims of Terror and War and The Israel Trauma Coalition between 2004 and 2009, Friedman-Peleg's rich ethnographic study challenges the traditional and limited definitions of trauma. In doing so, she exposes how these clinical definitions have been transformed into new categories of identity, thereby raising new dynamics of power, as well as new forms of dialogue.

"Keren Friedman-Peleg's ethnographic study is an incisive contribution to our understanding of how regional and national history, local institutional cultures, and the expectations of a diverse and divided population shape the clinical phenomenology of PTSD and an unending collective trauma." (Allan Young, Professor, Departments of Social Studies of Medicine, Anthropology, and Psychiatry, McGill University) "PTSD and the Politics of Trauma in Israel is an important contribution to the anthropological literature on PTSD." (Joshua Breslau, Medical Anthropologist and Psychiatric Epidemiologist, Rand Corporation) About the Author Keren Friedman-Peleg is a senior lecturer at the School of Behavioral Science and the Head of the Presidents Program for Excellence at the College of Management Academic Studies in Israel.