This book is a critical exploration of Israel’s curfew-closure policy in the Occupied Palestinian Territories through the eyes of CheckpointWatch, an organisation of Israeli women monitoring human rights abuses. The book combines observers’ daily reports from the checkpoints and along the Separation Wall, with analysis of the bureaucracy that supports the ongoing occupation. Keshet demonstrates the link between Israeli bureaucracy and the closure system as integral to a wider project of ethnic cleansing.

As co-founder of the group, Keshet critically reviews the organisation’s transformation from a feminist, radical protest movement to one both reclaimed by, and reclaiming, the consensus. Illustrating the nature of Israeli mainstream discourse as both anodyne and cruel, the book also analyses Israeli media representation of CheckpointWatch and human rights activism in general. Keshet contends that the dilemmas of these Israeli women, torn between opposition to the Occupation and their loyalty to the state, reflects political divisions within Israeli society as a whole.

Critical praise for this book

‘It is impossible to guess when and how the harsher Israeli version of the Apartheid Pass System will collapse. When it does, CheckpointWatch will have had an important role in its collapse.’  
Amira Mass, Israeli journalist

‘This important book offers an insightful perspective of the system of Israeli military checkpoints and blockades in the West Bank, their devastating impact on the Palestinian population, and the arbitrary use of a control mechanism for reasons which often have little to do with security considerations. The first-hand accounts and observations of the Watchers - Israeli women from all walks of life - also provide an interesting insight into how different sectors of Israeli society see - or fail to see - the impact of such a system and its injustices.’

Donatella Rovera, Researcher on Israel and the Occupied Territories, Amnesty International

About the author

Yehudit Kirstein Keshet was born in Wales and has lived in Israel since the late fifties, settling there permanently in 1974. With a background in both anthropology and film studies, she is now a full-time activist having dedicated her retirement to opposing Israel’s occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.

As the daughter of refugees from Nazi Germany, Kirstein Keshet is adamant about the importance of speaking out and regards this book and the work of CheckpointWatch, of which she is co-founder, as the expression of her determination not to be silent. She is currently working on a political novel set in Jerusalem.