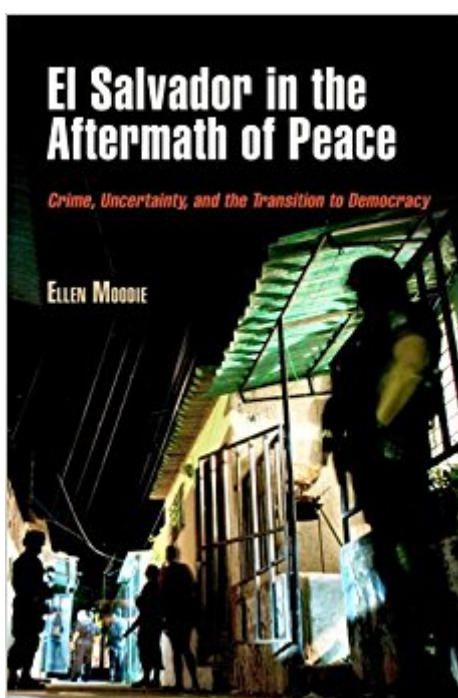


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# El Salvador In The Aftermath Of Peace: Crime, Uncertainty, And The Transition To Democracy (The Ethnography Of Political Violence)



## Synopsis

El Salvador's civil war, which left at least 75,000 people dead and displaced more than a million, ended in 1992. The accord between the government and the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) has been lauded as a model post-Cold War peace agreement. But after the conflict stopped, crime rates shot up. The number of murder victims surpassed wartime death tolls. Those who once feared the police and the state became frustrated by their lack of action. Peace was not what Salvadorans had hoped it would be. Citizens began saying to each other, "It's worse than the war." *El Salvador in the Aftermath of Peace: Crime, Uncertainty, and the Transition to Democracy* challenges the pronouncements of policy analysts and politicians by examining Salvadoran daily life as told by ordinary people who have limited influence or affluence. Anthropologist Ellen Moodie spent much of the decade after the war gathering crime stories from various neighborhoods in the capital city of San Salvador. True accounts of theft, assaults, and murders were shared across kitchen tables, on street corners, and in the news media. This postconflict storytelling reframed violent acts, rendering them as driven by common criminality rather than political ideology. Moodie shows how public dangers narrated in terms of private experience shaped a new interpretation of individual risk. These narratives of postwar violence—occurring at the intersection of self and other, citizen and state, the powerful and the powerless—offered ways of coping with uncertainty during a stunted transition to democracy.

## Book Information

Series: The Ethnography of Political Violence

Paperback: 304 pages

Publisher: University of Pennsylvania Press (December 13, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0812222350

ISBN-13: 978-0812222357

Product Dimensions: 1 x 6 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 15.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 1 customer review

Best Sellers Rank: #311,635 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #12 in Books > History >

Americas > Central America > El Salvador #219 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences >

Politics & Government > Specific Topics > War & Peace #283 in Books > Politics & Social

## Customer Reviews

"Moodie's study provides a fascinating account of how daily micro relations between individuals permeate macro features of a society. The book also demonstrates the possibilities opened up by the kind of qualitative methodological approach adopted by Moodie, going beyond the statistical data on El Salvador's rates of crime and homicide, to tell the story of how ordinary people's experiences of violent crime are constructed and the hidden and changing political consequences of such constructions." — *Bulletin of Latin American Research*

In this compelling and original book, anthropologist Ellen Moodie analyzes crime stories that circulated in El Salvador in the postwar period. Her goal is not to understand crime per se, or even public perceptions of crime, but rather to make sense of the postwar period itself. . . . Beautifully written, *El Salvador in the Aftermath of Peace* moves in time and space, returning repeatedly to sites and moments that symbolize hopes and disappointments." — Susan Bibler Coutin, University of California, Irvine

Ellen Moodie is Associate Professor of Anthropology and Latin American and Caribbean Studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Excellent book, prompt service, as described.

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