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| Nota di contenuto       | PART 1. SMUGGLING IN THE DRUG WAR ZONE: Introduction: Drug trafficking - studies and sources relevant to the Mexican-American drug war zone ; La Nacha: The heroin queen of Juarez ; The roots of contraband smuggling in El Paso ; Female drug lord ; Community-based drug use, smuggling, and dealing in the 1970s and 1980s ; Selling drugs in downtown Juarez: Juan and Jorge ; A young smuggler and his family ; Blaxicans: The life of a Chicano smuggler and musician on the borderline of African American and Mexican American culture ; Drug addiction and drug trafficking in the life of an anarchist ; Drug smuggling through tunnels: The tale of a scuba-diving instructor ; Witness to a Juarez drug killing -- PART 2. LAW ENFORCEMENT IN THE DRUG WAR ZONE: Introduction: Ethnographic dimensions of law enforcement in the drug war zone ; Undercover agent on the Border: Cultural disguises ; The death of Francisco ; A Juarez policeman fighting drug traffickers ; Journalism and drug trafficking: Covering the narco beat on the Border ; Patrolling the drug war zone: A Border Patrol Agent in the War on Drugs ; Intelligence and the drug war: Commander of an Antidrug Task Force on the Border ; Excerpt from Weed: Adventures of a Dope Smuggler by Jerry Kamstra ; Agent on prohibition |

-- Epilogue and conclusion.

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Sommario/riassunto

Thousands of people die in drug-related violence every year in Mexico. Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, adjacent to El Paso, Texas, has become the most violent city in the Mexican drug war. Much of the cocaine, marijuana, and methamphetamine consumed in the United States is imported across the Mexican border, making El Paso/Juárez one of the major drug-trafficking venues in the world. In this anthropological study of drug trafficking and anti-drug law enforcement efforts on the U.S.-Mexico border, Howard Campbell uses an ethnographic perspective to chronicle the recent Mexican drug war, focusing especially on people and events in the El Paso/Juárez area. It is the first social science study of the violent drug war that is tearing Mexico apart. Based on deep access to the drug-smuggling world, this study presents the drug war through the eyes and lives of direct participants. Half of the book consists of oral histories from drug traffickers, and the other half from law enforcement officials. There is much journalistic coverage of the drug war, but very seldom are the lived experiences of traffickers and "narcs" presented in such vivid detail. In addition to providing an up-close, personal view of the drug-trafficking world, Campbell explains and analyzes the functioning of drug cartels, the corruption that facilitates drug trafficking, the strategies of smugglers and anti-narcotics officials, and the perilous culture of drug trafficking that Campbell refers to as the "Drug War Zone."

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