

Banal Nationalism (Theory, Culture and Society)

Michael Billig



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Michael Billig presents a major challenge to orthodox conceptions of nationalism in this elegantly written book. While traditional theorizing has tended to the focus on extreme expressions of nationalism, the author turns his attention to the everyday, less visible forms which are neither exotic or remote, he describes as `banal nationalism'. The author asks why people do not forget their national identity. He suggests that in daily life nationalism is constantly flagged in the media through routine symbols and habits of language. Banal Nationalism is critical of orthodox theories in sociology, politics and social psychology for ignoring this core feature of national identity. Michael Billig argues forcefully that with nationalism continuing to be a major ideological force in the contemporary world, it is all the more important to recognize those signs of nationalism which are so familiar that they are easily overlooked.

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