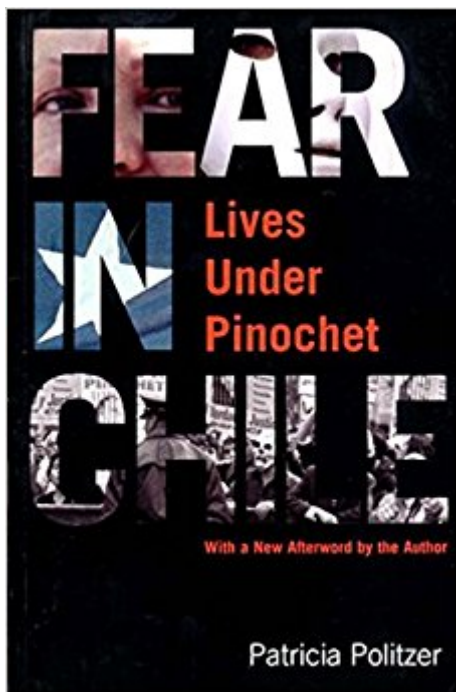


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Fear In Chile: Lives Under Pinochet



Synopsis

“Like a García Márquez novel that has suddenly, horrifyingly, come to real life” (New York Newsday), *Fear in Chile* is an extraordinary collection of first-person accounts of life under dictatorship. In the 1980s, shortly after Chile emerged from one of the century’s most notorious reigns of terror, Chilean journalist Patricia Politzer interviewed figures including a revolutionary activist, a military leader loyal to General Augusto Pinochet, a bank clerk concerned with the status quo, the mother of one of the “disappeared,” as well as a dozen other men and women from every political position and social stratum of Chilean life. The result is a broad, vivid, yet nonideological view of modern life under military rule, about which Ariel Dorfman writes, “I can think of no better introduction to my country.” With the October 1998 arrest of General Pinochet in Great Britain and renewed world awareness of the horrendous crimes committed during his regime, *Fear in Chile*, updated with a new afterword by the author that considers the recent attempts to prosecute Pinochet for human-rights violations, offers a vivid portrait of Chile’s Pinochet era.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Must-reading for would-be dictators. . . . Chileans had always thought it can't happen here"; Politzer, one of Chile's best opposition journalists, shows how it did." *The New York Times* "Every story has revealing, touching moments. . . . The voices in *Fear in Chile* tell about events in Chile but say much more about the human spirit." *The*

Boston Globe "Vivid. . . . Politzer's interviews weave a chronicle of sustained horror."
Los Angeles Times Book Review "A remarkable and moving document about life under military dictatorship."
Newsday "Dramatic. . . . A timely, balanced report."
Kirkus Reviews

Patricia Politzer was, in a national radio broadcast in 1978, one of the first journalists to speak out against the Pinochet coup, and for many years she had a weekly political interview column in the opposition newspaper La Epoca. She is now a cabinet member in the Chilean government under President Lagos.

The journalist Patricia Politzer does a good job at showing that this is not a black and white piece of history, but many colors in between. People interviewed tell their story and explain why they have taken a given stand. Maybe because its isolated geography, Chile has a history that is not as polarized as other neighbouring countries. For example, a regular family would have relatives in the right, the center and the left at the same time, so most Chileans knew for a fact that abuses were being made when they were being made for whatever reason. This book shows that sensibility, and has a place in history as well, having helped us Chileans to exorcise our fears and get back into democracy.

The book is Ok, but not quite there. There are interviews from Pro Pinochet people and familiars of the disappeared. However, I would also have liked to see the opinion of a person whose relatives were killed by communist guerrillas. Also, at the end of the book she tries to portray Allende as the good and Pinochet as the bad guy. That shows she is one sided. Well, Politzer was the head of campaign of Chile's current socialist president Ricardo Lagos and she has her own views but I think she still has some emotions in her that don't let her see what happened in Chile with full neutrality.

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