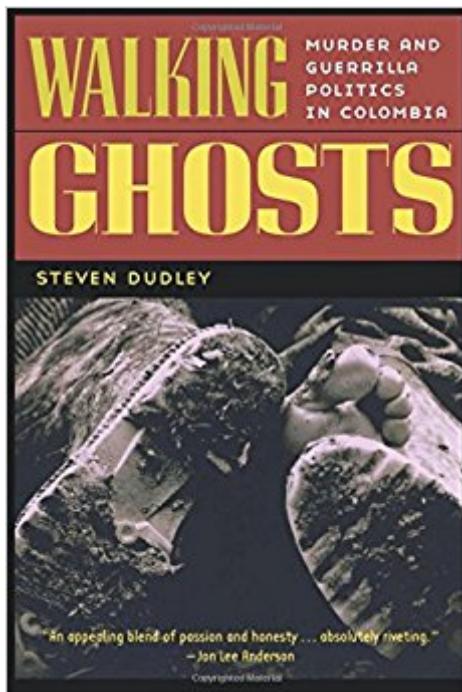


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Walking Ghosts: Murder And Guerrilla Politics In Colombia



Synopsis

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Customer Reviews

Dudley has written for many national periodicals, and his dispatches from Colombia have been heard on National Public Radio. His five years in that war-, drug-, and assassin-torn country are fodder for this extremely revealing volume of reportage. Infinite patience and concentration will be needed to navigate the author's encyclopedic exposition. Careful readers, though, are rewarded with a cast of characters so colorful that if the venue were shifted to the U.S., they could only reside in New Orleans. A country with one-seventh the population of the U.S. experiences some 30,000 murders per year, 75 political assassinations per week, and 10 kidnappings per day. (Kidnapping in order to elicit funding for political fronts has been perfected to a high art.) So deadly are the country's politics that the author had to flee the country and still fears for his life. But he was impelled to chronicle the story anyway in this thrilling and informative read. Includes impromptu photographs that assist in humanizing the myriad rebels, guerrillas, drug kingpins, and politicians who populate this quagmire. Allen WeaklandCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

"A brave, meticulously researched story of missed opportunities, treachery and revenge, and the burden of history on a country that has rarely known peace." -Scott Wilson, the "Washington Post

... "an authoritative work of modern history which is also a nail-biting page turner ... Dudley writes with an appealing blend of passion and honesty, and his book is absolutely riveting."-Jon Lee Anderson, the "New Yorker" "Meticulously reported, Walking Ghosts...leaves the reader on the edge of his seat."-Juan Forero, "New York Times ..." "essential reading for anyone who wants to fully understand the causes of Latin America's longest-running civil war. A brave and unflinching book."-Joseph Contreras, "Newsweek ..." "an engrossing, sometimes hair-raising account of Colombia's bloody, overlapping conflicts."-Roane Carey, "The Nation

I am on my second reading of the book, and unless you read each page three times, you will need a second reading of the book. There are a tremendous number of characters to keep track of. To his credit, Dudley does reintroduce characters in later chapters as if you've never read about them. It's obvious this book is a rewrite of a masters thesis, but I'm not sure what Dudley was rewriting it into. It feels as if it was supposed to be (and to some extent is) a story of the authors experiences in Colombia and what he was able to reveal about the Colombian political culture. However the chapters seem to be chunks of a thesis with a new title put on and rearranged text to better fit the title. For example, the "Black Vladimir" chapter contains a great deal of information on the character, however so does the rest of the book. Having said that, it is a great overview of the tumultuous 80's in Colombia through detailed accounts. This info is essential to understand current politics in Colombia. Also included is a cursory overview of the pre-1980 colombian political situation as well as the 90's. There is an attempt to cover politics outside of the UP, but it struck me as shallow. The 90's, for example, are glossed over for the most part. I also wish there was more information about the more current situation.

Overall, author Dudley has done right in laying open the running sores of the Colombian civil war to public view, a generally engrossing - and gross - account of chicanery, cynicism, and atrocity. That said, I could not give it more than three stars because of its flawed insistence - in my opinion - of blaming the left for its own destruction in Colombia. At one point he writes of the "startling number of dead" the UP "put in the morgue." Yet the Union Patriotica did not torture, kill, or "disappear" these people, nor force the death squads to do so, and therein lays the book's flawed premise. By his own admission, Colombia has engaged in political violence against dissidents for decades, and its 1980s death squads were willing to kill virtually anyone they disliked. The UP, then, did not have to be cynically betrayed or manipulated by the FARC to earn this lethal attention - it would have come anyway, regardless of any guerrilla politics behind the scenes. The paramilitaries were out to

destroy the left, and the center; the guerrilla politics upon which Dudley lavishes so much scrutiny were a secondary factor at best, and in no way confirm the Colombian military's "analysis" or strategy.

If you are an American who wants to know more about the hidden history behind modern Colombian politics, this book is for you. This is the behind-the-headlines story that will make you an informed reader/viewer of contemporary media stories about Colombia. Steven Dudley is a master of his subject and presents it in a highly readable way.

Very fast shipping ,the book was in perfect condition.Now the story of the book is amazing and very well writteng .for example everything is well documented.reading this book will help you understand more about the outgoing conflict in Colombia .and will give you an insight on both side of the conflict .i really recommend this book and here is in a amazing prize (iTunes wants \$39 for the same book)

I found the character descriptions and events chronicled in this book to assist me immensely in understanding the Colombian political predicament. I was sorely disappointed, however, that the book seemed very "cut and paste." Mostly it seemed like he wrote a variety of papers, then slapped chapters on them and called them a book. I was reminded again and again what "una guerra en todas las formas" meant. Literally **27** times this term is DEFINED. Ok, I got it the first time you told me. Furthermore, he repeats descriptions of people and places even in the same chapter, to a point that is ANNOYING. I don't need you to tell me the same thing 14 times, please edit that out. WHERE WAS HIS EDITOR?? Did he fall asleep reading it? There are so many details and descriptions in this book that are crucial to understanding current Colombian politics, but I have to give it 3 stars based on the fact that he was at times verbose, reiterative (yes, reiterative), and that in all the book seemed like a disjointed set of narratives. Mr. Dudley, please, read your own work from beginning to end and tell me that you realize it needs editing!!

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