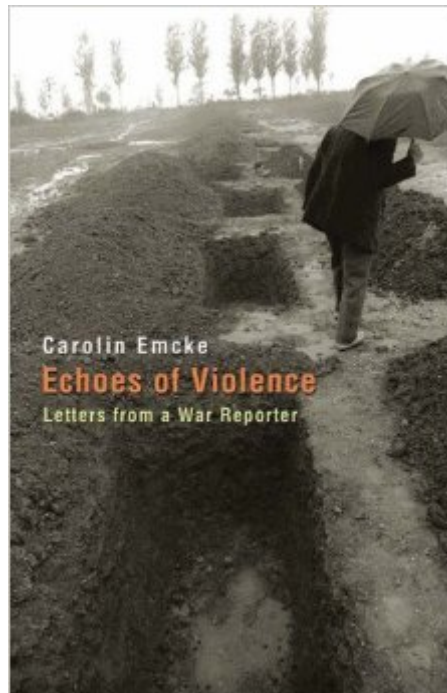


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Echoes Of Violence: Letters From A War Reporter (Human Rights And Crimes Against Humanity)



Synopsis

"Nobody I ever met on my assignments . . . asked me for direct, practical help. . . . But over and over again people have asked me: 'Will you write this down?' " --Echoes of Violence

Echoes of Violence is an award-winning collection of personal letters to friends from a foreign correspondent who is trying to understand what she witnessed during the iconic human disasters of our time--in Iraq, Lebanon, Afghanistan, and New York City on September 11th, among many other places. Originally addressing only a small group of friends, Carolin Emcke started the first letter after returning from Kosovo, where she saw the aftermath of ethnic cleansing in 1999. She began writing to overcome her speechlessness about the horrors of war and her own sense of failure as a reporter. Eventually, writing a letter became a ritual Emcke performed following her return from each nightmare she experienced. First published in 2004 to great acclaim, Echoes of Violence in 2005 was named German political book of the year and was a finalist for the international Lettre-Ulysses award for the art of reportage. Combining narrative with philosophic reflection, Emcke describes wars and human rights abuses around the world--the suffering of civilians caught between warring factions in Colombia, the heartbreaking plight of homeless orphans in Romania, and the near-slavery of garment workers in Nicaragua. Freed in the letters from journalistic conventions that would obscure her presence as a witness, Emcke probes the abyss of violence and explores the scars it leaves on landscapes external and internal.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

From time to time Echoes of Violence is a very interesting book, and when it's at its best the reader will have an extremely difficult time trying not to keep on reading forever and ever. But alas, this only happens on a few occasions. And that's too bad, because there is no reason whatsoever to think that Carolin Emcke comes even close to being a bad writer. A German journalist with a thorough experience in doing war journalism, Emcke has spent much of her professional career in different war zones all around the world, and she writes in a style that's actually both emotional and clear-sighted at the same time. Not only that, she also offers such detailed background analyses that it never becomes necessary for the reader to have any deeper knowledge about the area she's in or the events leading up to the particular conflict (though it's obviously not a disadvantage if the reader indeed does have this knowledge). Most important of all, though, is the simple fact that she never loses touch with the human aspects of her story. And that's not much of a surprise, really. After all, it's this humaneness that permeates the entire book and prompted her to start putting the stories into words, since the book is based on letters she began writing to some of her closest friends after visiting Kosovo in 1999 and becoming a witness to the horrendous suffering caused by all the sickening ethnic cleansing. In order to come to terms with what she's seen she decided to put it all into words, and Echoes of Violence is the end result. However, just because it happens to be quite a touching testimony detailing the stupidity of mankind doesn't mean it's a brilliant book.

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