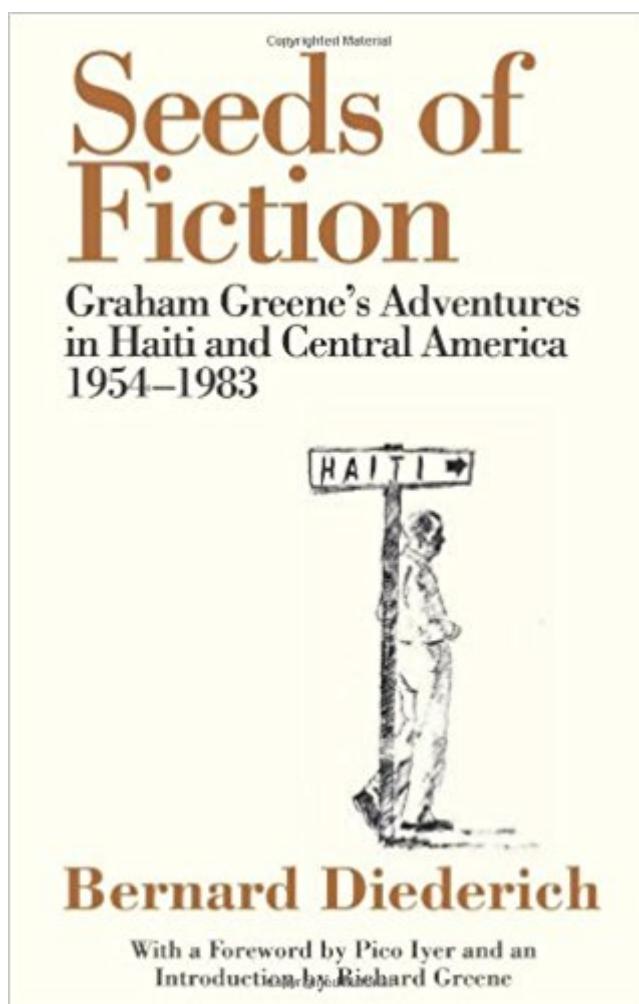


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# Seeds Of Fiction: Graham Greene's Adventures In Haiti And Central America 1954&#150;1983



## Synopsis

A major new biography of Graham Greene with extensive new material; exclusive, never-before-seen photographs of Greene on his travels; and full family cooperationAn essential read for fans of literary biography, this book finally and fully illuminates a pivotal episode in Graham Greene's life and career in the kind of detail that will sate any fans of his work, but which also provides a fascinating glimpse into a writer's life. In 1965, Greene joined journalist Bernard Diederich in the Dominican Republic to embark on a tour of its border with Haiti, then ruled by "Papa Doc" Duvalier. They were accompanied by activist priest Jean-Claude Bajeux. Diederich had known Greene since the mid-1950s and had lived in Haiti for 14 years. He was a seasoned correspondent for the British and North American press and had reported many stories from the region, including Castro's triumph in Cuba and the death of the Dominican dictator, Trujillo. In 1963, he had been thrown out of Haiti and when Greene arrived was working from the Dominican Republic. The famous novelist was 61 and depressed, having struggled to finish *A Burnt-Out Case*, and was being plagued by religious doubt; Bajeux, meanwhile, had been informed that his family had been "disappeared" by Duvalier's henchmen. As this trio traveled along the border they met a number of rebels and other characters later fictionalized in Greene's most politically charged novel, *The Comedians*, published the following year. This book tells the story of how a series of extraordinary and often hair-raising journeys gave one of the greatest novelists of the 20th century new inspiration in his writing.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"This is a perfect match of subject and author. Bernie Diederich has captured the passion for journalism and politics that made his friend Graham Greene such a powerful novelist." - Walter Isaacson, author of *Steve Jobs* "This is a book fifty years in the making...anyone interested in the life and work of Greene will find it full of new insights." - America "One of the finest books yet written on Greene" - The Spectator Seeds of Fiction provides an intimate portrayal of one of the great novelists of the twentieth century as well as a fascinating glimpse into a hertofore-obsolete period of his life." - World Literature Today

Bernard Diederich is a journalist, originally from New Zealand, who launched the English-language weekly newspaper the *Haiti Sun* in 1950, and subsequently became the resident correspondent for the Associated Press, the *New York Times*, the *Time-Life News Service*, and London's *Daily Telegraph*. In 1963, as a result of his courageous reporting, Diederich was arrested by Papa Doc's Tontons-Makouts, imprisoned, and ultimately expelled from the country. In exile in the Dominican Republic, he was staff foreign correspondent for the *Time-Life News service*. Richard Greene is an associate professor at the University of Toronto and the editor of *Graham Greene: A Life in Letters*. He lives in Cobourg, Ontario. Pico Iyer is an essayist and novelist whose books include *The Man Within My Head* and *The Open Road*. He writes for such publications as *Harper's*, *New York Review of Books*, and *A Time*.

I've been a huge Graham Greene fan for some time and since I've read all his books, I've found myself searching out books about him. This time I read Bernard Diederich's *Seeds of Fiction: Graham Greene's Adventures in Haiti and Central America 1954 - 1983* (2012). Diederich, a journalist, was Greene's guide with activist priest Jean-Claude Bajeux during his initial visits to Haiti and remained a lifelong friend until the author's death. The First Part "Greene in Haiti" chronicles his travels that lead to the writing of one of his greatest books about Haiti and Papa Doc Dulavier, *The Comedians*. The Second Part of the book, "On the Way Back: Graham Greene in Central America," looks mainly at his many visits to Panama and elsewhere in the 70s and 80s. Parts of these adventures ended up in later books such as *The Captain and the Enemy* and the Panama visits in the nonfiction, *Getting To Know the General*, which is mostly about his relationship with Panamanian benevolent dictator General Torres. It is an interesting account of Greene's life, when he was well into his old age. He lived a very active inquisitive life until the end. There is a forward by Pico Iyer called "Greene in the World," and an introduction by Greene's son, Richard Greene. It

probably goes without saying that this book is probably of interest only for those who are Graham Greene fans and complete-ists.

The work provides an authoritative insight into the troubled times in Haiti, under the fearsome "Papa Doc" regime, which was inspiration for several of Graham Greene's subsequent works , and characters who featured in them. More interesting to me, however, was the intimate glimpse of Graham Greene, the man. This is a close up and personal view of the man, at the height of his career. I found it enlightening, and have renewed interest to revisit his tales of those people and places.

I liked this book . I recommend to read about the Caribbean and Central America

Excellent account of Graham Greene and his ties to Central America and the Dominican Republic.

This is a first rate account of Green'e's life and times in Haiti. Well written, clearly focused. I found the book's details a plus.

This book is very factual and different facets of the important characters. I lived in Haiti and the story is reality.

SEEDS OF FICTION Graham Greene's Adventures in Haiti and Central America 1954-1983 by Bernard Diederich is a fascinating story of the friendship between a legendary journalist and a celebrated author coupled with an eyewitness account of dictators, revolutions, and resistance fighters during times of great upheaval in Haiti and Latin America. Travelling with Diederich, Greene gathers the "seeds" for some of his future work, including the novel *The Comedians*, which exposed the world to Haitian dictator "Papa Doc" Duvalier's nightmare regime. I found *Seeds of Fiction* valuable not only for the "back stories" behind some of Graham Greene's work, but also for the broader insights Diederich provides about Latin American leaders and the politics of the era. His friendship with Panamanian strongman Omar Torrijos was especially interesting to me. One has to wonder how events might have unfolded in Central America had the relatively moderate Torrijos not been killed in a plane crash. seeds of decidedly non-fictional future bloodshed can also be found in this

book. Diederich must be an inspiration to journalists today. He writes modestly about his interactions with Greene, but glimpses of his bravery, street-smarts, and determination to figure out what is going on and report on it to the larger world appear again and again in this book. Would love to read Bernard Diederich's own story--hope he does an autobiography soon!

A surprisingly insightful book. Full of nuggets and perspective. If you are a Graham Greene fan this book belongs in your collection.

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