

Fear and Crime in Latin America

The feeling of insecurity is a little known phenomenon that has been only partially explored by social sciences. However, it has a deep social, cultural and economic impact and may even contribute to define the very structures of the state. In Latin America, fear of crime has become an important stumbling block in the region's process of democratization. After long spells of dictatorships and civil wars, violence in the region was supposed to be under control, yet crime rates have continued to skyrocket and citizens remain fearful. This analytical puzzle has troubled researchers and to date there is no publication which explores this problem.

Based on a wealth of cutting edge qualitative and quantitative research, Lucía Dammert proposes a unique theoretical perspective which includes a sociological, criminological and political analysis to understand fear of crime. She describes its linkages to issues such as urban segregation, social attitudes, institutional trust, public policies and authoritarian discourses in Chile's recent past. Looking beyond Chile, Dammert also includes a regional comparative perspective allowing readers to understand the complex elements underpinning this situation.

Fear and Crime in Latin America challenges many assumptions and opens an opportunity to discuss an issue that affects everyone with key societal and personal costs. As crime rates increase and states become even more fragile, fear of crime as a social problem will continue to have an important impact in Latin America.

Lucía Dammert holds a PhD in Political Science from Leiden University. She is Executive Director of the Global Consortium on Security Transformation and has been researcher at University of Chile, FLACSO Chile and Universidad de San Martín in Argentina. She was a public policy fellow at the Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars. She has been an advisor to the Public Security Department of the Organization of American States and to the Ministry of Interior in Chile, Argentina and the Public Security Secretariat in México.

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First published 2012
by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Simultaneously published in the UK
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 4RN

First issued in paperback 2014

*Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group,
an informa business*

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Dammert, Lucia.

Fear and crime in Latin America : redefining state-society relations /
Lucia Dammert.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

1. Violent crimes—Latin America. 2. Internal security—Latin
America. 3. Democracy—Latin America. 4. Security (Psychology)—
Political aspects—Latin America. 5. State, The. 6. Latin America—
Politics and government. I. Title.

HV6810.5.D35 2012

364.98—dc23

2011048936

ISBN 978-0-415-52211-3 (hbk)

ISBN 978-1-138-84902-0 (pbk)

ISBN 978-0-203-11628-9 (ebk)

Typeset in Sabon
by IBT Global.

To Camila and Matías

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Acknowledgments

This book is the result of more than a decade of research into the issue of citizen security in Latin America and three years of intensive study of the high levels of fear of crime that Chileans express in their daily lives. My academic and professional journey has been very diverse. I studied sociology at both Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú and Universidad Nacional de Cuyo in Argentina. My bi-national education allowed me to develop a strong regional perspective of the importance of social issues in Latin America. I owe much of my passion to follow the line of investigation of social problems to many of my teachers and friends who ardently debated how to interpret and analyze social tensions, violence, and institutional weaknesses. Soon after, I moved to Pittsburgh to focus in greater depth in the fields of Latin American Studies and Public Policy. I will be forever grateful to Eduardo and Billie Lozano who were crucial in allowing me the time to build my family while focusing my studies on the importance of sound public policies.

Returning to Latin America was a challenge. Economic crisis and political instability were the focus of many research studies at the time, while crime, insecurity, and police forces were not. A fertile terrain in the region allowed me to develop and to continue my specialization on democracy and public security issues. Even though it was in a state of crisis, the Argentinean National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET in Spanish) awarded me with a fellowship to further my research on crucial issues that were very much understudied. At that time, a group of scholars helped me to understand the specific complexities of violence in Argentina, including Máximo Sozzo, Gabriel Kessler, Marcelo Saín, Alejandro Isla, and Marcelo Cavarozzi, whose time and insightful comments helped inspire and drive my own research.

Most of my professional life has developed in Chile, where I have lived for more than a decade. I am grateful to the Centro de Estudios de Seguridad Ciudadana of Universidad de Chile and the Ministry of the Interior, institutions that I worked for in the research and public policy fields that allowed me to amplify my understanding of the problems and dilemmas of contemporary Chile. I worked at the Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias

Sociales (FLACSO) for five years with an excellent group of young researchers that showed me the importance of teamwork, institutional building, and the increasing need for rigorous research on security issues in Latin America. Each person helped me at different moments with the content of this book and generously shared suggestions and information. I extend a special thanks to Claudia Fuentes, David Alvarez, Javiera Diaz, Rodrigo Alvarez, Liza Zuñiga, Felipe Ruz, and Felipe Salazar. In the public policy arena, I had the opportunity of working at the Organization of American States with interesting, proactive and creative colleagues who included insecurity among the priorities of the organization. Many thanks to Jose Miguel Insulza, Christopher Hernandez, Julio Rosenblatt, and Ana Maria Diaz for their generosity and support.

Working in several countries of Latin America has allowed me to develop a clear understanding of the challenges being faced to tackle insecurity. My work has been strongly influenced by a group of leading scholars with whom I have had the privilege of working. I would like to especially mention John Bailey, Hugo Fruhling, Alejandra Lunecke, Azun Candina, Thomas Bruneau, Maria Victoria Llorente, Carlos Basombrio, Mary Malone, and Mark Ungar. I hope this book reveals some of what I have learned with and through them about public security, crime, and fear.

I presented the first version of this work as my doctoral dissertation in Political Science at the University of Leiden. I had the fortune of working with Patricio Silva, my dissertation adviser. He played a fundamental role and offered constant support and specific suggestions that have significantly improved the research. The first chapters were written at the Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars, where I was a residential fellow. Much recognition must be paid to Cynthia Arnson, who helped by providing me with the time and opportunity to concentrate on reading and finishing the core ideas of my dissertation. There are also other colleagues, too many to acknowledge them all by name, who have heard me talk about this project in the last years and have made valuable suggestions. Also, many other colleagues have read drafts of different sections of this work and have shared their comments and suggestions with grace and total enthusiasm. My heartfelt thanks go to all of them.

Patricio Silva pushed me to transform my dissertation into a book. In this process, I acknowledge the help of Miriam Rabinovich for her incredible job in translating the manuscript. Michael Solis, Tamara Ramos, and Cristobal Montt helped me tremendously in collecting and organizing statistical material and editing the final version of the book. I am especially thankful to Routledge for their support and enthusiasm in this project.

Of course, I would have accomplished nothing without the constant support of my family. Throughout all of these years, I have been fortunate enough to have the full support of my parents and my brother and sister, who have always been for me role models of discipline, rectitude, and profound love for Latin America, even if they may not understand the reasons

for my interest in the world of crime and the police. Daniel Cancino has supported me in my work and my life in ways too numerous to detail. I thank him for his love and encouragement on the good and the rainy days. Finally, I am most indebted to Camila and Matías, my children, without whose patience and love I would have been unable to carry on with this work. Were it not for them, my efforts would have far less meaning.

Introduction

The feeling of insecurity is a little known phenomenon that has been only partially explored in the field of social sciences. However, it has a deep social, cultural, and economic impact and may even contribute to defining (or redefining) the very structures of the State. In Chile, insecurity has become a key element that characterizes forms of urban development, policy design, socialization policies, and government action. Further, the citizens have constructed a discourse related to this feeling of insecurity, which is most often directly associated with the possibility of being the victim of crime. This political citizen discourse has configured a social phenomenon that in recent years has acquired autonomy even from those factors that have been traditionally linked to its emergence and development.

MOTIVATION FOR THIS STUDY

Chile is a country where fear pervades. Several studies and analysts have shown the various ways in which fear is present in the daily lives of Chileans and the impact that this situation generates on subjectivity and the national culture (UNDP 1998; Dammert and Malone 2006). However, the multiplicity of interpretations generated in the last decade highlights the complexity of fear as a social phenomenon that should be interpreted from various and even contradictory standpoints. Perhaps the simplest interpretation would be to relate fear to the increase of criminality since the early 1990s (Foro de Expertos 2004; Frühling 2001a; Dammert and Lunecke 2002). It is worth noting, however, that the slowdown of crime rates since 2006 has not had the same impact on fear. On the contrary, fear's autonomy became even more evident when its intensity increased. This finding has made it possible to gradually withdraw this issue from the strictly political sphere, in which, depending on the ideological orientation of the analysts, fear was perceived either as the creation of mass media or as an expression of the growth of criminality and violence. This process of conceptual autonomy has made it possible to open up a space for analysis that calls for an improved definition and specificity of the theoretical foundations of fear and insecurity.

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The conceptualization of fear is no easy task, as proven by the multiple angles that are taken in international literature on the matter. Within the topic of fear as a general phenomenon, fear of crime has elicited most of the academic concern in recent decades because of its magnitude and presence in most of the countries in the world (Dammert and Malone 2006; Farrall, Jackson, and Gray 2006; Pantazis 2000). The massive spread of fear of crime has not gone hand in hand with an improved analysis of its source, social or cultural links and impacts. Rather, the initial efforts have concentrated on the description of the subjects who feel insecure, with a stress on their individual and collective characteristics. The absence of social analyses that permit the interpretation of citizen fear has generated public policy responses that do not acknowledge the depth of the cultural change implied by the daily pervasiveness of the world of fear. On the contrary, there is a tendency to look for mechanisms to set limits to fear, starting from the premise that it is a characteristic that can be eliminated or even regulated in citizens (Gabriel and Greeve 2003; Borja 2003).

The reductionistic way in which this problem has been tackled has made it even more difficult to comprehend and, in many respects, has restricted the possibility of understanding the sociocultural roots of fear. Therefore, it is crucial to develop an in-depth strategy for the interpretation of fear based on a theoretical triangulation defined as the assessment of the usefulness and capability to prove rival theories or hypotheses. This definition involves proving contradictory theories and hypotheses or alternative explanations for the same phenomenon by means of research. In general, a small set of hypotheses have so far oriented research, and the data obtained have originated only within their particular scope—a situation that prevents an empiric approach with multiple perspectives and interpretations. In cases in which the data disprove the central hypothesis, an approach that considers several other theoretical viewpoints may contribute to determining their relevance and usefulness. Each of these perspectives encourage criticism and debate from different theoretical dimensions, making it possible to confront theories against the same corpus of data, and imply the development of efficient criticism to keep in line with the scientific research method of the social sciences. Of course, all of this begins with the assumption that a corpus of empirical data is always socially constructed and open to multiple interpretations.

Regardless of context, there is at present a tendency towards excessive specialization in terms of both subject matter and technical aspects. However, the study of fear cannot be grounded solely on the purity of a given discipline, as this strategy may not be appropriate for the understanding of such a complex social phenomenon. All things considered, this book puts forward a theoretical revision that seeks to break away from or overcome boundaries between disciplines in order to deal with the issue of fear from the complementarity existing among disciplines and the necessary theoretical triangulation. Consequently, the conceptual framework takes care of the

need to generate a frame for understanding based on the sociology of fear in Chile and its relation to the sociocultural changes that have taken place in recent decades. There is no doubt that the Chilean process has important peculiarities within the regional context, but the proposed framework for analysis may be applicable to similar phenomena in different countries in Latin America.

The starting point is recognizing fear as a social construct ever present in individuals. In addition, in recent decades, because of globalization and its associated modernizing processes, fear has been magnified, with the consequent loss of what Giddens calls the “ontological safety” that refers to how individuals feel about their daily lives (2004). In this sense, fear appears specifically to characterize contemporary society as a “risk society” (Beck 1998), albeit with deep historical and cultural roots. In other words, today’s fear has some characteristics that are inherent to a specific social process in a given space and time in history.

In this vein, several authors have pointed out that the different fears affecting people at present are not only the result of the new lifestyles and modes of interacting with others, but they are also the expression of a cultural anxiety whose sources are related to the loss of collective roots particularly associated with urban life (Martín Barbero 2002; Bauman 2005; Borja 2003; Dammert and Malone 2003). Thus, fear is a phenomenon whose convolutions exceed mere perception or an individual’s cognitive process, as it includes sociopolitical and cultural elements. My specific object of study is the social phenomenon articulated as fear of crime, which is related to deeper processes that have to do with the modernization process undergone in Latin America and, with particular intensity, in Chile in recent decades. Given this context, the aim is to understand the figure of the offender or criminal as the objectification of an identifiable other, responding to a deeper anxiety related to cultural features of contemporary life that tend to intensify social stigmatization. From this perspective, anxiety as a concept becomes crucial in that it refers to a process other than fear; it is brought about by the non-visible threat of destruction of the self (Agamben 1998). Therefore, the current loss of real and symbolic roots operates as a trigger for anxiety, expressed in collective and individual ways. The way in which anxiety is objectified is in fear of the other, recognized as dangerous, different, and, above all, alien to our daily life reality.

Accordingly, it is possible to differentiate between two moments within the same reaction. First, there is the emergence of cultural anxiety, followed by its objectification as fear. In consequence, as Reguillo says, “fear is always an experience which is individually experienced, socially constructed and culturally shared” (2003: 189). Thus, standardized practices are constructed to respond to fear or, in other words, fear becomes an institution with norms of action, steps to follow, and relatively identified objects to be fought. In short, fear is understood as the concrete and individually experienced feeling directed to the other as an object, whose source may be found at a deeper

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level in the anguish of uprootedness. Although this definition is of a general theoretical nature, it is necessary to consider that the meaning of fear will depend on gender, context (home, neighborhood, district), emotion implied (fear, anger, sorrow, etc.), and discourse of fear (e.g., assertions that delinquency is becoming more serious in the neighborhood, etc.) (Hollway and Jefferson 2000).

It follows that if the other must be fought, given the threat that he/she/it implies, a question emerges: what is being threatened by this other, and why has this become a menace? The gap between crime occurrences and excessive concern about them may be the expression of a deeper phenomenon related to basic insecurities, i.e., those provoked by the weakening of social ties, the feeling of community, and, ultimately, the notion of order. In this case, as pointed out in a report by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP 1998), fear of crime can be considered as a metaphor for our social helplessness resulting from the loss of significant social and community connections. Thus, the perception of threat has to do with placing this objectified other in the figure of the criminal who, as such, reveals the social vulnerability of contemporary society. In other words, if there is a weakening of the notion of order, the commonplace disappears and is replaced by a threatening other.

At present, we live in a society characterized by risk: nothing seems to be in place and everything is at permanent risk of going wrong, spreading the resulting damage to a large part of the population, regardless of characteristics. The essential point is that risk has been configured as a condition inherent to modern societies constituted from insecurity and, consequently, this contributes to the installation of fear. It should be borne in mind, as mentioned earlier, that fear is not an abstract psychological category but acquires its context and sense within the framework of the society of risk. If we consider that the society of risk is the actual realization of modern times, the concept of citizenship as a permanent exercise in the life of a nation is undergoing a crisis. How can this crisis be defined? According to Arendt (1998) citizenship is said to be in crisis insofar as the social sphere has "colonized" the political sphere, as shown by the outcrop of bureaucracy and mass society. The public space, as an open space for the exercise of citizenship has been forgotten in the process of city construction. It is in this context that otherness implies a risk, since it appears as a threat that may destroy the self. Moreover, this threat indicates that the functionalism of modern urban planning has failed to appreciate the cultural and proper political dimension of the public space. In this sense, it is evident that a society that is characterized by fear, as well as by the constant perception of threat and risk has serious limitations to consolidate active citizenship and a strong civil society. Empirical evidence confirms this idea: rising levels of interpersonal distrust characterize citizen action at present. This has been accompanied by a decline in participation in initiatives associated with non-material goals (Brunner 1992; Campero 1998; Engel and Navia 2006; Lechner 2002).

This may serve as a backdrop for the detailed development of the conceptual framework for this book. The framework is based on three streams of interpretation of fear of crime that have not previously been considered together: quite the opposite, they have been developed in different contexts and at different times and have not been applied to the study of this phenomenon in Latin America or Chile. In the first place, the process of social and cultural change that has taken place in the last few decades is analyzed from the standpoint of Norbert Lechner and studies developed by the United Nations Development Programme. This interpretation formulated the hypothesis that the sociocultural change occurred in recent decades has brought about a generalized malaise, which in turn has been translated into fear (UNDP 1998; Tironi 2006; Dammert and Malone 2003; Salazar 2006; Bengoa 1994). This first form of interpretation resorts to a macrosocial approach, with special reference to the cultural and political processes that have taken place in Chile, in order to explain the relevant presence of citizen fear. The second form of interpretation is the approach based on the traditional analysis of fear of crime, understood as the fear of being the victim of a crime, or the probability analysis of becoming a victim (Dammert and Lunecke 2002; Arriagada and Godoy 1999; Cruz 1999; Gaviria and Pages 1999). This focuses on the description of those persons that present the highest levels of fear and the possible interpretation of this situation¹. The third form of interpretation is the theoretical development of sociology of emotion, which makes it possible to analyze fear in detail by means of a micro-social approach. The recently emerged sub-discipline of the sociology of emotion has developed a theoretical corpus in the United States and Europe, which complements the traditional approach for the interpretation of fear (Jackson et al. 2006; Gordon 1981; Gray et al. 2006; De Haan and Lador 2002).

METHODOLOGY

The selection of the research methodology that resulted in this book was no easy task. The subjective motivations of fear explicitly described in the theoretical framework necessitated a strategy that included the voices of the individual and collective subjects. This called for qualitative techniques to gather data about these multiple perceptions, to record similarities and differences in discourse and to detect features of the different groups. However, a qualitative analysis alone is not sufficient. For this reason, the qualitative research was complemented with a secondary quantitative analysis of data based on opinion and victimization surveys carried out in Chile. Overall, this methodological triangulation made it possible to record different angles of the problem and identify new areas that required analysis. The fieldwork was carried out in late 2007 and early 2008. Data processing took place in 2008. In turn, the quantitative data were gathered from different surveys carried out by institutions whose validity and rigor are

widely acknowledged. Multiple sources, cited in the following chapters, were consulted throughout the research. In all cases, the most recent results available were used, generally based on data from the year 2010.

QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES: ADVANTAGES AND LIMITATIONS

Two qualitative data gathering techniques were opted for: interviews and focus groups. The information thus amassed has permitted a more in-depth analysis of citizen discourse applicable to the main variables of interest. In order to cope with researcher bias—which in ways explicit or implicit attempts to make the data fit the researcher’s theoretical preconceptions—and with the reactivity or influence produced in the interpersonal relation of the interview, a triangulation method was applied. This triangulation should be understood as the collection of data from a wide variety of individuals and situations, through the use of a variety of techniques. Furthermore, this research used feedback procedures by means of which indirect sources made it possible to corroborate the information obtained from direct sources. In this case the data were compared to results of descriptive studies on fear that had been previously carried out.

The individual interview is one of the most widely used techniques in qualitative methodology, as it permits significant personal interaction between the “interviewer subject” and the “interviewee subject” (Ortí 1986). In its most psychologistic definition, an “in-depth interview” is made up by “repeated face-to-face encounters between researcher and informants directed toward understanding the informants’ prospects about their lives, experiences or situations, expressed in their own words” (Taylor and Bogdan 1987). A social phenomena such as fear of crime is best characterized by a general interview that connects multiples issues of concern. Those that were interviewed discussed their victimization experiences, their knowledge about the criminal problem, and the importance of fear in their daily routines.

Beyond the particular characteristics of each type of interview, the basis for all of them is a conversation between peers, in which the formal mediation of the questions should be minimal. In that sense, I concentrate my role not solely to get answers, but to learn about which questions to ask and how to ask them. I did even rephrase the questions when the dialogue was generated, in which case there was a constant switch of addressee into addresser and vice versa. The interviews allowed me to study relatively large number of people in a brief period of time and record individual experiences if they express social constructs of the problem. Hence, within the sociological framework of this research, the methodological function of the interview is “the reproduction of the (conscious and unconscious) motivational discourse of a typical personality in a well-determined social situation and/or before social objects that (instead) are only relatively defined” (Ortí 1986).

There are some limitations of using this type of interview. In the first place, as a qualitative interview is an interaction between two people, the researcher must be fully aware of the reciprocal influence that takes place in a conversation, which may generate bias in the responses. Also, as the data is gathered from discourse, they may have incorporated the falsifications, inconsistencies, and distortions that characterize any verbal exchange. And, last, the interviewers do not observe the interviewees directly in their day-to-day context. In order to tackle this possible bias the interviews were done by a group of young researchers that help me throughout the process. Allowing the voices of those interviewed to flourish and express in full.

The second tool used to gather information was focus groups that allows gathering data through the interaction developed by a group on a topic defined by the researcher, aimed at reaching a consensus. To attain this aim, it is sometimes necessary to have more than one meeting with the same group. In the words of Ortí (1986), “the aim of the group meeting is essentially pragmatic, macro-sociological and external to the group: the group is relevant only as the medium of expression of social ideologies, as a pertinent production unit of ideological discourses.” Therefore, in the group discussion method, regardless of reaching or failing to reach a consensus on a given issue, what is at play is the very conception of discourse, i.e., the practice of the production of signification. This can also be applied to focus groups. Therefore, the process of gathering opinions has evident methodological implications in that the researcher faces the challenge of reconstructing a system of significations from which definitions, typifications, stereotypes, metaphors, and other elements can be derived from the discourse performance.

The main advantage of this technique is that expressed group discourse that responds to socially constructed visions—be they related to gender, age, or economic status—permits the researcher to overcome the partiality of personal interviews. Second, the group permits the emergence—with all its contradictions, ambiguities, and nuances—of the basic motivational structure of what is called as collective subjectivity by most sociologists. A third advantage of this technique is that by sparking group discussion about an issue as debatable as crime or insecurity encourages the formation of a discourse that is itself much more critical, coherent, and consistent: in an interview the reactive effect is stronger, and therefore, there is a tendency to give a politically correct answer or, depending on the possibilities offered, there may be a lack of consistency between the way in which those topics are seen and understood in daily life and what is said in the conversation of the focal group.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

As for the type of sampling, given that the aim of this book is to show and compare the manifestations of fear in socially differentiated groups,

the research opted for intentional stratified non-probability sampling. In addition, a significant number of respondents were considered to attain a wide range of variability on the dimensions of interest of the phenomenon explored. Although the non-probability design of the sampling may restrict the generalization of the results to the whole of the population, this does not detract from the potential merit of the method. On the contrary, by aiming at an improved understanding of fear, the qualitative results will make it possible to define concepts and indicators, establish relationships, and find the sense that the social actors (of certain social characteristics) give to the hypotheses suggested. As a consequence, 78 interviews and 18 focus group meetings were carried out in the Metropolitan Region of Santiago. The population was divided using three criteria: gender, age, and socioeconomic levels. Age groups were organized in three categories: 18–29, 30–49, and 50 years old and more. Furthermore, the socioeconomic classification divides the population into ABC1 or upper segment; C2–C3 or middle segment; D–E or lower segment. This classification is used in opinion polls and is based on possession of certain goods such as color TV, telephone, or car; sector of residence; and other variables.

Respondents were selected by intentional stratified sampling, according to the parameters defined by the population variables and the qualitative methodology opted for, the aim of which is not statistical random sampling but information saturation. In this case, the number of respondents was determined in advance, in proportion to the characteristics defined. To discriminate between economic levels, the research used databases segmented by socioeconomic group, including district of residence, occupation and/or income level, and education level. Next, there was a selection by sex and age group of subjects who met the defined requirements and who were willing to be interviewed in-depth. Finally, after the groups were defined, my team and I carried out 78 personal interviews of an approximate duration of 30 to 45 minutes at the respondents' workplace or place of residence. In some cases, more than one interview was necessary to complete the interview scheme.

The reason invoked to invite participation was the issue of citizen security, with no additional information on specific objectives. Given the importance of this issue for the population, in almost all the initial contacts and later in the interviews, the response was positive. Discourse flowed smoothly and all the topics elicited some kind of response, which was why there was no need for a significant increase in number of people contacted.

As for the selection of the focus group members, we opted for intentional stratified sampling and used the same selection and contact method. In addition, we considered the existence of pure registers, that is, people who had not taken part in a poll using a similar methodology. As part of the invitation and in the initial contact, we gave a general idea of the topics that would be dealt with at the meeting, and we emphasized their social aspects given that, in general, people are tired of being invited to meetings related

to the marketing of brands or products. The invitation focused on topics of general interest, citizen security, and, particularly, the role of mass media.

The degree of interest shown by the prospective participants and the effectiveness of the invitation were quite striking. The focus group meetings took between one and two hours. With respect to participation, most of the respondents showed a serious interest in talking about their experiences and giving their opinions on the issues dealt with. The broad nature of the issue became evident with the multiplicity of sub-issues and problems that arose in the conversation, all of which posed significant challenges to the methodology. The topics ranged from structural situations of inequality, fragmentation, and poverty to individual situations of drug use and even negligence on the part of some individuals.

QUANTITATIVE SECONDARY INFORMATION

In order to complement the information gathered from citizen discourse, I analyzed several opinion polls and the national survey on victimization with the latest available information (2010 in most cases). The surveys analyzed have received national and international recognition (Dammert, Ruz, and Salazar 2008) on account of the quality of their samples, and the rigor and independence of their results. Thus, each of the chapters is complemented with secondary information from three main sources: Latinobarómetro, Barómetro de las Américas, and the National Urban Survey on Citizen Security. The first source² is a survey that has been carried out since 1995, involving over 19,000 interviews in 18 countries in Latin America. The data gathered in the different countries permits the development of comparative and trend analyses of different realities. Although Latinobarómetro does not have a specific section dealing with fear or insecurity, in the latest versions several of the questions have been refined to gain in specificity and permit a more complex level of analysis. The second opinion poll is Barómetro de las Américas³. Although it focuses on the study of democratic values, ever since its first version in 2004 it has included multiple questions related to insecurity in its different dimensions. The latest version (2010), involved 23 countries and over 36,000 interviews.

Finally, the National Urban Survey on Citizen Security (ENUSC in Spanish)⁴ undertaken by the National Statistics Institute with the collaboration of the Ministry of the Interior of Chile is one of the best tools for the analysis of the phenomena of victimization and fear in the country. This survey was carried out in five different years. Its latest version (2010) is part of an ongoing process of annual development, with a questionnaire that was specifically defined for this purpose and compared with international surveys on citizen security. The latest survey involved over 25,000 home interviews, which represent 101 municipal districts in the country.

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK

This book is organized in eight chapters that deal with a specific issue. Thus, the text permits a transversal reading, but it also seeks to establish partial argumentations that may shed light on the complexities of each of the topics dealt with. The first two chapters set the national scene and provide the conceptual framework for this research. Chapter 1 presents in a succinct but explicit way the changes that have occurred in Chile in recent decades, marked by the return to democracy in the early 1990s after seventeen years of military dictatorship. The multiple processes of cultural, economic, and social transformation during that time have crystallized into a new outlook for the country. There is no doubt that insecurity in its broadest sense has become a key subject of the analysis of the current situation and the changes undergone in the Chilean society. Chapter 2 focuses on fear as a social phenomenon and a category for analysis. Drawing from different traditions for interpreting insecurity, the chapter describes a conceptual framework based on two major conceptions. On the one hand, there is insecurity as a phenomenon arising from belated modernity in Chile, an increasingly privatized country with high levels of social distrust. On the other hand, there is insecurity understood as an emotion and, consequently, as a fundamental component of individual and social performance. Both streams have been developed in-depth in the national and international literature respectively, but this is undoubtedly the first time that a unified frame for analysis has been produced.

Chapters 3 and 4 outline the situation of crime, insecurity, and public policies in Chile and in other Latin American countries. Chapter 3 demonstrates the recent emergence of this phenomenon—on which Chile has been compiling quality information since the early years of this decade—and refer to the constraints preventing a comparative analysis of the problem of fear. In addition, Chapter 4 reviews public security policies developed in the last few decades. Their wide variety in range and emphasis shows the importance of the problem, as well as the role that fear and insecurity play in the redefinition of citizenship and politics in contemporary Chile.

Chapter 5 zooms in on one of the main transformation processes that have taken place in Chile and, particularly, in its capital city, Santiago, in recent decades and its relation with the increase in citizen insecurity. In this new urban scheme, the interrelation between the feeling of fear and reality can be seen clearly because Santiago and other cities in Chile are marked by fragmentation and stigmatization. This has become fertile ground for the consolidation of a suspicious attitude that presumes guilt in the most vulnerable and unknown segments of society. This chapter shows in a clear way the emergence and consolidation of the other, differentiated by its socioeconomic affiliation and territorial location in the urban scene.

Chapter 6 deals with the increased citizen distrust of institutions, the State's capacity to solve certain fundamental concerns, and the weakening

of social ties and interpersonal relations. On the basis of quantitative and qualitative information, the general panorama is described as colored by high levels of distrust just beginning to be translated into a discourse that is close to authoritarianism in its claims for increased levels of punishment, police presence, and a strong public response to cases that generate insecurity in the population. In its last section, this chapter refers to the role that mass media have played in the consolidation and even growth of insecurity. This hypothesis has been extensively developed at a theoretical level, but as the empirical evidence has shown mixed results, it should be tackled from citizen discourse.

There is no doubt that in order to understand the phenomenon of fear, a brief comparative and contrastive regional analysis of the information available is necessary. Chapter 7 presents a general overview of the security panorama in Latin America with specific emphasis on the issues analyzed in previous chapters for the Chilean case.

In the last chapter, the book presents some conclusions about the role played by the different factors analyzed and the need to produce improved conceptual frameworks to make it possible to make progress in the interpretation of one of the most distinct and still enigmatic features of current life, namely, fear.

1 Democracy, Modernity, and Fear in Contemporary Chile

Chile has been through a sea of changes in the last three decades. After the military dictatorship, the country went through a transition process based on a series of agreements that encouraged economic and political stability. This was accompanied by profound shifts in economic policy that were necessary to guarantee a liberal economy in which the State played a smaller or even subsidiary role.

In order to understand the Chilean modernization process, the social, political, economic, and cultural changes that have taken place in Chilean society in recent decades must be analyzed. The return to democracy brought multiple challenges and a still pending agenda on inclusion, protection, and equality in a society marked by deep cleavages that persist to this day.

Fear appears to be a characteristic of this modernity in which doubt and uncertainty seem to prevail over feelings of safety and security that are necessary for people to live peacefully on the individual and collective levels. In this chapter I examine the history of individual and collective transformations that have taken place in Chile in recent years. A brief description that depicts a process where political stability was considered key to redemocratization and many important reforms were not included in the agenda to allow democracy to fully develop.

MALaise IN DEMOCRACY: FEAR AND POLITICS IN CHILE

In the mid-1990s several analysts pointed out that modernity and the modernization processes in Chile bore no relation with the subjectivity of the people. A different form of social malaise developed in Chile, characterized by the fact that “the people do not perceive themselves either as the subject of modernization, which appears to gather strength behind their backs, or as the beneficiaries of the new opportunities” (Lechner 2002). This scenario can be observed in the swift, top-down approach that the dictatorship imposed on the modernization process. There is no doubt that the restructuring was profound and rapid, and that it generated expectations that have yet to be met in most areas. Social movements developed

during the year 2011 showed that issues such as quality of education are still long-term goals. In fact, at these social movements took the streets of Santiago by a storm and gained public support since issues of justice, public education and equality for all have been at the center of the agenda.

Furthermore, this malaise embodies the typical expression of modernity in Chile, which does not differ substantially from other national processes in the rest of Latin America (Brunner 1992). This is not to suggest a “situation of exceptionality” in the case of Chile, but rather a certain degree of specificity within a global process that has had an impact on the region as a whole.

The Relevance of Social Capital

The social capital approach suggests that the problem lies in the re-composition of a collective capable of affecting the operation of the different functional systems. Thus, it appraises the social opportunities and constraints in two main spheres: the dreams and ambitions of Chileans and the transformation of their sociability by means of social capital. This observation can be understood through the difficulty that people have expressing their dreams individually or voicing common aspirations as opposed to the effortless manner in which they complain. Therefore, what one group ultimately shares is not hope, but rather hopelessness (Lechner 2002). What is more, the content of the aspirations refers mainly to the personal sphere. People no longer seek to “change the world,” but rather to “change their lives,” which does away with the possibility of a future, let alone a collective future. This individualization of goals also applies to what people expect and desire from politics, understood as a space restricted to a select few who are responsible for ensuring the livelihood of others.¹

This approach assigns a special role to social capital and coincides with the thoughts of Putnam (1993) when he argues that relations of personal trust can generate a social or generalized trust when reciprocity norms and civic commitment networks prevail. Such norms and networks are understood as the cornerstones underpinning social capital. In the case of Chile, the most serious risks to social capital are related to the institutional context: low confidence in the institutions, a pervasive perception of inequality before the law, and a relative indifference to the democratic order (Engel and Navia 2006). As for social capital understood as a resource, this refers to the opportunity for accumulation, which is concentrated and segmented (Paras 2003; Buonanno et al. 2006; Savage and Kanazawa 2002). Accordingly, it is possible to assume that there is unequal distribution of social capital based on socioeconomic group, i.e., the higher the education and income level, the larger the social capital share. Last, in historical terms, although there is a reduction in levels of affiliation to social organizations relative to the 1980s, there has been an increase of membership in associations for specific purposes and immediate aims, as well as weak links of a more expressive nature. This ratifies

the hypothesis that relations of civic trust and commitment are changing (Paras 2003; Dammert and Malone 2003).

However, it is impossible to ignore the presence of negative social capital (Browning, Dietz, and Feinberg 2000), which quite often operates effectively in the consolidation of disadvantaged social groups. As a matter of fact, in many cases the aims of such groups have to do with facilitating or carrying out criminal actions that bring about high level of fear in the people around them. For this reason, it is essential to make progress in the qualification of the factors that impinge on the construction and orientation of social capital within the framework of the rule of law.

Malaise and Democracy

Researchers that explore the topic of civic malaise have been analyzing why people feel ill-at-ease in democracy. In an attempt to explain why in the year 2001 only 50 percent of the people surveyed said that they preferred democracy as a political system in Latin America and why the levels of confidence that a democratic government system will make Chile become a developed country dropped from 72 percent in 2003 to 61 percent in 2006 (UNDP 2000).

It is worth noting that in neither of these two cases is it possible to transfer the discontent about the economic situation and the government to the valuation of democracy, given that the macroeconomic indicators of the country show that despite the post-Asian-crisis economic slowdown, Chile has steadily shown the best economic indicators in its history. However, inequality and income distribution have still not been tackled in an effective way. This originates the hypothesis that this mismatch may be the result of cultural changes, that is, changes that have taken place in the way in which, in practice, the people live together without there being a parallel reformulation of the collective representations of society (Lechner 2002; Paramio 2002).

In addition, discontent with the political system, with the self-referential dynamics of the political parties, endogamy and corruption, has contributed to this malaise (Valenzuela and Dammert 2006). Additionally, people perceive the changes that involve one or more taking something away from them, which confirms the feeling that the process of transition has failed to generate a forward-looking or meaningful vision that will make people feel identified with its process: they undergo the changes but fail to understand their underlying reasons. Thus, helplessness, dereliction, and impotence are the main feelings shared by the population. There is a process of dual dissociation, described by Lechner as follows: on the one hand, these people do not consider the changes as their own and feel alien to the social process because, on the other hand, they do not feel like citizens. They do not perceive themselves as participants in a democracy, that is, in a decision-taking process about the course of the changes. Therefore they are unable

to discover the relationship between the state of the country and their daily lives. Given this, the question that arises is whether democracy contributes to the production of social meanings that may allow the diversity of individual experiences to formulate a collective identity that articulates the meanings that may operate as mediators between the individual and the dynamics of the functional systems (Gallego 2002).

On the level of imagery, there has been a weakening of the construct of “us,” whose referent used to be the State, particularly in education and public health. Consequently, it has contributed to the fragility of the national identity and it has also prevented the reconstruction of a collective memory, hindering the formation of an us-centered discourse (Salazar 2005). For this reason, the collective imagery of the nation and democracy appears to be valid only for the group of individuals that feel integrated within social and political life. On the other side of the spectrum, those who feel excluded tend to ignore the national and civic us. The outlook seems bleaker than it actually is as the proliferation of technologies and the development of specific cause-based agendas have encouraged the emergence of multiple citizen groups with organization and convening power. Although in many cases these are sporadic processes, the population—particularly the young—is re-assigning significance to the public space and social capital on a daily basis.

There is no doubt that the changes that have occurred in the last three decades have produced mutations in our mental maps. The interpretive keys of the past have lost their validity and the new codes have not yet become consolidated. For example, there has been a change in the conception of time, with people questioning the idea of a future in which nothing seems to last and everything is diluted into a permanent continuous present (Bauman 2005: 142, 143). There has also been a change in the disintegration of the social space—in terms of socioeconomic inequality and social distances—and in difficulties related to capacity for action and forward-looking leadership of the political power, which has been assigned responsibilities that the new world model prevents it from carrying out. Although this last demand made to the political power does not take into account the current role and functions of the State, it is still valid as it expresses a need for protection and leadership that reflects the existing contradictions between the basic notions to deal with the social reality. In this sense, we are at what Bauman calls a “postpanoptic” stage, in which what matters is that the people that handle the power of the least volatile partners of the relationship can at any time become out of reach and totally inaccessible (2006: 16). This contextual backdrop makes it possible to observe an malaise regarding politics, expressed mainly through the lack of alternatives, which in turn reflects the erosion of cognitive maps. This situation does not however imply an active protest against a given state of affairs, but rather the reaction against a reality that appears unintelligible and not dependent on human will. In the absence of interpretive keys that allow for

the verbalization of inconsistency, there only remains a vague malaise that is often left unexpressed.

Fears

The foregoing considerations point to a context in which fear becomes a fact of daily life. In the mid-1980s, many Chilean researchers were of the opinion that democracy will not eliminate fear and, what is more, the idea of a society without fears must be understood as a utopia. Further analysis highlighted that fear can be understood in a life context in which the order has been questioned, in which the subject confronts a future with no prospects and in which anything goes. This allows for the presentation of the initial thesis that fear of crime is the most visible aspect of a more diffuse apprehension characterized by being afraid of losing one's individual identity, social roots, and collective being. This thesis was further reinforced in a UNDP report (1998) and was later empirically verified in a study carried out by Dammert and Malone (2003). The analysis confirmed that most Chileans experienced feelings of general helplessness about losing their jobs or poor health care coverage and that such concerns were habitual. This is not exclusive to the case of Chile: a study carried out by Farrall, Jackson, and Gray (2006: 32) concluded that the people who implement the language of fear and crime often do so as an excuse to communicate other fears that are not as easy to express.

Fear of the other is understood as a form of explicitly voicing other social fears that have their own history. Thus, their interpretation and analysis call for a review of the historical processes that have occurred in Chile, the form in which memory has been sorted out and the answers given to the violent processes experienced in the past. For example, the image of the "internal enemy," which in the 1970s and 1980s was personified by the extremist, has nowadays come to be embodied by the delinquent. There is some cause for concern in this direct transfer between two completely different processes that appeal to similar ways of perceiving one's social life.²

There is no doubt that fear has a direct connection to the collective in which people live. Lechner goes even further and says that the size of the fear is inversely proportional to the size of the "us" (2002: 47). Therefore, the slow but steady process of limiting the social spaces of people has a negative impact on their development as true citizens, given that it reinforces the processes of privatization of the public space and increases interpersonal distrust. In addition, this malaise about democracy is associated with a feeling of exclusion from society, and especially, from things that are considered a central part of social success. Paradoxically, the increase of access to education, health coverage, and improvement in the social security system has not been accompanied by an improved perception on the part of citizens of the real capacity to access these social services. On the contrary, the perception is that there is a strong possibility of becoming excluded, which spreads a

general feeling of fear and anxiety in the population. Evidence shows that this social anxiety is strongly related to a central element of the Latin American and Chilean development model, namely, inequality. Similarly, there exists in Chile a pervasive perception that the actual alternatives to access these benefits are exclusively associated with inclusion in or access to the upper socioeconomic classes. This implies that the process of societal modernization has not taken place in an equitable way, but has rather benefitted some in an excessive way, to the detriment of others (Valenzuela and Dammert 2006; Engel and Navia 2006).

In turn, the social response was not direct confrontation with the problem, but its removal to the private sphere, which has generated a process of naturalization of the changes and characteristics of the system (Bourdieu 1998). This is a crucial point, as the “community” seems to disappear in its foundational design and become a social aggregate of individuals attempting to cater for their main needs. In addition, this situation shows the crisis of political representation that the country is undergoing and, in addition, the so-called “symbolic and cultural Chilean crisis” (Lechner 2002). In this vein, during the government of President Bachelet (2006–2010) some signs of citizen action began to appear, as members of civil society verbalized their aspirations and criticisms in a public way (Valenzuela and Dammert 2006).

It is striking that the initial perception of failure or problem during this period coincided with the demonstrations of school children against the perceived exclusiveness of the educational system. In the political sphere, dissension, or opinions that differ are regarded as disruptive and even negative for democracy. This perception was not shared by the voters who in late 2009 manifested themselves openly for a political turnover and new faces and practices in the performance of politics.

During President Sebastian Piñera’s administration the presence of riots and social movements have become more prominent throughout the country. There is still little understanding of this phenomenon but the general perception that Chileans are no longer conformed to the model and that they are requesting more benefits for the middle and lower class is evident.

Therefore, the approach to analysis identifies a fear that is more diffuse and associated with finding no sense in life. In the present social context, which rewards success—translated mainly into access to material goods—ordinary life is characterized by stress and long working hours (Tironi 2006). Social life is lived as a type of turmoil in which the ultimate objective is not clear to those suffering its consequences. The short-term goals especially related to tangible benefits are easily identified. As in the risk society depicted by Beck (1998), society today can be characterized by the increase in risk and, consequently, the near impossibility of limiting uncertainty by means of technological advances or even ideological definitions. Thus, Chileans seem to have climbed onto a treadmill, along a road going nowhere, in which the end is justified by the means, i.e., the road is privileged over the final destination. There is no doubt that this situation

generates uncertainty and anxiety in the people, who do not have a clear idea of the future being thus constructed and also feel that they play no part in such construction.

Cultural interpretations are also associated with institutional approaches, which despite recognizing the relevance of the subject's actions still focus on the institutional framework. In a following section of the book a brief description of the institutional perspective based on an examination of the criminal justice system will be furthered discussed.

CRIME: THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE STRUCTURAL

Penal welfare is one of the paradigms in the organization and operation of the penal system in the welfare State structure and is part of its social and economic policies. Its period of splendor—the mid-20th century—was one in which the criminal policy was subordinated to the ideal of rehabilitation rather than to the punishment of the lawbreaker. This originated a structure, principles, laws, practices, and operators in which the actors of the traditional justice system were relegated from the center of the penal sphere and “prison in general was regarded as counter-productive from the point of view of reform and correction of the individual” (Garland 2001: 82).

Another feature of this period is the conviction that knowledge of criminology is the way to understand crime. This produced mechanisms to facilitate the performance of operators, and a significant number of social experts on crime. Penal measures were not the exclusive province of specialists, and the citizens' expectations were partially considered in the process. For this reason it was necessary to attempt to strike a balance between the demands for punishment for the more serious offenses and the opinion of the specialists in each particular case. The intervention of politicians and the opinion of the citizens in the everyday aspects of penal justice were minimal because this was believed to be a strictly technical issue. Thus, the word of the specialists prevailed, although not devoid of conflict with the criminal justice institutions. The focus of action for criminology was the “psychopath offender” or “criminally insane,” that is, criminals that are misfits and require assistance from the system for their correction.

In short, penal welfare was made up of a series of elements: “fundamental sociopolitical assumptions, a series of cultural compromises, and a given form of criminological knowledge” (Garland 2001: 87), with its main axiom being that the reduction in crime is a consequence of social reform and economic growth. The State has a dual role and is responsible not only for security and the punishment and control of crime, but also for the reform and welfare of offenders.

The consolidation of neoliberalism in the economy, combined with a conservative vision of values (Garland 2001; Reiner 2007; O'Malley 2006; Wacquant 2000) encouraged a social order that privileged the role of the

market and individual responsibility, leaving it to the State to govern by means of the law, morals, discipline, and order. Consequently, penal justice and criminal policy have developed a mainly authoritarian and punitive orientation that conceives of crime as part of the moral decadence of society, equivalent to “a return to the constraints, a reintroduction of controls, an attempt to steer an unruly world” (Garland 2001: 316).

Wacquant (2000) interprets this process as a weakening of the social role of the State, in contrast with the emergence of the penal State, mainly due to an increase in the security and penal justice budget to the consequent detriment of the social services traditionally associated with the Welfare State. Crime becomes a fact of individual responsibility, and therefore the State must act through social control mechanisms emphasizing punitiveness, coercion, and paternalism to form good citizens. This author suggests that the social policy no longer has the function of reforming society, but rather of “supervising life” (2000: 48) as a fundamental condition for order. To this end, there is a reinforcement of mechanisms such as increased police force, privatization of jails, and focus on penalty.

Thus, criminology of retaliation (Melossi 2006) emerged in the 1990s in the United States and England as a reaction of the more conservative sectors seeking a reunification of society under the concept of order. This vision corresponds to a given social and cultural context, which confronts the bad morality, generated by the so-called underclass by means of exclusion, penalty, and massive incarceration to protect society from those considered dangerous. Thus, the degree of repression of policies becomes an indicator of success and effectiveness in the fight against to the so-called public enemy.

In turn, within the context of the risk society, the development of a series of mechanisms oriented to the management of uncertainty has been promoted and there has been a change of approach in criminal policy with the emergence of the actuarial dimension, which favors the probabilistic calculation and statistical distribution of risk to generate categories that may permit the management of crime (Rosal 2009). In Chile, as in many other countries of the world there is a profound need for security, order, and peace, combined with the control of randomness in each culture and, thus, actuarial measures seek to manage uncertainty and the probability of the occurrence of crime.

The security policies promoted from a neoliberal and conservative axis have imposed a new way of tackling crime and criminality, in which there is a “programmatic combination of privatized prudentialism and punitive sovereignty” (O’Malley 2006: 76). This has resulted in the construction of a society of security in which the political and the social dimension are articulated on the basis of a common goal: risk management and control of crime. These initiatives are not exclusive to conservative spheres. Many governments of more progressive leanings, such as the ones in England and Australia, have also developed policies of this type. One of the mechanisms

that embody this vision is situational prevention, in which the analysis favors the individualization of the actions that originate a crime over the social aspects that may condition its appearance. Therefore, the emphasis falls on the reduction of prospective targets—people or places—that might be the object of crime.

Chilean public policies were not an exception. On the contrary, as will be discussed later on this book left wing governments designed and implemented policies specially focused on punishment and deterrence.

This context promotes the development of individual responsibility to protect oneself from crime, and gives origin to double victimization, a process that reduces civic freedom and increases control in order to deal with crime. This is accompanied by the implementation of a series of techniques oriented towards the protection of persons and places—public or private—so as to reduce the possibility of victimization. Mechanisms such as private guards, electronic surveillance, or urban design are constant reminders of the latent risk and generate an impact that varies in form and magnitude on the citizens' perception of insecurity. The result of this has been a vicious circle in which the increased precautions feed back on insecurity and in turn generate the need for increased protection.

The main criticism of penal welfare made by privatized prudentialism is its failure, as shown by the increase in crime rates in the whole world and, particularly, in the United States and England. This is compounded by its reduced efficiency in terms of the causal and social aspects of crime. According to O'Malley, there is a "discourse of failure" bias in the criticism of security policies, because the high degree of politization of this issue generates constant tensions between the different players. In addition, the way in which the efficiency and effectiveness of policies is measured is still not well defined (Dammert, Ruz, and Salazar 2008). In fact, there is not enough background information in Latin America on criminality diagnoses and pertinent follow-ups to suitably support statements on the effects and quality of the implemented policies.

THE CULTURE OF CRIME CONTROL AND THE EMERGENCE OF PENAL POPULISM

How much crime is a society willing to put up with? There is a tendency to forget that conflict and crime are a consubstantial part of society and that the proposals for their elimination have few possibilities of success. When Foucault (2007) reflects on how to keep crime within an acceptable range to permit the optimal functioning of society in a given social and economic framework, he puts his finger on one of the critical knots of the current debate. That line of thought focuses on power as the main element that should be analyzed in order to understand the way it operates and to design several measures with which to control crime.

One such mechanism is to stipulate a norm that determines what is allowed/forbidden, listing a series of proscribed actions to which a penalty is assigned. A second mechanism is the law, complemented by surveillance and correction measures, i.e., disciplinary mechanisms inherent to penal welfarism, such as the diagnoses required in order to define the possibilities of reinsertion and rehabilitation. A third and subsequent mechanism is the incorporation of safety measures in which the offense is always something likely to happen, and for this reason it is necessary to consider the calculation of costs and of a tolerable average. These measures are applied to the rest of the population, and their aim is to reduce the likelihood of the offenses happening again. They are not applied to the lawbreaker, but to generating a corrective effect on the rest of society.

The role of the State is to keep criminality at bay and prevent it from becoming a threat to the authority and to the citizens whose interests the State must watch over. Because of this, crime control is one of the central issues of public safety and penal justice policies: the police have the power conferred upon them by the State to maintain public order through the legitimate use of force. In the penal justice system uncertainty and inefficacy abounds because of the existence of criteria that define the type of criminal activities to be persecuted—generally the acts that most affect citizens. Thus, only in a small percentage of the total number of offenses that takes place is it possible to identify the culprits, and only in an even lesser percentage is it possible to arrive at some kind of conviction. For that reason invoking a greater degree of certainty and effectiveness of the sentences is equivalent only to demanding an increase of the symbolic value of repression from a viewpoint of general prevention. Effectiveness would be seen not as the result of an improvement in the management processes but of enhanced control by means of penalty.

Because of this, the actual functioning of the penal justice system comes into tension with the technocratic vision that calls for greater operative effectiveness and demands an increase in punitiveness. Thus, the sentence and the punishment applied become performance indicators that outrank the quality of justice that the system doles out. Uncertainty and inefficiency may be the elements that explain the constant questioning of the penal justice system by politicians and the civil society.

In turn, the social demand for increased punishment is based on the perception that offenses are on the rise, as is impunity, combined with the feeling that the social order is being threatened and that crime goes unpenalized. Thus, penalty and control reappear as the solutions likely to preserve the social order by means of authoritarian reassurance. These solutions place the onus on the criminal justice institutions, based on the assumption that unpenalized criminality is a problem that concerns mainly those bodies.

There are different cultural, social, political, and even psychological explanations for the subjects' need for protection. Opinion polls show that

even in countries where the levels of distrust towards the police are very high, the population claims for an increased police presence. Similarly, even acknowledging the fact that prisons operates more as schools for crime than as places for rehabilitation, the population demands more punishments involving incarceration even for minor offenses. The demand for increased control has become one of the key factors in the development of strategies to manage uncertainty and fear in contemporary societies.

It goes without saying that the criminal justice system has several characteristics that make it different from the other sectors of the State. As suggested by Bottoms (1995), there are three particularly crucial aspects to understand how it operates. The first one manifests the tension between fair punishment and human rights. There are times when this ratio shows asymmetries due to the very definition of both concepts since the characterization of what society considers fair punishment has varied significantly in the last few decades. In fact, the continuous changes in the severity of the punishments imposed by law in the whole of Latin America illustrate this process in which human rights—as principles of the rule of law—are permanently appealed to and the object of analysis in a region marked by their constant violation.

The second aspect that characterizes the criminal justice system at present is the evident emphasis on management and administration. There are operative mechanisms and discourses that stress a systemic, user-oriented, and actuarial logic, this last mechanism attempting to control risk by means of probabilities. This has resulted in reduced attention being paid to elements of justice and increased attention being paid to efficiency and efficacy. This has been accompanied by incentives to improve the achievement indicators even when they may not go hand in hand with an increase in the quality of justice.

Finally, the third aspect is the development of clientelism incorporated as a form of considering citizen opinion in the criminal justice process, with an aim to replicate concepts typical of the private sector in the public administration. Although these three aspects do not account by themselves for the changes in crime control initiatives, they have played an important role in the definition of policies and, consequently, in State interventions that most of the countries in the region intend to implement.

The link between the political sphere and penal sanction responds to a series of assumptions. In the first place, there is the perception that an increase in punishment has direct effects on the reduction of crime rates, mainly due to the dissuasive effect of the possibility of the offender being incarcerated. In the second place, strong sanctions are believed to contribute to the strengthening of the moral consensus against acts that violate the law, especially on dealing with the moral panic that becomes widespread in the case of violent or sex- or drug-related crimes, or in the case of actions that deviate from or subvert the public order. Finally, there is an electoral impact in appearing to be strongly against crime, as confirmed by Garland

when he analyzes several national contexts: "(T)he populist tendency in contemporary criminal policy is, to some extent, a political posture or tactic adapted to attain short term electoral advantages. As such, this can be rapidly reverted if the 'popular' initiatives no longer coincide with the calculations of political benefit" (2001: 282).

Attunement between the demands of public opinion and what the policy offers should be direct. Cases in which simplistic policies are proposed, regardless of their true relevance, generate a problem that Roberts identified when he said that "populist politicians seek to gain votes without considering their effects" (2002: 5). Thus, the combination of public anxiety and political opportunism is a key factor to explain the emphasis on punishment, as anything redolent of light-handedness or permissiveness is immediately rejected. On an institutional plane, the role of the political opposition centers more on criticism than on proposing innovative or alternative solutions. The rationale of this political game is to show that the opponent in power is not quite as strong-handed as he or she professes to be, thus, opening a window for attack during the electoral terms.

The consequences of policy initiatives based on the thermometer of public opinion can be varied. They are positive when the expected objectives are attained, although they may involve low levels of public spending efficiency; they are negative when the policies that the public opinion finds attractive are low on effectiveness or even generate unwanted externalities. Thus, one of the paradoxes of populist security policies is the increase in public spending, in contrast with the decline in effectiveness or, what is worse, the lack of information about the effects of the initiatives on violence and criminal activity.

Similarly, according to Roberts (2002), there are three essential elements that explain penal populism. The first one is the politicians' excessive concern for the electorate's feelings, as a tool to relate to public opinion. The second is the general public's tendency to emphasize the simplistic assumptions on violence and criminality, without resort to suitable data-gathering methodologies. Last, the third element has to do with the politicians' indifference to the effects caused by the measures implemented, especially those that result in stronger controls and sanctions.

The factors that explain the growth of penal populism form part of the changes that society as a whole has undergone in recent decades. They are characterized as "a political explosion or changes in the feelings of a community, [in which] the politicians are much more reactive and respond promptly to the crises provoked by strong-impact crimes and mass media coverage" (Roberts 2002: 61). In many of these contexts this has not necessarily been a response to the increase in crime indices, but rather a reaction to the widespread citizen concern from which politicians have culled the existing discourse on violence and criminality.

Sentiments of injustice and impunity emerged in the 1970s as public opinion responded to the indulgent application of penalties and the growth

of offenses. The citizenry started calling for changes and reforms to the criminal justice system based on its need for safety. Gradually, the citizens became increasingly interested in subject matter that had traditionally been reserved for experts and demanded more severity in the punishments applied. As a result, the penal policies responded to those demands with an increase in punitiveness and punishment for a series of offenses. In this case, the policies produced were not necessarily associated with control but with the public visibility acquired by the supporters of this approach.

In this context of change, there are many characteristics that describe and define the nature of penal populism. The first characteristic is the exclusion of the elite from the development of criminal policy, i.e., the specialists and scholars that had played a key part in the generation of knowledge in previous decades now carry less specific weight. By contrast, it is now the victims and those that feel vulnerable who play an active role in promoting security as one of their fundamental civil rights. With this, subjectivity becomes a defining characteristic of the public policy agenda, because knowledge of crime does not necessarily include the direct experience of victimization. The second related factor is the construction of a misinformed democracy, with two sides to it. The first one is the public's limited information on and about the criminal process—in particular, the sentences for each crime—combined with scant knowledge about the complexity of the phenomenon of crime. The second one, at the political level, has to do with the mechanisms to find out people's opinions on crime—for example, the media's focus on frustration, which may mislead political actors and decision makers. For the formulation of public policies, decision makers in particular require efficient inputs such as permanent measurements of criminality, program evaluations, and generation of knowledge or information about citizens' perceptions of the criminal situation. Failing in this, the options for confronting crime will always be limited or biased. Up to now, the only point of convergence between public opinion and the political actors has been the emphasis on punishment.

Finally, an aspect that is much more related to the changes experienced by contemporary society has to do with the citizens' uncertainty about the State's capability to regulate change by means of political processes. Crime constitutes a risk that affects personal safety, and because of this, "the crime complex has disseminated awareness and concern in the media, in popular culture and in the social environment" (Roberts 2002: 71). The solution to recover the social order has been punishment and the return to essential values.

The expressions of increased punitiveness tend to focus on certain types of crime and criminals. Thus, society seeks to control mainly those who engage in sexual abuse, drug trafficking, and breaking and entering. A specific target group is that of young delinquents, whose range of offenses is wider, from simple theft to manslaughter. Citizens are far more sensitive when young people are guilty of serious offenses because they consider the

young as a group that is hard to control and, thus, the measures applicable to them are even more diffuse.

Increased punitiveness is also associated with the type of victim. Children, women, and the elderly are considered to be the most vulnerable, and this determines in part the degree of indignation of public opinion and the demands for the exemplary punishment of offenders, particularly when the tragic nature of the crime makes it attractive to the media. At present, the main role in an act of a crime is assigned to the victim, with whom the public constructs an emotional link through identification and the socialization of the perceived risk of becoming a victim.

Penal populism emerged as a political reaction to the anxieties typical of late modernity derived mainly from the increase of criminality and the perception of insecurity. Criminal policies, like public safety policies, arise from the interests at play of several groups—political actors, public opinion and mass media—and are often triggered by the need to secure quick results in the face of a crisis.

It is possible to recognize the expressions of the trend of popular penalism in several spheres of the criminal justice system. An example includes the stipulation of mandatory sentencing for offenders charged with crimes that are more severely punished, which reduces the judges' room for interpretation of the law and the possibility of a different sentence. Another example has to do with accountability of the judiciary, which measures the performance of the system on the basis of efficiency indicators. Yet another example is the criminalization of the behavior of youngsters and school violence, the sanctioning of which includes restrictions within the school system also applicable to the parents, or in more complex cases, their transfer to the adults' system. In addition, there is a stigmatization of wrongdoers that makes them easily recognized by law-abiding citizens: their names may be entered into criminal records such as, for example, sex offender records, or they may be sent to training camps of military persuasion, such as boot camps, to serve their sentences.

To arrive at a deeper understanding of why violence and criminality have become so relevant at present, it is necessary to consider that "this has been influenced by the changes in the social organization of the societies because of the particular social problems that characterize them and the political, cultural, and criminological adaptations that have appeared as a response to particular problems" (Garland 2001: 313).

Stated briefly, the consensus on crime control includes five core points that have held constant in the different policies promoted. The first point is that crime is Public Enemy Number One. Offenses, anti-social acts, and since September 11, 2001, terrorism, have been at the forefront of the concern of the people and politics and have become a threat to society. The second point is the mirror image of one of the pillars of neoliberalism: crime is a matter of individual responsibility. As mentioned elsewhere, accounting for criminal acts as the result of a rational election has significantly reduced the

likelihood of such acts being justified as an expression of social deprivation or structural factors. Thus, crime control policies highlight the victims and not the offenders. Victims are at the center of the discourse, they are the most affected by criminality, they are vulnerable, and they have no responsibility whatsoever for the occurrence of crime. At the political level, a zero sum game takes place; not expressing concern for or interest in the victims could result in the public's perception of a favoring the wrongdoers. The next two points of this consensus are closely linked. The perception that society must get used to high crime indices is one of its current and defining elements. Because of this perception, the citizens' lives are pervaded by a tension between the fear of crime and the need to increase security, or rather, reduce their risk in different spheres of life.

The last point is that the dissuasion and disabling of offenders operate as effective crime control mechanisms, without considering public freedom and human rights, which have become "marginal questions, subordinated to coercive control requirements [while] the deep social causes are denied or minimized" (Reiner 2007: 126).

When it comes to coverage of crime and criminal activity there is also a consensus about the change in function of mass media. The news tends to highlight the negative dimension through the use of emotional language and focusing on the most violent crimes—murder, in particular—or on those that will most likely impact the audience/readership. Here once again there exists a zero sum game involving the binary opposition of victim and offender. On occasion, the news shows the public authorities, particularly the police, in their role as experts or because of alleged responsibility for the negligence that made the crime possible.

This victim-centered approach and its impact on public opinion has brought about a more pragmatic decision-taking perspective, particularly in the case of offenders, in which the punishment has the function of "preserving the integrity of the law, assuaging the victim's pain, and disabling the wrongdoer to prevent the repetition of such acts" (Reiner 2007: 147). As far as crime prevention is concerned, the public in general claims for a stronger police force and harsher punishment as the sole sources of peace for the victims or as a measure that may have an impact on the people's perception of insecurity.

In Chile, the politization of security has tended to specify the citizens' demands and, consequently, the institutional responses orientated to crime control, sanction, prevention, and rehabilitation. The government of criminality aims at managing the present disorder, which has generated a pragmatic convergence around the mechanisms and techniques developed. This may explain why different initiatives implemented by conservative governments have been adopted and promoted by the most dissimilar governments, with the consequent lessening of ideological divergence in terms of discourse and practice.

2 Fear as a Category for Analysis

For the fearful, fear is a reasonable response to what is considered a very genuine and tangible threat. Why do we feel fear?

For many, fear is a normal response to the conditions generated in a complex society, while for others it is a social construct based on a certain type of stigmatization process. In general, much remains unknown about the subject. Historically, fear or the feeling of insecurity became a subject of investigation, as well as a public policy concern, in the mid-1960s in the United States and Europe, mainly in England. This does not imply that there was no citizen fear or concern about crime prior to that time period, but rather that it was in the 1960s that diverse studies analyzing the different angles and complexities of this phenomenon were initially developed. From the outset, the research agenda on fear has been linked with the need for effective public policies, with multiple seminal studies resulting in the creation of government initiatives to respond to citizen fear and insecurity. Even at present the relevance of the government institutions' support of the research agenda is undeniable in Europe and the United States. Such research projects have generally led to policy proposals that tackle the political effects of the feeling of citizen insecurity.

The literature in Latin America is even more limited. Fear of crime is fundamentally public policy topic that has coincidentally been used in political terms with little theoretical knowledge or support. In fact, most analyses on fear of crime in Latin America are based mainly on statistical data from opinion polls. Therefore, key elements such as longitudinal analysis or consistency are not part of the interpretive framework. Furthermore, the differences between fear, concern, and worry are not clear in the literature. In fact, there is far more media coverage on the issue than books or papers.

The objective of this chapter is to describe the complexities of the analysis of fear as a social category. The chapter presents the developmental path of the concept, with a focus on where most of the work on this topic has been carried out—the United Kingdom and the United States, with links to the Latin American literature.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FEAR

Fear of the unknown and, mainly, of what appears to be outside the law is a phenomenon present in the very constitution of societies. Several political theories of State formation emphasize the need for an organ regulating the actions of individuals to make it possible to live in a community. With the birth of the State came the consolidation of laws, sanctions, and the definition of what is acceptable when people live together in a society. Conduct or behavior that deviates from these norms elicits feelings of anxiety and fear in the rest of the population (Conklin 1975; Clore and Gasper 2000). Crime, penal systems, or police records clearly show how the appearance of criminal acts or their rise correspond to moments of great citizen concern and, in some cases, denote even more serious crises (Elias 1994; Furedi 2002).

Consequently, throughout history different crises of insecurity have generated various representations of their causes, most of which are linked to specific social groups. The metaphor of breach of the peace and order becomes one of the characteristics used to describe a segment of the population considered to be the cause of these acts. For instance, at the beginning of the 1970s, the figure of young and poor African-Americans was considered one of imminent threat in the United States (Hollway and Jefferson 2002; Jackson and Bradford 2006). Later, in the 1990s, illegal immigrants became the new objects to be feared. After the terrorist attacks of September 11 in New York, this fear extends to Arab or Muslim-looking people, particularly youth.

In Latin America, and in Chile in particular, the process followed a similar pattern. During the 1970s and 1980s, the internal political enemy was characterized by young, radical males who came from the most vulnerable socioeconomic groups. Military dictatorships used that image to instill fear in the citizenry, which affected how people viewed their futures and well-beings. With democratization in the 1990s, fear of crime became a central concern throughout the region. Paradoxically, the new threat is the same group of young poor males who are considered once again to be dangerous, a cyclical process that will be described in following chapters after a theoretical review.

On the global scale, there is no doubt that fear as a concept has mutated in recent decades and that an analysis of the particular characteristics of this change is necessary to understand its pervasiveness. The following section presents such analysis and acknowledges the importance of fear in the configuration of present-day societies, social relations, and power structures.

THE TRAJECTORY OF A CONCEPT

Fear alone has not been the focus of news, but the concept of “fear of crime” seems to have become installed in social and political imagery

since the early 1960s. Interestingly enough, the term appears central to a presidential report on crime commissioned by President Johnson in 1965, which points out that “the Committee has tried to find out precisely which aspect of crime generates anxiety among Americans, that is to say, whether anxiety is a realistic response to danger and how it affects their daily life.” In addition, the government of the United States commissioned different studies and surveys that attempted to demonstrate that “public anxiety was not based on experience,” but rather on a special understanding of reality. However, this same document recognized the cultural relevance of the phenomenon and, consequently, the difficulties of performing quantitative analysis on it without taking into account the role of mass media and people’s prior experiences.

It is necessary to bear in mind the political and social context in which these initial studies on fear were carried out in the United States: ever-increasing social protests, emergence of confrontation due to racial discrimination, and, mainly, the consolidation of a conservative political position that attributed social guilt to the young poor, especially the African Americans of the country’s major cities. The assassinations of President Kennedy in 1963 and of Martin Luther King in 1968 provide a distinct frame for the political and social context of those days and also mark the origin of the increased public and political attention paid to citizen anxiety surrounding the issue of crime. Some authors even suggest that “public alarm about crime” was a strategy that conservative governments resorted to in order to reduce the civil rights movement’s chances of success.

The analysis of fear as a measurable object is at the core of many studies that include victimization surveys and possesses three specific objectives. The first is to show the gap, if any, between the crimes actually committed and the population’s levels of anxiety—that is, to make the rationality of the phenomenon explicit—and also to show the high level of autonomy that these phenomena have from each other in time. The second objective is to identify the characteristics of the victims and to check whether there is something about the victims themselves that may explain the crimes. For example, age and gender are significant in the analysis of the probability of the occurrence of certain types of street crime. The third objective is to make progress in the measurement of unreported crime—that is, the gap between crimes reported and those actually committed (Warr 1980; Arnold 1991).

New approaches to criminological analysis were developed in the 1970s and 1980s in England, placing special emphasis on the concept of “moral panic” and on a feminist approach (Walklate 1998). Hall et al. (1978) worked the notion of moral panic to highlight the relevance of the media in the appearance of public anxiety and described how this situation may be used from an ideological or political perspective. During this period, the English government led by Margaret Thatcher paid special attention to

the moral challenges posed by the deterioration of the concepts of family, community, and authority (Jackson 2004a). In turn, influential groups of critical female criminologists developed the issue of gender violence, drawing attention to male violence as a form of social control and to the multiple historical and cultural factors that account for the high levels of fear reported by women (Girling 2000).

As occurred in the United States, in England there was an evident politicization of the problem of crime in general and fear in particular. Garland (2001) has pointed out that since the 1970s, crime has become a daily concern of the general public and is no longer exclusive to those whose living conditions are more precarious. In addition, inner city riots at the beginning of the 1980s in some medium-sized towns in England fuelled media coverage of crime and its impact on British society. It should be noted that while this was happening, the Home Office (responsible for crime control and public security)¹ carried out several studies, surveys, and analyses that led to the overexposure of the population to the issue of crime. Curiously enough, the generation of information often triggers an undesired inverse process in which the results reported emphasize the negative aspects and, thus, bring about heightened levels of citizen anxiety. In addition, situational prevention systems were set up, such as CCTV surveillance cameras, which may have fed into the public's perception of insecurity (Godbey et al. 1979; Hollway and Jefferson 2000).

With the change of government in England in the 1990s, there was an important shift in the policies developed to deal with crime. The defeat of the Conservative Party led to a change in priorities and to an explicit recognition of the importance of anxiety or fear of crime as a social problem (Lewis and Maxfield 1980), setting aside the theory of the inexplicable gap between victimization and fear. In addition, there was an increase in the use of situational security mechanisms, especially video surveillance cameras and residents' associations, which became an important part of English daily life (Loader 2008).

It was also the 1990s that marked an increased public and political concern with insecurity and crime in Latin America (Arriagada and Godoy 1999; Dammert and Bailey 2005). The end of the civil wars in Central America and the return to democracy in most countries in South America coincided with the reappearance of crime as a problem that affected broad populations of people. The response to fear was a series of iron-fist policies that governments used to show that crime would not go unpunished and that it "didn't pay." The effects of the policies developed in the United States and England have had political and conceptual consequences in Latin America, which followed the path towards punitive populism (Dammert and Salazar 2009).

Thus, the emergence of fear of crime as a problem generated a new focus of study, which was initially approached by means of surveys to find out who presented the highest levels of fear (Pantazis 2000; Rountree and Land

1996; Tulloch 2000). However, analysts admit that delinquency is a real phenomenon and that fear generates negative effects for society, especially for victims. These effects derive both from the fact of living in fear and from the practical consequences of this fear in terms of self-imposed restrictions on the exercise of basic freedoms, such as going about undisturbed at any time of the day or night. This hypothesis was later affirmed in Latin America based on the importance that people in nearly all Latin American countries assign to the issue of security². The increase of insecurity in Central America (especially in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras) has had a strong impact on citizens' actions, and the direct relinquishing of the use of public spaces has been accompanied by episodes of citizen justice and even lynching (Godoy Snodgrass 2006). Last, in Argentina, the growth of insecurity has had an important impact on the people's attitudes, which have been particularly affected by the perception of police corruption (Dammert and Malone 2003).

THE POLITICAL GAME OF FEAR

Fear has been one of the most successful means of social control. Governance by fear that takes the form of general concern, hysteria, apprehension of threats (real or imagined) has been the strategy of politics for centuries. This rubric of fear has been one of the preoccupations of political power and thought. Fear has a two-sided face and a multidimensional nature. On one hand, it inspires terror, limits goals and objectives, and diminishes action. But on the other, it can lead to censorship, a type of misinformed acceptance and respect for leaders, and political decisions that have little or no grounding in fact or research. As Machiavelli states, a prince ought to inspire fear in such a way that, if he does not win love, he avoids hatred; because he can endure very well being feared whilst he is not hated. The political game includes several types of fear that influence the anxiety of citizens of democracies in crisis. These citizens come to believe that their fearful status quo can be changed dramatically to one characterized by its lack of fear and protection from individuals, organizations, and state institutions themselves.

As part of the political game, crime has become one of the main issues of dispute. There is no doubt that crime is one of the most important problems in contemporary society, as the social, economic, and cultural impacts of crime, including its political implications, are significant. The issue of crime even plays a defining role in election results, as it constructs a public agenda and becomes a relevant factor in the evaluation of the work of the government. The impact of crime becomes installed at the politico-electoral level and in the attitudes towards and assessment of the effectiveness of democracy. Clearly, when the perception of insecurity is high, interpersonal and institutional trust is impaired, individualism becomes more radical, and

social capital deteriorates. Such impacts create stronger barriers to the construction of citizenship. The resulting attitudes, combined with the institutional deficit, cannot but detract from the quality of democracy. As FDR noted in his famous First Inaugural Address in 1933, “[t]he only thing we have to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoned, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.”

Paralysis limits legitimacy while the general monopoly of power by the State must be questioned. The increase of crime, the perception of impunity, the feeling of insecurity, and the distrust of crime control institutions have reinforced the role of private security. This industry has grown in practically all Latin America in an inorganic, scattered, and deregulated way.

As previously noted, political action plays a leading role in the present state of affairs as it generates spaces for social organization around the quest for increased security. The main challenge is the creation of spaces that dispense with suspicion and fear as the central elements both in the generation of policies and in their design and subsequent implementation. The idea is to defeat the paradox referred to by Bauman when he says that “some time ago, friendship and solidarity, which were the main building materials of a community, became very fragile, brittle or very weak” (2006: 23). The wrongdoer represents the hub of threat for the whole of society and generates an articulated response from the opposition of those who are the perceivers of the risk. However, the wrongdoer can also serve as a form of representation of society’s other daily insecurities, although it cannot always be verbalized in such a direct way. From another perspective, Reiner (2007) suggests that the worries of society—crime, among them—present opportunities in politics in that they are mechanisms by which it is possible to build social consensuses.

WHAT IS FEAR?

There has been much progress in the development of research, as well as design and implementation of public policies that attempt to do something about fear or the feeling of insecurity. But what do we understand about fear? It is interesting to note that this question, which should be the initial one of any relevant study, has not been rigorously dealt with in academic literature. The consensus has been widely accepted that the best way to deal with the study of fear is by means of public opinion or victimization polls that collect the main characteristics of those who experience fear. This is a limitation that throws serious doubt on the capacity and validity for dealing with fear through public policies that leaders decide to implement (Ferraro and Le Grange 1987; Farall 2004).

In recent years, different analytical perspectives have been carried out along with qualitative methodologies to understand the social problem of fear in a better way. They will be analyzed in later sections. However, at this point it

is worth noting that the more traditional concept of fear, as interpreted from certain determining factors, can be grouped into three levels: (Fajnzyłber, Lederman, and Loayza 2001): individual, familial, and communitarian.

With respect to the first level, although different theoretical positions explain the influence of the characteristics of individuals in varying (and in some cases contradictory) ways, there appears to be a consensus on the need to study victimization that takes individual variables into account. Likewise, the study of fear must also study these variables in those who perceive themselves as being the most threatened and, thus, express the most fear. An analysis that considers these elements permits the identification of features of the population that may influence the heightened or lessened sentiments of insecurity. The most frequently used variables are age, gender, education level, employment status, income level, participation in social organizations, level of trust in the criminal justice institutions, levels of interpersonal trust, knowledge of public security policies, etc.

The second level has to do with the familial characteristics. The study of such features includes socioeconomic characterization variables of the respondents' environment, such as the number of members in the household, family income, and family typology. This level of analysis presents a greater aggregation than the exclusively individual level, but it has been applied more in home surveys than victimization surveys. With respect to the latter, the findings show that the size of the family is inversely proportional to the victimization levels of its members, since the family operates as a type of protective net (Fajnzyłber, Lederman, and Loayza 2001). In turn, the fear that respondents express individually may be influenced by expressions of insecurity of the family members or of insecurity generated by the precarious conditions of the home itself.

Finally, the third level seeks to characterize the community where the respondents live in order to determine the factors that may account for general levels of victimization or fear. This type of interpretation calls for variables that, in many cases, come from sources that are external to the victimization surveys. Among the most widely used variables to analyze both victimization and fear are those related to the hypothesis that poverty levels have a direct impact on the levels of victimization and fear. Therefore, this level of analysis includes an investigation of unemployment rates, per capita income, resident population beneath the poverty line, and income distribution of the residents in these communities.

In addition, fear is also related to situational variables such as quality of the dwelling, existence of public spaces, and public lighting of the common spaces of the respondents' place of residence. Relatively recent analyses conclude that victimization and fear levels are greater in those communities in which coexistence problems and the presence of offenders have been detected. To find out whether this relation exists, the victimization surveys include questions about the presence of gangs, graffiti, coexistence problems, and vandalism (Sims 2001; Walklate 2001). Also, working from

the hypothesis that crime occurs and fear increases in places where there is no surveillance, the surveys use indicators that measure variables such as presence of private security guards in the community, community alarm systems, presence or absence of informal social control schemes, and police officers to inhabitants ratios. Last, to verify the hypothesis that the existence of social capital in the community reduces the inhabitants' feelings of victimization and fear, there are indicators that measure the presence of social organizations and cooperation networks.

This somewhat methodological definition poses a serious challenge to the development of empirical studies on fear. The problem has to do both with the analysis of methodologies and information sources available because of the limitations of the official statistics on reported crime. Some recent studies have used victimization surveys as the source of information on the individual characteristics of the victims of crime and on their perceptions of the communities where they live. These studies may also use additional social information for the characterization of the community whose levels of victimization and fear are being analyzed (Sampson and Raudenbush 2001; Sims 2001; Rountree and Land 1996). In fact, the limits of social statistics to study crime and fear of crime have been a topic of profound analysis. In a critical perspective, Young defines three levels of critiques: Representativeness, Masquerading, and Interpretation (2011: 37). Each one points towards the need of a more profound framework of analysis of a social problem that it is not a fixed category with clear and agreed measurements and uncontested figures.

FEAR VARIABLES AND CONNECTIONS

The analyses based mainly on quantitative approaches lose sight of certain elements of political economy and of the cultural implications and symbolic aspects of the problem of fear. It is for this reason that they are complemented with multidisciplinary perspectives that focus on different or complementary processes and variables. The following sections deal with the main factors described in academic literature—mainly in the United States and Europe. In some cases, these findings have not been confirmed by subsequent research or in different national contexts. For this reason, the following sections highlight factors about which there is a greater consensus in the literature.

Sociodemographic and Personal Characteristics

The feeling of insecurity has a real connection with demographic, personal, social, and situational characteristics, as confirmed by several studies in international literature. For example, vulnerability appears to be a relevant concept in studies of fear (Killias and Glerici 2000).

Specifically, this concept has been useful to account for the higher levels of fear in women and the elderly (Hollway and Jefferson 2000). Personal vulnerability to a criminal act bears a direct relation to factors such as gender, age, physical size, state of health, and the ability to defend oneself in the case of being attacked. The study carried out by Pantazis (2000), for instance, concluded that these characteristics differentiate the population into groups according to their feelings of fear. Even though gender is the most relevant variable, there are important differences in men and women. Factors related to age and poverty were significant in the case of women, whereas in men the most important factors were their perception of their capacity for self-defense and income level. Similarly, Killias and Glerici (2000) focused on the relative importance of factors relating to personal, social, and situational vulnerability—such as gender, age, residence in certain places, and characteristics of the neighborhood—and also on different dimensions of threat or the probability of crime, such as the seriousness of the feared consequences and the feeling of lack of control over the probability of an occurrence of an act of crime. The findings indicate that although vulnerability competes with several other variables regardless of the fear metrics used,³ it turned out to be a very important factor to explain the personal feelings associated with the fear of crime. It should be noted, however, that the subjects' age and gender determine their lifestyles, perception of who is considered a "stranger," and their more or less frequent use of public spaces and transport. Thus, as suggested by Tulloch (2000), a detailed situational analysis allows one to conclude that the policy initiatives intended to reduce fear of crime must progress beyond the mere identification of which groups experience the most fear of crime and focus instead on different contexts and situations that generate anxiety, malaise and even fear.

Victimization

The experience of having been the victim of one or more crimes has direct effects on those victims' feelings of fear by increasing their perception of the probability of being affected once again, compared to the perception of those who have not undergone a similar experience. The case of the former is understood as the reflection of their personal vulnerability and the possibility of becoming a habitual victim. In this sense, the greater fear among women and senior citizens can be attributed to their feelings of increased physical vulnerability. That said, the relation between the experience of victimization and the fear of delinquency has produced contradictory results in different international studies (Foro de Expertos 2004; Dammert and Lunecke 2002). A recurring argument is that young men are less afraid of crime, yet they are the most victimized, whereas older women, who are the least victimized, are the most afraid (Gibson et al. 2002). However, most of the studies cited here fail to control for

gender, age, or socioeconomic level, all of which are characteristics that may influence the choices, habits, and exposure to risk of the different groups. The studies also fail to examine the feeling of victimization by considering other pertinent factors such as vulnerability, contexts, and situations in which such victimization occurs.

An indirect effect of victimization on the feeling of insecurity is the so-called “vicarious fear,” that is, the fear that someone may feel based on the experience or perceived risk of victimization of somebody who is close to him or her. This may be particularly relevant in the case of adults with children who might be victimized.⁴ In order to isolate the effect of victimization on the feeling of insecurity, it is necessary to control the other factors related to insecurity. In other words, one must measure the effect that the experience of victimization has on fear within homogeneous groups, controlling personal, social, and situational characteristics. Only then will it be possible to understand the real impact of victimization on the increasing levels of fear in someone who has already been the victim of a crime.

Mass Media

In light of the fact that mass media informs the population about the occurrence of crimes, especially those of the most violent and serious variety, several international studies have suggested that the media’s treatment of crime is a factor that has a bearing on fear (Martín-Barbero 2001 and 2002). However, this opinion is not generally shared throughout the literature, and different theses have been advanced to interpret this relationship. Two such fundamental theses were initially suggested. The first, known as the cultivation thesis (Gerbner and Gross 1976; Gerbner et al. 1980), argues that the consumption of media messages tends to distort the beliefs of the audience. The second, by the same authors, is the resonance thesis, which puts forth that images have a greater impact on those members of the audience that have undergone a similar experience (Gerbner et al. 1980). Other interpretations followed that developed around the substitution thesis (which predicts an effect in those who have not had a direct experience of crime); the affinity thesis (which assumes reinforcement of the effect for those that have characteristics that are similar to those of the victims that habitually appear on television) and the vulnerability thesis (which suggests increased attention and response to the media’s messages among those that are perceived as weaker) (Ball-Rokeach and De Fleur 1983). In a systematic analysis of the influence of television, Chiricos et al. (2000) points out that the possible relationship between watching television and fear has been theorized but has not been sufficiently studied in an empirical manner. The authors begin by acknowledging that personal experience may precede both watching television and fear, and this may contaminate any relationship observed between the two. Alternatively, it has also been suggested that for many people media reports are simply irrelevant because they deal

with situations that are far removed from the experiences of daily life. This approach seeks to explain a supposed absence of evidence for the connection between the media and fear (Bandura 1994).

In a detailed study of the main findings of the research on the relationship between media consumption and fear, Eschholz refers to a total of 73 studies, only 20 of which conclude the existence of a significant, positive relationship (1997). Consequently, the empirical evidence does not permit one to conclude that watching television in general bears an influence on fear of delinquency. However, in the field of Latin American studies there are many specialists who have made this connection, as well as that of the politico-ideological role played by mass media (Martín-Barbero 2001 and 2002; Ramos and Guzmán 2000).

In the Chilean case in particular, citizens' perceptions highlight the role played by the media in reporting and even reinforcing the presentation of criminal acts. The fine line that divides the quest for higher ratings and political positioning becomes even thinner. The final section of Chapter 6 in this volume investigates this further through an analysis of citizen discourse on the role of the media, which refers to this perspective.

Social Integration and Citizen Participation

As mentioned, social integration has been associated with variations in the levels of fear in particular residential areas. However, this has not been studied as a determining factor in the different levels of fear of delinquency among people who live in the same neighborhood. Gibson et al. (2002) analyzes the role that the perception of collective efficacy⁵ of the residents of a neighborhood plays in the relation between social integration and fear of delinquency. This study concludes that social integration is indirectly related to fear of delinquency through the perception of collective efficacy. In this same perspective, as mentioned, different analyses associate fear with shortage of social capital—a situation that shows higher levels of fear in the population in those spaces in which the social link has been weakened with the consequent increase of citizen distrust and a decrease in the possibilities of the creation of a common future project. This demonstrates the interaction between the different fear-reinforcing factors already mentioned. This is also analyzed in further detail in the Chilean context in following chapters.

Community Disorder

Several studies focus on the characteristics of the environment of the community and its relation to fear and victimization levels.⁶ In a study in 2000, Killias and Glerici concluded that although certain signs of decline (graffiti, trash, presence of “strangers”) are important, personal vulnerability is even more so. The characteristics that influence the feeling of insecurity range

from factors at the macro-scale (associated with a country or city) to factors of the micro-scale (associated with the people's own environments). In connection with the latter, several studies show that the perception of the levels of disorder on a local scale may explain the levels of fear.⁷ There is evidence that demonstrates that 79 percent of the people who live in areas perceived as having a high level of disorder feel more afraid than people who live in other areas (Sims 2001).

This second context has encouraged the development in the United States and Europe of disciplines such as CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design), which devise tools and techniques to improve the quality of the context. A study by Fisher and Nasar (1993) concludes that fear in open spaces is associated with the perception of a low capacity for defense or of getting help, as well as a high possibility of being intercepted by aggressors hiding in the surroundings and blocked escape routes. All of these aspects are considered to influence the perception of exposure to risk and loss of control, and understanding each one may contribute to learning the correct approach for programs that can effectively reduce fear.

Citizen and Institutional Distrust

The existence and development of a situation of general distrust of government institutions is associated with the factors described here and is considered central to explaining the high levels of fear in populations. Recent studies describe the negative impact of criminality on trust in the government (Chanley et al. 2000; Vlassis 2000) and the positive role played by trust in the government in the protection of the democratic systems despite rising crime rates (Burianek 1997; Hraba et al. 1998). The focus of attention on the effect of crime on a specific public institution such as the police is crucial, since it has an impact on the design and implementation of public security policies. Thus, one of the elements that can raise levels of fear is the absence of trustworthy public institutions. If the citizens cannot trust the institution responsible for crime control, their overall feeling of insecurity will be greater (Dammert and Malone 2003).

Other studies have centered on the role of interpersonal trust as a mediator of the relation between victimization and people's levels of fear (Fukuyama 1996; Moser and Holland 1997; Walklate 2001). They have shown that regardless of crime rates, the citizens that show lower levels of trust in their peers show the highest fear indices.

Other Fears and Insecurities

As already mentioned, the notion of vulnerability to crime is also related to the presence of other fears such as fear of unemployment, disease, etc. Pantazis (2000) has established that poorer population segments suffer from a wide range of insecurities associated with delinquency, as well as the

possible occurrence of a series of non-crime-related events or conditions such as job loss, indebtedness, and disease. More research is needed to determine the interrelations between fear of delinquency and other insecurities. In Chile, the most probable factors and related mechanisms may be similar to those reported in the international literature, but their nature and relative weight may reveal important differences.

FACTORS RELATED TO THE INDIVIDUAL, THE FAMILY, AND THE COMMUNITY

Similarly, as mentioned, another way of analyzing the most important determining factors for the interpretation of fear is based on the grouping of these factors into three levels: individual, family, and community-related factors (Fajnzyblber et al. 2001). With respect to the individual level, although different theoretical stances account for the influence of individual characteristics in different—and at times contradictory—ways, there is a consensus on the need to study fear taking individual variables into account. An analysis considering these individual characteristics permits the identification of features of the population that may bear an influence on the greater or lesser presence of insecurity (Dammert and Lunecke 2002; Gaviria and Pages 1999; Walklate 2001). As for the second level, that of the family, the main variables of concern are the number of people in the family, family income, and family typology. This level of analysis has a greater degree of aggregation than the individual level and appears to indicate, for example, that the fear that subjects express individually may be influenced by expressions of insecurity of the members of the family or of insecurity generated by the precarious condition of the home itself (Walklate 1998; Tulloch 2000). Finally, the third level seeks to characterize the communities of those who experience fear, so as to determine the factors that may explain the existing levels of fear.

EMOTION, RISK, AND SOCIAL ATTITUDES

Cognitive variables have not often had an impact on the generation of a definition of insecurity. Although they are important, they are not sufficient to analyze a problem that contains clearly subjective elements related to experience, reception of messages, and the social background that configure an ethos for the interpretation of this phenomenon. This explains why in the analysis of fear some questions emerge in each of the different approaches. What happens when the issue of emotions is introduced? Which are the emotions that shape the contemporary control culture? And last but not least, what role do emotions play in the process of democratization and/or the humanization of justice? All of these doubts confirm the

need to incorporate this perspective of micro-social analysis into the study of several social problems, including fear and insecurity.

The most traditional version of the analysis of fear associates fear directly with the emotion that subjects experience in certain contexts or situations. This version stresses that biology or the individual psychological structure has been considered of lesser value by the social and cultural studies of fear due to the risk of falling into a so-called “biologist’s” explanation of this phenomenon. However, several authors like Elías argue that “any research that only considers the conscious part of men, their reason or ideas, leaving aside the structure that they manage, their diction and the form of their human affections and passions, can be considered of limited value” (1994: 486). When fear is assumed as a social phenomenon with serious implications for individual behavior, there is a need to open up the conceptual frames traditionally used to interpret this phenomenon.

Criminology has faced some criticism because of counterintuitive explanations for the presence of fear and its variations. For example, in the mid-1980s Young wrote about an “aetiological crisis,” since criminology and its different paradigms could account in a convincing way for the reason why crime rises in those countries in which there is a welfare state. Some time later, De Haan and Loader (2002) used the same term to refer to the elements that move delinquents to commit acts involving unnecessary violence. Their work points out that the present context shows a third aetiological crisis in which it is not possible to explain the reasons for crime, and that although in some contexts crime levels fall or stabilize, this has no effect—or may have the opposite effect—on the levels of fear. Thus, the relative independence of fear as a social phenomenon requires a more far-ranging interpretive ethos than the ones traditionally used by criminology and sociology.

There is no doubt, as pointed out by De Haan and Loader, that “in order to have a more rational debate on criminality and the criminal justice system, more attention should be paid to the emotional dimensions” (2002: 250). In other words, it is necessary to make progress in the understanding of the affective side of the problem, including the theoretical development of the sociology of emotions, which could contribute significantly to criminological studies. In addition, from the point of view of methodology, it has become clear that the analysis of fear based exclusively on opinion polls results in its over-estimation. In a detailed study of the differences between the senses and the answers to the traditional questions on fear, Farrall, Jackson, and Gray (2006) argue jointly that fear must be analyzed in a greater degree of complexity, since surveys fail to account for all its aspects as they generally ask questions about the respondents’ “concern for crime” rather than about fear of crime. Similarly, Marshall (2004) concludes that quantitative research on fear is incapable of capturing the true level of psychological and physical stress and the anxiety and emotional trauma that fits into the subjects’ typical interpretations of fear.

Fear as an Emotion

The debate on fear is not new, and every social moment generates its own images and objects of concern. Whether they are objective or based on general perceptions, these objects or actions become the center of concern for specific social groups. Among the multiple levels of the academic debate on fear, the first involves the nature versus nurture debate, with some believing that emotions are installed in human neurology while others argue that emotions are constructed socially. Although most sociologists agree that emotions are closely related to changes in people, some, like fear, appear to be distributed among the whole population. A second level of the debate has to do with the relationship between emotions and feelings. Most experts on sociology and psychology agree that feelings are forms of representation of the emotions (Katz 1999, 2004; De Haan and Loader 2002), which does not necessarily mean that all emotions are consciously assumed. Therefore, it is necessary to acknowledge that most of the theories that have been developed are associated with feelings rather than with emotions—that is, with what the subjects consciously think and express.

The preceding outline shows the need to deal with the perspective of sociology of emotions in greater detail to interpret the phenomenon of fear in Chile. This perspective is not without its detractors as, in general, there are no empirical studies that confirm the hypotheses proposed. However, if we combine it with the other perspectives developed in this theoretical framework, it opens a window of opportunity with important elements to take into account at the time of interpreting such a complex, elusive, and diffuse phenomenon as fear.

The sociology of emotions was initially developed in the 1970s, which was when human emotions began to be studied in a systematic way as a specific issue in social analysis (Kemper 1990; Williams and Bendelow 1998; Katz 1999; Hochschild 1983). The main explanation for the need to advance in this more introspective perspective is the general acknowledgement that emotions comprise the glue that holds people together; they permit the generation of large-scale social commitments as well as cultural structures, yet they also have a negative impact as they may tear people apart, cause people to question established social structures and challenge cultural traditions. Therefore, emotions are considered as a crucial bridge between the macro and micro levels of social reality.

Within sociology, different theories have been developed to interpret emotions. Some of these theories consider emotions to be socially constructed; that is, individuals are conditioned by the process of socialization in their culture and by their participation in the social structures. Gordon is of the opinion that the origin of emotions is not biological but cultural (1981). However, other authors acknowledge the need to admit that some emotions, namely primary emotions, cut across different cultures and social structures. At the same time, the biological roots of emotions cannot be ignored in their

interpretation, as they have a clear physiological counterpart, as demonstrated by the physical changes of a person who is experiencing an emotion. In addition, other perspectives focus on the role of cognitive judgments in the emotions of the people and assert that emotions do not emerge until one analyzes a situation. “Emotional energy” (Collins 1990) is a concept used to analyze how emotions generate types of specific behavior. General theoretical perspectives of sociology assume that emotions influence the behavior of human beings either consciously or unconsciously.

Although there are multiple theoretical approaches to emotions, none of them, taken individually, offer a complete view of the phenomenon of fear. For this reason, it is necessary to present a brief summary of their interpretations, aiming at the design of a conceptual framework to join together all those elements that may make it possible to analyze fear of crime in all of its complexity. Thus, for example, the cultural theory suggests that people play specific roles created by social and cultural structures, differentiating between biological emotions (psychology) and social sentiments (sociology) (Gordon 1981). Thus, there is a move from a primary feeling related to an object to a social sentiment when a cultural perception is included in an identified object. One of the most relevant interpretations proposed by Gordon is associated with a way to understand the types of emotions, which also allows for an initial clarification for which type of emotions people—and in the case of this work, Chileans—are currently experiencing. The following table presents a summary of these types of emotions differentiated between the impulsive and the institutional.

Table 2.1 Summary: Impulsive and Institutional Emotions

Impulsive emotions	Institutional emotions
Duration of the emotion: short-lived	Duration of the emotion: long-term
Intensity: usually high	Intensity: usually low
Consistency of feelings and their expression	Consistency of norms and their expression
Sources: mass media and peers	Sources: tradition and institutions
Hypocritical gap between impulses and actions	Hypocritical gap between standards and actions
Emotional work includes reduction of inhibitions and display of emotions	Emotional work includes self control and capability to express emotion
Perception: personal emotion is natural	Perception: personal emotion is socialized
Loss of authenticity because of social pressure or inhibition	Loss of authenticity when it abandons its principles or is poorly communicated
Emotion vocabulary used has to do with fury, anger, unpleasantness, fear, and anxiety	Emotion vocabulary includes nostalgia, indignation, moral stance, sympathy

Source: Turner and Stest, 2005

From this table we can derive that the impulsive type of emotion is much more directly associated with primary emotions such as fear. Therefore, the way to interpret fear should be related to the framework provided by this table in which, among other characteristics, it is described as a high-intensity but short-lived emotion. Also, it is worth noting how this framework shows the role played by the media in the generation of fear, as an impulsive emotion, which despite its short duration should not be underestimated. Gabriel and Greeve (2003) suggest that the analysis should start from an essential difference between fear as a personal characteristic and fear as a momentary affective state. The diversity of ways in which fear can be interpreted is made evident by the fact that certain events can be considered very significant for one particular individual and irrelevant for another, depending on the personal, cultural, historical, and biological characteristics of the individual at a given moment in time⁸. In other words, fear appears to be more of an ordinary-life concept than one of psychological accuracy. It is also a political and cultural symbol that deals with an individual's increased sense of risk and reveals humanity's great anxiety about social change and the moral order at present (Girling 2000).

Risk and Insecurity

The literature on risk includes a complementary perspective for analysis, which unifies emotional and cognitive perceptions on estimating or assessing fear or insecurity (Loewenstein et al. 2001; Hollway and Jefferson 2000). Beck (1998) proposes risk as the central tool for the analysis of the social forms of late modernity. Although risk is implicit in the general concept of insecurity, it has been analyzed in theoretical and not in empirical detail. In fact, Ferraro (1995: 13–14) argues that “most of the previous studies do not consider in an explicit way the influence of risk, or of the perception of risk, on insecurity.” The literature in general, and Beck in particular, highlights the need to understand risk not in isolation but as a central element of life in society, in which multiple risks are experienced and managed. This is similar to Lechner's proposal for the Chilean society (1996, 2002) in which the multiple insecurities that the citizens feel are translated into a discourse of insecurity about crime. In a general sense, the war against crime can be associated with the modern need for authority and order, which generates discourse based on a bad and pernicious “otherness.” As pointed out by Bauman (2005), classification and segregation practices (such as the figure of the stranger as a category for analysis) are central to modernist discourse. In fact, this discourse has made “the criminal”—frequently characterized by social class and ethnicity—to be one of the main culprits for societal problems.

It is generally acknowledged that processes for the generation of knowledge differ and may be based on a logic of formal analysis drawing from empirical evidence or on an intuitive logic (Epstein 1994: 710)

drawing from experience and perceptions. Both processes can interact and generate a complex overview of risk and insecurity (Jackson 2006). Thus, the assessment of the risk of an action or situation is more often associated with an emotion than with an irrefutable fact based on statistical information.

This perspective explains the possible divergence between cognitive and emotional interpretations. Although people are expected to incorporate both variables in their analysis during any given moment, action, or situation, this does not always happen. It is necessary to emphasize that in these cases, emotions prevail over cognitive analysis and affect the behavior of the individual (Jackson 2006: 258). Obviously, not all situations generate the same emotive effects: actually, it is clear that those acts involving violence and direct consequences consolidate an image of insecurity and probability of occurrence. Therefore, risk and insecurity would serve as a response to concrete phenomena that cannot be easily extrapolated.

In this generation of perceptions, media sources play a key role as they not only provide allegedly valid and rigorous information, but they also present images and symbols that become transformed during their subsequent consumption and communication. Thus, a given crime may generate a situation of moral panic when it is presented in the media as a situation that keeps repeating itself, whose occurrence is probable and where ordinary citizens may fall victim.

CONSEQUENCES OF INSECURITY

Fear, insecurity, risk, and anxiety are concepts that are still being defined and studied. However, it is evident that the social problem that they refer to has a profound impact on modern-day society and culture. The most evident consequences are associated with conduct that makes people wary of, or avert, some situations that are considered dangerous. Specific types of behavior include walking only on well-lit streets and installing security systems at home, as well as restricting the use of public spaces, not going out at night, or always taking the same routes to a certain destination to prevent the feeling of insecurity that the unknown may generate.

Thus, cities become reconfigured through the insecurity discourse, assigning privileges to the use of certain spaces and forms of using them by classifying them as “safe” as opposed to other less “safe” spaces that are abandoned or left to be used by the “others.” As will be seen in Chapter 5 of this volume, urban configuration plays a predominant role in the way in which fears are construed in the cities of Latin America, particularly in Chile. The habits of evasion that become installed in daily life have economic, social, and even political impacts as people become isolated from even their usual social relations. However, insecurity may also have positive consequences as it generates situations and reasons for the consolidation of

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