



Dancing with the Devil in the City of God: Rio de Janeiro on the Brink

By Juliana Barbassa

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In the tradition of *Detroit: An American Autopsy* and *Maximum City* comes a deeply reported and beautifully written biography of the seductive and chaotic city of Rio de Janeiro from prizewinning journalist and Brazilian native Juliana Barbassa.

Juliana Barbassa moved a great deal throughout her life, but Rio was always home. After twenty-one years abroad, she returned to find the city that once ravaged by inflation, drug wars, corrupt leaders, and dying neighborhoods was now on the precipice of a major change.

Rio has always aspired to the pantheon of global capitals, and under the spotlight of the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games it seems that its moment has come. But in order to prepare itself for the world stage, Rio must vanquish the entrenched problems that Barbassa recalls from her childhood. Turning this beautiful but deeply flawed place into a predictable, pristine showcase of the best that Brazil has to offer in just a few years is a tall order—and with the whole world watching, the stakes couldn't be higher.

With a cast of larger-than-life characters who are driving this fast-moving juggernaut or who risk getting caught in its gears, this kaleidoscopic portrait of Rio introduces the reader to the people who make up this city of extremes, revealing their aspirations and their grit, their violence, their hungers and their splendor, and shedding light on the future of this city they are building together.

Dancing with the Devil in the City of God is an insider perspective into a city on the brink from a native daughter whose life, hopes, and fortunes are entwined with those of the city she portrays.

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Dancing with the Devil in the City of God: Rio de Janeiro on the Brink By Juliana Barbassa Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #612332 in Books
- Published on: 2015-07-28
- Released on: 2015-07-28
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x 1.20" w x 6.00" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 336 pages



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Editorial Review

Review

"[A] fascinating urban chronicle...[readers] will come away with a sense of having been there." (Publishers Weekly)

"Frank, fluid dispatches...Energetic, intrepid reporting by an insider." (Kirkus Reviews)

"Her interviews with police, prostitutes, drug dealers, ecologists, businesspeople, academics, movers and shakers, and the moved and shaken offer a fascinating look at the people who live in and aspire to change one of the world's most impressive cities." (Booklist)

"In a book that's akin to Charlie LeDuff's *Detriot*, Barbassa combines history and personal interviews in an informative and engaging work, showing a nation whose people desire a better country but are at odds with the government and even themselves at the best way to achieve that result." (Library Journal)

A powerful work of reportage. Eloquent, heartfelt, and thorough, Barbassa is a brilliant guide to the underside of Brazil's showcase city. If you want to understand twenty-first-century Rio de Janeiro, read this book. (Alex Bellos, author of *Futebol: the Brazilian Way of Life*)

Returning to Rio after years abroad, Juliana Barbassa takes the reader on a journey of urban exploration beyond the tourist clichés of Ipanema and Carnival. Her book, *Dancing with the Devil in the City of God*, seamlessly melds deep reporting with nuanced memoir, providing an insider's guide to a global city of immense energy, appetites, heartbreak and danger. To understand Rio's prospects for the 21st century, come with Barbassa on her voyage of inquiry and discovery. It's a trip worth taking. I savored every moment. (Ambassador Derek Shearer, Director of the McKinnon Center for Global Affairs, Occidental College, Los Angeles)

Juliana Barbassa has written a beautiful yet unflinching meditation on one of the world's great cities during a moment of profound change. Her book is a moving examination of the immense charms, staccato violence and unfulfilled promise of the marvelous city and of the heart of modern Brazil. (Michael Deibert, author of *In the Shadow of Saint Death: The Gulf Cartel and the Price of America's Drug War in Mexico*)

A timely tour-de-force...Drawing on the city's history, geography, social structure, culture, political intrigues, and economic disparities, Barbassa has written a multidisciplinary masterpiece. This splendid and accessible narrative is must reading not just for the journalists, spectators, and athletes who will be in Rio for the Olympic Games, but for anyone who has visited Rio – or not – and has been caught up in the magnetic attraction of this spectacular and complicated city. (Dr. Robert Maguire, Director of the Brazil Initiative at the Elliott School of International Affairs, George Washington University)

I became unexpectedly choked up not once but twice in the introduction alone and found myself sucked into the most in-depth, personal and thorough unfolding of Brazil's history on the brink of its economic rebirth. Whether as an anticipatory read before Brazil hosts the Olympics in 2016 or to better grasp a country so rich,

complex and divided by extreme dualities of lifestyles, this is a book that you will be unable to set down. Juliana Barbassa brings us both a journalistic and introspective vantage point of a country in the midsts of a metamorphosis with the unique angle of a native born Brazilian returning home forever a foreigner after living abroad for much of her life with a well-worn passport. Contemporarily relevant, uniquely compelling, exquisitely written and brilliantly delivered, I anticipate many readers, like myself, will find our passport soon bearing the stamp of Brazil thanks to Barbassa. (Jesica Sweedler DeHart, BookPeople of Moscow (Moscow, Idaho))

Rio de Janeiro is one of the world's most exotic cities and much in the news over the past few years with the World Cup in 2014 and the Olympics upcoming in 2016. Journalist and Brazilian native Juliana Barbassa presents a complex portrait of a city, country and society attempting to present the best possible face to the world while having to confront numerous problems in its own society, particularly a criminal level that is almost beyond belief. Her description of this massive change being attempted from on high and the disruption to an entrenched society is informative, instructive and mesmerizing as she strips bare the glitter and glitz of the beaches and gives us the true Rio. (Bill Cusumano, Square Books (Oxford, MS))

Is Brazil ready to take its place as the 6th largest world economy and is Rio ready to host the 2016 summer Olympics? Will the monumental social and political changes currently underway last beyond the final medal ceremony? Barbassa's well written and informative exposé is a fascinating look at Rio's history and attempts to transform itself into a safe, democratic and ultimately modern city." (Phyllis Spinale, Wellesley Books)

"In Julia Barbassa's fascinating new book, easy assumptions are peeled back to expose a place struggling to define its present and its future. . . . [S]he is both a knowledgeable insider and a fiercely critical outsider. . . . Brazil is indeed on the brink, on a precipice ready to soar or fall, or perhaps, as Barbassa suggests, fated to remain forever poised, waiting for liftoff." (Lourdes Garcia-Navarro, NPR News)

About the Author

Juliana Barbassa was born in Brazil, but she had a nomadic life between her home country and Iraq, Malta, Libya, Spain, France, and the United States before settling in Switzerland. Barbassa began her career with the *Dallas Observer*, where she won a Katie Journalism Award in 1999. She joined the Associated Press in 2003, and after two more awards from the National Association of Hispanic Journalists and the APME, she returned to Brazil in 2010 as the AP's Rio de Janeiro correspondent. *Dancing with the Devil in the City of God* is her first book.

Users Review

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Mary Thomas:

Information is provisions for individuals to get better life, information presently can get by anyone from everywhere. The information can be a information or any news even a huge concern. What people must be consider any time those information which is in the former life are hard to be find than now could be taking seriously which one is suitable to believe or which one the actual resource are convinced. If you get the unstable resource then you obtain it as your main information there will be huge disadvantage for you. All those possibilities will not happen throughout you if you take *Dancing with the Devil in the City of God: Rio de Janeiro on the Brink* as your daily resource information.

Aaron Blue:

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