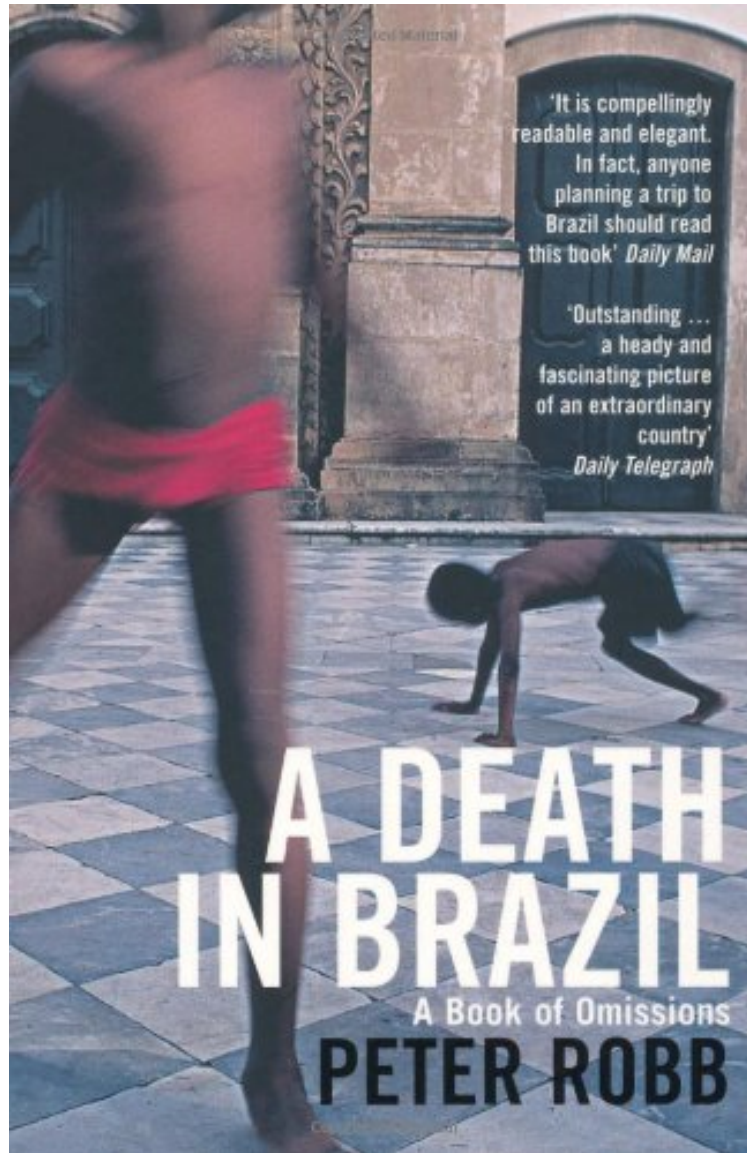


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A Death in Brazil: A Book of Omissions

Peter Robb

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Peter Robb : A Death in Brazil: A Book of Omissions before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Death in Brazil: A Book of Omissions:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Easy to get lost in, in ways both good and bad By Mr. GPeter Robb's "A Death in Brazil" defies classification. The narrative flows easily back and forth between the author's personal experiences and the greater context of Brazil's history. Those looking for travel and culture will find exquisite descriptions of food, architecture, and the sensuality for which Brazil is known. Historians will enjoy his digressions

into the little-known world of Brazil's dry northeastern highlands, populated by bandits, the landless poor, and the descendants of an escaped slave community that once numbered almost 30,000. Finally, if the book can be said to focus on any one story, it is that of a provincial political family's descent into scandal after the accession to the presidency of Fernando Collor in 1989. Robb deftly weaves together the threads of this tale, building it gradually from an election-finance fraud into a dramatic conclusion worthy of Shakespearean tragedy - or a modern-day telenovela. That said, while the reader can happily get lost in Robb's descriptions of Brazilian life, those looking for a simple plot and a satisfying conclusion will be disappointed. At times, anecdotes are thrown in with hardly any context and then forgotten, and at times the political scandals involve so many characters that I considered taking notes. Academics will also be disappointed by the absence of sufficient citations for the multitude of quotes used by the author, which appear in inexplicable and confusing italics instead of within quotation marks. While the story of the Collor family and their associates is more or less ended, many other tales - including the author's own brush with death which opens the book - are left frustratingly behind. Then again, the subtitle is "A Book of Omissions." All in all, highly recommended. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Colour without shape. By Chris Lawe Davies I am generally a fan of Peter Robb. But I found this book too unstructured. The anecdotes of daily life in the history of Brazil's development were of themselves interesting and well written, as always, but I wasn't sure what they added up to. Clearly the theme was extreme corruption and racism but I didn't have any sense at the end of the day of the 'patterns' of how that corruption developed. Perhaps that's the job of the historian rather than documentary novelist, which is how I see Peter's work : dealing in historical facts but with a narrative joining them. The narrative does not depart into the realms of historical fiction - that's not his genre - but must constitute an organising framework. I think that framework was missing this time. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great resource. By zizi Such a urbane written and informative book. Great resource.

Delving into Brazil's baroque past, Peter Robb writes about its history of slavery and the richly multicultural but disturbed society that was left in its wake when the practice was abolished in the late nineteenth century. Even today, Brazil is a nation of almost unimaginable distance between its wealthy and its poor, a place of extraordinary levels of crime and violence. It is also one of the most beautiful and seductive places on earth. Using the art, food and the books of its great nineteenth-century writer, Machado de Assis, Robb takes us on a journey into a world like Conrad's "Nostromo". A world so absurdly dramatic, like the current president Lula's fight for power, that it could have come from one of the country's immensely popular TV soap operas, a world where resolution is often only provided by death. Like all the best travel writing, "A Death in Brazil" immerses you deep into the heart of a fascinating country.

'Robb is a superb stylist, and this brilliant dissection of modern Brazil is unputdownable' Sunday Times 'Outstanding a heady and fascinating picture of an extraordinary country' Daily Telegraph 'Fascinating and revealing It is the Brazil that Robb sees beyond the sensations that gives his book its great travelling dimension' New York Times 'It is compellingly readable and elegant. In fact, anyone planning a trip to Brazil should read this book' Daily Mail About the Author Peter Robb has lived in Europe and Brazil for much of his adult life. He now lives in Sydney, Australia.