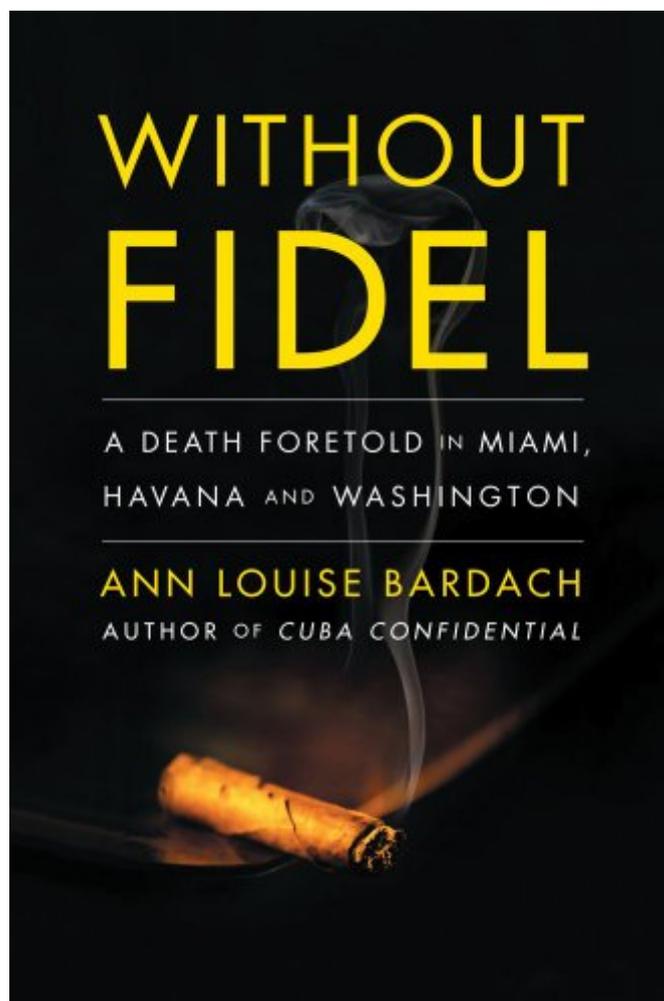


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Without Fidel: A Death Foretold In Miami, Havana And Washington



Synopsis

From the award-winning reporter and go-to source on Cuban-Miami politics Ann Louise Bardach comes a riveting, eye-opening account of the last chapter in the life of Fidel Castro: his near death and marathon finale, his enemies and their fifty-year failed battle to eliminate him, and the carefully planned succession and early reign of his brother Raúl. Ann Louise Bardach offers a spellbinding chronicle of the Havana-Washington political showdown, drawing on nearly two decades of reporting and countless interviews with everyone from the Comandante himself, his co-ruler and brother Raúl, and other family members, to ordinary Cubans as well as officials and politicians in Miami, Havana, and Washington. The result is an unforgettable dual portrait of Fidel and Raúl Castro -- arguably the most successful and enduring political brother team in history. Since 1959, Fidel Castro has been the supreme leader of Cuba, deftly checkmating his foes, both from within and abroad; confronting eleven American presidents; and outfoxing dozens of assassination attempts, vanquished only by collapsing health. As night descends on Castro's extraordinary fifty-year reign, Miami, Havana, and Washington are abuzz with anxious questions: What led to the lightning-bolt purge of key Cuban officials in March 2009? Who will be Raúl's heir? Will the U.S. embargo end now? Bardach offers profound and surprising answers to these questions as she meticulously chronicles Castro's protracted farewell and assesses his transformative impact on the world stage and the complex legacy that will long outlive him. She reports from three distinct vantage points: In Miami, where more than one million Cubans have fled, she interviews scores of exiles including Castro's would-be assassins Orlando Bosch and Luis Posada Carriles; in Washington, DC, she reports on the Obama administration's struggle to formulate a post-Castro strategy; in Havana she permeates the bubble around the fiercely private and officially retired Castro to ascertain the extent of his undisclosed medical condition. Bardach delivers a compelling meditation on one of the most controversial, combative, and charismatic rulers in history. Without Fidel includes never-before-published reporting on Castro, his family, and his half-century grip on the largest country in the Caribbean while assessing how his departure will forever transform politics and policy in the Western Hemisphere -- and the world.

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Customer Reviews

a riveting read of the US incursions, overt and covert, into Cuba to assassinate Fidel Castro. I admire Castro only for his tenacity to survive the behemoth 90 miles away . . . but after choosing the Stalinist "cult of personality" and banishing Che Guevara, the true socialist visionary to Angola and ultimately, to his death in Bolivia, then allowing his beautiful island to sink into near-oblivion, he has shown himself to be just another sociopathic dictator. How ironic that he, in the end, has cashed in on the United States return to Cuba . . . surely the gods are weeping.

This book very well written and gave extensive history of actions against Castro. Surprising information on the George Bush family connection to Cuba and the Miami Cuban community many covert operations against Castro and other Latin American dictators. However, I was looking for future for Cuba speculation on after the Castro's are gone.

Ms. Bardach's knowledge of Cuba and Fidel is unsurpassed. She presents a reporter's view: unbiased and crisp information exposing a failed system run by a prideful dictator who refuses to let go. She makes the point that all of the players are getting too old for this, it is time to move on. Everyone should read this book, particularly younger generations of Cubans on both sides of the water that want to connect with lost family, culture and history.

This is a great analysis of why Cuba and the USA have not mended fences. The US has reached out to former enemies in the Soviet Union, Red China, North Korea, and even Vietnam. They have relations with these nations, even though there is distrust. The Cuban regime is a different matter. 20% of the Cubans have emigrated out of Cuba and form a resolute block on making common cause with the Communist regime in Havana. These aging Cuban Americans have prevented a foreign policy reapproachment with Cuba. Two have to tangle in this deceit, and Fidel Castro has still wielded the nationalist bat against the American "Empire". He continues to stir up trouble, even though his country is shattered economically. Fidel will not live forever, but his rage against America continues to influence the policy of his brother Raul. The author has written a down the middle review of what troubles Cuba-American relations. Both sides have to give to receive. In the process of giving, there could be real economic and political changes in Cuba. However, the Fidelistas need to give up the government, and the Cuban American community has to overturn these rotten laws Washington has enacted. I felt this is a needed book of reform for both Washington and Havana. Change can help heal the rift in Cuban American relations.

If you want to know how we came to the current impasse with Cuba this is an excellent well-documented, well-written book. As a seasoned Cuba traveler I recommend this along with Julia Sweig's Cuba: What Everyone Needs to Know.

Forget the ranting/tiresome political stances and how they polarize discussion of Cuban affairs--on either side of the argument, and both sides of the Florida Straits as well as both sides of the Atlantic. Ann Bardach's research and writing about current realities and ancient historical disputes over Cuba are unmatched by any American (and probably all European writers on the topic as well). I've followed her writing for years, and have known the inside edge of these issues, too. From what I know of her examination of Cuban issues (not what I *believe* is any bias she would have), I can say without hesitation that Ms Bardach has no ax to grind whatsoever. She is the old-school journalist who cares only for uncovering a story, confirming sources, and then carefully reporting the truth without any bias for politics.

This book suffered greatly from its lack of proper editing which showed in its annoying repetition and digression. Greatly entertaining and informative was the writing on Fidel, Raul, the Castro clan and their machinations, and the author should have stayed with that. But she apparently decided to unload everything she had discovered over the years about: Cuban exile politics, CIA's

shenanigans and the Bush family's antipathy for the Castros. There were actually two or three books brewed into this production without a coherent arrangement and reading it became a slog. A lot less would have been a lot more.

Very balanced and interesting book. One of the most balanced books I've read on the subject. I would have loved a bunch of pictures in the next edition of the book. This book is definitely worth a read although the death plot stories were too many, and went on and on, just a few examples would have been enough. I look forward to the update, in light of facts in 2015. a lot has happened since 2009.

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