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**One woman's story of life in the slums of Rio de Janeiro**

*Lucia: Testimonies of a Brazilian Drug Dealer's Woman* (Publication Date: August 15, 2005) tells the story of one woman who was once intimately involved with drug gang life in Rio throughout the 1990s. Robert Gay met Lucia in the *favelas* of Rio de Janeiro in 1989 when he was conducting field research. He saw her off and on before she reportedly took up with a drug dealer and had a child. Four years later, Lucia reappeared, tired of drug gang life, and wanting to "start over." *Lucia* recounts what she calls the "struggle between good and evil" in Brazil—that is, between the easy lure of cash, cars, and houses that can be had through selling drugs, and the honest, and often religious life marked by poverty.

Written after the author spent three years of conversations and visits with Lucia—which were carefully concealed, given the attitudes towards exposing criminal life in Brazil—this account is not only an intensely personal view of what it is like to lead an unimaginable, criminal life marked by brutal violence, but also a female perspective on what is a male dominated world. If the conversations are riveting, they are not simply a matter of Lucia opening up and talking—Gay had to gain her trust so she would tell him things even her own family did not know—but also of overcoming her reluctance to discuss things buried in her past.

Gay has organized *Lucia* to introduce readers to the universe of the *favelas*, the emergence of drug gangs, issues of police violence and corruption, the prison system, education, work and religion, and in doing so, he puts Lucia's words, and her larger story in an important sociological context.

In the series, *Voices of Latin American Life*, edited by Arthur Schmidt

**Robert Gay** is Chair of the Department of Sociology at Connecticut College. He is the author of *Popular Organization and Democracy in Rio De Janeiro: A Tale of Two Favelas* (Temple).

***Lucia*  
*Testimonies of a Brazilian Drug Dealer's Woman*  
Robert Gay**

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