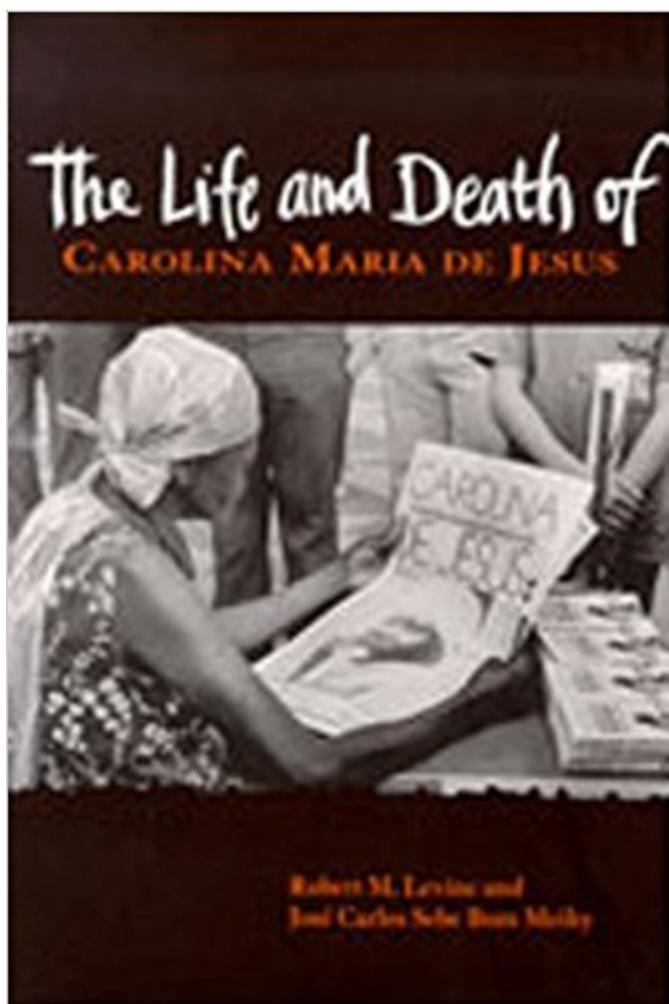


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# The Life And Death Of Carolina Maria De Jesus (DiÃ±ilogos Series)



## Synopsis

In the dozen years Carolina Maria de Jesus (1914-1977) lived in a São Paulo, Brazil, shanty slum, she survived by rummaging for junk. She also kept a diary of her abject poverty. Black, illegitimate, and poor, she suddenly became at age forty-six Brazil's best-selling author when a book drawn from her diaries appeared in 1960. An English translation, *Child of the Dark*, was published in 1962 and sold over 300,000 copies in the United States in a decade. *Newsweek* heralded her book as "a desperate, terrifying outcry from the slums of São Paulo . . . one of the most astonishing documents of the lower depths ever printed." Collaborating with a Brazilian colleague, Levine tells the story of Carolina's life, giving particular emphasis to the years following her publishing success, and engages in a provocative debate over what Carolina's life reveals about such issues as racism in Brazil, the rigidity of the country's class system, and the process of constructing an identity amid constant degradation and poverty.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Two historians work jointly to produce a biography of a brave, courageous, and fiercely independent favela dweller from the slums of São Paulo, Brazil. Levine, of the University of Miami, and Bom Meihy, of the University of São Paulo, chronicle the life and times of Carolina Maria de Jesus, an illegitimate black Brazilian woman born into destitution in the rural interior who fled the countryside in 1937 at the age of 23 to seek a better life in São Paulo. The authors describe Carolina's life of misery and poverty as aptly as their subject did in her own diaries, first published to great success in

Brazil in 1960 and later in English as *Child of the Dark* (1962). But they also explore the political, social, and cultural aspects of her life that she naturally would be inclined to omit, such as her sexual activities and the reasons for her lack of popularity in Brazilian intellectual circles. The book is especially useful for students of Brazilian history and culture. For academic and larger public library collections. ?Philip Y. Blue, Dowling Coll. Lib., Oakdale, N.Y. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc.

"This is an intriguing and thought-provoking biography . . . Levine and Sebe offer a poignant and provocative study . . ." The authors' reconstruction of her life story is compelling reading. . . . Strongly recommended. A haunting chronicle of hunger . . . a dramatic document of the dispossessed that both shocks and moves the reader. This is an intriguing and thought-provoking biography. . . . Levine and Sebe offer a poignant and provocative study. . . . It is a minor classic because it is one of the very few books that have ever been written about the lowest and poorest, "les misérables" by one of themselves. Her book contains the seldom-told truth which inspires in some compassion, in some revulsion, and in others revolution. [The authors'] reconstruction of her life story is compelling reading. . . . Strongly recommended. A haunting chronicle of hunger . . . a dramatic document of the dispossessed that both shocks and moves the reader. This is an intriguing and thought-provoking biography. . . . Levine and Sebe offer a poignant and provocative study. . . . It is a minor classic because it is one of the very few books that have ever been written about the lowest and poorest, "les misérables" by one of themselves. Her book contains the seldom-told truth which inspires in some compassion, in some revulsion, and in others revolution.

This is a marvelous study not only of a poignant African-Brazilian woman persecuted for daring to state her beliefs, but one that reveals the different ways that American (Levine) and Brazilian (Meihy) scholars perceive the problems of race in society. A must read for anyone interested in Latin American society or the history of women or of blacks in the hemisphere.

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