

## **DOCUMENT REPORT: LIFE IN A FAVELA**

### **i. Description and Purpose**

The [first] assignment of this course is a document report on the diary of Carolina Maria de Jesus (1915–1977). Carolina was the great grandchild of Brazilian slaves who lived most of her life in the slums of São Paulo, more commonly known as *favelas*. For several years she kept a diary on scrap pieces of paper she collected from garbage dumps. In 1958 a journalist discovered portions of her diary and eventually published them, turning Carolina into a best-selling author in Brazil and an international celebrity. You will carefully and critically read through Carolina’s diary and think about her description of life in a *favela*. How does Carolina describe *favelados* (those who live in a *favela*) and what type of language did she use? Did she make any distinctions between those within her *favela*? How did she distinguish herself from other *favelados*? What sort of relationship did she have with those outside the *favela*? Who does she blame for the existence of the *favelas*? The purpose of this assignment is to think about urban poverty in Latin America in the twentieth century and the larger political consciousness of the marginalized. This document analysis is designed to provide you with an opportunity to exercise your historical imagination and to engage with a primary source in a critical fashion. You must think about Carolina’s biases and how she viewed the world she was experiencing. To gain an understanding of Carolina and the context in which she wrote her diary you should read through the essay by Robert M. Levine cited below.

### **ii. Important Details**

**Due Date, Time, and Place:** To be determined (email by midnight)

**Length:** [XX] pages (double-spaced, 12-font)

**Sources:**

- Carolina Maria de Jesus. *Child of the Dark: The Diary of Carolina Maria de Jesus*. Translated by David St. Clair. 50th Anniversary Edition (New York: Signet Classics, 2003).
- Robert M. Levine. “Carolina Maria de Jesus: From Ragpicker to Best-Selling Author and Back Again.” In *The Human Tradition in Modern Brazil*, ed. Peter M. Beattie (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 2004): 231–248.