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: