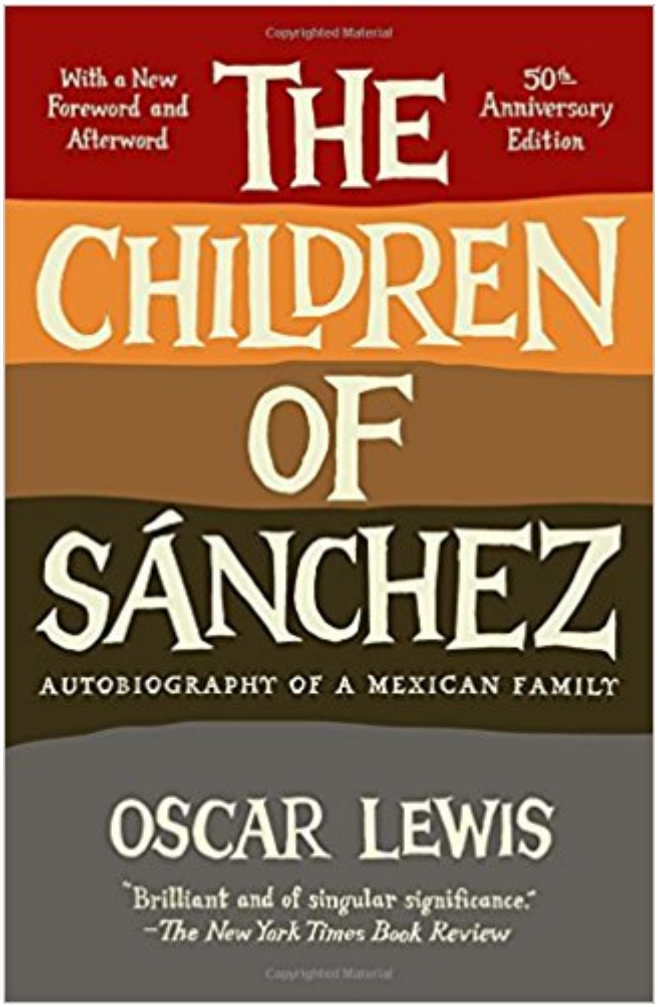
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The Children Of Sanchez: Autobiography Of A Mexican Family



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Synopsis

A pioneering work from a visionary anthropologist, The Children of Sanchez is hailed around the world as a watershed achievement in the study of povertyÃ¢â ¬â •a uniquely intimate investigation, as poignant today as when it was first published.Ã Â It is the epic story of the SÃƒÂ¡nchez family, told entirely by its membersÃ¢â ¬â •Jesus, the 50-year-old patriarch, and his four adult childrenÃ¢â ¬â •as their lives unfold in the Mexico City slum they call home. Weaving together their extraordinary personal narratives, Oscar Lewis creates a sympathetic but ultimately tragic portrait that is at once harrowing and humane, mystifying and moving.Ã Â An invaluable document, full of verve and pathos, The Children of Sanchez reads like the best of fiction, with the added impact that it is all, undeniably, true.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Ã¢â ¬Å“One of the outstanding contributions of anthropologyÃ¢â ¬â •of all time.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •Margaret MeadÃ Â Ã¢â ¬Å“Lewis has made something brilliant and of singular significance, a work of such unique concentration and sympathy that one hardly knows how to classify it. It is all, every bit of it except for the introduction, spoken by the members of the SÃƒÂ¡nchez family. They tell their feeling, their lives, explain their nature, their actual existence with all the force and drama and seriousness of a large novel. . . . The result is a moving, strange tragedy, not an interview, a questionnaire or a sociological study.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •Elizabeth Hardwick, The New York Times Book ReviewÃ Â Ã¢â ¬Å“A significant account of poverty as a culture unto itself. . . . An anthropological classic.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •Los Angeles

TimesÃ Â Ã¢â ¬Å“This bookÃ¢â ¬â •often brutal, sometimes revolting, but always powerful and compelling in its vivid truthÃ¢â ¬â •reveals poverty as the reader could not know it unless he lived it.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •The Washington PostÃ Â Ã¢â ¬Å“Extraordinary. . . . Not only a fascinating documentary but a work of art created by reality itself, an edited record of fact that comes closer than most contemporary fiction to the force of literature.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •TimeÃ Â Ã¢â ¬Å“Oscar LewisÃ¢â ¬â„¢s books on Mexico and Puerto Rico awakened in many of us a feeling that we must do more to alleviate the worldÃ¢â ¬â„¢s poverty.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •The Christian Science MonitorÃ Â Ã¢â ¬Å“Panoramic. . . . The Children of SÃƒÂ¡nchez is an amazing achievement. . . . So exciting, so moving, so full of human warmth and sadness.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •The SpectatorÃ Â Ã¢â ¬Å“The exciting thing about The Children of SÃƒÂ¡nchez, the fact which makes it a new point of departure in its field, is its humanity, its quality of projecting the individual, agonizing voice of the poor as they describe their own plight. This is a real accomplishment, original and full of substance.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •Michael Harrington, CommonwealÃ Â Ã¢â ¬Å“[LewisÃ¢â ¬â„¢s] masterpiece. . . . Uniquely, for me, his book depicts a worldÃ¢â ¬â •the society of povertyÃ¢â ¬â •which creates its own survival structures and rationale. Its voices are at once warm and cynical, hoping and resigned. To read it is to be forcibly woken from the middle-class dream.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •Colin Thubron, The Sunday Telegraph (London)Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“Lewis has created a book of far greater and more lasting significance than any sociological treatise is likely to be . . . a work that eludes classification, for what it tragically and beautifully portrays is not fiction. . . . This book is a classic in the exact senseÃ¢â ¬â •it is a standard by which other books of the same kind may be judged, and it is a touchstone for our evaluation of literature and of life itself.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •The ScotsmanÃ Â Ã¢â ¬Å“Rightly revered. . . . Most participant-observer sociologists (like Robert Coles) owe much to its perceptive author.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •The Globe and Mail (Toronto)Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“Indeed, both sociology and psychology stand to benefit from a study in which social surroundings and emotional problems are so clearly intertwined.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •Scientific AmericanÃ Â Ã¢â ¬Å“Here at last is a social scientist who neither explains poverty nor sits in judgment of it. . . . Whether judged as literature or as sociology The Children of SÃƒÂ¡nchez is a masterpiece.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •New StatesmanÃ Â Ã¢â ¬Å“A work of enormous influence and very great beauty. . . . The Children of SÃƒÂ¡nchez does not need any frame of reference; it is raw material made miraculously available to workers in a host of fields ranging from pure sociology through anthropology to psychology.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •The Sunday ObserverÃ Â Ã¢â ¬Å“The crime of poverty is exposed in these stories with a precision and immediacy which never destroys the humanity of the individual. . . . We gain in the case of this

book, a narrative which is continuously readable and continuously frightening.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •The Sunday Times (London)

Oscar Lewis was born in New York City in 1914 and grew up on a small farm in upstate New York. He received his Ph.D. in anthropology from Columbia University in 1940, and taught at Brooklyn College and Washington University before helping to found the anthropology department at the University of Illinois, where he was a professor from 1948 until his death. From his first visit to Mexico in 1943, Mexican peasants and city dwellers were among his major interests. In addition to The Children of Sanchez, his other studies of Mexican life include Life in a Mexican Village, Five Families, Pedro Martinez, and A Death in the Sanchez Family. He is also the author of La Vida: A Puerto Rican Family in the Culture of PovertyÃ¢â ¬â •San Juan and New York, which won the National Book Award, and Living the Revolution: An Oral History of Contemporary Cuba, with his wife, Ruth Maslow Lewis, and Susan M. Rigdon. Lewis also published widely in both academic journals and popular periodicals such as HarperÃ¢â ¬â„¢s. Some of his best-known articles were collected in Anthropological Essays (1970). The recipient of many distinguished grants and fellowships, including two Guggenheims, Lewis was a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He died in 1970.

What is poverty? This classic book which consists of verbatim transcripts of the Sanchez family tells the story in compelling, riveting human terms. What's it like to have a father who lashes out at his children one minute, supports them in the next? To have a single room shared by extended family, with people sleeping on the floor, on makeshift beds, sometimes standing up for each other, more often fighting for space and for place. In the literature of poverty (a large and expanding reading list) this book is a must-read--and must-share.

It was hard for me to put this book down. Some of the material rings so true to life, it made me recall memories of my own childhood. Since the book is written in "four part" chapters, each part is written by one of the four Sanchez siblings: Manuel, Roberto, Consuelo, and Martha. Each one talks about his or her own experience, in a way that you get to see each of the four sides & form your own conclusion as to how life really was. I would've liked for the father, Jesus Sanchez, to have written his own "side" in the epilogue, his own way of seeing things, and why he did things the way he did. All he spoke about in the epilogue was about politics in Mexico, and he rambled on about that. He hardly talked about his children, and how they grew up. The father's epilogue at the end of the book

served very little purpose in my opinion. The author's introduction was way more valuable and worthwhile. Overall this book was an excellent read, a true to life account of how life was for a typical poor family living in Mexico City. It reads like a fiction book, but it certainly is non fiction. It is never boring. Excellent, excellent book & highly recommended.

Great reading. A clear demonstration of the struggles of the extreme poor. Though it is set in Mexico it's probably similar in many other cultures, even here in the USA.

Wow, This is a great book! Definitely one of the first in-depth research and analysis about poverty and its affect of the people living in this life! This can be compared to many Americans living in our urban area, today!

Very enjoyable reading

I ordered this book for my Mom. She loved it!!! She had read other books by Oscar Lewis and wanted some more.

Happy, as expected.

Written in the 1960's this ground-breaking study of one family's life in Mexico City is still viable today. For those interested in Sociology, Psychology or Anthropology this is an excellent read.

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