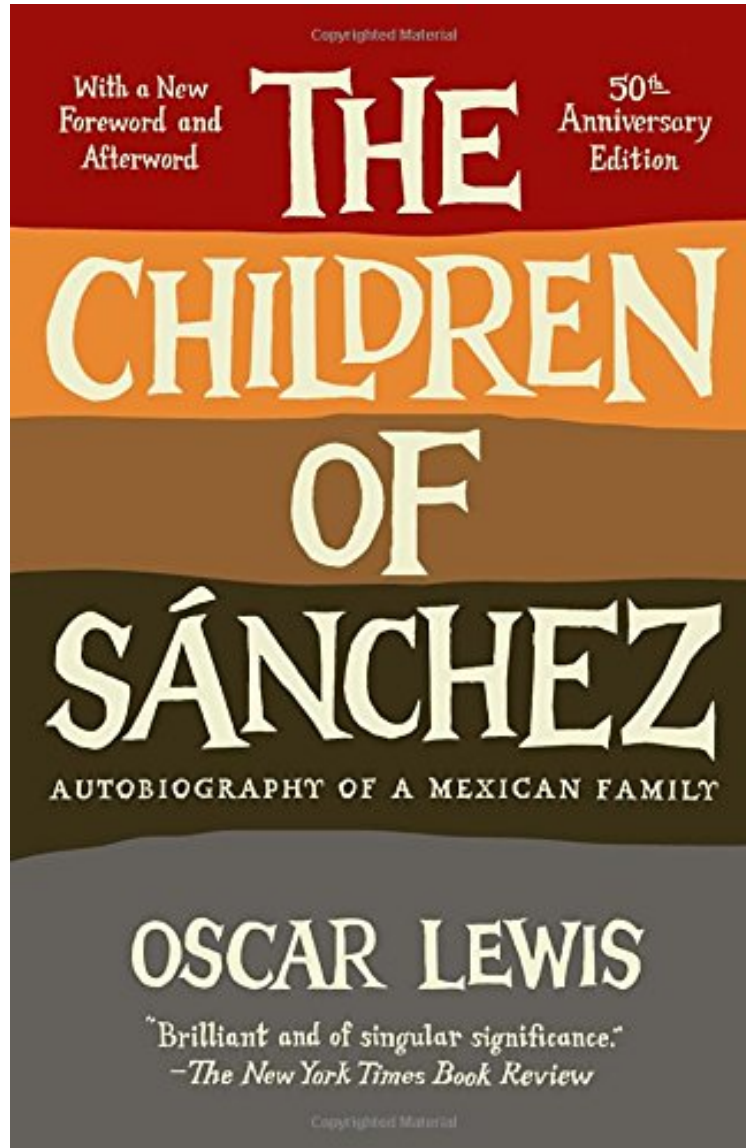


The Children of Sanchez: Autobiography of a Mexican Family

Oscar Lewis

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Oscar Lewis : The Children of Sanchez: Autobiography of a Mexican Family before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Children of Sanchez: Autobiography of a Mexican Family:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. How do we make sense of poverty? By Alan Webber 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. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Must Read Especially for Mexican American Descendants By Ima Nonfiction Buff 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. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great reading. A clear demonstration of the struggles of ... By Samuel A. Quinones 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.

A pioneering work from a visionary anthropologist, *The Children of Sanchez* is hailed around the world as a watershed achievement in the study of poverty—a uniquely intimate investigation, as poignant today as when it was first published. It is the epic story of the Sanchez family, told entirely by its members: Jesus, the 50-year-old patriarch, and his four adult children 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. 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.

One of the outstanding contributions of anthropology of all time. Margaret Mead 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 Sanchez 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. Elizabeth Hardwick, *The New York Times Book Review* A significant account of poverty as a culture unto itself. . . . An anthropological classic. *Los Angeles Times* This book often brutal, sometimes revolting, but always powerful and compelling in its vivid truth reveals poverty as the reader could not know it unless he lived it. *The Washington Post* 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. *Time* Oscar Lewis's books on Mexico and Puerto Rico awakened in many of us a feeling that we must do more to alleviate the world's poverty. *The Christian Science Monitor* Panoramic. . . . *The Children of Sanchez* is an amazing achievement. . . . So exciting, so moving, so full of human warmth and sadness. *The Spectator* The exciting thing about *The Children of Sanchez*, 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. Michael Harrington, *Commonweal* [Lewis's] masterpiece. . . . Uniquely, for me, his book depicts a world—the society of poverty—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. Colin Thubron, *The Sunday Telegraph* (London) 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 sense 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. *The Scotsman* Rightly revered. . . . Most participant-observer sociologists (like Robert Coles) owe much to its perceptive author. *The Globe and Mail* (Toronto) Indeed, both sociology and psychology stand to benefit from a study in which social surroundings and emotional problems are so clearly intertwined. *Scientific American* 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 Sanchez* is a masterpiece. *New Statesman* A work of enormous influence and very great beauty. . . . *The Children of Sanchez* 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. *The Sunday Observer* 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. *The Sunday Times* (London) About the Author 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 Poverty* 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 *Harpers*. 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.