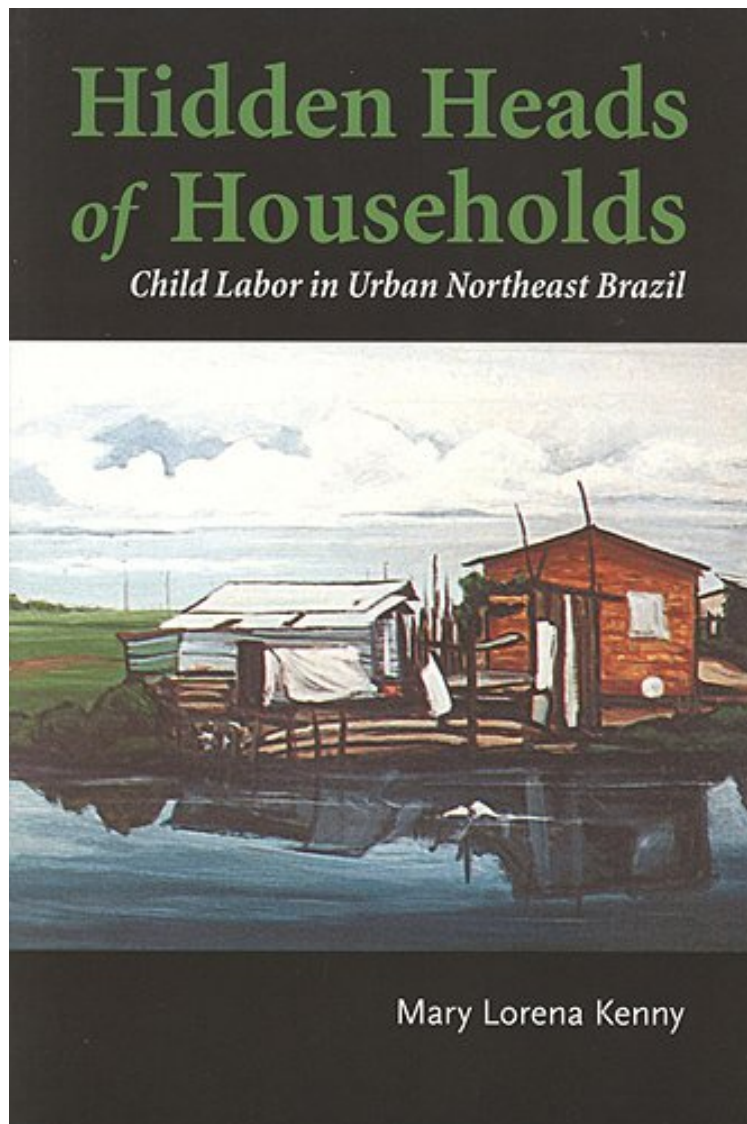


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Hidden Heads of Households: Child Labor in Urban Northeast Brazil (Teaching Culture: UTP Ethnographies for the Classroom)

Mary Lorena Kenny

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Mary Lorena Kenny : **Hidden Heads of Households: Child Labor in Urban Northeast Brazil (Teaching Culture: UTP Ethnographies for the Classroom)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Hidden Heads of Households: Child Labor in Urban Northeast Brazil (Teaching Culture: UTP Ethnographies for the Classroom):

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In the cities of Northeast Brazil where 50 per cent of the population lives in poverty, children play a key role in the local economy in their households, in formal jobs, and in the thriving informal sector (washing cars, shining shoes, scavenging for recyclables, etc.). Why children migrate to the city, how they negotiate their existence, and why they stay are just some of the questions addressed in this fascinating study. Mary Kenny spent close to 15 years in the urban areas of Northeast Brazil talking with and interviewing children. She even gave them disposable cameras to document their daily lives (many of the photographs they took are included). Rather than lament a lost childhood, or try to save these children, Kenny explores some of the complex conditions under which these children work and live. She illustrates how unrelenting scarcity shapes family and, by extension, children's options, decisions, and worldviews. The issues raised in this book are of critical importance. There are no easy answers, but listening to how these children define themselves and their circumstances is an important step towards understanding and ultimately solving economic and social inequality.

An outstanding ethnographic analysis of labor across the generations in a globalizing urban population: Kenny treats the often taboo topic of child labor with clear-eyed perception and a bracing lack of sentimentality. (Barbara J. Price, Columbia University) This is a book that, without becoming cumbersome, offers a nuanced view of children's work in a Brazilian shantytown. Starting from children's own perspectives, Kenny skilfully teases out the complexity of young people's lives as they develop in a context of structural violence. In-depth ethnography, the use of extensive quotes, and pictures taken by the children themselves make this book an excellent introduction to the subject matter. (Olga Nieuwenhuys, University of Amsterdam) This is an excellent book for undergraduate anthropology classes, and should encourage students to empathize with plights of the underprivileged. Instructors will find the book useful in encouraging discussion of human rights, poverty, applied anthropology, and development, as well as child labor. [...] I highly recommend this focused, readable, moving study. (Margaret Dorazio-Migliore, General Anthropology) About the Author Mary Lorena Kenny is Associate Professor of Anthropology at Eastern Connecticut State University. She has published essays and articles on street youth and child labor in Brazil, and the history and politics of drought in the sertão. In 2006, she was the Rockefeller Fellow at the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage examining the economics of cultural heritage in Brazil.