

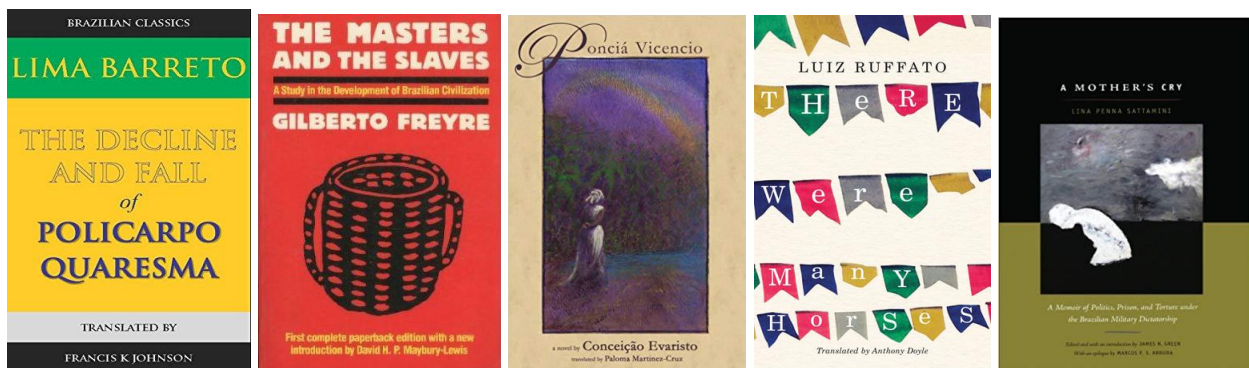
Professor James N. Green, Department of History

Professor Leila Lehen, Department of Portuguese and Brazilian Studies

Office Hours: James N. Green, Weds. 10-12:00 or by appointment, 59 Charlesfield St., 101

Leila Lehen, Fridays, 10:30-1:00, POBS 0711

Brazilian Democracy in Literature and History



This seminar offers an interdisciplinary examination of the origins, history, and transformation of the concepts and practices of democracy in Brazil from the twilight of slavery in the 1870s until the twenty-first century through literary texts, historical documents, historians' narratives, and cultural production. We will see how different intellectuals and political actors understood the notions of democracy in theory and in lived experience through an array of literary expressions and historical sources. The course will inquire into what – if any – elements of Brazilian democracy make it distinctive and whether the particularities of Brazilian democracy generate specific types of cultural expressions.

Learning goal:

This course is designed to strengthen skills in critical reading, reflective writing, and prompt discussion about complex historical and sociocultural issues. It is an opportunity to reflect on in-depth questions through engaged reading, active discussion, and analytical and reflective writing on assigned topics. This will include learning or strengthening the following skills:

- How to articulate a wide-ranging understanding of the complex interplay of diverse economic, social, political, and cultural phenomena in a specific historical moment;
- How to view and think analytically about ways literary production is used as a means of communicating specific narratives about a society and its historical context;

- How to understand and interpret literary texts, historical documents and other material (primary sources) produced contemporaneously to a period under investigation as a means of understanding political, economic, social, and cultural events and processes;
- How to write thoughtful essays using literary productions from a given period in Brazilian history combined with primary and secondary sources to analyze understandings of processes of consolidating and/or weakening democracy and democratic rights in Brazil.

Course Expectations:

The total of in-class hours and out-of-class work for all full credit courses at Brown is approximately **180** hours over the length of a semester. In this class, students seeking to maximize their learning can expect to spend: **45** hours in class (3 hours per week for 15 weeks); **84** hours reading for class (approx. 6 hours per week for 14 weeks); **6** hours preparing with another student the discussion of the weeks readings in two seminar; **8** hours attending two events sponsored by the Brazil Initiative or the Department of Portuguese and Brazilian Studies and writing two response papers; **8** hours attending two Brazilian films sponsored by the Brazil Initiative in its Film Series and writing two response papers; **29** hours researching and writing your final essay. Final grades are not determined by the amount of time a student spends on the course.

- **Readings.** *You will be required to read on the average 200 pages a week.* All assigned readings are required and should be completed before the lecture or discussion section. Students must submit at least one discussion question for each assigned text the day before the class meets. Students' questions must be posted on Canvas by 5 PM on the day previous to the scheduled course meeting.
- **Attendance.** *Seminar attendance is mandatory. You cannot get an "A" unless you attend all lectures and discussion sections. We will be taking attendance in class.*
- **Written assignments.** *All assignments must be turned in electronically on the date and time indicated on the syllabus, or they will be considered late and your grade will drop.* All papers should have an **original** title and be in a standard format (12 pt. font, 1" margins, double spaced, numbered, with appropriate citation and bibliography). ***Plagiarism is unacceptable and will be reported to the Dean of the College.*** If you have any questions about the Brown Academic Code, see: http://www.brown.edu/Administration/Dean_of_the_College/academic_code/guides.html
- **Classroom discussion.** *All students must participate in the seminar discussion.* You should come prepared, having completed all of the reading and ready to actively join in the discussion.

Course Assessment:

1. 20% Participation in the course discussion: Participation will be evaluated according to the students' engagement in class activities and on hand of submission of discussion questions about class readings
2. 10% Collaboration in the production of podcasts throughout the semester dealing with specific moments and/or topics that touch on democratic culture, history, institutions, and rights in Brazil
3. 10% Leadership in the seminar discussion
4. 10% Attendance at two Brazil Initiative or lectures in the Department of Portuguese and Brazilian Studies and writing of two two-page reflection essays of the events

5. 10% Attendance at two film screenings of the Brazilian Film Series and the writing of two two-page reflection essays of the films
6. 40% Final 20-page essay about literature and history on the theme of Brazilian democracy

Required Readings:

- Skidmore, Thomas E. *Brazil: Five Centuries of Change*, 2nd ed. Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Green, James N., Victoria Langland, and Lilia Moritz Schwarcz. *The Brazil Reader: History, Culture, Politics*. Duke University Press, 1999.
- Barreto, Lima. *The Sad End of Policarpo Quaresma*, trans. by Mark Carlyon. Penguin Classics, 2015.
- Galvão, Patricia. *Industrial Park*. University of Nebraska Press, 1993.
- Jesus, Carolina Maria de. *Child of the Dark*. Signet, 2003.
- Sattamini, Lina. *A Mother's Cry*. Duke University Press, 2010.
- Kucinski, Bernardo. *K*. Latin American Bureau, 2013.
- Ruffato, Luiz. *There Were Many Horses*. Amazon Crossings, 2014.
- Evaristo, Conceição. *Ponciá Vicêncio* (2003). Host Publications, 2006.
- Other selections posted on the MyCourse website.

Recommended Readings:

- Jorge Amado, *Tent of Miracles (Tenda dos milagres, 1967)*. University of Wisconsin Press, 2003.

Note: All reading material assigned for the course will be in English. However, students with fluency in Portuguese may use Portuguese-language sources, quote from those sources in their final essay, and write the essay in Portuguese.

Week #1 **Introduction to the Course**
Sept. 6 *Theoretical Framework:*

What is democracy? Can we use a universal definition? What is the state of democracy today across the globe? What does democracy mean in Brazil?

Classroom Reading:

Selections from Robert Dahl, *On Democracy* (1998) “The Beginning.” On MyCourse.

Classroom Viewing:

Astra Taylor, *What is Democracy?* (2018) (Available on Kanopy)

Writing Assignment: Based on the in-class discussion and the selected readings, prepare a two-page definition of what you understand to be democracy. Please send your essay in Word to Green and Lehen by email no later than **Wed., Sept. 11 at 9:00 pm.** James.Green@brown.edu; Leila.Lehnen@brown.edu.

Mini-lecture: “The Nature of Slavery and the Abolition Movement”

Week #2
Sept. 13

Resistance to Slavery and the End of the Empire, 1870-89

How does the interdisciplinary approach to the study of history and literature expand our understanding of these two fields and, more generally, of politics and society? Can historical documents be read as literary artifacts? Can literary texts be considered historical documents? What was the nature of slavery, the forms of resistance to the institution, and the status of free people of color under the Empire? Can we describe Brazil as a democracy during the late years of the Second Reign of the Empire? What are the links between the slave-holding economy, abolition, and the republican ideals in Brazil?

Readings:

- **Background Reading:**
 - Skidmore, 54-78.
 - “Coffee, the Empire, and Abolition,” *The Brazil Reader*, 205-10.
- **Historical Document:** Joaquim Nabuco, Selections from Joaquim Nabuco, *Abolitionism* (1883), *The Brazil Reader*, 246-49.
- **Literary Text:** Machado de Assis, “Father vs. Mother,” (1906). On MyCourse.

Mini-lecture: “The End of the Monarchy and Republican Brazil”

Week #3
Sept. 20

Was There Democracy in the New Republican Order, 1889-1930?

What is the gap between the republican dream of 1870 and the reality of everyday political life? How does Lima Barreto’s position as a low-ranking bureaucrat affect his literary portrayal of the republic? What was the nature of politics under the new regime? What kind of democracy did Brazil have? Can we draw analogies about similar democratic regimes in other countries?

Readings:

- **Background Reading:**
 - Skidmore, 78-96.
 - “Republican Brazil and the Onset of Modernization,” *The Brazil Reader*, 261-67.
- **Historical Document:** “The Republican Manifesto (1870),” *The Brazil Reader*, 233-35.
- **Literary Text:** Barreto, Lima. *The Sad End of Policarpo Quaresma* [Triste fim de Policarpo Quaresma], trans. by Mark Carlyon. Penguin Classics, 2015.

Mini-lecture: “How Brazilians Understood Race in the Early Twentieth Century”

Week #4
Sept. 27

What Exactly is Racial Democracy?

How can we understand Freyre’s sociological study as a literary artifact? What are the main ideas of Gilberto Freyre and their relationship to the concept of “racial harmony”? What has the impact of his ideas been on Brazilian culture and society? How does the notion of “racial democracy” inform Brazil’s political

institutions and culture? To what extent do Evaristo's literary interpretations of race, gender, and class interface with and challenge Freyre's ideas?

Readings:

- Historical Document: Gilberto Freyre, Selections from *Masters and the Slaves* (1933). On MyCourse.
- Literary Text: Evaristo, Conceição. *Ponciá Vicêncio*. Host Publications, 2006.

Mini-lecture: "Radicalism and Modernism in the 1920s and 30s"

Week #5
Oct. 4

Urban Uprisings, Labor Organizing, 1930-37

What were the new ways that the Brazilian working class organized after the Great Depression? Why was there such polarization between the Left and Right in Brazil? Were they fighting for democracy or something else? What was the response of the new regime led by Getúlio Vargas to social unrest? How is Galvão feminism reflected in her work? How do authors inspired by social realism portray the working class and its role in struggles for social justice?

Readings:

- Background Reading:
 - Skidmore, 97-112.
 - "Getúlio Vargas, the Estado Novo, and World War II," *The Brazil Reader*, 321-24.
- Historical Document: Luís Carlos Prestes, "Manifesto of the National Liberating Alliance" (1934), *The Brazil Reader*, 340-43.
- Literary text: Patrícia Galvão, (*Parque Industrial*, 1933) *Industrial Park*. University of Nebraska Press, 1993.

Mini-lecture: "Brazil under Authoritarian Rule"

Week #6
Oct. 11

The Estado Novo and Authoritarian rule under Getúlio Vargas, 1937-45

How do we understand Vargas' speeches as both historical and as rhetorical tools? What was the nature of the Vargas's rule? Was it a dictatorship or an illiberal democracy? Why did he have such popular support? Who resisted him and why? What role did Ramos' prison narrative play in challenging the Estado Novo? Why was Vargas pushed out of power?

Readings:

- Background Reading: Skidmore, 113-25.
- Historical Document: Getúlio Vargas, "Vargas and the Estado Novo (1937)," *The Brazil Reader*, 349-52.
- Film: *Memórias do Cárcere*, dir. Nelson Pereira dos Santos, 1984.

Mini-lecture: "Brazil during the Cold War"

Week #7
Oct. 18

An Experiment in Democracy, 1945-64

Did democracy mean social and racial inclusion and justice? What were the post-World War II proposals to overcome the social-economic inequality in Brazil? In what ways were they successful and/or unsuccessful? With a return to democracy, what new political players emerged? Who was left behind in the democratic project? How does Carolina Maria de Jesus understand her position as a poor, black woman within the “democratic” nation-state?

Readings:

- **Background Reading:**
 - Skidmore, 127-158.
 - “Democratic Governance and Developmentalism,” *The Brazil Reader*, 321-24.
- **Historical Document:** “Vargas’s Suicide Letter (1954),” *The Brazil Reader*, 380-82.
- **Literary Text:** Carolina Maria de Jesus, (*Quarto do despejo*, 1960), *Child of the Dark*. Signet, 2003.

Mini-lecture: “The Military Dictatorship”

Week #8
Oct. 25

The Return to Authoritarian Governance, 1964-74

How did literature react to authoritarian rule? To what extent does testimonial literature such as *A Mother’s Cry* elicit empathy from a national and international audience and what is the importance that empathy has in the fight for human rights? Why did the armed forces come to power in 1964 and why did they endure? Why did the generals insist on trappings of democracy, such as a functioning Congress, elections, and political parties? What kind of regime was in power? How did people show their opposition? What happened to them if they did?

Readings:

- **Background Reading:**
 - Skidmore, 159-75.
 - “The Generals in Power and the Fight for Democracy,” *The Brazil Reader*, 427-31.
- **Historical Documents:**
 - Francisco dos Santos Nascimento, “Institutional Act (1964),” *The Brazil Reader*, 435-438.
 - Luís Antônio da Gama e Silva, “Institutional Act No. 5 (1968),” *The Brazil Reader*, 451-53.
- **Literary Text:** Caio Fernando Abreu, (“Sargento Garcia” 1982) “Sargeant Garcia”. On MyCourse and: <https://www.wordswithoutborders.org/article/sergeant-garcia>
- **Literary Text:** Lina Sattamini, (*Esquecer nunca mais!*, 2000) *A Mother’s Cry*. Duke University Press, 2010.

Mini-lecture: “The Transition to Democracy”

Week #9
Nov. 1

The Slow-Motion Return to Democracy, 1974-88

Why did the generals decide to begin the process of decompression and then political liberalization? Was this only a top-down process? How and why did new social movements emerge to push towards democracy? How successful were they? What were the legacies of the dictatorship? How does Kucinski portray the dictatorship and the struggle against it? How does *K.* become a (literary) document about transitional justice in Brazil? What role does transitional justice (or the lack thereof) play in the consolidation of democratic values?

Readings:

- Background Reading:
 - Skidmore, 175-79.
 - “The Generals in Power and the Fight for Democracy,” *The Brazil Reader*, 431-34.
- Historical Document: “The Movement for Political Amnesty (1975-79),” *The Brazil Reader*, 484-88.
- Literary Text: Bernardo Kucinski, (*K. Relato de uma busca*, 2011) *K.* Latin American Bureau, 2013.

Mini-lecture: “Rural Brazil”

Week #10
Nov. 8

Rural Rights, 1970s-Present

As movements for rural workers’ and peasants’ rights have emerged in the last forty years, how have they forged new forms of participatory democracy? What have been the major obstacles to gaining access to productive land? What has been the effect of the environmental movement on rural mobilizations? To what extent do journalistic essays impact public thinking about different facets of democratic life, such as the right to and of the environment?

Readings:

- Background Reading: Skidmore, 229-55.
- Historical Document: Cristiana, “A Young Voice from the MST (1998),” *The Brazil Reader*, 514-18.
- Literary Text: Eliane Brum, “They Had an Island,” *The Guardian* (2018).
On MyCourse and:
<https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2018/feb/06/urban-poor-tragedy-altamira-belo-monte-brazil>

Mini-lecture: “Urban Brazil”

Week #11
Nov. 15

Urban Spaces, 1980s-Present

As Brazil became an urbanized country, what new challenges have arisen in the search for socio-economic justice and equality? What was the meaning of the June Revolts of 2013 and what have been their effects on Brazilian democracy? How does the fragmented city of Luiz Ruffato’s work foreshadow the 2013 mobilizations and Brazil’s sociopolitical polarization thereafter? Can literature

become an alternate participatory public sphere in which democratic values are articulated?

Readings:

- Historical Document: Marcos Nobre, “The June Revolts of 2013” (2016), *The Brazil Reader*, 536-40.
- Literary Text: Luiz Ruffato, (*Eles eram muitos cavalos*, 2001) *There Were Many Horses*. Amazon Crossings, 2014.
- Literary Text: “Vinagre” (2013). On MyCourse

Mini-lecture: “A New Black Militancy”

Week #12
Nov. 22

Black Voices in a Democratic State, 1980s-Present

Why and how did Afro-descendants develop a new protagonism beginning in the 1970s? How do the United Black Movement challenge the ideas of racial democracy? What were their long-term successes and failures? How do we conceptualize Afro-Brazilian literature? How do Afro-Brazilian writers think about the positionality of Black subjects within Brazil’s democratic endeavor?

Readings:

- Background Reading: Skidmore, 180-228.
- Historical Document Abdias do Nascimento, “The Myth of Racial Democracy” (1968), *The Brazil Reader*, 445-448.
- Literary Text:
 - Selections from Alves, Miriam. *Enfim ... Nós / Finally...Us. Contemporary Black Brazilian Women Writers*. Trans. Carolyn Richardson Durham. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1996.
 - Poems by Ricardo Aleixo, “My Man,” “Night of Calunga in the Bairro Cabul.” On My Course and:
<https://www.wordswithoutborders.org/article/december-2018-afro-brazilian-three-poems-ricardo-aleixo-dan>

Mini-lecture: “Political Polarizations”

Week #13

Thanksgiving Weekend—No classes

Week #14
Dec. 6

From the Left to the Far Right, 2002-Present or How Do Democracies Die?

What are the reasons for the shift in the politics from center-left governments to a new far-right candidate winning the presidency and the center-right dominating the Congress? How has literature dealt with the swing toward right-wing politics in Brazil? Can culture be an adequate forum to reimagine the democratic experience? What forms do the resistance against authoritarian governments assume? Why has Marielle Franco become such an important symbol in the movement against Jair Bolsonaro? What is similar and what is different in comparing the new government in Brazil to governments in the United States, Turkey, Hungary, Poland, the Philippines, and Russia? Why, in fact, do democracies die?

Readings:

- Background Reading:
 - Skidmore, 248-55.
 - “Redemocratization and the New Global Economy, 1985-present,” *The Brazil Reader*, 497-505.
- Selections from Steven Levitsky, *How Democracies Die* (2018), On MyCourse.
- Historical Document: Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, “Letter to the Brazilian People” (2002). On MyCourse.
- Literary Text: Letters from Lula. On MyCourse.
- Film: *O Processo*, dir. Maria Ramos, (2018.)

Dec. 13: Final Paper Due.