

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION
FRANCISCO CAETANO LOPES, JUNIOR
(1954 - 1994)

Francisco Caetano Lopes, Junior, Assistant Professor of Spanish and Portuguese, died of cancer at the Stanford University Hospital, on March 4, 1994, at the age of 39.

Francisco Lopes joined the Stanford faculty in the fall of 1990 as a specialist in Brazilian literature. He was by all accounts from prominent scholars in the field, both in Brazil and in the United States, one of the most outstanding young teacher-scholars in his area, highly motivated, with enormous energy, well prepared in Luso-Brazilian and Spanish American literatures, and particularly well-versed in literary theory. He earned two doctoral degrees, one from the University of Pittsburgh, the other from the Pontifícia Universidade Católica in Rio de Janeiro. He studied with several of Brazil's leading critics, including Silviano Santiago, Roberto Correa, and Affonso Romano de Sant'Anna. He owed his theoretical formation as well to extensive preparation in Portugal and France, with Foucault, Kristeva, and Greimas. And he always valued his first two years of teaching Portuguese in the Department of Romance Languages at the University of Washington in Seattle.

Upon his arrival at Stanford, Francisco very quickly established himself as an active and dynamic member of the Spanish and Portuguese Department. As the only faculty member in our Department with the sole responsibility for the teaching of Luso-Brazilian literature, he played the major role in offering essential courses in this area on both the undergraduate and graduate levels. The enthusiastic student response to his teaching and mentoring was a source of pride both to him and to the Department. We greatly valued the enormous energy and time he dedicated to the intellectual life of our Department, and we will always remember and appreciate the special effort he made to revitalize the field of Luso-Brazilian Studies at Stanford.

Special mention must be made of Francisco's initiative and successful negotiations with the Portuguese Minister of Education and Culture to establish

a leitorado, a “lecturer” position at Stanford in Portuguese language and literature, funded by the Portuguese government. The first appointment to this position has been Nelson de Carvalho, a native of Angola, a citizen of Portugal, and a graduate of the University of Lisbon, who has contributed to both the Spanish and Portuguese Department and the Program on African and African-American Studies. We anticipate the successful renewal of this position over the years and it will constitute an enduring legacy of Francisco to Stanford.

Francisco had a long-standing interest in film and welcomed the opportunity to teach it at Stanford. His courses on Brazilian cinema were popular and well attended and he often organized successful public screenings at the Bechtel International Center. Francisco was always at home at the International Center for he was truly a world citizen. He loved to travel and he would travel abroad at least twice a year: to Brazil during the summer to conduct research and lecture, and then again in the winter, to Europe, to Portugal, France, England, Spain, and Germany, frequently to lecture, and always to work, to take notes, and to write. France was his favorite European country, and French was his second language.

He published eight articles and numerous reviews, with several additional articles accepted for publication, since his arrival at Stanford. Many of these articles are or will be published in well known journals, and several of them pertain directly to his most recent research project, “Postmodernism: A reading from the Luso-Brazilian margins.” We are hopeful that this book-length project will be put into final form by close colleagues of Francisco. It is the first comprehensive study of leading contemporary writers in Portugal and Brazil and grew out of Francisco’s scholarly research on the relationship of theory (post-structuralism) and literature (of Brazil and Portugal) in a postmodernist context. In addition to a thorough knowledge of his subject, Francisco enriched his inquiry with both feminist and comparatist (Chicano and Latin American) perspectives. In so doing, he sought to relate the major themes of his investigation to central concerns of contemporary cultural studies and thus open up his specialized subject to a larger audience.

Indeed, Francisco’s broad and humane scholarly interests led him to take an active interest in feminist theory and he formed close ties with colleagues in Feminist Studies. He was a member of the Feminist Studies Program Committee and taught courses cross-listed with the Program. He appreciated the friendship and support of these colleagues especially during his last year.

A Francisco C. Lopes Prize has been established in his memory by the Department of Spanish and Portuguese for the best department honors essay.

The Program in Feminist Studies is also offering a prize in his name for the best undergraduate short essay on feminist issues or topics in the humanities.

We will always remember Francisco for his strength of character, his energy and enthusiasm, his lively and inquiring mind, his broad knowledge of European languages and their national literatures (Portuguese, Spanish, French, and English), his keen interest in contemporary literary and cultural theory, his social commitment to working for a better and more emancipated humanity, and, most of all, for his devotion to teaching and to students. We will always treasure his friendship. We extend our deepest condolences to his widow, Maria Luisa Correa.

Michael P. Predmore, Chair
Mary Louise Pratt
Jorge Ruffinelli
Yvonne Yarbro-Bejarano