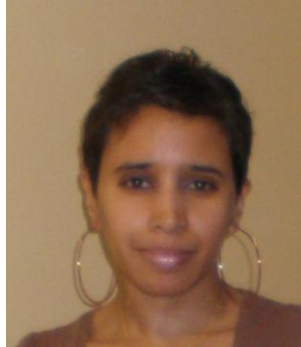


*The Department of Black Studies*  
*presents:*

**Jessica Barros**  
**Department of Black Studies Dissertation Scholar**



**Wednesday, June 6**  
**11 AM**  
**UCEN Flying A Studios Room**

***Koladeras, Literacy Educators of the Cape Verdean Diaspora: A Cape Verdean African Centered Call and Response Methodology***

In being denied literacy under Portuguese colonialism and its aftermath and in caring for their own literacy and selves, African slave women and their land-born descendants, Cape Verdean women, became the protectors of many African-centered Cape Verdean cultural literacies (CVCL). Like Linda Tillman who specializes in culturally appropriate methodologies of research, I define cultural literacies as the various ways of "thinking, believing, and knowing that include shared experiences, consciousness, skills, values, forms of expression, social institutions, and behaviors" that tie individuals to different and specific discourse communities (4). I use CVCL to refer to literacies used by a large majority of Cape Verdeans with the understanding that Cape Verdeans also belong to social groups with other sets of literacies that are just as valid as CVCL (Gee vii-ix; Street 77). *Koladeras* may be understood as women who improvise, string together, and sing complicated, impromptu tales about their lives and those in their community, especially during feasts for saints.

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Jessica Barros has a Doctoral degree from the Department of English at St. John's University, New York. Her dissertation, "Cape Verdean Rhetorical Discourse Strategies in *Bandera*," a qualitative study that investigates literacies in *bandera*, a Cape Verdean feast honoring a patron saint. *Bandera* rituals reflect social interactions that once existed between masters and their slaves. These social interactions are a critical site of literacy that show how Africans used their culture as education for resisting colonial violence. Jessica's dissertation is a multi-vocal text that centers itself in two elderly day centers and spans across generations of Cape Verdeans. As a Composition Rhetorician, Jessica brings cultural, post-colonial, and ethnic studies with special emphasis on critical race theory, literacy, language, rhetoric, discourse, and pedagogy to English studies. Her research includes how hip hop, as a *lingua franca*, cuts across ethnic and racial divides and aligns itself with black movements for education, freedom, liberation, and equality; how hip hop's black rhetorical strategies allow for the awakening of racial consciousness and unmasking of neo-racisms by students of diverse backgrounds; and how hip hop pedagogy prepares all students for the multimodal, multiple literacies, and critical race work of the 21st century and beyond. Jessica earned received her MFA in Creative Writing from Emerson College and her B.A. in Political Science and English from Boston College.