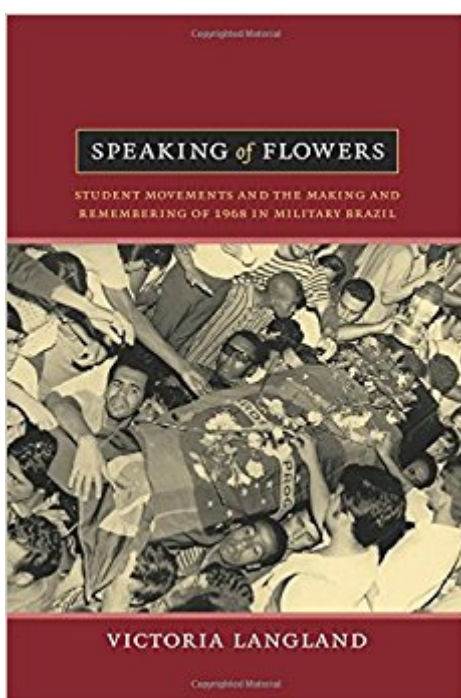


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# Speaking Of Flowers: Student Movements And The Making And Remembering Of 1968 In Military Brazil



## Synopsis

Speaking of Flowers is an innovative study of student activism during Brazil's military dictatorship (1964–85) and an examination of the very notion of student activism, which changed dramatically in response to the student protests of 1968. Looking into what made students engage in national political affairs as students, rather than through other means, Victoria Langland traces a gradual, uneven shift in how they constructed, defended, and redefined their right to political participation, from emphasizing class, race, and gender privileges to organizing around other institutional and symbolic forms of political authority. Embodying Cold War political and gendered tensions, Brazil's increasingly violent military government mounted fierce challenges to student political activity just as students were beginning to see themselves as representing an otherwise demobilized civil society. By challenging the students' political legitimacy at a pivotal moment, the dictatorship helped to ignite the student protests that exploded in 1968. In her attentive exploration of the years after 1968, Langland analyzes what the demonstrations of that year meant to later generations of Brazilian students, revealing how student activists mobilized collective memories in their subsequent political struggles.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"In this compelling book, Victoria Langland shows how Brazilian student activists of the 1960s generation rattled a military dictatorship and turned into powerful symbols of martyrs and militants whose memory drove the politics of repression, opposition, and democratization. The result is striking new insight on the practical and symbolic legacies of 1968 as a year of protest and

repression, in Brazil and transnationally. Steve J. Stern, author of *Reckoning with Pinochet: The Memory Question in Democratic Chile, 1989-2006* "Clear, concise, and full of engaging and dramatic stories, Victoria Langland's *Speaking of Flowers* is an important contribution to our understanding of the history of the Brazilian student movement and its vital role in twentieth-century politics. In addition, through her analysis of the constructed memories of 1968, Langland provides readers an excellent opportunity to consider a series of methodological questions about how history is written and how Brazilians have shaped the recollection of that history." James N. Green, author of *We Cannot Remain Silent: Opposition to the Brazilian Military Dictatorship in the United States* "Langland's accomplishment lies in providing the backstory of student movements, tracing their changing relationship with the Brazilian state throughout the 20th century and contextualising them in the country's political history. . . . The book's gendered analysis is fascinating, as Langland illustrates how the student movement defined themselves and were perceived as male-dominated and masculine." (Sarah Sarzynski *Times Higher Education*) "While there is no shortage of scholarship on Brazil under the military dictatorship that controlled the country from 1965 to 1985, or the subsequent transition to democracy, questions on the role of student activism in opposition are only now being investigated in English-language scholarship. Langland's study is a substantial contribution to this emerging field." (J. M. Rosenthal *Choice*) "Victoria Langland's comprehensive treatment of the 1960s in Brazil, *Speaking of Flowers* is an important contribution to a growing body of 1960s scholarship pertaining to Latin America. Langland has added a valuable piece to the understanding of the background to, the factors within, and the outcome of the 1968 uprisings." (Teresa Meade *The Sixties*) "Speaking of Flowers is among the best work yet to emerge from these new approaches to Brazil's ditadura. In examining student activism, memory production, gender, and Brazil in the transnational setting, Langland provides a groundbreaking and original work, one of the strongest books on Brazil's military dictatorship era yet." (Colin Snider *Hispanic American Historical Review*) "Speaking of Flowers is a brilliant book, one that unprecedentedly triangulates the realities of student militancy... with the documented paranoia of the police, public accounts, and the memories (on all sides) of 1968. The author does this with sensitivity, theoretical sophistication, and poignancy, shedding much-needed light on the decades-long process of reconstructing death, destruction, and atrocity into memory knots emphasizing heroism and triumph." (Benjamin A. Cowan *The Historian* 2015-07-01) "Speaking of Flowers is a joy to read." (Joel Wolfe *Canadian Journal of History* 2017-08-01)

Victoria Langland is Assistant Professor of History at the University of California, Davis.

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