Beyond Colorblindness: Race, Rights and Media Discourse in Latin America[1]
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Introduction

In early 2014, Brazilian youth began to flood public spaces, including shopping malls and parks in something they called *rolezinhos* (flash mobs/critical masses/strolls). These encounters, which were happening in major cities throughout Brazil, were made up of hundreds and even thousands of mostly black youth from favelas and poor neighborhoods. While most of the youth involved in the flash mobs initially saw them as purely about entertainment, the response by the Brazilian state was chilling, ranging from violent repression by the military police to closing dozens malls in anticipation of these events. In one of the country's most high-end mall, Iguatemí, they closed in fear of a flash mob that already had more than 3,000 participants confirmed on Facebook.

These flash mobs had not been violent, and typically ranged from less coordinated events where youth simply went to the mall to socialize in big groups, to highly coordinated ones where they sing, made rhythms and even did dance choreographies. Even so, state and mall security repeatedly portrayed them as violent riots of thugs looking to loot and fight. As a result, there was a politicization of these events, particularly as participants responded to state repression. In São Paulo, after police used rubber bullets and tear gas to break up a flash mob, the event shifted to a protest against racism, classism and state violence. Soon, black university students and black organizations joined the *rolezinhos* with a more explicit message against racial discrimination, including organizing official "*rolezinhos* against racism".

Yet whether participants intended this or not, these flash mobs were immediately read as political in the Brazilian context. This is because the very presence of non-white bodies, and particularly non-white bodies from poor neighborhoods, in de-facto white middle class spaces like shopping malls, posed not only a threat to the security of the so-called legitimate mall shoppers, but also to Brazil's racial and class order more generally. As Afro-Brazilian activist and sociologist Lélia Gonzalez's work shows well, Brazilian society operates with a set of racial rules that are held together if blacks simply stay in their place. Moreover, as the flash mobs became increasingly politicized, so too did the news coverage around them. Indeed, as the Brazilian state continued to repress them, and

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the moral panic among the white middle classes grew, media coverage around these events took on a more decidedly political and racial tone. This was the case with many political cartoons like the one featured here that contrasts the Brazil's Military Police's reaction to the *rolezinhos* with the wave of protests throughout Brazil of mostly white, middle class students just a year before. It reads "protestor" on the lighter end of the skin color spectrum and "vandal" on the darker end.

By 2014, I had been going back and forth to Brazil for 14 years and to Colombia. Increasingly, I, like many of the researchers I encountered in the field, felt that race relations were changing beyond the confines of the high-level legal and political changes that I was studying so closely. In Brazil, I saw an increasing number of brown and dark brown skinned Brazilians seemed to be represented in spaces that had previously been reserved, at least de-facto, for "beautiful people", a widely used Brazilian expression for white or very light skinned well off people. Similarly, in contrast to my earlier visits to both countries, if one was to open up a newspaper in either of these countries they are likely to see articles discussing racial inequality and racism where few previously existed. My sense, like many other scholars of race particularly in Brazil, was that the black movement was making its mark on society in some way.

After decades of denying racism and underplaying cultural diversity, Latin American states began adopting transformative ethno-racial legislation in the late 1980s. In addition to symbolic recognition of indigenous peoples and black populations, governments in the region created a more pluralistic model of citizenship and made significant reforms in the areas of land, health, education, and development policy. In my previous work, I analyzed this shift from color blindness to ethno-racial legislation in two of the most important cases in the region: Colombia and Brazil. Drawing on archival and ethnographic research, I showed how, over a short period, black movements and their claims went from being marginalized to become institutionalized into the law, state bureaucracies, and mainstream politics. I also examined the political consequences of these reforms, including the institutionalization of certain ideas of blackness, the reconfiguration of black movement organizations, the creation of new state bureaucracies

to manage racial issues, and the unmaking of black rights in the face of reactionary movements.

In the present project, I seek to move beyond these political outcomes to examine the socio-cultural impact that this monumental shift has had in Latin American countries. More specifically, I am interested in understanding what role the recent upsurge in ethno-racial mobilization and reforms has played in shaping public discourse around race, nation and inequality in the region. In Brazil – the country with the most expansive research on recent reforms – there was been a sense among researchers that black mobilization and the implementation of affirmative action policies have brought about broader social change in recent decades. While some scholars have focused on shifts in racial identity (Nobles 2000, Schwartzman 2007, Osuji 2013, Lamont et al. 2016) others have examined racial attitudes (Bailey 2009, Mitchell 2009), while still other work has looked at representation in alternative media (Gilliam 2012). Yet while all of these works allude to the centrality of black movements in bringing about these changes, few have systematically analyzed these relationships. Instead, scholars have documented a palpable feeling among most scholars analyzing race in Latin American countries that something has certainly changed in recent years. What is more, outside of Brazil, even fewer works have examined the cultural impact of the so-called multicultural turn on Latin American societies (Paschel 2013, Loveman 2014, Telles and Paschel 2014).

In the present article I try to parse out the relationship between black mobilization, ethno-racial legislation and changing public discourse of race and nation in Colombia and Brazil in recent decades. This paper is part of a larger project that analyzes media discourse around race in Latin American countries as a window in to broader socio-cultural change. While the policy outcomes of ethno-racial movements have been dramatic, the notorious gap between laws on paper and lived reality arguably make the analysis of the cultural consequences of social movements all the more necessary in this region. Nevertheless, beyond the Brazilian case the literature on race and representation in Latin America is limited (Carone and Nogueira 2002, Ferreira 2005, Feres 2009, Baptista da Silva and Rosemberg 2009). What is more, the studies on Brazil analyze media representation in itself, rather than examining the connection between changes in media discourse and political change. This project aims to fill that gap by focusing on race and media discourse in four Latin American countries: Brazil, Colombia, Panama and Argentina.

In this paper, I present very preliminary findings from the quantitative analysis of several newspapers as well as more in-depth discourse analysis of two newspapers, Folha de São Paulo (Brazil) and El Tiempo (Colombia). Here, I draw on data from a unique and original database of newspaper articles from the two of the widest circulating national newspapers: *El Tiempo* (Colombia) and *Folha de São Paulo* (Brazil). In this, I use media discourse as a proxy for broader public discourse in these two countries. I argue that both black mobilization and the emergence of ethno-racial policies in the 1990s and 2000s have substantially changed the nature of public discourse around ethno-racial issues in each country. More specifically in the case of Folha, I found that up until the early 1990s, most of the newspaper coverage on race tended to focus on racism in other places, namely the U.S., South Africa and Europe; however, by the early 2000s the conversation had dramatically shifted toward increasing concern about Brazil's domestic race problems.

I have also found that black movement actors have been important in the reshaping of public discourse around ethno-racial issues in both direct and indirect ways. Directly, black activists have written newspapers articles, been cited in articles and have mobilized the media around direct action, in ways that have shaped media discourse. Indirectly, they have been critical to pressuring state actors to transform state discourse and legislation around ethno-racial inclusion and rights, which in turn, has reconfigured media discourse. Ultimately, I hope this data will allow me to say something more generally about the relationship between social movements, policy change and social change.

Race and the Cultural Consequences of Social Movements

There is a growing consensus among social movement scholars that mobilization can, and often does, bring about broad cultural change. In one of his canonical works, Tarrow (1998) suggests that "movements do not simply fade away, leaving nothing but lassitude or repression in their wake; they have indirect and long-term effects that emerge when the initial excitement is over and disillusionment passes" (164). Similarly, McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (1996) highlight that social movements act as "both carriers of meanings and makers of meanings, which, by naming grievances and expressing new identities, constructed new realities and made these identities collective" (7). Yet when scholars began to analyze how social movements mattered empirically, they tended to focus on how social movements can be instrumental in shaping policy outcomes (Gamson [1975] 1990, Staggenborg 1995, Giugni, McAdam and Tilly 1999, Giugni 1999). In this, they have analyzed the conditions under which movements get legislation passed, get policies implemented and in some cases halt the passing of potentially harmful legislation (Zepeda forthcoming).

More recently, though, scholars have shifted their gaze away from policy and toward a more layered understanding of social movement success. As Oliver, Caddena, Roa and Strawn (2003) note that scholars have begun to pay attention to the "broader patterns of change in culture, opinions and lifestyles" that mobilization by social movements provoke (219). Among other things, they have shown that movements can profoundly change the lives of those involved in them (McAdam 1999), they can be successful in transforming the nature of political structures (Keck 2002, Desai 2003, Baiocchi 2005), in substantially changing the political culture (Bernstein 2003, Siegel 2006) and in shaping public opinion (Lee 2002).

Among these changes are what Bernstein (2003) in her work on gay and lesbian movements calls "cultural outcomes" or the "changes in social norms and behaviors, which alter public understandings of an issue and create a collective consciousness among activists" (357). The example of the Occupy Movement that emerged in 2011 in the United States, and subsequently around the world is instructive here. While most of the media and academic analysis of Occupy focused on their inability to define their demands, others have argued they were very successful.[2] Among other things, they have highlighted the Occupy movements' ability to reshape mainstream political discourse in the 2012 election toward a discussion of class inequality. To be sure, whether politicians or political commentators wanted to or not, they found themselves compelled to speak

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[2] See: Mitchell, Harcourt and Taussig (2013).

directly to these issues, and sometimes even in the language of the "99%" that the movement popularized.

Yet the extent to which the social movement literature has analyzed movements and public opinion or discourse, they have rarely treated these as ends in and of themselves. Though we know that many social movements have often sought to shift the terms of the debates around issues, sometimes as a means to shift policy, sometimes to reshape popular ideologies that reproduce inequalities. This may be especially true for what some have called "new social movements"[3], among them ethno-racial movements, LGBT movements and movements at the intersections of these struggles. In addition to demanding more egalitarian laws, have often centered their efforts on combating racism and homophobia in the broader society. If we take the example of the U.S. Civil Rights Movement, the issue of policy change was obviously the most important goal. Even so, it was only one aspect of a broader struggle against racial discrimination and systemic inequality. Indeed, changing the hearts and minds of Americans both in the South and outside of it was not only a necessary step for these policy transformations that they pushed for, but for the fight against racism.

If we look for examples closer to the ones I examine here, we find that movements can be important in reshaping identities on the ground. Indeed, many of the most important indigenous and rural black organizations in Latin American countries began as peasant associations in the 1970s (Brysk 2000, Yashar 2005, Paschel 2016). In this way, movements may do as Brysk (2000) suggests they "produce identities" as well as "discourses of identity for the entire society" (35). If we take the examples of black movements' census campaigns throughout Latin America over the last decade, to give one example, these movements may also be reshaping identities on the ground as well as discourse (Nobles 2000, Paschel 2013, Loveman 2014).[4]

This broader perspective of the consequences of social movements also mirrors the way movements themselves understand their own impact. The black activists I spent time with and interviewed in Colombia and Brazil often defined their struggle, and measured their success in terms of their impact on both the state and society. For instance, Giovanni Sobrevivente, an activist with the MNU in Salvador, described this as a dual struggle that simultaneously targeted the state and the black population on the whole:

> Right in the middle of a dictatorship, we were there in front of the dictatorship saying that racism existed and the state was saying that it didn't. For the state this was a racial democracy. So the great mark of our struggle was to unbury racism and we achieved this. Today, as we arrive in the 21st century, children are assumindo (owning) their blackness,

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[3] See: Touraine, Castells and Melucci. I do not use the term "new social movements" or "identity politics" as I believe they both obscure the very real ways that black struggle is fundamentally about symbolic power and recognition and deep material concerns. How I believe they depart from previous social movements that were **exclusively** class-based, is that they arise from systems of domination that are more explicitly expressed and experienced collectively, and which may rely on ideology and symbolic power to a greater extent than purely material struggles.

[4] Rather than see this as an imposition of an "elite" black movement onto the "masses", I prefer to think of it as a consciousness-raising process much in the way that scholars have analyzed similar efforts among ethno-racial movements (Nagel 1995), but also women's movements and class-based movements. Tianna: More citations on "false-consciousness" and class politics and feminist movements!

wearing their afros, assumindo their clothes, assumindo their culture. That was the work of the black movement (personal interview, Giovanni Sobrevivente, December 2009).

This perspective came from black movements' understanding of the problems they were confronting as having roots not only state discourse and power, but also in popular ideologies that also served to reproduce racial hierarchies and exclusion. Juan de Dios Mosquera of Cimarrón in Colombia also linked these two kinds of goals. He told me: "there was no visibility [of these issues] until Law 70 emerged. With Law 70 they became a topic of public consciousness. Racial exclusion and discrimination has been a continual problem in Colombia society, in relationships between Afro people, the mestizo community and the state. It is real."

Race theorists have long held that social movements are key to broader processes of racial formation (Omi and Winant 1994, Goldberg 2002, Sawyer 2006). In this, social movements' contestations with the state can change state policy, but also the state's orientation toward racial issues more generally. They also have shown how movements can influence society by changing the meanings associated with particular racial categories and by mobilizing people to inhabit them. One of the key outcomes in this has been collective identity. This includes understanding the ways in which movements might work shift the meanings associated with existing social categories in ways that result in larger numbers of people identifying as such, how they might create new categories of identification entirely, and how their mobilization may make particular categories more salient in the lives of people on the ground (Nagel 1994; Hattam 2007; Mora 2010; Zepeda-Millán). For example, in her study of Indian identity in the U.S. Joanne Nagel argues that Red Power movements in the 1970s were successful in shifting the negative meanings around the category "Indian" in ways that led to people of Indian descent claiming their heritage more, and in more visible ways. Similarly, in recent studies, political scientists Chris Zepeda-Millán and Sophia Wallace (2013) found that during and after marches, Latinos felt a stronger sense of collective racial identity, when you control for other factors; in another article, (Wallace, Zepeda-Millan and Jones Correa) found that Latinos who were in closer proximity to these marches, reported higher feelings of efficacy than those that were further away. Both of these suggest that protest cycles, even if they are short lived and are not part of broader social movements, can have substantial effects on identity.

Others have done similar work in the context of changing race identities in Latin American countries (Nobles 2000, Schwartzman 2007, Mitchell 2009, Gilliam 2012, Paschel 2013, Osuji 2013). As I have argued elsewhere (Paschel 2016), while black movements have not undermined older ideologies of *mestizaje* entirely, they have certainly challenged them in substantial ways. They have done this despite many challenges to mobilizing the masses among other organizational weaknesses. And this kind of goal to change society – both through the law and outside of – is perhaps even more salient for movements that are fighting against ideologies and practices that are not explicitly sanctioned by the state. In cases where exclusion and oppression do not happen through legal mechanisms, but rather through informal ones, it may be more difficult to make certain kinds of demands on the state.

This is the case in Latin American countries where the reproduction of racial hierarchy and exclusion largely happened outside of formal legal channels. Rather than Jim Crow-style segregation, there were de-facto practices of racial marginalization. In such a context, black movements often did not see themselves as changing a set of state policies (e.g. racist laws), but combatting a set of non-policies, of challenging formal colorblindness. In these cases it was often about the unwritten, the unlegislated, the largely unspoken ways that race crept into many facets of society, determining the way people thought, the way they behaved, and the material realities of different racial groups. Over the last decades, black movements in Latin America have fought bring about affirmative policies and differentiated citizenship regimes to counteract the seemingly race-neutral laws that helped to reproduce inequality. However, they did this alongside a struggle to change the hearts and minds of ordinary people, including black and indigenous people themselves through census campaigns affirming black identity, grassroots educational work, campaigns to ban racist representations in songs and on television and through changing the discourse around race and national identity.

What is more, in Latin America and the United States alike, the very goal of changing the law was arguably more fundamentally about changing a set of socio-cultural practices steeped in racist logics. This included institutionalized racism and individual acts of racial exclusion, whether they were sanctioned by the state or not. As such, the state has not always been the ultimate target of antiracist work in these countries. Indeed, even while the state acts as a guarantor of certain rights, as the diffuser of certain privileges and ideologies and as the legitimator of certain hierarchies, combatting racial regimes have never quite begun or ended with the state. The state has often been understood both as a target of anti-racist movements, and as an intermediary for the socio-cultural and economic changes that movements actually are pushing forward. In this sense, even when movements have demanded legislative and policy changes, it is often with the goal of more fundamentally changing a society overly shaped by past state action and inaction.

So how do we make sense of these changes in racial discourse and identity, and what, if any, relationship do they have with the political reforms that have unfolded in recent decades? The dominant thinking about how movements bring about cultural change is to view it alongside, parallel to the policy outcomes they seek to make. This may be why we have not thought much about the relationship between cultural outcomes and other ones (Bernstein 2003). Drawing on the case study of black social movements and the media in Latin America, I offer a way of thinking about the cultural impacts of social movements that suggests that there are two paths to bringing about cultural change. In Figure 1, I map these out. The first is the direct path whereby mobilization seeks to directly shape the identities, ideas, opinions and interactions and representations on the ground. In this case, movements mobilize and directly intervene in public debates including those around popular representation.

Figure 1: The Effect of Black Mobilization on Cultural Change
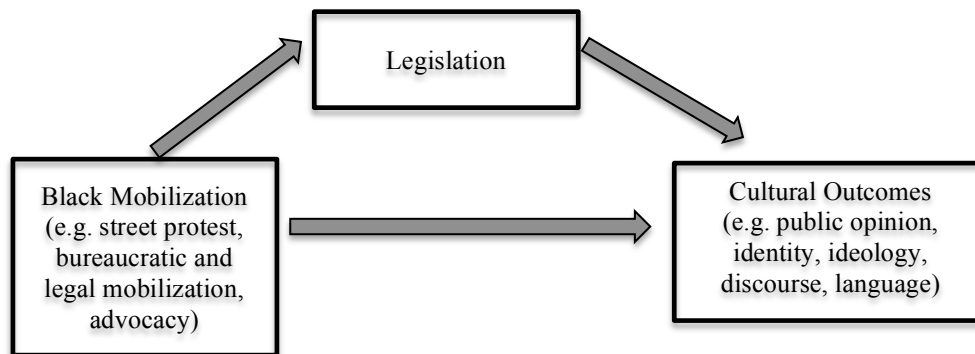
The second path to cultural change is a more indirect one. This happens when social movements engage in mobilization that seeks to bring about policy and political change, which in turn reshapes cultural understandings and practices. While these paths can be understood as separate, it is also important to note that for movements like the one under study here, there is often an engagement in both strategies simultaneously. I argue that even while they have never quite had the ability to mobilize the masses, at least not outside of their alliances with left political parties, they have been incredibly successful at changing state policy, and in reshaping culture in the country.

Research Design

　　With the more recent expansion to non-policy outcomes, though, scholars had to grapple with a number of important questions. First, they have had to make decisions about if scholarship should only analyze outcomes that movements clearly state as their main goals, or if they should also examine the indirect, unstated and even unintended consequences of political mobilization. Second and most importantly, the field has had to think creatively about what kinds of evidence could be leveraged to show that movements were indeed bringing about cultural changes. Showing empirically how movements can affect "the broader culture and public attitudes", as Goodwin and Jasper (2003) suggest they do, can be a difficult task (347).

　　Indeed, shifting away from discrete policy and legislative outcomes to the messier field of culture creates a number methodological challenges (Bernstein 2003, Earl 2004, Soule XXXX). As Soule XXXX contends: "There is agreement that social movements do have tremendous cultural effects and that that should be studied. But what there is no agreement about is what is culture and how we should approach this empirically." They could not be more right. Making the shift to cultural outcomes means trading the straightforward questions of "was the legislation passed or not" or "was the policy adopted or not?" for a messier set of questions like "what is culture?" and "how do we measure it?" This issue of measurement is a problem both for understanding how culture shapes social movements, and how social movements shape culture. As Ignatow (2016) aptly notes: "We may never be able to put culture into a regression equation to sort out its independent effects on the development and outcomes of collective action" (17).

In order to address some of these methodological concerns, the present project analyzes media discourse around race in Latin American countries as a window in to broader socio-cultural change. While the policy outcomes of ethno-racial movements have been dramatic, the notorious gap between laws on paper and lived reality arguably make the analysis of the cultural consequences of social movements all the more necessary in this region. Nevertheless, beyond the Brazilian case the literature on race and representation in Latin America is limited (Carone and Nogueira 2002, Ferreira 2005, Feres 2009, Baptista da Silva and Rosemberg 2009). What is more, the studies on Brazil analyze media representation in itself, rather than examining the connection between changes in media discourse and political change.

This project aims to fill that gap by focusing on race and media discourse in four Latin American countries: Brazil, Colombia, Panama and Argentina. I chose to analyze Colombia and Brazil because they had the most active black movements and the most comprehensive ethno-racial reforms related to black populations in recent decades. However, they were also interesting sites for an analysis of media discourse because, as I argued in my first book, the very different ways that ethno-racial questions were discussed in each. More recently, I became interested in comparing the two better-known cases to two contrasting cases. Panama's racial history is very different from its neighbors, in great part because of U.S. occupation and the implementation of Jim Crow policies in the Canal Zone in the early part of the 20th century. While the Afro-Panamanian movement is relatively visible, their gains have been limited when compared to neighboring countries. Finally, Argentina was chosen because it is a country where the black population and black mobilization are relatively low, and one where substantial ethno-racial reforms have not taken place. Extending the project to Argentina allows me to analyze racial discourse in a "negative case" of sorts, where little systematic work has been done, and where little change has happened at the level of policy. It also will help to parse out if domestic political dynamics, or other factors, are driving changes in media discourse around race in this region.

Toward that end, I am in the process of analyzing articles from 10 widely circulating national newspapers and popular magazines in Brazil (5), Colombia (3), Panama (1) and Argentina (1). These newspapers were selected on multiple criteria. First, they were the widest circulating newspapers and magazines with available digitized data in each of the three countries. Second, I chose various media sources in each country, when possible, because I wanted to compare patterns both within and between countries, and to assess if changes over time are specific to the newspaper being analyzed. Most of the media sources chosen cover the 1980 to 2015 period, however, one Brazilian newspaper, *Estadão*, goes back to 1870. I first used online search tools to analyze the prevalence of a the following general search terms in these media sources: "race", "racism", "racist", "racial discrimination", "mestizaje", "racial democracy" and "black movements" alongside more country-specific terms, which were designed to capture regional variation. I supplement this quantitative data that detail broad trends overtime by constructing a unique dataset of a smaller subset of articles. This more qualitative analysis allows me to examine more deeply the nature and grammar of racial discourse in Latin American countries over time.

My research team included two undergraduates students who read all articles that referenced any of the search terms mentioned above. Once these articles were read,

research assistants determined if the articles were primarily about race, or if they simply referenced race. If they were primarily about race, then they were included in the database to be coded. First, articles were coded for ten variables including if the content of the story was about domestic race issues or foreign, if black movement actors were referenced or not, if they included ethno-racial statistics or legislation, if they were covering an event(s) and if they spoke of international influence. To ensure that we had the maximal intercoder reliability, I held biweekly meetings for two months along with my research assistants where we all coded 20 articles along with each other, and aligned our coding. The biggest ambiguities were around 1) if articles should be included or not; and 2) if the racism that they discussed was individual or structural. While we resolved some of these problems, with additional funding, I would like to have all articles coded twice. I will then use NVivo qualitative software to begin a more in-depth textual analysis of the articles included in this database. Below is a preliminary analysis that is still far from systematic. It outlines some broad trends over times and offers a cursory reading of some of the qualitative data.

Very Preliminary Findings

Over the last couple of decades, many Colombian and Brazilian newspapers have increased their coverage of ethno-racial issues. A preliminary analysis of *La Semana*, *El Tiempo* in Colombia, and *Folha de São Paulo* and *Estadão* in Brazil, which reveals an increasing in articles on coverage on race through the 1990s and 2000s. I show this in Figure 2. If we look specifically at the use of the word "racism" in these newspapers, we also see a dramatic increase over time with the only exception being *Folha de São Paulo*. There are two reasons for this. First, the other newspapers cover a much longer time period. Second, *Folha* is known to be a left-leaning newspaper. However, the pattern in one of Brazil's other widely circulated newspapers, *Estadão*, is one in which 100 articles included "racism" in 1968, compared to 446 mentions in 200, the peak year, and just under 300 in 2013.

**Figure 2: "Racism" in Newspapers in Colombia and Brazil**
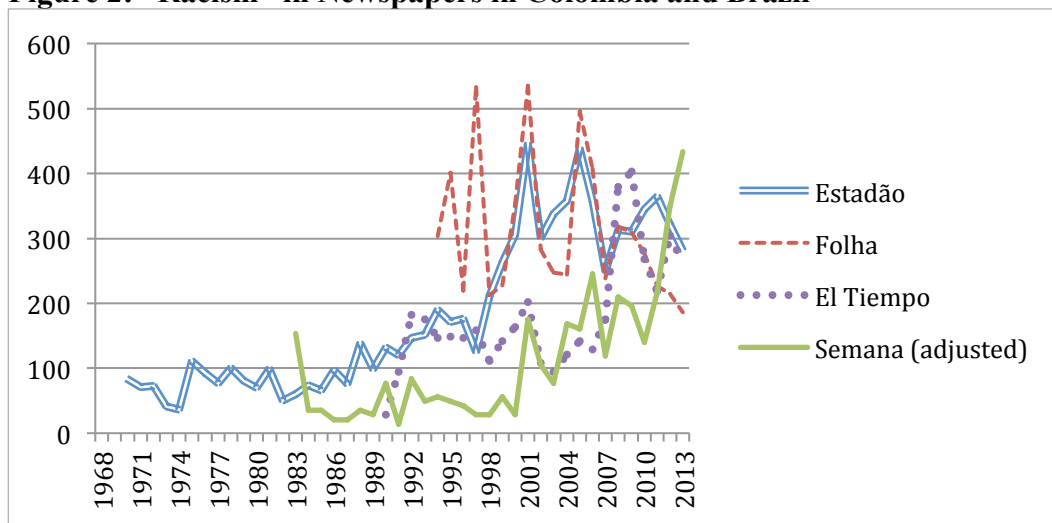
While these general trends are interesting, they raise more questions than they answer. What was going on in those years where "racism" peaked in these newspapers? When "racism" was mentioned, were these passing references or more substantive articles centered on these issues? Why does *Folha* coverage of racism seem to oscillate between large numbers of articles that mention racism in one year, followed by much smaller numbers in the subsequent year? And more importantly what kind of racial discourse emerged from this coverage?

The literature on race and representation in the Colombian media is limited. The literature in this area in Brazil is more promising.[5] Indeed, a number of scholars have analyzed race in Brazilian media, including newspapers (Conceicão 1998, Carone and Nogueira 2002, Borges 2003, Ferreira 2005, Baptista da Silva and Rosemberg 2009). Among other things, their work has highlighted the existence of racist discourse about Afro-Brazilians, the reproduction of the myth of racial democracy, and biased treatments of affirmative action in some newspapers and on television.[6]

Building on this research, and with a comparative lens, I examine a more specific question: What is the relationship between black mobilization and racial discourse in newspapers in Colombia and Brazil? In this, I take an in-depth discursive approach, which starts with the original database I created.

Figure 3: All Articles Primarily on Race in *El Tiempo* and *Folha de São Paulo*
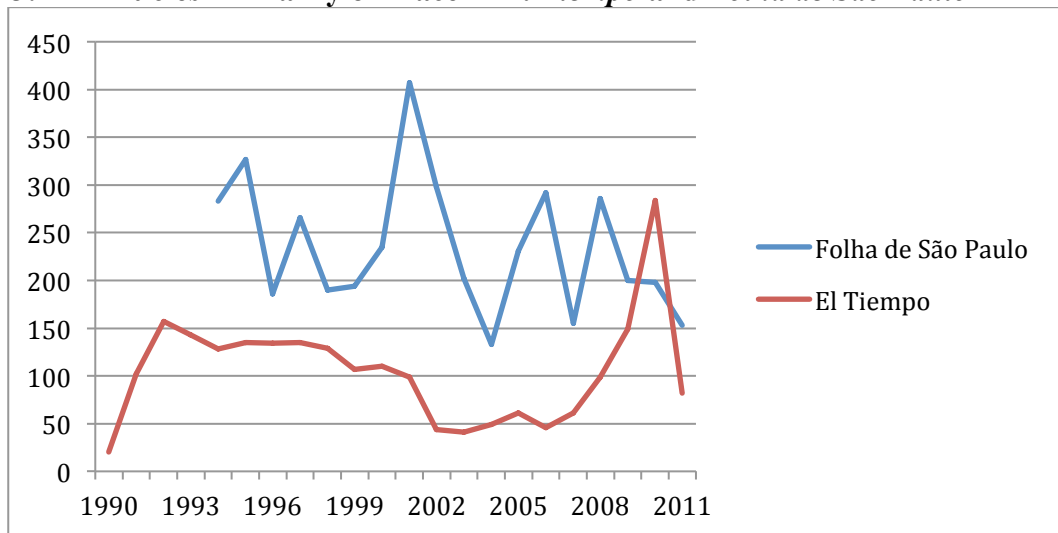
There were also notable changes in where articles were located in each of these papers. While in 1990, 97% of *El Tiempo* articles primarily about race were concentrated in the "Other" section of the newspaper, this number decreased steadily every year until it fell to only 19% in 2011. More importantly, these articles moved to the more visible and important sections of the newspaper including the "Nation" and "Politics" sections. No articles on race appeared in the prominent "Nation" section of *El Tiempo* at any point in the 1990s or early 2000s. In contrast, between 2005 and 2011 a fifth of articles on race were featured there. I found a similar pattern in the editorial section. While only 2% of the articles of race were in that section in the 1990s, in the 2000s it was tenfold (20%).

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[5] Check with Peter Wade and César about this.
[6] Engage more seriously with this research!

The peak of this editorial coverage was in 2001, where 33% of the articles featured in *El Tiempo* were editorials, the majority of which were on racism in beauty pageants in Colombia.

In contrast, the place of *Folha*'s ethno-racial coverage did not change much over time. Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, the overwhelming majority of articles were featured in one of three sections: "Daily Life", "Opinions" or "Brazil". Together, these sections featured over 75% of all articles primarily on race in the newspaper. If we also include consider ethno-racial articles on racial issues outside of Colombia and Brazil, we find that racism in sports was a particularly important topic. In total, there were 496 articles on race in the Sports section of *Folha* in the twenty-year period I analyzed. Two-thirds of them, however, were reporting on events outside of Brazil, typically racism in soccer fields in Europe. Similarly, in *El Tiempo*, there were 149 articles about race covered in the Sports section of the newspaper, though only 7 of these (5%) were about Colombia.[7] What this all suggests is that particularly in the case of *El Tiempo*, the coverage of ethno-racial issues became increasingly mainstream, integrated in broader discussions of politics, the nation and everyday life.

Figure 4: Racism in *El Tiempo* Articles Primarily about Race/Ethnicity
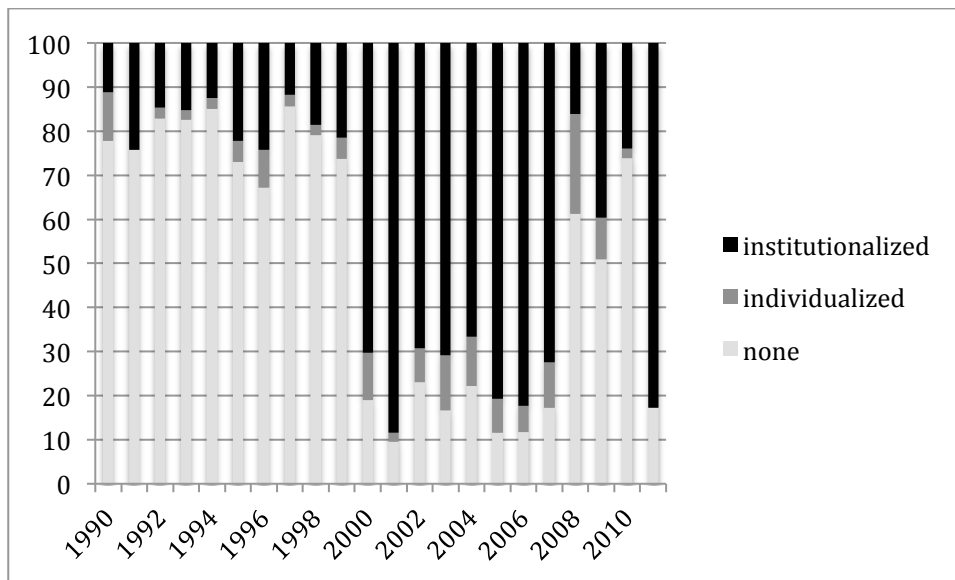

However, it was not just the prominence of racial discussion that changed, but also the very way that racism itself was discussed. When constructing the database, we not only examined if racism was discussed in the articles, but if such discourse around racism was treated as an individual or institutionalized phenomenon. If the article treated racism as a specific event perpetrated by a particular person or group, we coded it as "individual". If it discussed racism as a systemic problem in Colombian or Brazilian society, we coded it "institutionalized".

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[7] It is important to note that the coverage around race in sports was not only covered in the Sports sections of each of these newspapers. This was particularly the case with articles about racial incidents against Brazilian and Colombian players in Europe, which were sometimes featured on the front page of the newspaper and in the editorial and other sections of the newspaper.

Of course, in some cases, while the newspaper article may have been triggered by a specific racial incident, this event acted as a platform from which to discuss broader issues of racism and racial inequality. This was the case in late 1995 with about a dozen *El Tiempo* articles about the case of Sosir Palomeque an Afro-Colombian police cadet who murdered Major Fabio Humberto Antonio Castellanos by lighting him on fire. His justification was that he had endured systematic racism in police training, which sent him over the edge. This sparked articles not only about this case, but also about racism in the police academy, and among the police in Colombia more generally. In cases like these, we coded the article as one that discussed racism as an institutionalized rather than an individualized issue. Also, if the author of the article was making the argument that racism was not an issue in Colombian or Brazilian society – as was the case with many articles surrounding the case of Sosir Palomeque – they were still coded as institutionalized.[8]

Figure 5: Racism in *Folha* Articles Primarily about Race/Ethnicity
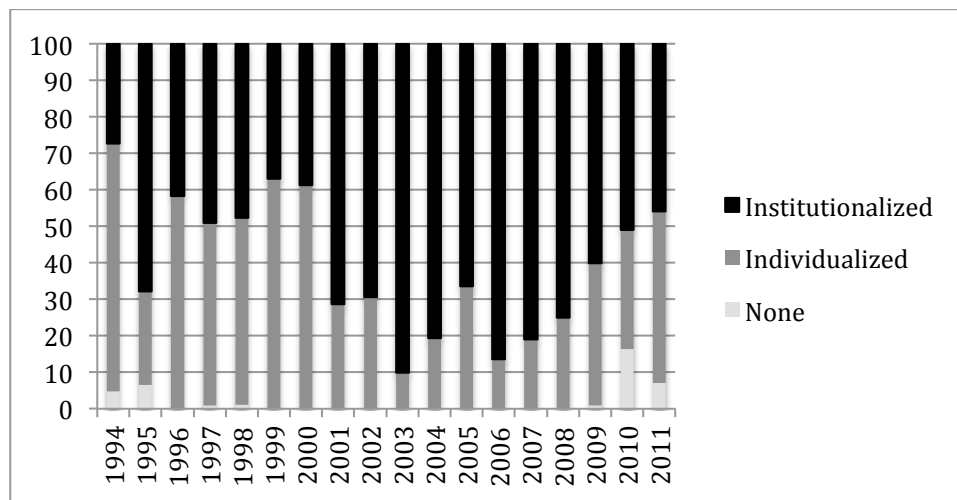
As Figures 4 and 5 show, the discourses around racism in *El Tiempo* and *Folha* could not have been more distinct. While racism was central to *Folha*'s coverage of racial issues, in *El Tiempo* such discussions were marginal. However, when *El Tiempo* did include articles on racism, it tended to move beyond thinking of it as individualized and isolated phenomena. As we will see, these patterns, including the shift in discourses around racism, is very much driven the emergence of ethno-racial legislation. I also want to suggest that they can be understood as both the direct and indirect effect of black mobilization in each country.

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[8] The reason for this is what is most important here is the emergence of a debate around institutionalized racism in these countries, not the complete disappearance of racial democracy or *mestizaje* discourse.

Public Discourse and Legislation: The Indirect Impact of Social Movements

In analyzing media discourse, the idea was to try to better understand the impact of both ethno-racial legislation and black movements outside of the field of formal politics. Along these lines, Lee (2002) analyzes black mobilization and public opinion in the U.S. in the 1950s and 1960s. In it, he argues that the U.S. Civil Rights Movement was successful in activating ordinary citizens' racial attitudes, something he calls "mass activation". Analyzing constituent letters written to politicians and newspapers, we shows the ways in which movements can impact public opinion. If we take the example of indigenous movements in Latin America, we know that their impact has gone beyond policy reforms and even opinion, but have reshaped identity on the ground (Brysk 2000).

In a similar way, in this next section I try to unpack the relationship between black activists' strategic action, ethno-racial legislation and newspaper discourse in Colombia and Brazil. As I have argued throughout this book, while black movements in both countries have been able to pressure the state to adopt legislation and restructure the state apparatus, they largely done so through strategic action in key moments of alignment rather through massive and disruptive forms of protest. As such, how these same movements may be shaping or reframing debates about race and ethnicity in their respective media requires may be through different channels as well. It is not likely the case that massive demonstrations by Afro-Colombian and Afro-Brazilian movements are what have forced newspapers to have a meaningful debate on these issues, as was the case with the U.S. Civil Rights Movement.

At first glance, black movements seem somewhat marginal to the most central debates around race and ethnicity in the two newspapers. Only about 25% of all articles primarily about race and ethnicity in *El Tiempo*, and even less of *Folha*'s articles (15%) mentioned or cited black activists or black movement organizations and activists. However, if we think of this as a case of black movements shaping policy, which in turn shapes public discourse, the findings are more compelling. About a quarter of *El Tiempo* and a third of *Folha* articles discussed ethno-racial policies.[9] Though, there was a great deal of variation in the prominence of discussion of both the black movement and policies for black populations from year to year in these newspapers.

Figure 6: Black Movement and Ethno-Racial Legislation Coverage By Year

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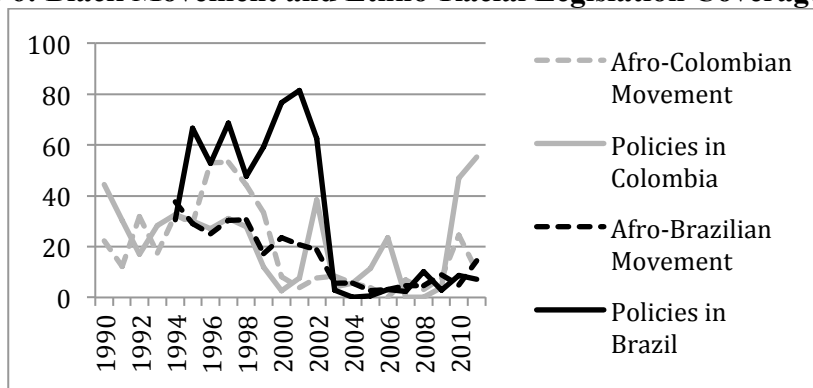
[9] We included articles that discussed specific policies that were already existent or under consideration, as well as articles that mentioned the need for specific ethno-racial policies generally speaking.

In Figure 6, I show the percentage of articles that mentioned black movement organizations and activists and those that cited ethno-racial policies If we look more closely at *El Tiempo* we find that in the 1990s there were over 500 articles about race and ethnicity, about a third (27%) of which referenced ethno-racial policies, followed by a lull in coverage in the 2000s with just over 300 articles, only 7% of which mentioned ethno-racial policies. In both *Folha* and *El Tiempo*, if an article discussed policies, it was more likely to mention or cite black activists. Moreover, in both newspapers, spikes in coverage of black movements were immediately followed by spikes in coverage of ethno-racial legislation. These increases in the proportion of articles discussing policies also map directly onto the policies I have discussed throughout this book. However, in order to really have a sense of the nature of these discussions around race and legislation, we need to delve more deeply into the grammar of race that is referenced and produced through the articles themselves.

As early as 1994, most of the discourse in *Folha* was critical of the idea of racial democracy. While some scholars have found that Brazilian media has tended to reproduce such ideologies, I found the opposite to be true of *Folha*, a newspaper that does have a progressive bent. Indeed, nearly every mention of "racial democracy" that appeared in the newspaper from 1994 to 2011 was preceded by "myth", "falsity" or "illusion". In these articles, they often highlighted the gap between the discourse or racial democracy and reality. As one opinion piece argued: "racism is not so 'cordial' in practice", alluding to the popular idea that slavery was more cordial in Brazil.[10] One headline included "Racial Paradise?" Another article contented that "reality is far away from the racial democracy that we dream for so much".[11] Even so, the adoption of affirmative action policies in universities in the 2000s created a more intense and polarized public debate around race. Though rather than merely discuss how racial inequality plagued Brazilian society, these policies forced Brazilians to engage in a debate around how best to address these problems.

Indeed, if one opened a newspaper, turned on the television, or engaged in small talk with ordinary Brazilians in this period, it would have been difficult to find the form of racial hegemony that Michael Hanchard so aptly uncovered in his 1994 book, *Orpheus and Power*. Rather than a silencing of racial issues, they would have found contentious debate over these questions in the public sphere.

Scholars both in the U.S. and Brazil have begun to analyze this shift in discourse as well as many other aspects of affirmative action policies in Brazil. This has included analyzing the political process that gave rise to these policies (Htun 2004, Telles 2004, da Silva Martins, Medeiros and Larkin Nascimento 2004), the politics of implementation (Santos 2006, Schwartzman and Morães Dias da Silva 2012) and even how affirmative action policies have been discussed in the media (Feres Jr. forthcoming).[12] In analyzing articles published in *Folha* between 1994 and 2011, I found 459 articles that dealt with the issue of affirmative action policies. This was over 20% of all articles primarily about race in the newspaper in this period, and about 30% of those published 2001 onward.
Affirmative Action in Folha

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[10] 3/24/2002

[11] 11/22/2001

[12] Email João Feres Jr about his new work on affirmative action in newspapers.

While *Folha* began discussing affirmative action policies as early as the mid-1990s, their coverage intensified as the Afro-Brazilian movement and government prepared for the Durban Conference in 2001. As it did, the debate also became increasingly polarized as the newspaper included crafted opinion pieces as well as journalistic articles and letters from readers. At the heart of *Folha*'s coverage was the very public disagreement between then President Fernando Henrique Cardoso who supported affirmative action policies, and his Minister of Education, who was vehemently opposed. "For the Ministry of Education (MEC), Quotas are Unconstitutional" and "MEC Rejects Quotas for Blacks" were some of the many headlines that featured prominently in *Folha* in 2001.

In addition to more journalistic articles, *Folha* began publishing a large number of opinion pieces, especially when it was clear that upon returning from Durban there would be some form of affirmative action passed. In one such opinion piece titled "Racism Quotas" the author argued that affirmative action policies would "try to repair one injustice by creating another", would undermine merit and were impossible to implement since it was not clear "how to define who was black".[13] The article also incited two readers to critique *Folha*'s coverage of affirmative action. In the first, a reader wrote: "Despite the fact that this newspapers is on the vanguard, and of indisputable merit in covering national questions, *Folha* still is not able to move beyond the addictive vision of our unjust structure of cordial Brazilian racism".[14]

In another opinion piece, a reader wrote in to congratulate the newspaper for their "quality" coverage of affirmative action policies. Indeed, a week after they published the op-ed "Racism Quotas", they published an article called "Positive Discrimination" where they made the case for affirmative action policies. The reader felt that this was an improvement from the previous week. This kind of dialogue was very common, in part because much of the debate around affirmative action in *Folha* was actually in the opinion section written by ordinary citizens, but also academics and activists on both side of the debate.

In the featured pieces covered by *Folha* journalists, the newspaper did seem to work at striking a balance. In many cases, it presented both sides of the debate in the same article, or in others it ran spreads with divergent positions on the issue. This debate played out in the weeks leading up to the Durban conference, but also during the conference as Brazilians wrote editorials about what position the government should take on these issues at the Third World Conference against Racism. Among the many articles covering Durban was one that reported the resigning of Afro-Brazilian activist and lawyer, Hédio Silva Junior from the National Committee on Durban just a month before the conference. The article included an extensive interview with Silva in which he gave a genealogy of affirmative action policies in the U.S. and India, as well as a lengthy justification for these policies in a Brazilian context. After the article appeared, *Folha* also published two follow-up pieces in the Opinion section that congratulated the newspaper for the "brilliant interview with Lawyer Hédio Silva Junior".[15] Cidinha da Silva of the black feminist organization, Geledés, wrote one of them not in her capacity

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[13] 8/23/2001
[14] 8/24/2001
[15] July 14, 2001

as an activist, but as a Brazilian citizen. These types of actions by activists helped to shape the debate around affirmative action in this period.

After Durban, the discussion over affirmative action intensified even more with the adoption of affirmative action policies by the State University of Rio de Janeiro (UERJ) in 2002. Those in favor of the policies highlighted persistent inequalities and cordial racism in Brazil. While a few articles did argue against affirmative on the grounds that racism was not a problem in Brazilian society, more often they recognized the problem, but argued that affirmative action was not the solution. Among other critiques, these authors painted a picture of affirmative action policies as constituting racism, as undermining merit, and as impossible to implement because of racial mixture and ambiguity.

On May 23, 2002, *Folha*, included a spread of five articles about affirmative action in the Fovest section of the paper.[16] It featured three neutral articles reporting on newly adopted policies, and two opinion pieces, one in favor and one against affirmative action. The first was written by black feminist activist Edna Roland, who at that point had already been named one of the five eminent experts from around the globe to follow up on the Durban Conference. In her opinion piece, she outlined the four dominant critiques of affirmative action policies, and systematically countered their arguments. Responding to the "How do we know who is black" question, Roland simply suggested they use the methodology of the national census that asks respondents their color.

The opposing view came from Eunice Durham, an anthropologist of the University of São Paulo.[17] In it she argued that the problem facing Brazil was a more foundational one of class inequality that starts in primary education.[18] As such, the system had to be fixed from there. For her affirmative action was incompatible with Brazilian society: "Among us, there are very few blacks and very few pure whites. The overwhelming majority of the population is mixed-race, and our road to confront discrimination means recognizing that reality and valuing our mixedness". The article also accused advocates of affirmative action of importing racial policies from the U.S. to Brazil. This charge of importation was common among those that challenged affirmative action, and one that the Afro-Brazilian movement had heard for decades. The article starts "I'm saddened that in Brazil we have taken a path that imitates the United States with the question of 'racial' quotas". Durham was not alone in her critique of these policies. Over the 2000s, *Folha* included hundreds of pieces critiquing affirmative action some written by famous as was the case with Grammy winning singer Caetano Veloso. In addition to writing an op-ed, he signed on to a manifesto against affirmative action that became known as the "The Manifesto of the White Elite" which also appeared in *Folha*.

However, while the affirmative action debate was certainly polarized in the mid-2000s, by the end of the decade it had become a less contentious issue. By that time, dozens of universities had adopted the policies, and in some ways those in favor of racial policies had won the discursive debate. Indeed, the majority of Brazilians were now in

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[16] Tianna: Figure out if this was on the front page!

[17] Durham became a very visible critique of affirmative action, writing academic articles as well as opinion pieces in major newspapers in Brazil.

[18] Tianna: If you want to expand this section and include more articles against affirmative action go to: 11/14/2001, 5/23/2002, 11/13/2002a, 11/13/2002b, 12/17/2002

favor of these policies.[19] This is not to say that affirmative action seized to be a politicized issue. What was different, though, was a sense that these policies were in Brazil to stay, especially after the Supreme Court declared them constitutional in a unanimous decision in 2012.

In all of this, Afro-Brazilian activists were at the center of *Folha* coverage. Indeed, much of *Folha*'s coverage of racial issues recognized black political organizations as important actors behind the Durban Conference and affirmative action policies. Moreover, activists themselves wrote dozens of articles in favor of affirmative action including many of those that emerged as key actors in previous chapters: Sueli Carneiro, Helio Santos, Hédio Silva Junior and Edna Roland. Yet while the Afro-Brazilian movement was important in shaping public discourse around race in Brazil in the 1990s and 2000s, it would be a mistake to assume that the ways that black movements have reshaped public discourse in Brazil was exclusively through debate over ethno-racial legislation.

Race, Popular Culture and Media Discourse

After articles on legislation, articles on race in popular culture made up the highest number of articles in both *Folha* and *El Tiempo* included in the database. This was particularly the case in the editorial sections, where ordinary, and not so ordinary, citizens debated the role of race in soap operas, television commercials, sports and even beauty pageants. While these discussions may seem less relevant to thinking about the impact black movements in each country are having on public discourse, I want to suggest that they may be just as important. If we consider that the Afro-Brazilian and Afro-Colombian movements have historically been concerned with raising consciousness and visibility about racial issues, then popular culture is central. Indeed, catalyzing and weighing in on mainstream conversations of popular culture can be an effective way to do that. Moreover, these discussions are also mediated by other black movement activity as they use legal mobilization and protests to call attention to racism in popular culture.

More specifically, black movements in both countries have leveraged anti-racism legislation that they helped to create to file highly publicized lawsuits against artists, companies and business for cases of racism. This was the case, for example with the lawsuit filed by black organization against Sony Music for the racist and sexist lyrics in the song "Look at Her Hair". Caldwell (2007) does an amazing analysis of in her book. What she does not highlight is the very public debate around race and gender that this lawsuit spurred in the Brazilian media. *Folha* alone published more than a dozen articles on this case, among them tense debates. In this way, the Afro-Brazilian movement has been a key actor in putting racial issues, and racism in particular, on the table for public debate, both directly and indirectly.

A debate about racism in the Brazilian soap opera *Pátria Minha* illustrates this dynamic well. *Pátria Minha,* or My Homeland, aired on Brazil's most popular television station, Rede Globo, from late 1994 to early 1995. Unlike in the United States, soap operas in Brazil air on primetime television and are watched by both women and men and people of all ages. As such, the stories unfolding on soap operas – and particularly the "novela das oito" or the 8pm soap opera – are often the topic of lively discussion in living

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[19] Citation!

rooms throughout the country as well as barber shops, newspaper stands and street corners. I lost count of the number of times in Brazil strangers sparked up conversations about what happened last night on the *novela das oito* during my time in Brazil. Did you see that coming?" "Can you believe she did that?" "If it were me…?"

In this way, soap operas are at the center of public discourse in Brazil, not just among the popular classes, but also the middle and upper classes (Leal 1990). Moreover, because the narratives of soap operas in Brazil are often about issues like adultery, betrayal, class injustice, among other themes, quotidian conversations around them are often moral in nature. Increasingly, this has included taboo topics in Brazilian society such as racism and homosexuality.

This was the case with *Pátria Minha*. Like many soap operas in Brazil, the main protagonists of the show were white. The few black actors on the *novela* were in supporting roles as servants to the main white characters, including a black cook and her nephew, a gardener named Kennedy. In November of 1994, an episode aired in which the protagonist, Raul Pelegrini, a rich white man, wrongly accused Kennedy of stealing items from his safe. In a rage he cursed him out, yelling (among other things) racial slurs like "negro safado" and "criolo". He also used a number of racist expressions like "If blacks don't dirty things when they come in, they will when they leave". More importantly (at least from the perspective of the Afro-Brazilian movement) was the fact that the gardener did not defend himself against this tirade. Instead, he merely bowed his head and accepted the accusations and violence, despite the fact he was innocent.

The reactions to the scene were immediate and were featured prominently on the pages of *Folha*. The first article that appeared was titled "The Racism of Raul Pelegrini Generates Protest". It reported that the newspaper had received 15 "indignant" phone calls from people upset about the "unconstitutional" and "prejudiced" way that Raul Pelegrini threatened the gardener on *Pátria Minha*. The newspaper also interviewed one of the show's writers who defended the scene saying the strong words on the episode were "intentional" as their goals was to broach the topic of racism in Brazil. The paper also reported that the Institute for Research on Black Culture (IPCN) tried to file a suit to impede the station from airing the episode, but were unsuccessful. *Folha* also published several articles on the black feminist NGO, Geledés, that met and ultimately decided to file a lawsuit against Rede Globo to force the network to include a new scene that rectified the situation.

In total, *Folha* printed more than 30 articles about the issue race in *Pátria Minha*, the majority appeared between November 4 and December 14 of 1994. Nearly all of the articles fell into one of three categories: those that argued that the incident reproduced racism and the idea of blacks as submissive, those that argued it facilitated a necessary dialogue about racism in Brazilian society, and finally, those that felt that regardless of what the episode did or did not do, this was ultimately a question of free speech. While no article denied the existence of racism in Brazilian society per se, one did suggest that the scene showed a violent form of racial prejudice "uncommon to Brazil" at the time, while another charged with bringing "an issue to Brazil, again, that seems taken from the U.S. where the thesis that the IQ of blacks is inferior to that of whites became a best seller" purely for the sake of melodrama.

However, this idea that the incident on *Pátria Minha* was somehow not Brazilian, was a rare one. Instead, the dozens of articles on the scene in *Pátria Minha* recognized

the existence of racism in Brazilian society, though they treated it as an individualized problem. Indeed, rather than frame racism as the black activists involved in this debate often did – as rational and systemic – *Folha* coverage tended to talk about racism as irrational, and as individualistic. For example, on November 7, one *Folha* journalist wrote the following: "the racist speech by Pelegrini is so brutal, *so without logic* that it ended up provoking the opposition reaction. People were so shocked by that kind of stupidity that they ended up running to the defense of the victims".[20]

More importantly for my analysis here was the place of, and discourse around, the black movement in all of this. In nearly all of these articles, those written both by *Folha* journalists and Brazilian citizens were responding directly to the charges and provocations of black movement organizations. Even in articles that argued that the lawsuit was unjustified and even "ridiculous" did not suggest that racism was not a problem in Brazilian society. Nor did they question the need for organizations like Geledés, the Institute for Research on Black Culture (IPCN), the Nucleus of Black Consciousness or the Black Parish of São Paulo, all of which had been protesting *Pátria Minha*.

For example, in a critical article titled "The Black Movement Attempts Coercion", the author starts by saying "protest on part of the black community makes sense. If they felt they were they were wronged by the 'racist' focus of '*Pátria Minha*' they can and should make their right to speak against that which they consider offensive to black Brazilians. The author felt that the movement's demand for them to include a new scene was "naïve and wrong". For him, both the writers of *Pátria Minha* and the movement had a write to free speech. Indeed, throughout *Folha*'s coverage, even articles that saw black organizations protesting the soap opera as misguided, all used the categories "black community", "black movement" and "organizations that fight for black rights" without questioning them.

The very idea that the Afro-Brazilian movement was perceived as a legitimate political and social actor in these articles suggests a serious departure from previous decades where public discourse around the black movement was one of suspicion. In fact, they were often called racists for speaking against racism (Hanchard 1994, Alberto 2011, Paschel 2015). In fact, there was only one article that accused the movement of racism.

Ultimately, black movement actors provoked a public discussion of racism not only in this soap opera, but in Brazilian society more generally. As such, both the television network and writers were compelled to respond, even before the lawsuit had been officially filed. The initial response was that the lawsuit was absurd and that the soap opera had shed light on the serious issue of racism, as opposed to reproduce racism. However, as protest intensified, mainly through phone calls and legal action both by black NGOs and the city attorney of São Paulo, they began to respond. Their first attempt to address the issue came about a week later with the inclusion of a scene in which a white lawyer on the soap opera informed the gardener, Kennedy, that racial incidents like the one he had endured were against Brazilian law.[21]

Black organizations threatened to continue the court case against the television company not only because of this misinformation, but because they saw this as a more

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[20] 11/7/1994

[21] The scene cited Law Arinos that ceased to exist with the 1988 constitution with the criminalization of racism.

fundamental issue of what Sueli Carneiro of Geledés called "dignity". In fact, the initial complaint filed with the court was not against the racial violence portrayed in the show, but the disempowered, submissive response on the part of the gardener, which they argued had negatively affected the self-esteem of black Brazilians.

Beyond the movement, many readers writing into *Folha* also framed the issue in these terms. This was the case in a short opinion piece written by Isabel Cristina Feliciano that appeared early on in the scandal:

> "I was so devastated by the scene in *Pátria Minha* where Raul Pelegrini (Tarcísio Meira), verbally and morally assaulted that black guy Kennedy (Alexandre Moreno). I just hope that after so many critiques, the protagonists of this shameful act that disrespected black citizens become aware of this and at least try to ask for the forgiveness of that race that has been the victim of injustice and marginalized. The black guy Kennedy has to react!"

In this way the critiques of *Pátria Minha* were framed as an issue of dignity and as a call for a "reaction" to racism. As Sueli Carneiro explained: "The gardener did not behave with dignity. He received the offenses almost passively. He had a conduct that does not reflect the behavior of contemporary blacks". In another article, Carneiro reiterated this by saying: "The problem is that Kennedy and the rest of the blacks on *Pátria Minha* behave submissively; They don't know how to defend themselves. They always need a white character to show them the light. It is an archaic and paternalistic view that is plucked from the old history manuals." In this sense, activists and ordinary citizens alike were offended in part because the scene seemed to underscore what they saw as a kind of racial submission that was more reminiscent of race relations under slavery.[22]

As such, Geledés demanded that the network create a scene where the gardener was to be empowered and his "dignity restored" specifically through conversations with other black characters on the show, rather than white ones. However, as *Folha* also reported, their lawsuit was eventually thrown out by the judge on the grounds that demanding the soap opera change scenes would have been censorship, something "absolutely prohibited by the constitution".

Despite this, the Afro-Brazilian movement was successful in the end. As one headline reported: "*Pátria Minha* Ceded to Protests by Black Groups". A few weeks after the initial scene was aired, Rede Globo included another long scene where Kennedy's black godmother, Zilá, sat down with him and talked about how she had never been ashamed of being black. The *Folha* article reporting on it included extended direct quotes from the scene. In it, Zilá says that she had always been proud to be "part of the black community" and that nobody should "be quiet when faced with racial prejudice". The article also emphasized that the inclusion of this scene was a direct response to "the demands of the groups that combat racism in Brazil".

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[22] Despite this outrage by activists and ordinary citizens many of the black actors that *Folha* interviewed defended the soap opera, calling the black movements actions "silly" and as violations of both free speech and artistic expression. The one exception was one *Folha* article that mentioned that Afro-Brazilian actress and activist, Zezé Motta, said that she did feel it was "a shame" that Kennedy had "bowed his head" to the insults.

The media spectacle around *Pátria Minha* in the mid-1990s can be seen as one of many key moments in which the Afro-Brazilian movement has been successful in pushing for a broader public discussion around racism, anti-racism and even black consciousness. In this way, it is not only massive black mobilization, or even the adoption of racial equality legislation, that have had the power to catalyze debate about the role of race in Brazilian society. Indeed, following this, throughout the late 1990s and 2000s discussions about racism in television and popular culture more generally continued to be covered in *Folha*. As it did, the discourse of racism embedded in coverage of these events recognized racism a systemic and institutionalized issue, rather than a rare, individualized psychological problem.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I analyzed the changing patterns of racial grammar in newspapers in Colombia and Brazil as a window into broader changes in social understandings of race and nation. I suggest that black movements have been important actors in the reshaping of public discourse around ethno-racial issues in both direct and indirect ways. Indeed, neither country were black movements able to build massive and sustained movements that had the power to change the ideological contexts in which they were embedded. However, in a more indirect way, they may have achieved just that.

To better illustrate this point, I want to briefly go back to the example that I started with, the *rolezinhos* in shopping malls that were so heavily covered in the media throughout Brazil in January and February of 2014. The Minister of Racial Equality, Luiza Bairros – herself a long time activist – was brought in by President Rousseff to mediate the hysteria around the *rolezinhos* throughout Brazilian cities. Instead she spoke candidly in support of them, critiquing both the government of São Paulo and mall administrations as racist. The critical masses represented what she called an "awakening of black consciousness among the youth". However, this awakening, in many ways, was one that she, along with the black movement more generally, was never quite able to achieve, at least not directly.

Yet, in a somewhat ironic way, in taking their struggles away from the grassroots and toward targeting the state through more strategic action, black movements have arguably reached level of societal influence much greater than any of their most valiant grassroots efforts. In this, black activists have not only been instrumental in breaking the silence around racism and the plight of black populations, but also in shaping the language that society came to use in the 1990s and 200s to talk about these issues.

Even so, I do not want to suggest that racial democracy and *mestizaje* have disappeared. What the adoption of ethno-racial policies in Colombia and Brazil did, rather, was disrupt the racial status quo by questioning *mestizaje* and racelessness in mainstream society. The conversations about inequality and racism that Afro-Brazilian and Afro-Colombian activists had been having at the edges of mainstream politics for decades were now being discussed on the front pages of the widest circulating newspapers in their respective countries.