

**Silence Behind the ‘Talk of Crime’: Representations of Violence in a  
Sample of Contemporary Brazilian Films and Television Series**

**Eli L. Carter**

University of Virginia

Over the last twenty years there has been a proliferation of audiovisual works representing urban poverty, violence, and race in Brazil. During the same period, critics have devoted a significant amount of time to discussing the types of violence portrayed and the aesthetic constructions used for their varied representations, while also taking into account some of their political consequences. For example, while scholars such as Ivana Bentes (2005), Beatriz Jaguaribe (2005), Tânia Pellegrini (2005), Lúcia Nagib (2003), Emanuelle Oliveira (2009), and Sophia A. McClennen (2011) have dealt with questions of aesthetics, others, like Esther Hamburger (2007), have directed their attention to matters of production and the broader dispute for the control and appropriation of the mechanisms of production—that is, *who* controls and produces these representations and *how* they do it.

Taking on both the complex matter of individuals representing themselves *and* the aesthetics of contemporary representations of violence, João Cezar de Castro Rocha (2005) proposed the “dialectic of marginality.” In contrast with Antonio Candido’s “dialectic of malandroism” (*dialética da malandragem*), which outlines a process wherein the marginalized individual is brought into the legal and ordered public sphere, the “dialectic of marginality” does not reconcile differences, but rather

points them out and refuses “to accept the improbable promise of compromise between the tiny circle of the powerful and the expanding universe of the excluded” (Castro Rocha 31). Though Castro Rocha’s argument is appealing in theory, it fails to recognize that in practice the tightly controlled media landscape tends to silence those at the margins.

This is not, however, to imply that only those living in or originally from a marginalized space such as a *favela* are capable of representing what goes on there. As Diony Maria Soares contends, even those works that deal with themes and spaces directly related to their creator’s respective realities often reproduce stereotypical and problematic representations of Afro-Brazilian men, for example (119). Indeed, as Teresa Caldeira documents in *City of Walls: Crime, Segregation, and Citizenship in São Paulo*, the root of such stereotypes is often found in the local communities where the urban violence occurs. According to Caldeira, citizens construct questionable and incomplete narratives to cope with and make sense of everyday violence and socioeconomic inequality. These narratives, or what Caldeira refers to as the “talk of crime,”

Bestow a specific type of knowledge. They attempt to establish order in a universe that seems to have lost coherence. Amid the chaotic feelings associated with the spread of random violence in the city space, these narratives attempt to reestablish order and meaning. Contrary to the experience of crime, which disrupts meaning and disorders the world, the ‘talk of crime’ symbolically reorders it by trying to reestablish a static picture of the world. (20)

However, in the effort to restore balance to the chaos induced by violence, the quotidian narratives resulting from the “talk of crime” leave much unsaid about root causes and fail to establish a context for understanding violence. As a result, while they “talk of crime,” such narratives ignore a more nuanced examination of violence and fall short when addressing the many complex factors contributing to violence and socioeconomic inequality.

Caldeira formulated the concept of the ‘talk of crime’ during her ethnographic research in a relatively homogenous, albeit changing middle class neighborhood in São Paulo. Thus, though her employment of the term in that study is largely class-based, I aim to demonstrate that when abstracted beyond the context of her ethnography and applied to audiovisual works that deal with poverty, violence, and race in marginalized urban communities, it proves to be a fruitful point of departure for exploring both what is said—that is, the “talk of crime”—and what is

left unsaid—that is, the silence behind the “talk of crime.” What follows, then, is an examination of the commercially inclined feature-length films, *Cidade de Deus* (Fernando Meirelles and Kátia Lund, 2002) and *Era uma vez ...* (Breno Silveira, 2008) alongside the post-primetime television works, *Cidade dos Homens* (Fernando Meirelles, 2003—2005) and *Subúrbia* (Luiz Fernando Carvalho, 2012). Unlike the overwhelming majority of studies dealing with Brazilian audiovisual representations of urban violence that focus exclusively on a film or set of films or on the *telenovela* genre, I propose an analysis that places select works from both fields in a comparative context. The choice of the aforementioned four work stems from their representative positions within their respective fields of Brazilian film and television production. More precisely, in terms of their financial models, the two films exemplify big budget attempts to portray urban violence, while the two television programs are representative of prestige programming dealing with the subject matter. In terms of their aesthetic, all four employ varying degrees of realism, the standard for Brazilian films portraying urban violence. Finally, all of these works were coproduced or produced by Globo Filmes or TV Globo, branches of the largest media company in Brazil, and were directed or overseen by affluent white Brazilians, employed nonprofessional actors, and were shot on-location in or around Rio de Janeiro *favelas*.

By examining these different productions as the fictional and audiovisual iterations of the “talk of crime”, I argue that we can gain two important insights into the broader field of Brazilian audiovisual production. The first has to do with how and why Brazilian film and television both “talk of crime,” yet ultimately produce narratives that, each in their own way, remain silent with regard to underlying reasons behind the crime and violence of which they speak. Central to this silence and therefore directly related to the first, the second insight has to do with how the respective representations, whether filmic or televisual, tend to situate the *favela*-residing, black Brazilian man as inherently and fundamentally violent.

*The “talk of crime” in Cidade de Deus and Era uma vez...*

In the same article in which she develops the now famous term “cosmetics of hunger,” Ivana Bentes praises Nelson Pereira dos Santos’s 1955 classic, *Rio, 40 Graus*, for incorporating the *favela* and its inhabitants into the cityscape. In contrast, Bentes strongly criticizes *Cidade de Deus* for failing to situate the *favela* in the broader urban

landscape of Rio de Janeiro.<sup>1</sup> For Bentes, the film isolates the *favela* from “the rest of the city, as an autonomous territory” and at no point “does one suppose that the trafficking is maintained and develops (guns, money, and police protection) because it has a base outside the *favela*” (89). Subverting Bentes’s argument, some moments in the film do in fact reveal the drug trade’s connection to a sustaining outside world: for example, a corrupt police force, a gas company that sells propane tanks to locals, an arms dealer named Tio Sam (an explicit critique of the United States’ role in producing and selling weapons), and the middle-class Thiago, who lives outside the *favela*, but enters to purchase drugs for himself and his friends. Nonetheless, Bentes’s point is important because it highlights the film’s emphasis on the generally decontextualized and perpetual physical violence committed by Zé Pequeno and his gang, ignoring a more meaningful representation of both the physical violence and the underlying socioeconomic and racial inequality. Instead, Meirelles’s film, which in the closing credits declares itself to be based on a true story, provides the spectator with what Beatriz Jaguaribe refers to as an “interpretive pedagogy of the ‘real’” (66). Not unlike Caldeira’s conceptualization of the “talk of crime,” this pedagogy functions to instruct the viewer in a simplistic manner that these violent young men of color are the source of urban violence. In doing so, it activates an implicit performative anti-blackness through which white supremacy becomes “a historical discourse of power that depends on the association between blackness, on the one hand, and non-humanity, exclusion, abhorrence, on the other” (Vargas 7).

A central part of this anti-black performance is the film’s elimination of the

---

<sup>1</sup> In the 1960s, Cinema Novo directors focused on creating films that simultaneously *represented* and *aesthetically embodied* the country’s poverty-stricken, unequal, and violent social reality. This meant low-budget, on-location shoots in socioeconomically marginalized spaces as well as the frequent use of non-professional actors. For Rocha and other Cinema Novo filmmakers, political engagement was a central consideration for determining content and its representation. For example, in his now famous theorization of the “aesthetics of hunger,” Rocha aggressively argued that the filmmaker “ready to place his cinema and his profession at the service of the great causes of his time [embodies] the correct definition which sets Cinema Novo apart from the commercial industry because the commitment of industrial cinema is to untruth and exploitation” (70-71). Though they never abandoned their political engagement, it is important to note that in its later phase (1968-1972), *a fase tropicalista*, Cinema Novo filmmakers made a concerted effort toward producing more commercial films such as *Macunaíma* (Joaquim Pedro de Andrade, 1969) and *Como era gostoso o meu francês* (Nelson Pereira dos Santos, 1971), in an attempt to draw larger audiences to their films. The “cosmetics of hunger” is meant to be a critical take on the way some contemporary, commercially inclined films treat controversial subject matter like urban violence, packaging it in a slick and pleasing aesthetic. When juxtaposed with those ugly, sad films that defined Cinema Novo, surfing through reality and emphasizing beauty are, for Bentes, superficial and detached characteristics of an aesthetic focused on commercial gain rather than on political struggle (84).

working class black man. Whereas the majority of the characters from *Rio, 40 Graus* form part of the working class, in *Cidade de Deus* such characters, especially among younger black men, are virtually nonexistent. In fact, there is a telling moment early in the film during a conversation between two amateur thieves, Alicate and Marreco. An establishing shot at the beginning of the scene portrays a tranquil, almost idyllic community still dormant as the sun rises. Set in the 1960s, this first part of the film is a transitional period that functions to move the narrative from the incipient, working-class *Cidade de Deus* community, bothered, but not yet dominated by criminals, to the drug-trafficking controlled and ultraviolent community of the 1970s. In the scene in question, Alicate and Marreco have gone into the woods to escape from the police who are searching for them regarding their suspected participation in a violent robbery of a local motel. Concerned about his burgeoning life of crime, Alicate asks Marreco what it is like to work. In his response, Marreco implies that it is nothing to which one should aspire: "Porra! Só trabalhei com meu pai. E sabe como é pai, né? Pai só fala merda!" ["Fuck! I've only worked with my dad. And you know how dads are, right? They only spout bullshit"] (Meirelles and Lund DVD).

One way to characterize the rest of the first part of the film is that, in its push toward establishing the violent *favela* that comes to define the fictional period covering the 1970s, it constructs a "pathological script" that depicts the impending doom of the *favela*-residing working-class black man (Alves 315). Becoming involved in the emerging drug trade, Marreco negates the possibility of following in the steps of his humble, hard-working father who sells fish to the local community. Alicate leaves the gang for the church. We never see him again, and only hear of him when Cabeleira, the third member and leader of the *Trio Ternura* gang, mocks his former partner in crime during a conversation with his fiancée, Berenice, who urges him to get an honest job and to quit robbing and lying around smoking weed. Cabeleira's position, however, is emphatically clear: "Trabalhar dá dinheiro? Vai trabalhar, então, ué" ["Does working get you money? If so, go work"] (Meirelles and Lund DVD). While Cabeleira lambasts work and Marreco is incapable of keeping an honest job, the adolescent Dadinho and his best friend Bené, not unlike the boys from *Rio, 40 Graus* hit the city streets with the objective of making some cash. However, as in the case of the boys from dos Santos's film, rather than spending an honest day's work selling peanuts, Dadinho and Bené proceed to rob and beat innocent citizens. A montage of their endless crimes and their joy in committing them serves to transport visually the

spectator to the second part of the film, which is centered on the violent drug trade that threatens to destroy the community of Cidade de Deus.

In this part of the film, Dadinho, now the eighteen-year-old known as Zé Pequeno, employs relentless violence in his plan to take over the *favela* where he intends to sell cocaine. Thus, the violent boy, Dadinho, has developed into the even more violent young man, Zé Pequeno. With no explanation offered for why Dadinho and later Zé pequeno participate in such violence, the film spectacularly portrays one of its main character's senseless acts of violence as a matter-of-course. In fact, in what plays out as a "pathological script of black masculinity," with the exception of the protagonist and first-person narrator, Buscapé, nearly every young black man in the film is involved in the violent drug trade (Alves 315). However, as Bentes and Castro Rocha have both argued, Buscapé's inability to commit a crime—he tries and finds that it is simply not in his nature—highlights stark behavioral differences between the narrator and the other characters, effectively making Buscapé an outlier and an exception to the fictional world's general depiction of young men of color as not working and committing violence. Thus, although he is in fact a young black man from Cidade de Deus, the film distinguishes Buscapé from the others, having him narrate from a position that is ultimately removed from the space's inherent violence.

Buscapé's moral and figurative distancing is compounded further through the presence of his own camera, which situates him as the fulcrum for the problematic communicative interaction Caldeira calls the 'talk of crime.' As Caldeira notes, the repetition of stories of crime and violence "only serves to reinforce people's feelings of danger, insecurity, and turmoil" (19). "Thus," she concludes, "the talk of crime feeds a circle in which fear is both dealt with and reproduced, and violence is both counteracted and magnified" (19). This is precisely what happens in the film when Buscapé repeats to the spectator the story of the rise of the 1970s drug war in Cidade de Deus. In this way, he functions as a detached insider who is more like the middle-class viewer than those he lives with and describes (Bentes). What is more, in the film's fictional universe, as the photographer who captures Zé Pequeno and his gang as perpetrators of the drug-related violence, Buscapé also participates in constructing and repeating stereotypes of *favela* dwellers to an imaginary Brazilian sitting at home reading the *Jornal do Brasil* newspaper, which publishes the narrator's photos capturing the urban violence. In both instances, the story appears straightforward: poor young men, most of whom are black, endlessly kill each other not far from the perfect postcard version of Rio de Janeiro. The problem with this view of violence is that "it

not only produces certain types of interpretations and explanations (usually simplistic and stereotypical); it also organizes the urban landscape and public space, shaping the scenario for social interactions” (Caldeira 19). Thus, the film embodies the “talk of crime” at two levels: it uncritically depicts the circulation by the media of fictional narratives of the marginalized violent other; and, as a narrative itself seen by millions of Brazilians, it contributes to the broader social view of who is violent and how and where they commit such violence. As Jaime Amparo Alves argues, the “pathologization of favelas/shantytowns as places of criminality, danger and fear is a discursive ideological apparatus by which racial domination effectively takes place in urban Brazil” (320).

In the film’s last scene a gang of adolescent boys kills Zé Pequeno and takes control of the *favela*. The implication is clear: drug trafficking is here to stay and is only going to get worse as younger, less aware, and better-armed boys come to power. As Chan and Vitali eloquently put it: “This image—the gang of younger, more violent children—helps present the violence affecting the *favelas* as a self-perpetuating, self-generating cycle, one that sucks each generation into its wake as it feeds on itself” (27).<sup>2</sup> *Cidade de Deus*’s representation of the *favela* as being no more than the home of violent drug dealers, who are increasingly lacking in consciousness, paradoxically provides these socio-economically marginalized young men with a bleak visibility. Instead of freeing them, this visibility or “talk of crime” further marginalizes or silences them because it positions them as the source for much of what is wrong with Brazil, or, in José Murilo de Carvalho’s words, it situates them as the “negative image of the people” par excellence (111).

This is complicated further by the fact that *Cidade de Deus*, in the way of Cinema Novo and dos Santos’s film, was shot on-location in and around the actual community of Cidade de Deus. The film also features a majority of non-professional actors from different Rio de Janeiro *favelas*. In fact, as already mentioned, immediately following the hopeless last scene, the shocked spectator is informed that what she just saw was based on a true story. Consequently, the film as a form of the “talk of crime” validates itself as being directly connected to and representative of Cidade de Deus’s *actual* reality. By invoking such a connection, the film alerts the spectator to the ‘real’

---

<sup>2</sup> While interpretations like this one have become the standard regarding the film, others, such as Susana Schild in “*Cidade de Deus: O tiro que não saiu pela culatra*” (2002), have argued in favor of the film’s representation and power to generate a public debate.

dangers present in Rio de Janeiro's *favelas* which, according to the film's diegetic universe, are home to violent, black drug-traffickers. The stealth naturalization embodied in this "representational practice" (Hall 325) mobilizes "fear and anxieties to produce both the white city and the black favela, the black criminal and the white victim" (Alves 328). In turn, the reification of this resulting oversimplification of violence, its origin, its perpetrators, and its victims is precisely the embodiment of silence enacted by the 'talk of crime.' Put differently, as a form of naturalization, the "talk of crime," is a "representational strategy defined to *fix* 'difference', and thus *secure it forever*. It is an attempt to halt the inevitable 'slide' of meaning, to secure discursive or ideological 'closure' (Hall 336). In the case of the "talk of crime" in *Cidade de Deus*, without consideration of the *favela*'s social and economic context, it works to 'fix' the idea that physical violence and those black men who appear to partake naturally in it are the overriding explanation for this community's and, more broadly, urban Brazil's precarious reality.

*Era uma vez...* (2008), Silveira's follow up to his wildly successful *2 Filhos de Francisco* (2005), is a Shakespearian love tragedy set in contemporary Rio de Janeiro. If, as some critics have argued, *Cidade de Deus* fails for not situating the *favela* within the broader geographical landscape of Rio de Janeiro, the same cannot be said of *Era uma vez...* Moreover, the film explicitly re-asserts the existence of the working-class *favela* dweller, who was largely eliminated in Meirelles and Lund's film and implicitly classified by race in the *Cidade dos Homens* episode.

*Era uma vez...* opens with Dé (Thiago Martins), the protagonist and first-person narrator, declaring that he lives in the most beautiful place in the world—the South Zone *favela*, Morro do Cantagalo. He speaks of his home's location in one of Rio de Janeiro's most expensive neighborhoods (Ipanema). As he does so, an expansive panning shot draws the audience's attention to a collection of bland, makeshift homes covering a hillside. The panning shot continues, revealing a wealthy urban beach community set near the base of the hillside. Despite the fact that the two communities share essentially the same geographical space, Dé clarifies that their realities could not be more different. While the camera captures individuals moving throughout the *favela*, Dé signals the source of this difference by listing a number of blue-collar professions and declaring, "Eu faço parte dessa multidão invisível que trabalha todos os dias nas ruas de Ipanema" ["I am part of this invisible multitude that works every day in the streets of Ipanema"] (Silveira DVD). We quickly learn that Dé's invisibility is in part a reference to Nina, the wealthy white girl who lives in front



of the kiosk where Dé works and who, despite his love for her, never notices his presence.

*Era Uma Vez...* takes a strong stance against the socioeconomic inequality that characterizes the lives of so many Brazilians and is one of the deciding factors in socially and geographically dividing cities like Rio de Janeiro. However, it perpetuates those same racial stereotypes of violent, unproductive black men present in *Cidade de Deus*, ultimately making its “talk of crime” as simplified as that of Meirelles and Lund’s film. Along these lines, more telling and more interesting than Dé’s impossible love with Nina is the way the film represents his adopted, older black brother, Carlão (Rocco Pitanga). Carlão first appears in the film as a morally sound and hardworking electrician. However, when drug traffickers kill his other younger brother and threaten his own life, he is forced to flee the *favela* to the streets of Ipanema, where he ends up selling hot dogs along the beach. One day, while enjoying the ocean with Dé, his still adolescent brother, Carlão, finds himself the victim of racial profiling by police officers who have stormed the beach in reaction to a mass robbery committed by local boys from a *favela*. When the police examine Carlão’s backpack they find a gun he had confiscated earlier from Dé who was naively contemplating avenging their other brother’s death. Though innocent of any wrongdoing, Carlão ends up in jail, where, he eventually becomes a hardened criminal.

In the treatment of Carlão’s incarceration, the film evokes an oft-represented reality of the Brazilian juvenile and prison system as worsening, rather than rehabilitating, criminals.<sup>3</sup> At issue is not the implicit critique the film makes of the Brazilian prison system in depicting the racial profiling and Carlão’s incarceration. Instead, the problem is that the film reverts to a simplified “talk of crime,” transforming Carlão from a hardworking, honest, and law-abiding citizen to a gun-toting, drug-using, violent drug trafficker, as if it were an inevitable, natural trajectory. In doing so, the film positions Carlão as the violent other. His presence—as represented in the fictional universe’s own “talk of crime” which, like in *Cidade de Deus*, is communicated through stories of violence and crime from the nightly news and morning newspapers—doubly solidifies itself in the social imaginary, striking fear into the hearts and minds of those upper-middle class citizens in the film like Nina’s

---

<sup>3</sup> Such films include, but are not limited to *Pixote, a Lei do Mais Fraco* (1980), *Notícias de uma Guerra Particular* (1999), *Ônibus 174* (2002), *Prisioneiro da Grade de Ferro* (2003), *Carandiru* (2003), *Tropa de Elite 2: O Inimigo agora é Outro* (2010).

father, who watches and reads from the comforts of his penthouse apartment in Ipanema, and those watching in the movie theater or at home.

Like *Cidade de Deus*, which emphasizes its narrative's connection to reality by declaring it to be based on a true story, *Era uma vez*'s... problematic representation of Carlão, and the broader group of which he is a part, enacts a similar discourse of anti-blackness through an even more explicit appeal to its connection to reality. Following the last scene in which both Dé and Nina are tragically shot and killed, Thiago Martins, the actor who plays Dé, declares in voiceover:

Meu nome é Thiago Martins. Eu nasci numa *favela* na Zona Sul do Rio de Janeiro. Moro lá até hoje. Faço parte do grupo de teatro Nós do Morro. Eu batalhei muito para fazer esse filme porque essa história podia [sic] ser minha. Nessa guerra não tem vencedor: rico, pobre, todo mundo sai perdendo. Eu não sei se essa cidade tem solução. Não sei. Mas se as pessoas olhassem com mais cuidado pras [sic] outras, acho que seria diferente.  
 [My name is Thiago Martins. I was born in a favela in the South Zone of Rio de Janeiro. I still live there today. I am a member of the theater group, Nós do Morro. I worked hard to make this film because this story could have been mine. In this war there are no winners; rich, poor, everybody ends up losing. I don't know if there is a solution for this city. I don't know, but if people looked at others more carefully, I think it would be different.] (Silveira DVD)

Purposefully blurring the lines between fiction and reality, Martin's very personal commentary bolsters the film's political position established in Dé's narration in the opening scene. However, like the *Cidade dos Homens*'s episode discussed below, the complex sociopolitical and socioeconomic reality that structures the inequality present in Rio de Janeiro and Martin's very own trajectory as a nonprofessional actor who was discovered and offered a role in *Cidade de Deus* while still a boy, is reduced to the suggestion that a closer look at others might resolve these longstanding, deeply embedded problems.

#### *The "talk of crime" in Cidade dos Homens and Subúrbia*

While in pre-production for *Cidade de Deus*, long-time TV Globo director Guel Arraes approached Meirelles to see if he was interested in contributing to the Arraes-led, TV Globo special programming project called *Brava Gente*. Meirelles accepted Arraes's invitation with the understanding that he was in the early production stages of the feature-length film, and that he would want the freedom to create something related to that project. Importantly, Meirelles was keen on using the special as an opportunity to test the actors who were participating in the *Nós do Morro*

workshop in preparation for their roles in the upcoming film. Moreover, Meirelles saw the special as an opportunity to experiment with location, lighting, cameras, and other cinematographic and production elements in anticipation of shooting *Cidade de Deus* (Caetano 173-177; Gatti 239-244; Matta and Souza, 33).

With little publicity, at 11 PM on December 28, 2000, TV Globo aired the Meirelles directed one-hour special, *Palace II*. Taken from a portion of a chapter from Paulo Lins’s novel, *Palace II* tells the story of two poor, Afro-Brazilian boys (Laranjinha and Acerola) who concoct a plan to steal money so they can attend a musical concert. Much to the surprise of O2 Filmes—Meirelles’s production company—and TV Globo, the episode captured relatively high ratings, prompting the network to request another eight episodes. However, because Meirelles wanted to finish *Cidade de Deus* first, those episodes were postponed until 2002, when O2 Filmes and TV Globo began production for the episodic series, *Cidade dos Homens* (Caetano 173-177; Gatti 239-244; Matta and Souza, 33).

Although *Cidade de Deus* was a commercial and critical success, earning over R\$19 million domestically and garnering four Oscar nominations, a number of critics, scholars, and *favela* community members throughout Brazil took issue with the film for its treatment of the *favela* as both disconnected from a broader social context and as the home to violent young men with little to no regard for human life (Pereira n.p.). In part as a response to this criticism, *Cidade dos Homens* made a concerted effort to portray everyday life in the *favela* not simply as a hotbed for violence, but as a home to a working-class population integral to Rio de Janeiro. Broadly speaking, one of the primary objectives of the series was to deconstruct the numerous real and imagined barriers separating *favelas* and their inhabitants from the rest of Rio de Janeiro. Nowhere in the nineteen episodes of the series is this clearer than in “Uólace e João Victor” (“Uólace and João Victor”), the fourth episode from the first season.

Intent on making the argument that the two boys share a number of important similarities, the “Uólace e João Victor” episode juxtaposes a day in the life of Uólace (Darlan Cunha)—a poor Afro-Brazilian from a South Zone *favela* in Rio de Janeiro—with João Victor (Thiago Martins)—a white, middle class adolescent who lives in the exclusive neighborhood of Leblon. In a clear reference to dos Santos’s *Rio, 40 Graus*, the episode opens with an aerial tracking shot that focuses on some of the city’s most famous landmarks. What is more, like dos Santos’s film, the *Cidade dos Homens*’s episode strives to establish Rio de Janeiro as not divided, as Zeunir Ventura

(1994) has famously argued, but integrated at its core. As the spectator takes in the famous landmarks through the aerial shots, João Victor and Uólace take turns narrating in voice-over to the sound of a hip-hop beat. “Essa cidade que tem esgoto,” [“This city that has sewage”] João Victor begins, “se chama o Rio de Janeiro” [“is called Rio de Janeiro”]. In turn, Uólace echoes, “Essa cidade que não tem esgoto se chama o Rio de Janeiro” [“This city that does not have has sewage is called Rio de Janeiro”]. João Victor follows with, “Essa cidade de asfalto se chama Rio de Janeiro,” [“This city that has asphalt is called Rio de Janeiro”] before Uólace concludes with, “Essa cidade de terra se chama o Rio de Janeiro” [“This city of dirt is called Rio de Janeiro”] (Meirelles DVD). Thus, while the boys’ narration recognizes the urban landscape’s distinct realities, it emphasizes that in the last instance it is one—that is, it is simply Rio de Janeiro.

A message attempting to deconstruct the real and imagined barriers dividing Rio de Janeiro and its citizens is of course not a negative one. Rather, at issue is the episode’s silence regarding the inequalities that structure and perpetuate these barriers. In doing so, it concludes that despite socioeconomic and racial disparities, in the end, like the urban space of Rio de Janeiro mentioned in the opening, Uólace and João Victor are merely two innocent Brazilian boys who share similar hopes and fears. The narrative informs the spectator that both, for example, live with their single mothers and have absent fathers; both like hamburgers; both have best friends; both want the same hot new tennis shoes; both worry about their futures. While highlighting the boys’ similarities encourages the spectator to focus on their humanity, it masks the stark contrast that characterizes their respective daily lives. For example, while João Victor is upset with his father for being absent, Uólace does not even know who his father is. Both of the boys’ mothers are hardworking women. However, whereas João Victor’s mom is ever-present and overly concerned with her son, Uólace’s mother is never home, due to her job as a live-in maid. In the morning, Uólace wakes up alone and hungry, so he decides to panhandle in the streets in hopes of raising enough money to get a hamburger. João Victor also wants a hamburger for breakfast, but his mother makes him eat toast instead. Uólace fears he will never be able to get a legitimate job, and is not even certain he could sell pirated CDs on the street like his best friend Acerola. João Victor, on the hand, contemplates the glorious professional futures of his two best friends, wondering not whether he will secure a job, but the level of success he himself will achieve.

One might argue that the subtext of these events seemingly undercuts the

broader emphasis on the boys’ similarities, revealing the episode as embodying a complex dialectic. However, the narrative ends by reinforcing the unifying message initiated in the opening scene. In the last scene, João Victor sits in his bedroom window looking down on Uólace who walks aimlessly and alone down the middle of the street. Whereas in the opening scene the boys’ voices alternate in opposition, emphasizing the unity of Rio de Janeiro, here they meld together as they look at one another and conclude in voice-over: “Ele parece tão perdido . . . que nem eu” (“He looks so lost, just like me”) (Meirelles DVD). At issue is not the feeling of uncertainty shared by the two boys, but instead the emphasis on its seeming universality and therefore the erasure of the specific contexts that inform the boys’ feelings.

The last shot of the episode is of Uólace walking down the middle of this dark street by himself. Those familiar with Brazilian film will notice the similarity of this shot with that of the final scene from Hector Babenco’s *Pixote, a Lei do Mais Fraco* (1980).<sup>4</sup> Nonetheless, while in the spirit of Cinema Novo, Babenco’s film explicitly emphasizes the fault of those in power, the “Uólace e João Victor” episode makes no effort to address the deeper underlying systemic issues that function to marginalize certain groups of people, such as Uólace, to certain spaces like the *favela*. Instead, by establishing tenuous similarities between the two boys and pointing to their shared existence within the broader space of Rio de Janeiro, the “Uólace e João Victor” episode promotes a discourse of racial democracy on the basis that the two boys, and by extension all *cariocas*, are, independent of their skin color, human beings.

Such a message appearing on television in the early 2000s, especially when one considers the trajectory of the idea of Brazil as a racial democracy within the Brazilian academy, is disturbing at best. In his seminal work *The Masters and the Slaves: A Study in the Development of Brazilian Civilization* (originally published in 1933), though

---

<sup>4</sup>*Pixote, a Lei do Mais Fraco* is a coming-of-age tale in which the protagonist, a twelve-year-old Pixote, is the victim of an unjust society that foments the young boy’s loss of innocence while also teaching him through corrupt structures how to be a hardened criminal. In one of the film’s last sequences, Pixote kills two people. To console the young boy, a prostitute named Sueli cradles him in her arms like a baby, à là Michelangelo’s *Pietà*. In what is perhaps the film’s most disturbing scene, Sueli begins to breastfeed the twelve-year-old Pixote. Initially comfortable, believing for a moment that she could take care of this boy as her son, Sueli, a symbol of the ravaged motherland, quickly realizes this to be impossible. In response, she shoves him off of her, emphatically yelling, to herself and to him, that she is not his mother. Sueli’s forceful repulsion of the motherless Pixote elucidates the way in which the young boy’s country has forsaken him, abandoning him to a life of crime, violence, and scarcity. In the film’s subsequent and final shot, the spectator sees Pixote walking aimlessly by himself along some railroad tracks.

he did not coin the term, Brazilian anthropologist and sociologist Gilberto Freyre made famous the idea of racial democracy, arguing,

Every Brazilian, even the light skinned fair haired one carries about him on his soul, when not on soul and body alike, the shadow or at least the birthmark of the aborigine or the negro, in our affections, our excessive mimicry, our Catholicism which so delights the senses, our music, our gait, our speech, our cradle songs, in everything that is a sincere expression of our lives, we almost all of us bear the mark of that influence. (278)

Edward Telles, in his groundbreaking book *Race in Another America*, makes clear that “by the 1950s Brazil had gained an international reputation for its racial democracy” (42). However, around this same time, Brazilian scholarship, led by Florestan Fernandes, was working to debunk the concept. In addition to showing how the scholarly work on race in Brazil transitioned from the idea of Brazil as a racial democracy to Brazil as racist, Telles argues that recent data suggests “young persons are socialized to identify increasingly in black and white categories” (33-46, 101). Thus, whereas an ideology of racial democracy “uses ambiguity and middle categories to avoid the placement of others in particularly stigmatized categories,” the emergence of the black movement in Brazil has given rise to support for a system “that excludes the middle categories increase forcing the vast majority of Brazilians (Asians and Indians excepted) to identify as either black or white” (Telles, 105).

Though, as outlined by Telles, over the last fifty plus years there has been a definitive move in the Brazilian academy, and to a certain extent among younger Brazilians, away from the idea of a racial democracy, the *Cidade dos Homens*'s episode reactivates the outdated discourse.<sup>5</sup> In doing so, it remains silent on why, despite the emphasis on their similarities, the black boy lives in a *favela* and the light-skinned boy lives in a comfortable apartment outside the *favela*. Though the episode comments on

---

<sup>5</sup> Such a take is nothing new, however; as early as 2000, in his seminal study on race in the *telenovela*, Joel Zito Araújo argued that under the influence of the myth of racial democracy producers did not even consider the matter of race relevant (68). Over twelve years later, in 2012, Samantha Nogueira Joyce published a *Brazilian Telenovelas and the Myth of Racial Democracy*, emphasizing the myth's centrality to the Brazilian *telenovela*'s focus on representing a white Brazil. Additionally, in a quantitative analysis of race and gender in TV Globo's *telenovelas* from 1995 to 2014, UFRJ's Grupo de Estudos Multidisciplinares da Ação Afirmativa, GEMAA found that, on average, white actors and actresses played 90 percent of the central characters while black and *pardo* actors and actresses played a paltry 10 percent of such roles (Campos). This blatant underrepresentation in Brazil's most accessible, widely consumed, and exported symbolic good is striking, particularly when one considers that, according to the most recent census from 2010, blacks and browns (*pardos*) make up 50.8 percent of the country's total population (“Tabela 1379”). Lastly, the 2015 TV Globo series, *Mister Braun*, created and directed by Jorge Furtado who cowrote the “Uólace and João Victor” episode, also promotes the ideology of a racial democracy.

racism by both the white and Afro-Brazilian boys, the importance race plays in determining one's socioeconomic position is diminished by the emphasis placed on a universal humanity.

Similarly, *Subúrbia* also diminishes the importance of race by proposing a neo-liberal model of hard work, religion, and family as the answer to overcoming socioeconomic inequalities. Nonetheless, whereas *Cidade dos Homens* responded to criticism surrounding *Cidade de Deus's* isolation of the violent *favela* by including less violence and attempting to integrate the space into the broader cityscape, *Subúrbia* regresses by offering a narrow representation of the isolated periphery and its inhabitants. In doing so, like the other three works already analyzed, the six-part microseries, directed by the critically acclaimed and innovative Luiz Fernando Carvalho, evokes a long tradition of naturalist cultural production in Brazil, whose three central ideological tenets have been outlined by David Haberly: "the consequences of change, at the level of society or the individual, are certain to be negative; sexual desire is the single most powerful and controlling human emotion; and genetic heredity and environmental conditioning entirely determine character and behavior"<sup>6</sup> (146-147, 148). While the latter two tenets are at the core of *Subúrbia*, the narrative inverts the first, suggesting to the viewer a path to follow to productive citizenship while offering a happy ending.

Like *Cidade dos Homens*, Carvalho's microseries, which was co-written by Paulo Lins, stands out in the Brazilian television landscape for featuring a predominately Afro-Brazilian cast. At the surface level, this is an important achievement, for, as many scholars have documented, there has been a historical scarcity of blacks presented on the small screen (Araújo 229-230; Joyce 15; La Pastina et al. 104-108; Mitchell 178; Sovik 318; and Subervi-Velez and Oliveira 80). However, a deeper look reveals that the microseries perpetuates the anti-black and pathological representations of Afro-Brazilians pointed to in Vargas's and Alves's work, and therefore, also implicitly perpetuates Brazilian television fiction's longstanding

---

<sup>6</sup> According to standard Brazilian literary historiography, naturalism begins in Brazil with the publication of Aluísio Azevedo's *O Mulato* in 1881. The same historiography marks the literary period as having come to a close around 1900, only ten years after the publication of Azevedo's naturalist masterpiece, *O Cortiço* (1890). Nonetheless, the objectivity achieved through the narrator's critical distance from her subject matter and the genre's characteristic determinism continued to influence Brazilian literature to varying degrees throughout the twentieth century. Some examples include, but are not limited to: *Os Sertões* (1902), *Menino de Engenho* (1932), *São Bernardo* (1934), *A Hora da Estrela* (1977), and *Cidade de Deus* (1997).

emphasis on whiteness as the national ideal (Araújo; Dennison; Grijó and Sousa; Joyce; La Pastina et al; Mitchell; Silva; Simpson; and Sovik).<sup>7</sup> Indeed, rather than representing Conceição, its Afro-Brazilian female protagonist as strong and independent, the work uncritically presents her as a suffering, illiterate, hypersexualized object. But Conceição is also loving and determined, two traits she possessed while still in the countryside of Minas Gerais where she lived with her impoverished, yet hardworking family. Conceição's adopted working-class family, which resides on the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro, further reinforces these traits. In the broader context of that space, however, compared to the many villainous characters lurking about, Conceição and her family are an anomaly. In fact, throughout the microseries—as is the case with Jerônimo in Aluísio Azevedo's famous 1890 naturalist novel, *O Cortiço*—Conceição and her family constantly run the risk of being overcome by the troubles of the local environment.

Indeed, Cleiton, Conceição's future husband momentarily succumbs to the environment and an almost inescapable heredity. The first time the viewer encounters Cleiton he is a quiet, shy, and gentle young man who quickly becomes smitten with Conceição. So that he can keep an eye on her, the stereotypically jealous Cleiton helps Conceição get a job at the gas station where he works. Within the broader context of the narrative, Cleiton's jealousy and impotence in the face of the overwhelming male attention directed at his girlfriend help to explain his uncharacteristic behavior when one night, while inebriated, he attempts to rape Conceição. Not unlike Carlão, almost immediately following the tragic event, Cleiton gets involved with local drug-traffickers who help him avenge the murder of his brother. After entering the nearby *favela* where he coldly kills a number of rivals, Cleiton becomes the head of the local drug trade. During this transformative period, like his alcoholic mother, he begins to drink and do drugs excessively. Thus, as with Zé Pequeno and Carlão, in yet another "pathological script of black masculinity," with no real examination of the reasons for his radical transformation, the narrative positions Cleiton as an overly simplified and helpless product of his race, environment, and moment, having succumbed to the powers of his uncontrollable sexual desire, his family's past of alcoholism, and the *favela's* culture of violence (Alves 315).

While the emphasis on environmental conditioning in the series is

---

<sup>7</sup> Similar to those scholars examining the heightened importance of whiteness as portrayed as the national ideal on Brazilian television, Caetana Maria Damasceno has shown how it has also long played a central role in everyday life in Rio de Janeiro, despite a prevailing discourse of racial democracy that calls for the erasure of race and racism (190-193).



problematic, Cleiton’s subsequent transformation into an evangelical pastor is even more troubling. Cleiton’s trajectory takes him from the position of an average, working-class man to that of a murderous drug trafficker. After a near-death experience, however, he oscillates past his previous working-class social position, becoming an evangelical pastor who enthusiastically shares the gospel with those same drug dealers he used to lead. To use another literary reference, Cleiton’s trajectory is similar to that of the Leonardo Pataca—the protagonist of Manuel Antonio de Almeida’s 1853 novel, *Memórias de um Sargento de Milícias*—in that he is ultimately co-opted into, to use Candido’s term, the *polo da ordem* (the positive pole of order) (86). The juxtaposition of the two extremes—the ultraviolent drug dealer and the saintly pastor—and the elimination of a more neutral option—blue collar worker—creates a situation wherein the work situates itself didactically, implicitly positing to the viewer the appropriate path for an impoverished individual to follow. Thus, whereas in *Cidade de Deus* and *Era um vez... Zé Pequeno* was always violent and Carlão undergoes a transformation from a working-class young man to a violent drug trafficker and is subsequently the cause of his brother and Nina’s tragic deaths, *Subúrbia*, like “Uólace e João Victor” before it, offers its television audience a more palatable representation of the violence and inequality that structures the protagonists’ lives. Such positioning is not surprising, particularly when one considers that TV Globo—the largest broadcast television network in South America—has long attempted to establish itself as the primary disseminator of Brazilian culture and, more broadly, as the source for and platform upon which *brasilidade* is represented and negotiated. To celebrate its 50th anniversary, for example, in 2015 the network decided to use as its slogan: *Somos Brasil, somos 50 anos, somos Globo* (We are Brasil, we are 50, we are Globo). The slogan suggests that the two are one and the same: TV Globo is Brasil and Brasil is TV Globo.

This positioning by the network goes far beyond mere slogans. Parts of the company’s mission statement speak of a social responsibility, which comes as the result of “being in contact with hundreds of millions of people, in almost every Brazilian home” (“Social Mission”). According to the Rio de Janeiro network’s self-definition, its task is more than just entertainment: “Globo’s high-standard dramaturgy includes the dissemination of knowledge, the transmission of socioeducational messages and the incentive for debate and behavioral change” (“Social Mission”). In recognizing its nearly ubiquitous reach, TV Globo maintains

that its enormous audiences oblige the network to disseminate behavior-forming fictional content. Because of TV Globo's influence and supposed mission, the network does not simply *reflect on* or *represent* what it means to be Brazilian, but to a certain degree, *creates* or *dictates* what, at least according to them, it means to be Brazilian. What is more, with the recent rise of the middle class known as the C-Class<sup>8</sup>, the televisual *favela* has increasingly become not the “dwelling for blacks and the locus of violence and crime, but rather the gentrified space inhabited by the country's emerging new middle class” (Rêgo, 93).

With an eye toward attracting members of the C-Class, *Subúrbia* provides the audience with a happy ending, thereby inverting the logic of the first tenet of naturalism referred to by Haberly—that the consequences of change are certain to be negative. After endless struggles, Conceição finds peace when she marries Cleiton. For his part, Cleiton becomes a man of God and a productive citizen, going so far as working to convert drug traffickers. *Subúrbia*'s narrative, then, suggests that a good Afro-Brazilian male is law-abiding and dedicated to forming a family. Moreover, religion is the form of environmental conditioning that allows him to overcome his sexual, violent, and criminal tendencies, which are seemingly embedded in and perpetuated by the marginalized communities where a high proportion of Afro-Brazilians live. With regard to the Afro-Brazilian female, the suggestion is that she be innocent, both physically and mentally, and devoted to her man at all costs, even if, as in Conceição's case, he has killed others and attempted to rape her.

In short, in contrast to the tragic conclusions of *Cidade de Deus* and *Era uma vez...*—both of which present violence as natural for and stemming from young black men—*Subúrbia*'s simplistic positioning of Cleiton and Conceição means that it, not unlike the racial democracy-inspired hopeful message of “Uólace and João Victor,” remains silent with regard to the deeper causes of the systemic violence that characterizes the marginalized characters' daily lives. Such positioning, it should be clear, is tied to TV Globo's interrelated objectives of making profit and forming law-abiding, working citizens interested in consumption. In discussing Homi Bhabba's theorization of the nation as being formed through the dual process of pedagogy and

---

<sup>8</sup>According to the Fundação de Getúlio Vargas's Centro de Políticas Sociais (Getúlio Vargas Foundation's Center for Social Politics), members of the C-Class are those households that earn an income between R\$2,005 and R\$8,640 per month (approximately \$615 to \$2,650) (“Qual a faixa”). Demographic research in the last few years from the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (The Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics), among others, estimates that the C-Class makes up 54% of Brazil's population, approximately 105 million people (“Classe C já”).

performance, Alves notes: “In his [Bhabba’s] framework, being a good or a bad citizen depends upon the ways one performs the nation” (332). As is evident in the examples from *Cidade dos Homens* and *Subúrbia*, insofar as TV Globo provides its millions of spectators with pedagogical and performative models of appropriate behavior and citizenship, it plays a significant role in determining both what a good or a bad citizen looks like and how he or she is productively embodies the role of the former.

### *Conclusion*

In “Imagens em conflito,” critically acclaimed documentary filmmaker João Moreira Salles argues that historically there has been a shortage of violent images in the media, even despite the overwhelming presence of such images in widely watched, sensationalistic Brazilian television programs like *Aqui Agora* (SBT 1991-1998) or *Cidade Alerta* (Rede Record 1995-2005, 2011- ). According to Salles, this shortage illustrates the tragic Brazilian tradition of visual silence with regard to violence (85). Contrary to Salles, who, while using television as a point-of-reference, advocates for the production of more images portraying violence, Octávio Florisbal, TV Globo’s Chief Executive Officer from 2002 to 2012, contends that “Brazilian people face enough difficulties in their everyday lives [and therefore] don’t want to see more suffering” (Wheatley).

To a significant degree, as indicated in the examples above, Brazilian cinema’s and television’s differing representations of violence—that is, the degree to which the cinema talks of crime by emphasizing the tragedy of physical violence committed by men of color, while television tends to silence it by emphasizing ideologies that erase difference and suggest a path to appropriate behavior—is due to their respective political legacies and economic models. Whereas most Brazilian films secure their budgets through public financing mechanisms, television production centers on revenue generated largely by advertising dollars. Within the field of Brazilian audiovisual production, this creates a situation in which Brazilian films, whether intentionally or not, struggle more for symbolic capital—capital deriving from critical recognition, awards, fame, and the like—and less for economic capital—capital stemming from the aggregation of large audiences. For example, *Cidade de Deus* and *Era uma vez...*, both co-produced by Globo Filmes and distributed by Miramax and Columbia Pictures respectively, had approximate budgets of R\$7 and R\$8.6 million

(Arantes, n.p.; Matta and Souza 32), of which approximately R\$3 and R\$5.6 million came from government financing mechanisms, Articles 1 and 3 of the Audiovisual Law (“Consulta”). The films achieved theatrical domestic audiences of 3,370,872 and 570,480 (“Filmes brasileiros”). While *Cidade de Deus* can be considered a Brazilian blockbuster having attracted the 38th largest movie-going public ever for a Brazilian film,<sup>9</sup> both numbers pale in comparison to the audience shares of the TV Globo produced episode “Uólace e João Victor” and the microseries *Subúrbia*. Despite airing after 11 PM, the first secured an average audience of approximately 4 million in São Paulo alone, while the latter, nearly ten years later and in an increasingly competitive field characterized by the emergence of the Internet and pay television, achieved an average audience in São Paulo of approximately 2.5 million (“Globo mantém” and Stycer).<sup>10</sup>

As the numbers above suggest, Brazilian cinema’s concentration is within what Pierre Bourdieu refers to as “the sub-field of restricted production,” while television maintains its drive for economic capital, and, as a result, functions mainly in the “sub-field of large-scale production”—production directed at achieving the largest audience possible (39). Fewer economic exigencies result in more artistic freedom for filmmakers than for those producing television. Thus, if filmgoers choose not to see a film because of excessive violent content, it ultimately matters little in economic terms to the producers of the work because public financing mechanisms have likely already paid for the film and consequently their own salaries. Television, however, must sell advertising space to pay for the programming it produces. In order to sell this space to interested advertisers, networks need to offer them a robust audience, thereby diminishing interest in producing controversial content that might turn potential viewers away. What is more, due to its need to produce an audience of consumers, TV Globo has a vested interest in exploring narratives that promote acceptable forms of citizenship through ideologies such as neoliberalism or Brazil as a racial democracy.

---

<sup>9</sup>With a public of 11,147,723, number one on the list is José Padilha’s *Tropa de Elite 2* (2010). Bruno Barreto’s *Dona Flor e Seus dois Maridos* (1976) is second with 10,735,524. From the third position to the 38th, there is a significant drop ranging from 6,509,134 to *Cidade de Deus*’s 3,370,872. The vast majority of the films coming in before Meirelles’s film achieved a public in the 3 to 5 million range (“Filmes brasileiros”).

<sup>10</sup>The cited numbers come from the formula used by the audience and public opinion measurement firm, the Instituto Brasileiro de Opinião Pública e Estatística (IBOPE). During its four-year run, *Cidade dos Homens* had an average share of around 30 points. At the time, one point represented 47,000 households in São Paulo. If one assumes that each household had on average three members, then one arrives at the approximate number cited in the text. At the time of *Subúrbia*’s airing rather than 47,000 households, one IBOPE point equaled 60,000. By using the same logic, one arrives at the number cited in the text.

In the end, however, more in line with Candido's "dialectic of malandroism" than with Castro Rocha's "dialectic of marginality, independent of the specific political and economic structures that in part define their practice, Brazilian cinema and television productions portraying urban violence tend to offer comprises "between the tiny circle of the powerful and the expanding universe of the excluded" (Castro Rocha 31). Whereas in the case of the former, the *favela*-residing, violent black Brazilian male is the root of society's ills, in the latter, race is suppressed in favor of emphasizing Brazil as a racial democracy or the importance of hard work. Both, however, "talk of crime" in a manner that ultimately reinforces a silence on the deeper structural and systemic factors that inform such violence and crime.

### Works Cited

- Alves, Jaime Amparo. "Narratives of Violence: The White Imagination and the Making of Black Masculinity in *City of God*." *CS* 13, 2014, 313-337.
- Arantes, Silvana. "Era uma vez... Põe a prova o 'filme de favela.'" *Folha de São Paulo*. (13 Jun 2008): n. pag. Web. 18 Feb 2017.
- Araújo, Joel Zito. *A negação do Brasil: o negro na telenovela brasileira*. São Paulo: Senac, 2000.
- Bentes, Ivana. "The Aesthetics of Violence in Brazilian Film." *City of God in Several Voices: Brazilian Social Cinema as Action*. Ed. Else RP Vieira. Nottingham: Critical, Cultural and Communications Press, 2005. 82-92.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. *The Field of Cultural Production*. Ed. Randal Johnson. New York: Columbia UP, 1993.
- Caetano, Maria Rosário do. *Fernando Meirelles: Uma biografia prematura*. São Paulo: Imprensa Oficial, 2007.
- Caldeira, Teresa Pires do Rio. *City of Walls: Crime, Segregation, and Citizenship in São Paulo*. Berkeley: Univ of California P, 2000.
- Campos, Luiz Augusto, Marcia Rangel Candido, and João Feres Jr. "A raça e o gênero nas novelas dos últimos 20 anos." *Grupo de Estudos Multidisciplinares da Ação Afirmativa*. n.d. n. pag. Web. 12 Mar 2016.
- Candido, Antonio. "Dialética da malandragem." *Revista do Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros*

8(1970): 67-89.

- Carvalho, José Murilo de. "The Edenic Motif in the Brazilian Social Imaginary." *Revista Brasileira de Ciências Sociais* SPE1, 2000, 111-128.
- Castro Rocha, João Cezar de. "The 'Dialectic of Marginality': Preliminary Notes on Brazilian Contemporary Culture." *Centre for Brazilian Studies, University of Oxford, Working Paper Number 62*, 2005, 1-39.
- Chan, Felicia and Valentina Vitali. "Revisiting The 'Realism' of the Cosmetics of Hunger: *Cidade De Deus* and *Ônibus 174*." *New Cinemas: Journal of Contemporary Film* 8.1, 2010, 15-30. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 20 Jun 2016.
- "Classe C já é maioria da população do País." *Portal Brasil*. (22 Mar 2012): n. pag. Web. 18 Feb 2015.
- "Consulta de Projetos Audiovisuais." *Ancine*. n.d. n. pag. Web. 12 Feb 2017.
- Damasceno, Caetana Maria. "'Em casa de enforcado não se fala em corda': notas sobre a construção social da 'boa' aparência no Brasil." Eds. Guimarães, Asa e Huntley, L. *Tirando a máscara. Ensaio sobre o racismo no Brasil*. São Paulo: Paz e Terra, 2000. 165-199.
- Dennison, Stephanie. "Blonde Bombshell: Xuxa and Notions of Whiteness in Brazil." *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies* 22.3, 2013, 287-304.
- "Filmes brasileiros com mais de 500.000 espectadores—1970 a 2015." *Ancine*. n.d. n. pag. Web. 12 Jul 2016.
- Freyre, Gilberto. *The Masters and the Slaves (Casa-Grande & Senzala): A Study in the Development of Brazilian Civilization*. Trans. Samuel Putnam. New York: Knopf, 1946.
- Gatti, André. "Distribuição e exibição na indústria cinematográfica brasileira (1993-2003)." (PhD diss, Universidade Estadual de Campinas, 2005).
- "Globo mantém Ibope alto com *Cidade dos Homens*." *Folha de São Paulo*. 17 Oct 2002. n. pag. Web. 6 Jun 2015.
- Grijó, Wesley Pereira and Adam Henrique Freire Sousa. "O negro na telenovela brasileira: A atualidade das representações." *Estudos em Comunicação* 11, 2012, 185-204.
- Haberly, David T. "The Brazilian Novel from 1850 to 1900." *The Cambridge History of Latin American Literature*. Ed. Roberto González Echevarría. Vol. 3. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996. 137-156.
- Hall, Stuart. "The spectacle of the other." *Discourse theory and practice: A reader*. Eds.

- Margaret Wetherell et al. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2001. 324-344.
- Hamburger, Esther. "Violência e pobreza no cinema brasileiro recente: Reflexões sobre a ideia de espetáculo." *Novos Estudos* 78, 2007, 113-128.
- Jaguaribe, Beatriz. "The Shock of the Real: Realist Aesthetics in the Media and the Urban Experience." *Space and Culture* Vol. 8, 2005, 66-82.
- Joyce, Samantha Nogueira. *Brazilian Telenovelas and the Myth of Racial Democracy*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2012.
- La Pastina, Antonio C., Joseph D. Straubhaar, and Lirian Sifuentes. "Why Do I Feel I Don't Belong to the Brazil on TV?" *Popular Communication* 12, 2014, 104-116.
- Matta, João Paulo Rodrigues and Elizabeth Regina Loiola da Cruz Souza. "*Cidade de Deus e Janela da alma*: um estudo sobre a cadeia produtiva do cinema brasileiro." *Revista de Administração de Empresas* 49.1, 2009, 27-37.
- McClennen, Sophia A. "From the Aesthetics of Hunger to the Cosmetics of Hunger in Brazilian Cinema: Meirelles' *City of God*." *symploke* 19.1, 2011, 95-106. Print.
- Meirelles, Fernando and Kátia Lund, dir. *Cidade de Deus*. Miramax, 2002. DVD.
- Meirelles, Fernando, dir. "Uólace e João Victor." *Cidade dos Homens*. TV Globo, 2002-2005. DVD.
- Mitchell, Jasmine. "Popular Culture Imaginings of the Mulatta: Constructing Race, Gender, Sexuality, and Nation in the United States and Brazil." Dissertation, University of Minnesota, 2013.
- Nagib, Lúcia. "A língua da bala: Realismo e violência em *Cidade de Deus*." *Novos Estudos Cebrap, São Paulo* 67, 2003, 181-191.
- Oliveira, Emanuelle KF. "An Ethic of the Esthetic: Racial Representation in Brazilian Cinema Today." *Vanderbilt e-Journal of Luso-Hispanic Studies* 4, 2009.
- Pellegrini, Tânia. "As vozes da violência na cultura brasileira contemporânea." *Crítica Marxista* (São Paulo), Rio de Janeiro, Vol. 00, 2005, 132-153. Print.
- Pereira, Miguel Serpa. "Estéticas e mercado no cinema brasileiro incentivado." *IV Encult: encontro de estudos multidisciplinares em cultura* (2008): n.p.
- "Qual a faixa de renda familiar das classes?" *Fundação Getúlio Vargas—Centro de Políticas Sociais*. (1 Jan 2014): n.pag. Web. 13 Nov 2014.
- Rêgo, Cacilda. "Centering the Margins: The Modern *Favela* in the Brazilian Telenovela." *Brazil in Twenty-First Century Popular Media: Culture, Politics, and Nationalism on the World Stage*. Ed. Naomi Pueo Wood. Lanham: Lexington, 2014. 91-111.

- Rocha, Glauber. "The Aesthetics of Hunger." *Brazilian Cinema: Expanded Edition*. Ed. Randal Johnson and Robert Stam. New York: Columbia UP, 1995. 69-71.
- Salles, João Moreira. "Imagens em conflito." *O cinema do real*. Ed. Maria Dora Mourão e Amir Labaki. São Paulo: Cosac Naify, 2005. 82-95.
- Schild, Susana. "Cidade de Deus: O tiro que não saiu pela culatra." *Criticos*. 26 Sep 2002. n. pag. Web. 12 May 2014.
- Silva, Denise Ferreira da. "The Drama of Modernity: Color and Symbolic Exclusion in the Brazilian Telenovela." *Black Brazil: Culture, Identity, and Social Mobilization*, Eds. Larry Crook and Randal Johnson. Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center Publications, 1999. 339-361.
- Silveira, Breno, dir. *Era Uma Vez...* Columbia Pictures, 2008. DVD.
- Simpson, Amelia. *The Mega-Marketing of Gender, Race, and Modernity*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993.
- Soares, Diony Maria. "O cinema e a população afro-brasileira: Desafios da autorrepresentação em *Bróder* e *5 x Favela agora por nós mesmos*." *Revista Teia*. 12, 2011, 111-122. Web. 13 Aug 2014.
- "Social Mission." *Rede Globo*. n.d. n. pag. Web. 2 Jan 2014.
- Sovik, Liv. "We are Family: Whiteness in the Brazilian Media." *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies* 13.3, 2004, 315-325.
- Stycer, Maurício. "Globo erra ao exibir *Subúrbia* depois do *Fim do Mundo*." *Uol TV e Famosos*. 2 Nov 2012. n. pag. Web. 13 Dec 2012.
- Subervi-Velez, Federico A. and Omar Souki Oliveira. "Negros (e outras etnias) em comerciais da televisão brasileira: Uma investigação exploratória." *Comunicação & Sociedade* 10.17, 1991, 79-101.
- "Tabela 1379 - Pessoas de 5 anos ou mais de idade, total e as alfabetizadas, por cor ou raça, segundo a situação do domicílio e a idade." *Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística*. n.d. n. pag. 17 Feb 2016.
- Telles, Edward E. *Race in Another America: The Significance of Skin Color in Brazil*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2004.
- Vargas, João H. Costa. "Gendered Antiracism and the Impossible Brazilian Project: Emerging Critical Black Brazilian studies." *Cultural Dynamics* 24.1, 2012, 3-11.
- Ventura, Zeunir. *Cidade partida*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1994. Print.
- Wheatley, Jonathan. "Brazil's Winning Game Plan." *The Financial Times*. (5 Jun 2008) n. pag. Web. 4 Apr 2015.