



Just War and Citizenship: Responses to Youth Violence

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This case study of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil argues that treating youth violence as an issue of criminality rather than citizenship, positions youth at the center of a "just war" that reproduces violence as a biopolitical strategy of conserving authority. Images of Rio's favelas, the once ad hoc squatter settlements where more than one million favelados now reside, represent favelado youth as violent criminals. I trace the development of this public image through three key stages and argue that the status of favelado youth as criminals stems from violations of the state's authority to regulate citizenship. The state and youth are fighting a war for control of the terms and conditions of citizenship(s). This perpetual violence is not resolvable through violence; effective approaches will begin with a paradigm shift that recognizes violence as a means of performing citizenship.

Keywords: Citizenship, Criminality, Gangs, Just War, Representation, Youth Violence

Introduction

Violence, a global economic and political phenomenon in which youth plays a central role as both proponent and target, is rising to unprecedented levels (Abramovay, Castro, de Castro Pinheiro, de Sousa Lima, & de Costa Martinelli, 2002; Arana, 2008; Tavares dos Santos, 2002). Presently, violence is one of the leading causes of death among young people worldwide (WHO, 2002). Abramovay et al. argue that

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research, which attempts to respond to youth violence, must understand violence as a multifaceted phenomenon rooted in a complex set of power relations that vary from one historical period to another. They note that violence can include the practice, the perception, or the threat of force, and that violence is enacted on and with the body; against property; through policies of political and economic exclusion; and through adherence to and in violation of social norms. Finally, violence is a strategy that, when employed, both contests and reifies normative relations of power that regulate citizenship.¹

Miller (2007) critiques classical definitions of citizenship that identified the citizen — an individuated self — as the national subject of a sovereign-state who is endowed with political, economic, and cultural rights. Miller argues that this model is inadequate, as it does not account for the importance of cultural citizenship, especially for marginalized groups who demand and secure political and economic rights through cultural affiliations. Holston (2008) argues that citizenship, particularly in the Brazilian context, is a relationship of state and society configured by daily practices that result in differentiated citizenships. Holston adds that there is “a gradation of rights . . . in which most rights are available only to particular kinds of citizens and [are] exercised as the privilege of particular social categories” (p. 7). Ong (1996) suggests that cultural citizenship is not simply about belonging, but rather is “a cultural process of ‘subject-ification,’ in the Foucauldian sense of self-making and being-made by power relations that produce consent through schemes of surveillance, discipline, control, and administration” (p. 737). Citizenship is “formed through a range of discursive practices” (Madison, 2003, p. 474) and is dialectically negotiated with and against the state (Ong, 1996, p. 738). Thus, citizenship refers to this relationship of authority and subjectivity, wherein rights discourses serve a regulatory function that affirms the necessary and legal authority of the state and the subjectivity of the citizen.

Globalization has advanced a “project of universal citizenship,” characterized by a relationship of authority and subjectivity, wherein “just wars” — or state authorized use of violence — have become an everyday performance of citizenship (Hardt & Negri, 2001, p. 34). Just wars, carried out through moral and military interventions, constitute a “perpetual relationship of force” (Foucault, 1997, p. 17) that conserves economic and political power in the form of differentiated citizenships, through state-ordered and police-regulated citizenship. The “right” to regulate citizenship — belonging to the nation-state,² the

¹ See Laclau and Mouffe (2001) on resistance as a way of conceptualizing a “type of action whose objective is the transformation of a social relation which constructs a subject in a relationship of subordination” (p. 153). This article adapts Laclau and Mouffe’s framework as a way of thinking through strategic violence as a type of intentional action that can be dually deployed in order to 1) effect social change by transforming relations of authority or right, and 2) affirm the status quo by cementing those same relations. Violence, as an intentional action, can be transformative, regressive and stabilizing; sometimes it is all of these things at once. See also Dreyfus and Rabinow (1983, pp. 224-226) for an in-depth discussion of relations of power and relations of strategy, including the reciprocal appeal of the two.

² I refer to the nation-state as a nodal point through which power is networked rather than as the authoritative locus that organizes power. Although the primacy of the nation-state has declined with the rise of supranational formations, appeals to the sovereignty and authority of the nation-state still hold

police, and the society at large — legitimizes state violence as a way to maintain its position of authority. As a result, this relationship produces not only differentiated levels of citizenship, but also a differentiate citizen whose status may be suspended, diminished or revoked. The most common way this differentiation is achieved is through discourses of criminality.

It is in this context that the criminalization of youth violence positions youth gangs as a threat to citizenship and, by extension, to the sovereignty of the nation-state. Even absent the occurrence of physical acts of aggression, youth gangs pose a threat to the authority or right of the nation-state because the perception of force constitutes violence, and the perception of youth gangs as violent justifies perpetual state interventions as a way to systematically manage these differences of citizenship. These just war interventions, which often include increased policing and incarceration, alter the relationship of citizenship such that youth are rearticulated as criminals or unauthorized enemies of the state; as citizens, they are not foreign or alien others, and yet, as criminals, they are not citizens. This precarious subjectivity of the “Not Not citizen”³ positions youth as a perpetual threat, and thereby affirms violence as the principle means of regulating their performances of citizenship. By appropriating the logic of just war, youth use violence as a means to enhance mobility, self-representation, visibility, autonomy, and legitimacy. As a result, acts of violence that are commonly labeled as criminal deviance are better understood as attempts to supplant the so-called “right of the nation-state” by multi-lateral, contingent networks of actors,⁴ performing violence as a mode of organizing for social change and, in turn, performing citizenship differently.

In order to understand how violence is being used to performed citizenship differently, I introduce Rio de Janeiro, Brazil as a case study. The formations of violence and citizenships depicted in this analysis are not unique to Brazil; they are constituted and reified by transnational understandings of youth violence that — by marking youth as differentiated citizens, criminals, and Not Not citizens — perpetuate cycles of violence between youth and police. As such, this case study is, in many respects, a first study that joins a broader conversation about representation, citizenship, violence, and social change. The communicative practices described in this essay are transformable; we can elect to deinstitutionalize

rhetorical force, and just war interventions against violent youth are easily justified as a tactic for maintaining citizenship and protecting “sovereign” borders and rights.

³ See Madison (2003) for an explanation of the “Not Not” in performance used to signify the paradox of inhabiting a distinct and separate persona and/or identity from that being performed (that which I am performing is not me) and, at the same time, sharing an embodied connection that is permeable and permutable (even though that which I am performing is not me, it is also not not me). I use it here as a way of highlighting the contradictory double of youth subjectivity as both citizen and “not citizen,” and later in the essay to highlight the contradictory double within the case study wherein the favelado is both citizen and “not citizen.” The blurring of the citizen and “not citizen” results in a performance of subjectivity characterized as “Not Not citizen.”

⁴ See Arias (2006) for an extensive analysis of how criminal networks are organized within Rio de Janeiro favelas.

discourses of criminality, particularly as they pertain to youth, and instead pursue an approach to youth that sees them as citizen-actors.

Youth Violence: Criminality as Interpretive Frame

Youth violence, at one time characterized by local, random acts of physical aggression, is now manifested by the presence and activities of gangs. Hagedorn (2007) suggests that this “institutionalized” global phenomenon has reached such a point of saturation that gangs’ presence worldwide is “obvious, natural and appropriate” (p. 23). Manwarning (2005) calls for national and international governing bodies to view the gang problem as more than youth deviance and instead treat gangs as an international security concern. In a later paper, Manwarning (2007) positions violence as part of a broader economic and political agenda in which gangs are the chief protagonists behind the worldwide violence challenging governmental sovereignty. He also argues that, economically, violence is a way to “protect markets and control competition” (p. 5), and that, politically, violence is used “to negate enforcement efforts directed against them [gangs] by police and other national and local security organizations” while seeking to “acquire political power in poorly governed space” (p. 6). Youth violence, implemented by gangs, is a strategic mode of action that not only targets individuals and property with actual and perceived force, but also violates the right of the police to exert control and authority over subjects by interrupting state practices of regulating citizenship.

The role of authority and subjectivity in defining and responding to youth violence occurs within the broader matrix of rights discourses. Bufacchi (2005) notes, “many contemporary theorists of violence have converged on the idea of defining violence in terms of a violation [of rights]” (p. 15). Though technically a social group, youth gangs are frequently considered violent simply because their constitution occurs outside of the sanction of the law and because the gang offers its members political and economic securities that are not afforded by governmental authorities (Hayden, 2004; Johnson & Muhlhausen, 2005; Sanders, 1994; Vigil, 1988). In other words, the term “gang” invokes a perception of or threat of violence, irrespective of the actions of any particular gang or gang member. In this equivocation, young people are understood as criminal because they are in a gang and gangs are understood as violent because they are criminal (Hayden, 2004; Marez, 2004). Young people, subject of and subject to governmental authority, become violent criminals when they counter institutionalized economic and political norms through informal, unauthorized or illegal activities rather than because they practice acts of force or aggression. As a result, if a young person does commit some physical act of violence, it merely affirms his or her position as a criminal, rather than initially justifying such a positioning.

Governmental authorities have largely ignored the economic and political challenges that youth gangs pose. Instead, they approach youth gangs as criminal enterprises that are a global security threat (Arana, 2005; Brotherton & Barrios, 2004; Hagedorn, 2007; Hayden, 2004; Johnson & Muhlhausen, 2005; Manwarning, 2005; Manwarning, 2007). When concerns over citizenship rights are raised, the vulnerability of youth is pushed aside as an issue for non-governmental organizations to resolve; youths remain discursively outside the scope of citizenship protections (Leite, 2000, p. 74; Tavares dos Santos, 2002, pp. 26-27).

It is imperative that we adopt a framework that does more than simply reify the current cycle of fighting violence with violence (Human Rights Watch, 1996). This essay responds to authors who, for divergent reasons, have established that youth violence is a strategy of organizing and challenging the economic and political sovereignty of the nation-state, police, and other governmental agencies. As such, youth violence is an issue of citizenship, not criminality. This article does not argue the merits of regulating or criminalizing, but instead contends that if we are to find an alternative to the institutionalization of youth violence as a social norm, we must be willing to find an alternative to criminality as the normative response. Such an alternative must account for the regulating function that violence plays in citizenship, as well as the relations of violence configured through citizenship.

Foucault (1997) as well as Hardt and Negri (2001) have written extensively on the uses of violent force as a mode of politics that conserves power. By adopting a genealogical approach, these authors explore violence as a complex set of relations and, in doing so, offer scholars a way of responding to the complexities in current formations of youth violence. Foucault (1997) establish the inexorable link between discourses of violence and citizenship; he identifies force as the grounding principle that governs the relationship between the citizen and the nation, which in turn renders violence a justifiable response to any threat to this relationship or to the authority of the state to administer control over the "rights" of citizens. Hardt and Negri (2001) describe conditions of globalization, wherein politics and economics increasingly overlap, that complicate the relationship of authority and subjectivity such that a supranational world order displaces the primacy of the nation-state and leads to a transformation in the forms and frequency of violence. Violence is increasingly biopolitical, circulating power and authority anonymously through communications that target human beings in their every-day activities (p. 23). Violations no longer require an overt act of aggression against the nation-state. Instead, any violation of either the rule of law or normative sentiments regarding morality is sufficient cause for just war.

This theoretical approach to violence has implications for how stakeholders in conversations regarding youth violence respond. It holds explanatory power over why, despite the rise in theories on violence that emphasize the presence of a violation over than the occurrence of physical acts of aggression or force, the frequency of violence that targets physical bodies is increasing. Violence is widely administered on and through bodies, making rapes, assaults, murders, and other acts directed at individual bodies a very real concern. Abramovay et al. (2002) note that it is largely youths, as a group, who are the targets and victims of violence, in the form of physical acts of force and aggression by other youths, police and other adults, and policies that criminalize them, exclude them from politics and labor, and render them criminal or alien others.⁵

⁵ It is for this reason that ultimately this must be a conversation that engages with youth, as opposed to simply being about them. One of the ways this can be accomplished is through research that "listens" to the statements that youth are making about their own experiences with citizenship and violence. For an example of scholarship that does this see Caster (2004) or Conquergood (1992).

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: A Case Study in Youth Violence

Rio de Janeiro is an ideal point of entry for historicizing the criminalization of youth against the backdrop of urbanization, modernity and the construction of democratic citizenship. Like many other urban communities, Rio de Janeiro has been actively working to remedy the problem of youth violence by placing an emphasis on the security threat that youth gangs pose. Typically, cariocas, or people from Rio de Janeiro, perceive the young residents of the favelas or slums as the source of crime and violence in the city (Levine, 1999, p. 7). These youths are often referred to as favelados. The criminalization of youth as a discursive frame relies on a longer history of the way the city has treated favelas. These communities are vital to the city, providing its manual labor force, but also are a threat, which is symbolically represented in the image of youth gangs terrorizing lawful citizens. This shared public image of violent young favelados situates them as “dangerous others.” Once placed at a moral distance from the authorized citizens of Rio de Janeiro, the logic of just war supports perpetual violent interventions in the favelas slums and on the favelados.⁶

In 2000, Rio de Janeiro’s favelas were home to more than one million of the city’s roughly six million residents (Perlman, 2006, p. 158). Residents of these once ad hoc squatter settlements frequently live in poverty. Although governmental and non-governmental organizations have made steps to alleviate these conditions, Perlman (2005) suggests that the conditions for poverty — namely discrimination and unemployment — have increased. The term favela is no longer merely a referent for a geographically locatable urban space; this public imaginary of poverty and crime rampant in the hills, shadowing the affluent beach community, is disseminated locally and internationally through informal conversations, legislative policy and mass media, like news reports, television, and film. This imaginary has created a public image of the favelado as both tragic victim and incomprehensible monster. By both accounts, this representation of favelados marks them as outsiders, whose status as citizens is obscured by a sentiment that they are not really Brazilian.⁷

Within Brazil, the word favelado has a pejorative connotation; it connotes disdain for the outside status that favelados hold. Although the current image of favela and favelado are rhetorical or imaginary constructs that do not necessarily correlate with the places and people they represent, their prevalence in discourses of criminality has material repercussions for how favelas as neighborhoods are configured, and how favelados as individuals are treated by cariocas and the police. Although favelados are technically citizens, the term favelado functions as a mechanism of biopolitical control which regulates the subjectivity

⁶ Hardt and Negri (2001) explain that criminalizing discourses create a “social alarm” that can be used to justify intervention. In the case of the favela and favelados, criminalization of an entire urban space and group of people creates a shared moral objection on the part of cariocas that further legitimates interventions and further delegitimizes any claim to citizenship that favelados attempt to make. Systematically, criminalizing discourses regulate citizenship, conserving power from the top-down and the bottom-up.

⁷ Once again, the Not Not is a useful way of conceptualizing the ambiguous position favelados occupy. Having been born in Brazil, they are Brazilian nationals. Yet, their often undocumented status, relative age and poverty, and ultimately their differentiated citizenship allow them to be treated as not-Brazilian.

and political, economic and geographic mobility of young residents in the favelas. The administration of this control disenfranchises and discriminates against those called favelados. This outcome is the result of the historical development of favelas through three stages, which I have named: formation, friction, and integration.

First Stage: Formation

Favelas began as unauthorized spaces, which housed unauthorized persons. Homeless soldiers, former slaves, migrant workers, and immigrants created a stable labor supply for the emerging industrialization in cities such as Rio de Janeiro (Arias, 2006, pp. 22-23; Levine, 1999, pp. 77-96). Workers settled on vacant land adjacent to transportation lines and work sites because this unregulated land provided them with free housing and easy access to urban employment. Favelas were not marked on city maps, not officially subject to tax collection, and not authorized to access city services including water, sewage, and police protection. Although favelados lacked citizenship rights, they were generally not subject to overt governmental regulation. While residents had no legal right to the space they occupied, there were also no active attempts to collect rents or to remove them from the land. Largely unacknowledged, neither favela nor favelado were incorporated into discourses of illegality or criminality.

Second Stage: Friction

Spanning the 1930s to the 1970s, the second phase of favela development marked a time of transition, with various political regimes trying to use the favelados' political and economic resources to advance their own agendas and cariocas relying on these unofficial labor sources to help build a new middle class (Pino, 1998). Favelados began to figure into citizenship discourses whenever they could serve to publicize the platforms of labor-friendly candidates or support the advancement of authorized citizens, but the conditions of poverty that characterized the favelas threatened the broader Brazilian image of progress and order. The favelado emerged as a differentiated citizen who would ensure the supremacy of the state and the superiority of cariocas.⁸ Perceived differences between cariocas and favelados led favelados to be characterized as "alien[s] within" (Goldstein, 2003, p. 16; Arias, 2006) that were "a blight on the city" (Perlman, 2005, p. 12). The friction that divided the cariocas and the favelados worked to create a divided city wherein one half received the securities of citizenship and the other became a direct threat to the security of the citizens and the sovereign authority of the government (Leite, 2000, p. 74).

The administration of this differentiated citizenship then transformed the favelado from an "unofficial" citizen into to an "illegal" presence. Favelados were undocumented; they lacked birth certificates because they were not born in hospitals, they lacked work permits because they were unobtainable without birth certificates, and they lacked ownership rights to their homes. This served as a rationale to deny access to legal employment, voting and city services such as electricity and waste disposal (Arias, 2006). Moreover, because the government did not authorize their presence, the favelados

⁸ This division, between carioca and favelado, is not "natural," but rather was formed through the discursive practices outlined in this section.

were marked as a criminal threat, which in turn justified military force and urban removal programs as ways to eradicate the favelas (Perlman, 2005, p. 12). By the end of this stage, the term favelado had become synonymous with criminality, generating a friction that the next stage has not yet been able to resolve.⁹

Third Stage: Integration

As Brazil moved into a period of re-democratization, forced removal programs became impractical, and a new mode of response emerged: integration. The 1993 Favela-Bairro, or "Favela to Neighborhood," program was indicative of this period, which saw the official integration of the favelas into the city at the expense of its youngest residents. For long-term residents, the program provided opportunities for infrastructure and landownership. Grants enabled residential associations and other community organizations to do modifications that aesthetically incorporated their neighborhoods into the city. However, attempts to integrate favelados into the formal, official and legal structures of Brazil only reified their status as an unauthorized, illegal — and therefore violent — presence, thereby justifying continued moral intervention.

Rather than responding to the ways residents already articulated their citizenship status and sense of community, integration policies suppressed these people. For example, integration programs gave opportunities for legal landownership without first addressing the barriers that constrained favelados' access to employment (Perlman, 2006, p. 176). Such programs sidestepped favelados' citizenship claims and attempted to mold residents into an image more consistent with elite aesthetics. Although new paint and official deeds proved useful in undoing the violation of space, beauty and security that the terms favela and favelado symbolized, these developments failed to endow favela residents with political voice or economic agency. As a result, despite their progressive agendas and intentions, integration policies were largely divisive.

In this final stage, the young people — frequently members of neighborhood gangs — are currently challenging the official attempts to integrate favelados in three distinct ways, inciting neighborhood conflict. First, gangs articulated a right to regulate the streets and the mobility of residents and visitors. Second, they articulated a right to assert economic independence, often by trading in illicit goods. Finally, gangs asserted a right to embrace the communities in which they live, rather than erasing all forms of difference; they resisted attempts to assimilate into carioca subjectivity by acting out through excessive violence, which increases their visibility and asserts their authority to determine the conditions of their own subjectivity. This left older residents, who dream of better conditions for their children, caught between governmental discourses that render them invisible and gang uses of physical violence

⁹ I attempt to capture the ambivalent and often slippery relationship that favelados have with the state as differentiated citizens. Their occupancy of urban space, access to utilities, use of currency, protection of the law, among other considerations, are in part constituted through a relationship of authority and subjectivity wherein the favelado is a citizen of Brazil. On the other hand, their status as "violent" positions them as criminal, or, a Not Not citizen. The result is that their relationship is unstable, and often only recognized when justifying interventions.

that leave them in fear of their physical safety (Perlman, 2006, p. 173). Human rights violations have been rampant (Human Rights Watch, 1996) and although Rio de Janeiro's favelas do not officially comprise a war zone, the international community has compared the conditions there to those in places like Uganda, Darfur, Colombia, and Bolivia (Bellos, 2003; Perlman, 2006).

Youth Violence: Citizenship as Interpretive Frame

Regulating Citizenship

In Rio de Janeiro alone, there are 2.8 minors per 10,000 incarcerated people in the city's unsanitary prison units, where these youths are the target of physical attacks by other inmates and by prison guards (Human Rights Watch, 2005). In 2007, death rates among favela youth rose by more than 36% from the previous year (Human Rights Watch, 2007). Reel (2007) marked the current moment as one where ubiquitous violations of the law by favelados are met with equally ubiquitous acts of police violence. The result of regulating citizenship in this manner is a self-perpetuating cycle of violence where the war between police and youth gangs has become a war against all favelados, making the young and the poor the target of a just war in an attempt to maintain the authority of the state and the subordinated status of favelados. The same violence that conserves the authority of the state at the expense of favelados also protects the citizenship rights of cariocas; as such, violence becomes a normative condition for all citizens. Individual Brazilians, community groups and non-governmental organizations, such as Amnesty International or Human Rights Watch, condemn the actions of the police, but they have no jurisdiction to enforce such judgments, nor do they possess the legitimate authority to regulate or guarantee the citizenship rights of favelado youths.

Competing notions of citizenship and justice are escalating tensions between youth gangs and police. Residents believe that police are unlawfully killing youth and police believe that violence is a justifiable and viable response to gangs. The police's reliance on criminality ensures that the weapon of choice in the war on violence will remain violence. Tropes, such as "justice," will continue to justify interventions against those marginalized by legal codes. The principal factor in perpetuating the logic and violence of just war is not empirical acts of crime; rather, it is the upholding of a biopolitical condition that constructs favelado, in advance, as subject to the authority of the state while denying those labeled as favelado the rights of citizenship. Communications about youth that construct them as violent, and therefore criminal others, perpetuate violence by both youth and governmental authorities who are caught in a war over who has the right to regulate citizenship.¹⁰ This rhetorical move indiscriminately targets the primarily young and poor residents of the favelas, and places them wholly within the authority of the state and wholly outside the protections and rights of citizenship.

¹⁰ My dissertation, currently progressing under the direction of Carole Blair, Professor of Communication Studies, examines such communications, including public policy (local and international), news articles (from Brazilian and non-Brazilian outlets), television programs (e.g., *Cidade das Homens*), and popular films (e.g., *Cidade de Deus*). In addition, I also examine communications that complicate, in various ways, the reduction of youth to violent or criminal others.

Performing Citizenship

Although the right to use force or violence rests principally with the nation-state, individuals and groups seeking to transform the conditions of citizenship readily appropriate this right. While such uses of violence are unofficial, and by extension illegal, violence is an increasingly common mode of gaining access to political voice and visibility; violence is, despite its destructive capacities, an increasingly common way to perform citizenship. The frequent formation of extra-governmental entities (e.g., youth gangs) coupled with the alteration of what is normally considered the state's 'right' into a citizen's 'right' allows violence to function as "an object of knowledge for a group, a nation, a minority, or a class, [that is used to] constitute a historico-political field, and to make history function within the political struggle" (Foucault, 1997, p. 164). Foucault traces a historical transformation in which marginalized groups incorporate knowledge of the political force of war — of the tactical uses of violence — as a means of politicking. Such a use of violence allows favelados to re-incorporate their own histories into the terrain of political struggle, and de-link violence from the naturalized discourses of morality and rights that have excluded them from politics and made police use of violence normative. Violence, as embodied in political struggles that wage war against the present and the presented past (or history), is a way of gaining recognition as citizens for a class of people that are otherwise unintelligible, or even invisible. In the case of Rio, this doesn't necessarily lead to an easy victory for marginalized groups. Instead, a push-pull strategy that renders informal modes of politics and labor invisible or criminal — based on the dominant political and economic discourses in a given moment — further normalizes just war enacted by the state and violent counter-strategies enacted by youth gangs.

One way to disrupt this practice is to set aside the preoccupation with the moralistic implications of violence and instead focus on the regulatory function of violence. Foucault's (1997) understanding of violence as politics by other means is particularly useful in that it casts violence as not only a political tactic, but also as a strategic mode of action. For both youth and the state, the on-the-ground tactical uses of violence (e.g., shootings) are tied to a broader strategy of controlling the terms of citizenship and the movement of citizen bodies (e.g., by dictating and denying criminal codes). The force of this push-pull is magnetic; it binds the state and the favelado youth together as co-participants in just war. On the one hand, the state articulates the favelado youth as substantially violent, a move which politically justifies any and all interventions. On the other hand, *because* the favelado youth is substantially violent, then all forms of labor, politics, and life in the favela perpetuate violence and are, by extension, political. Violence, whether used by the state or by citizens (marginalized or otherwise), is, for now, the preferred mode of politics. Put this way, it is no longer feasible to (mis)understand perpetuated and perpetual violence in the favelas as an issue criminal deviance. In fact, to do so only furthers the moral outrage and public anxiety that support continued just war interventions which, in turn, support counter-acts of violence. Pragmatically, it is much more useful for both scholars and policy makers to understand youth violence as a political and organizational strategy that is being used to articulate citizenship claims and negotiate the terms of citizenship. As such, rather than policy solutions aimed at reforming favelas and favelados into legitimate spaces and subjectivities, it appears necessary to find ways to respond to the favelas and favelados as already legitimate Rio spaces and Brazilian subjectivities.

Conclusion

This essay has positioned Rio de Janeiro as a case study that allows us to see the multifaceted constructions of violence and citizenship, in which youth currently occupy a central role. Violence is a strategy that both the state and the youth deploy in order to negotiate configurations of authority and subjectivity in a contest over citizenship. As such, both the state and the youth are actors in a war that reproduces violence as a biopolitical strategy; this wrangling over authority travels the asphalt and the hills, creating an atmosphere of fear that further legitimizes the need for the state as a regulating force to protect the citizens of Brazil. Violence, as practice, perception and threat, is continuous and administered at every level of experience.

Although violence is perhaps the most widely available response to differentiated citizenship and the marginalized political and economic conditions that it produces, it is not the only viable response. By asserting a right to organize for social change through the use of violence, youth gangs have invariably begun a process whereby the need to secure citizenship rights, worker rights and rights to determine one's own use of space is being made visible both in and outside of Brazil. The institutionalization of youth gangs and the violence this essay describes are not natural though; it only seems that way because criminality has become the salient global frame for addressing rises in youth violence. This frame has created the conditions in which violence works; perhaps breaking away from this frame will create conditions where violence is no longer so effective.

Rio de Janeiro is not only an ideal site for understanding the complexity of formations of violence, but it is also a case study of alternative solutions. While it is beyond the scope of this essay to say what alternative solutions will arise out of a citizenship frame, it is worth noting that scholars and community activists are increasingly envisioning alternatives that account for the political, economic, material, symbolic, conservative, and progressive aspects of youth violence in Rio de Janeiro. On-the-ground work, brought about by local community groups, is increasing opportunities for primary education in the favelas, organizing to increase access to work permits and fair wages, creating community development projects, and using the internet and film media as venues for autonomous, self-representation and articulations of citizenship. Increasingly, solutions emerge out of an expression of solidarity with favelados rather than a drive towards legalization and assimilation (Leite, 2000, p. 84).

A comprehensive account of the connections and disconnections between violence and citizenship would help cultivate alternatives to the cycle of violence perpetuated by the logic of just war.¹¹ Scholars

¹¹ My dissertation contributes to such an account by exploring discourses that, rather than simply representing favelas and favelados as violent, draw attention to violence as an aesthetic ritual, as a possibly inauthentic cultural expression and as a constitutive element of citizenship. I have found it particularly useful to look at such discourses as "serious statements" and unpack "rules" that give rise to these formations, "what it means for [statements that violate these rules] to have appeared when and where they did" (Foucault, 1972, p. 109), and how their appearance creates a space for continued

of communication and culture should resist antiquated notions of criminality that normalize and perpetuate violence as a strategy for asserting and contesting citizenship rights. Research on the representations of social spaces such as favelas, slums, and ghettos should continue to investigate the biopolitics of criminality, violence, and citizenship. Future scholarship might also identify places where divergent, networked, citizenships are possible without re-instantiating differentiated and disparate citizenships. Informed scholarship will not be sufficient to eradicate global violence, but it can set the terms of discourse for a conversation that moves away from policing youth in favor of a renewed focus on collaborative endeavors that perform citizenship differently.

interruptions of violence as usual. As part of my long-term research trajectory, I plan to conduct ethnographic work that further explores counterproductive performances of violence and embodied practices of youth citizenship.

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