Exclusion and Agency in Rio de Janeiro
An Analysis of the Marginalization of Favela Residents and Their Resistance to Violence

Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy Thesis
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ABSTRACT

Brazil has experienced a significant increase in political power and economic strength over the past decade, allowing a growing number of Brazilians to leave poverty and to enjoy higher living standards. However, this positive change has not affected all Brazilians equally, with millions of Brazilians still living in settlements known as favelas and facing marginalization and stigmatization on a daily basis for a number of different reasons. This thesis begins by discussing the characteristics of favelas in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and their residents and moves to analyze the causes of discrimination against favela residents, including race and gender, and the criminalization of individuals living in favelas. It provides evidence to prove that state policies and the Brazilian elite’s beliefs about favelas have marginalized favela residents and have contributed to actively excluding these individuals from full integration into Brazilian society. Thus, marginality – once true only in a geographic sense – has become a reality for Brazilians living in favelas. Next, the thesis moves to explore violence – both in the public and private spheres – in the favelas and the way in which Brazilian authorities use violence as a justification for police operations to restore order in the favelas. It discusses the establishment and growth of drug trafficking organizations and organized crime in certain favelas, as well as the state’s reaction via military police operations, women’s police stations, and the newest innovation – the Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora (UPP) or Pacifying Police Units – and their effectiveness at responding to incidents of violence. The state’s response to violence in the favelas is overwhelmingly repressive, tends to use lethal force instead of recurring to non-lethal means to resolve conflicts, and often does not distinguish between the targets of police operations (such as gang members) and civilians. The thesis then turns to the responses of favela residents, particularly youth organizations, protest movements, and favela community associations, and argues that these groups have had some success in attracting the attention of domestic and international audiences through the use of mainstream and social media, in raising awareness of incidents of police brutality, discrimination, and stigmatization, and in obtaining a response from state authorities. However, the state still needs to fill many gaps in order to fully integrate favela residents into Brazilian society and to put an end to policies that actively exclude these individuals. Brazil’s recent economic growth and increase in political power therefore represent an opportunity for the state to address its legacy of marginalization and discrimination and to formulate policies that will make the country more inclusive of all its citizens.
Introduction

Eu só quero é ser feliz/ Andar tranquiúmente
Na favela onde eu nasci/ É...
E poder me orgulhar/ E ter a consciência/ Que o pobre tem o seu lugar.¹

(I just want to be happy/ Walk with tranquility/ In the favela where I was born/ Yeah.../ And to be able to take pride/ And being aware/ That the poor have their place.)

Since its military dictatorship collapsed in 1985, Brazil has experienced high levels of economic growth, political stability, an increase in political power at the international level, and the creation of a large and growing middle class. Its recent economic success was recognized in 2001, when Wall Street analysts grouped the country together with Russia, India, and China as part of the “BRIC group,” denoting the largest and most powerful emerging economies.² Since then, Brazil has become the focus of attention for many economic analysts and scholars seeking to understand how Brazil has managed to lift millions of its citizens out of poverty and to reduce one of the highest levels of income inequality in the world. At the same time, the international community has also acknowledged its successes by awarding the 2014 World Cup to Brazil and 2016 Summer Olympic Games to the city of Rio de Janeiro. Consequently, Brazil has embarked on major preparations to upgrade infrastructure in areas that will be hosting the two mega-events, to construct new stadiums and sporting facilities, and to improve security in locations frequented by tourists, particularly in Rio de Janeiro, which is known for its high levels of crime. The two upcoming mega-events represent Brazil’s opportunity to show the world how far it has come in its economic and social development and to present a positive image of the country to international investors and decision-makers.

Despite Brazil’s apparent progress in reducing poverty and inequality, however, a large proportion of Brazilians continue to earn incomes below the poverty line, and affordable housing

¹ From Donna M. Goldstein, Laughter Out of Place: Race, Class, and Sexuality in a Rio Shantytown (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2003), Introduction.
² Larry Rohter, Brazil on the Rise (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 140.
in cities, like Rio de Janeiro, is scarce. Thus, these individuals are limited to living in the informal settlements within and on the outskirts of megacities like São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro that are known as “favelas.” The word “favela” itself comes from a bush that thrives in stony soil and also from Mount Favela, a battleground site in the Canudos War of 1890s northeastern Brazil. When veterans of the war later migrated to Rio de Janeiro and established Providência, the first favela, they were reminded of this site and consequently referred to their new settlement as a “favela.” Therefore, one can see that the roots of these settlements are deep, and that they have persisted despite the attempts of government officials to remove and relocate their residents over generations. By the 1920s, the word “favela” became “the generic term for squatter settlements, shantytowns, and all types of irregular settlements,” and they were finally recognized in Brazilian law by 1937, when the Codigo de Obras (Building Code) expressly prohibited them.

Following the end of World War II, Brazilian cities experienced a large rise in migration from rural regions of the country, especially the impoverished northeastern region, and were unable to accommodate the migrants’ need for housing. Once migrants had exhausted their possibilities of finding housing in formalized neighborhoods of Rio de Janeiro and in existing favelas, they began to create new favelas further from the city’s downtown and on land that was considered less desirable for real estate purposes. Thus, the number and population size of favelas exploded as migrants added onto previously existing favelas and developed new settlements on the hillsides surrounding the city, as well as on vacant land closer to middle and

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upper class neighborhoods. From 1950-1960, the population growth rate for favelas soared at 99.3 percent, compared to a population growth rate of 41.5 percent for the city as a whole. The favela population growth rate declined until 1980, but increased to 40.5 percent during Brazil’s transition to democracy from 1980 to 1990, compared to a 7.6 percent general growth rate across Rio de Janeiro. Today, favelas continue to experience higher population growth rates than the city overall, with favela growth registering a 2.4 percent increase over the last decade and non-favela growth increasing by only 0.38 percent. As favelas have expanded across the city to accommodate their growing populations, they have also tended to “follow the money” since, like many others, favela residents prefer to save money on high transportation costs by living close to their workplaces. Hence, not all favelas are concentrated on the outskirts or in rundown, dangerous areas of the city. Many are in fact located in or around Rio de Janeiro’s more prosperous neighborhoods, since their residents can readily find jobs in these areas.

Today the term “favela” is generally understood to encompass settlements that “(1) emerge from an unmet need for housing, (2) [are] established and developed with no outside or governmental regulation, (3) [are] established and developed by individual residents (no centralized or outside ‘developers’), and (4) [are] continuously evolving based on culture and access to resources, jobs, knowledge, and the city.” While some favelas are affected by high levels of violence and poverty, it is important to remember that others are not. An estimated one percent of favela residents participate in some form of violent crime or drug trafficking organization, yet residents frequently find themselves the target of either violence from these

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5 Moreira Alves and Evanson 27.
6 Perlman, Favela: Four Decades of Living on the Edge in Rio de Janeiro, 53-55.
7 Ibid. 27-28.
organizations or harsh police crackdowns against crime.\textsuperscript{9} Thus, the perception and characterization of favelas as “dangerous places” by politicians and the media matters in the creation of policies affecting these neighborhoods, especially in public security issues, and in facilitating the integration of these areas with the rest of Rio de Janeiro.

Similarly, favelas should not be characterized as slums or ghettos. Sociologist Janice E. Perlman argues that the term “slum” is often used in the global North to refer to “huge low-income housing complexes or areas of deteriorated and/or abandoned housing.”\textsuperscript{10} Favelas, on the other hand, have few or no abandoned buildings; Perlman notes, “Every space is used, and most households rent out a room or use part of the home for day care, commerce, or manufacturing.”\textsuperscript{11} Furthermore, these neighborhoods are home to vibrant, thriving communities whose residents have lived there for generations. In the Jacarezinho favela, for example, Perlman observes, “Construction, reconstruction, expansion, improvement, commerce, community projects, candomblé alongside Catholicism, thriving real estate markets characterize daily life there. The city is investing heavily in its upgrading….\textsuperscript{12} Thus, it is wrong to think of favelas as run down or as urban blight. Instead, favela residents continue investing in their own homes and communities, and they work to improve their access to the same city services that residents of Rio de Janeiro’s formalized neighborhoods already enjoy.

My thesis will attempt to dispel myths about favela communities in Rio de Janeiro and to show how residents actively work to resist the efforts of the Brazilian state and society to exclude them from full participation in civic life and decision-making processes, particularly those undertaken in anticipation of the World Cup and Olympic Games. I begin \textbf{Chapter One}

\textsuperscript{9} Moreira Alves and Evanson 5.
\textsuperscript{10} Perlman, \textit{Favela: Four Decades of Living on the Edge in Rio de Janeiro}, 37.
\textsuperscript{11} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., 38-39.
by providing background information about the current socioeconomic context in Brazil as a whole and in the city of Rio de Janeiro which faces both high levels of social exclusion and increased scrutiny over this issue from the international community prior to the two upcoming mega-events. The chapter explores poverty and inequality indicators and discusses the effect of poverty on certain marginalized populations, including Afro Brazilians and women. I then look at race in Brazil, including the popular and erroneous belief in the country as a “racial democracy,” and examine how race affects an individual’s ability to access public services, jobs, and housing. Next, I turn to gender as a factor leading to discrimination and marginalization, especially for Afro Brazilian women and young men. I show how Afro Brazilian women face difficulties in finding stable jobs that will pull them out of poverty, and how Afro Brazilian young men are confronted by pressure to join criminal gangs and targeted by police operations, even when they do not participate in crime. I end the chapter by exploring the criminalization of poverty, the characterization of favelas and their residents as violent, and the division of spaces in Rio de Janeiro into the formalized sections of the city and informal settlements outside of the realm of public services and state protection.

In Chapter Two, I look at statistics on and causes of urban violence in major Brazilian cities and note that the state, the media, and Brazilian society tends to associate urban violence and its effects almost exclusively with young men, especially those of color and those living in the favelas. Thus, women’s experience of violence – both in the public and private spheres – is frequently left out of the discussion. Additionally, I note that violence has a distinct effect on Brazilians, depending on their race, sex/gender, their socioeconomic background, and the area of the city in which they live. I explore the various actors involved in urban violence in the favelas, including the Comando Vermelho and militia groups, and those involved in preventing and
responding to violence, such as state law enforcement agencies. I then turn to alternative state responses to violence, including women’s police stations and the widely publicized and controversial *Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora*, or Police Pacifying Units (UPPs), and evaluate their effectiveness in reducing violence.

Finally, I devote **Chapter Three** to analyzing three specific responses of favela residents to repressive state policies and the marginalization that they face from the rest of Brazilian society. I first look at organizations that aim to encourage young men and women to resist violence and to change popular perceptions of youth living in favelas. I subsequently explore the participation of favela residents in the popular protests that shook Brazil during the summer of 2013, favela residents’ demands, and the states’ response to such demands, specifically in the case of disappeared bricklayer Amarildo de Souza Lima. Then, I look at the participation of women in activist movements that seek to reduce state and societal repression by considering the role of De Souza Lima’s widow in protest movements against police violence and the role of the Quilombo das Guerreiras, an organization consisting of single female-headed households that is fighting eviction from a settlement that they have occupied for the past seven years. I also examine the work of other favela community associations, such as Catalytic Communities and RioOnWatch, to represent favela residents and to protect their rights as Brazilian decision-makers design policies to prepare Rio de Janeiro for the World Cup and Olympic Games and take actions that have direct and often negative effects on the lives of favela residents.

I **conclude** the thesis by providing five policy recommendations with respect to the ways in which the Brazilian government can more fully integrate favelas and their residents into civic life and the actions that both the state and society should take to reduce the stigmatization and marginalization of favela residents. My proposals include police reform, an acceptance of the
permanence of favela settlements, and a change in the media’s portrayal of favela residents. By implementing these recommendations, the Brazilian state will lower the barriers that these individuals face in participating fully in society and in benefiting from Brazil’s recent economic growth; thus, by reducing their effective marginalization, the state will improve favela residents’ overall wellbeing as well as that of the nation.
Chapter One
Marginalization and Exclusion in Brazil

Brazil has a remarkably diverse population that takes pride in its Portuguese, African, Indigenous, Japanese, Italian, and other ethnic roots. On the surface, it appears that Brazilians of all races and ethnicities live together in a “racial democracy,” as conceptualized by sociologist Gilberto Freyre. However, the harmony that appears to exist, the tolerant nature of Brazilian culture, and recent high levels of economic growth obscure the fact that race, class, gender, educational level, income, and other factors do in fact contribute to the creation of an intensely divided and unequal society. Race and gender play arguably the largest roles in the active marginalization of millions of Brazilians, particularly Afro Brazilian women and young men in cities. Additionally, high levels of urban violence result in sensationalist media coverage that stigmatizes populations living in informal settlements. This chapter begins by exploring sexual and racial inequality in Brazil, providing an overview of the interconnected factors that lead to the marginalization of favela residents in Rio de Janeiro. It then looks at the portrayal and stigmatization of favela residents by the media and society in Rio de Janeiro, as well as the active exclusion and marginalization of these individuals. Thus, I will provide necessary background information about the context in which favela residents live in order to better explain in Chapter Two how state policies contribute to their ongoing marginalization.

Poverty and Inequality in Brazil

Brazil is characterized by one of the highest inequality rates in Latin America and in the world, where inequality is defined as the disparity in the distribution of wealth, income and other assets (such as land) between the wealthiest and poorest residents, although it has lower poverty
As in many countries of Latin America, urban poverty rates in Brazil are lower than those of rural areas. However, urban areas of Brazil register higher Gini Indices, indicating higher income inequality than in rural areas. A Gini Index score of 0 indicates perfect equality (of income or wealth) and a score of 1 indicates perfect inequality. Regional differences in poverty levels are particularly significant, with the northeast region of the country registering higher levels of poverty than the relatively well-off southeastern region encompassing the megacities of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo.

Income distribution inequality progressively worsened from 1960-1990, despite the transition from an authoritarian government to that of a democracy in 1985, the implementation of subsequent major reforms throughout the Brazilian government and economy, and the creation of new civil society movements. In fact, one of the few areas of Brazilian society that has remained relatively unchanged is the inequitable distribution of income. In 1960, 27.7 percent of the country’s wealth was controlled by the top five percent of individuals located in the highest income bracket, whereas the bottom 20 percent held only 3.5 percent of the wealth in the country. An economic boom in the 1970s led to an increase in Brazil’s overall gross domestic product, but also a corresponding increase in income inequality as the highest income brackets saw their incomes increase at a faster rate than the poorest. By 1990, the wealthiest five percent of the country controlled 35.8 percent of Brazil’s wealth, with the poorest 20 percent actually seeing a decline in their wealth to 2.3 percent of the country’s wealth.

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17 Ibid., 188.
18 Ibid., 189.
However, one can see some signs of improvement in poverty levels, income distribution, and inequality with Brazil’s economic success over the last decade. Relative poverty levels have fallen from around 21 percent of the population in 2003 to 11 percent in 2009, with extreme poverty also showing a decline, from 9.8 percent in 2004 to 6.1 percent in 2009.\(^\text{19}\) World Bank data indicates that, “Between 2001 and 2009, the income growth rate of the poorest decile of the population was 7 percent per year, while that of the richest decile was 1.7 percent; as a result, income inequality (as measured by the Gini index) fell markedly, from 0.594 in 2001 to 0.521 in 2011 – a 50 year low.”\(^\text{20}\) World Bank researchers Pierre-Richard Agénor and Otaviano Canuto attribute the decrease in economic inequality to low inflation, high levels of economic growth, well-focused social programs, and real increases in the minimum wage.\(^\text{21}\) During this period, the percentage of women in the workforce also increased, from 52.8 percent in 1998 to 57.6 percent in 2009, and today there are significantly more women enrolled in tertiary education than men.\(^\text{22}\) While Brazilian women with twelve or more years of schooling in the year 2008 earned 58 percent of men’s salaries, their increased participation in the workforce and higher overall education levels also may have had effects in decreasing income inequality, as more Brazilians than ever are earning incomes and are able to apply for jobs requiring higher levels of education, which should theoretically pay higher wages.

Within Rio de Janeiro, poverty is not concentrated in any one particular section of the city, but is spread throughout, with poor neighborhoods located next to extremely wealthy ones, and with favelas rising above the city on the surrounding hillsides, creating a spatial and


\(^\text{20}\) Ibid.

\(^\text{21}\) Ibid.

\(^\text{22}\) Ibid., 5.
geographical distinction between people of the asfalto (pavement), or the formal city, and people of the morro (hill), or informal city. 23 Nevertheless, one should be careful when associating favelas with high levels of poverty. According to reports from 2008 by the Brazilian newspaper O Globo, only one third of impoverished individuals in Rio de Janeiro lived in favelas, and in fact, rising income levels in Brazil at that time had technically lifted large numbers of favela residents out of poverty and increased their ability to purchase material goods, such as televisions, refrigerators, cell phones, and Internet access, even if their day to day existence was still somewhat precarious. 24 Furthermore, in a survey conducted in select favelas by sociologist and Brazilian favela expert Janice E. Perlman in 2003, around 20 percent of residents perceived and identified themselves as being part of the middle class. 25 Consequently, while there is a correlation between favela residency and poverty, one cannot assume causation.

Race and the Myth of the “Racial Democracy”

Income inequality is not the only factor contributing to the stratification of Brazilian society and marginalization of a large percentage of its population. Studies find that race consistently comes out on top as one of the leading causes of discrimination and marginalization in Brazil. After Nigeria, Brazil has the second largest population of individuals of African descent out of any country in the world, a consequence of the extremely high levels of slave importation beginning in the period of colonization until the abolition of slavery in 1888, when Brazil became the last country in the Western Hemisphere to outlaw it. 26

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25 Perlman, Favela: Four Decades of Living on the Edge in Rio de Janeiro, 256.
26 Skidmore 5.
Nascimento, Director of the Instituto de Pesquisas e Estudos Afro-Brasileiros (Institute of Afro-Brazilian Research and Studies) in Rio de Janeiro, notes that race “exercises a social function that has considerable impact on human life. This is the phenomenon of socially constructed race.”

Brazilians choose, and in fact prefer, to define their race strategically based on approximations of skin color rather than ancestral origins. Thus, while more than 50 percent of Brazilians are of African ancestry, only five to six percent declare themselves preto or negro (black in Portuguese) on official census forms. As pointed out by Nascimento, “Such a tendency results from the whitening ideal, which assigns higher social status to lighter skin color. As a consequence, official statistics have been notoriously distorted: the dark-skinned black group is undercounted, but the white and brown groups are considerably inflated.”

Nevertheless, many Brazilians refuse to acknowledge the roots of their preference for whiteness or for the “hegemonic moreno,” as Larkin Nascimento calls the “de-Africanized mestizo” or anyone with darker skin color. Indeed, in an interview by Perlman, a former favela resident responded that racial discrimination had not gotten worse in the past thirty years because the phenomenon did not exist in Brazil. His wife, however, then noted that all of their lighter skinned children were employed, and her darker skinned children were not.

The suppression of the term “race” and preference for the use of color or ethnicity to define one’s ancestry has also created a widespread belief that Brazil is a race-less society, a belief that refuses to acknowledge the enormous problem of racial discrimination and the

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28 Skidmore 5.
29 Ibid.
30 Larkin Nascimento 44.
31 Ibid., 74.
32 Perlman, Favela: Four Decades of Living on the Edge in Rio de Janeiro, 170.
continued domination of the country’s white population in all aspects of Brazilian life.\textsuperscript{33} This belief is best summarized by the theory of Luso-Tropicalism as developed by Brazilian sociologist Gilberto Freyre in the 1930s. In \textit{Casa Grande e Senzala} (The Master and the Slaves), published in 1933, Freyre argues that the phenomenon of slavery in Brazil, in contrast to that of the United States, was relatively “benign” and “humane,” and characterized by widespread miscegenation, particularly by Portuguese men and African slave women, which served as proof that the Portuguese colonists were not racist.\textsuperscript{34} Larkin Nascimento points out, however, that miscegenation “as a social phenomenon… was actually rape,” thus demonstrating the coercive nature of power dynamics in colonial Brazil with white men dominant over black females.\textsuperscript{35}

Freyre’s theories were very popular with upper class Brazilian society, who had previously viewed miscegenation and the creation of a mixed \textit{moreno} race in Brazil as a national embarrassment. The elite began to promote the view of Brazil as a “racial democracy,” in which discrimination was based on class – not race – and people of all races could live together side by side in harmony without any of the racial conflict that characterized the United States and other regions of Latin America at that time. Furthermore, Brazilians of all races and shades of skin color – except those of European descent – started to describe themselves as \textit{moreno} or brown, rather than by their actual ancestry or a more accurate description of their skin color. Some scholars have compared this phenomenon to the way in which all Americans claim to be middle class, even though there are obvious class differences.\textsuperscript{36} Despite all of the language about the creation of a new mixed race in Brazil and the progressiveness of Brazilians’ supposed inability to see race, the creation of the \textit{moreno} identity represented yet another attempt to “whiten”

\textsuperscript{33} Larkin Nascimento 19.
\textsuperscript{34} Skidmore 198, and Larkin Nascimento 53.
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{36} Donna M. Goldstein, \textit{Laughter Out of Place: Race, Class, and Sexuality in a Rio Shantytown} (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2003), 103.
Brazilian society, as it removed the African identity from thousands of lighter skinned Brazilians and allowed them to claim a “virtual white” identity. Furthermore, the desire by upper class white Brazilians to maintain their privileged role in society continued to manifest itself through immigration policies in which migration from Europe was heavily promoted as a way of decreasing the percentage of the Brazilian population that was moreno or black.

The belief in the myth of “racial democracy” by both white and black Brazilians continues to contribute to the ongoing marginalization of Afro Brazilians even in the absence of laws or regulations formally creating segregated institutions. In a survey conducted in 2001 in several favelas in Rio de Janeiro, Perlman noted that race was the second most frequently mentioned source of discrimination by favela residents, with place of residency being the biggest source. While favelas are racially mixed, in 2007, 60 percent of favela residents were moreno or black, and 40 percent were white, compared to the population in non-favela areas, the majority of which is of European descent. Moreover, the extremely low numbers of Afro Brazilians in positions of authority within the government civil service, the Catholic Church, the military and police services, legal fields, and medicine are also indicative of widespread discrimination in hiring practices. Until recently when some government institutions and universities implemented affirmative action style campaigns, however, there had been few calls by Afro Brazilians or more progressive whites for changes in employment and university admissions policies to counter discrimination against Afro Brazilian students and workers. Historian Thomas E. Skidmore believes that this can be attributed to three factors. First, race is not the only source of discrimination or element determining one’s place in society. Second, Brazilian society is

37 Larkin Nascimento 56.
38 Ibid., 51.
39 Perlman, Favela: Four Decades of Living on the Edge in Rio de Janeiro, 153.
40 Moreira Alves and Evanson 22.
41 Skidmore 199.
rigidly hierarchical, which prevents grassroots movements from gaining much momentum or ability to influence others outside of their own social spheres. Skidmore notes, “Afro-Brazilians, who are mostly at the bottom of the socioeconomic scale, are therefore doubly affected (class and race) by that deferential mind-set.”\(^{42}\) Finally, due to the identification of many Afro Brazilians as white or *moreno*, it is difficult for organizers to build solidarity within the Afro Brazilian community for movements in support of their rights.\(^{43}\) Thus, the myth of racial democracy is deeply internalized by many Brazilians, and race continues to figure prominently as an ongoing source of discrimination and marginalization.

**Gender**

Gender is another factor leading to discrimination and marginalization, particularly for Afro Brazilian women and young men living in favelas. Just as race is a socially constructed phenomenon, so is gender, and it has a strong effect on what types of employment and education one can access, the areas of the city in which one feels comfortable, and the response that one will receive when stopped by members of the police or military services. Elisa Larkin Nascimento notes that one must take race into account when speaking of gender in Brazil since the two factors play the largest role in determining one’s income.\(^{44}\) She again notes the dominance of the white male in earning income in Brazil, stating, “White women enjoy a privileged position in relation to black men, and Afro Brazilian women are on the lowest rung of the income and employment ladder. White men earn over three times more than black women earn. Black women in turn earn less than half of what white women do.”\(^{45}\)

\(^{42}\) Ibid., 200.
\(^{43}\) Ibid., 199-200.
\(^{44}\) Larkin Nascimento 46.
\(^{45}\) Ibid.
Gender plays a large role as a determinant of the types of jobs that women, especially those of color and those from the favelas, can access. In Brazil, most domestic workers in middle and upper class areas of Rio de Janeiro are women, and large numbers of them are Afro Brazilian women who live in the favelas on the surrounding hillsides. Domestic work and freelance domestic services are among the few jobs open to these women, in no small part due to the fact that many advertised jobs require *boa aparência*, or good appearance, a phrase meant to discourage poor or individuals of color from applying. Women domestic workers once again find themselves in a subordinate position to wealthier and “whiter” Brazilians. Goldstein notes that this serves to reinforce the idea that many impoverished Brazilian women have of themselves as “inferior.” Furthermore, the extremely low wages and lack of job benefits in this field of work contribute to the ongoing feminization of poverty, particularly among black women who have higher unemployment rates and earn less than any other demographic category in Brazil. Nevertheless, many Brazilian women take these jobs since domestic work is one of the few fields accessible to them, and the demand for domestic workers is very high. Being able to hire domestic help is considered both a necessity as well as “a defining feature of middle-class life,” a status symbol that demonstrates that a family has made it into the middle class and is able to consistently consume at that level. Goldstein, noting the middle class’ paranoia of slipping back into the ranks of the impoverished, speculates regarding domestic help that, “Because this is a defining feature of middle-class life, I suspect it will be the last luxury to be forfeited in times of economic stress.”

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46 Goldstein 60.
47 Ibid., 69.
48 Larkin Nascimento 47.
49 Goldstein 67.
50 Ibid.
Goldstein’s work follows the life of an Afro Brazilian woman named Glória who lived in a Rio de Janeiro favela and worked as a domestic worker. Goldstein demonstrates that, for domestic workers, relationships between employer and employee are often complicated, ambiguous, and unequal. Glória had pleasant relationships with each of her employers, particularly one who was generally more progressive and paid her a living wage. Goldstein notes that many of Glória’s employers would lend her money or drive her somewhere when she needed it; nevertheless, Glória was never able to negotiate for higher wages than those offered by her employers, and all of the relationships could be described as paternalistic in nature.\(^5\)

Whereas sex discrimination negatively impacts women’s ability to earn income in Brazil, it also has a negative impact on the ability of young men living in the favelas to navigate the city and to stay alive. Young men from favelas, especially those of color, are victims of widespread discrimination. They are frequently associated with criminal gangs that operate in the favelas based almost entirely on their appearance, with one out of five young men in a survey conducted in the Complexo da Maré favela in Rio de Janeiro noting that the police discriminate against them “pelo modo como se vestem,” or because of their way of dress.\(^5\) Furthermore, young men in favelas are significantly more likely to become victims of violence, either from the gangs themselves or from military and police reactions to violence, a problem that will be covered in greater detail in the next chapter on urban violence and state responses. A United Nations report from 2008 noted that homicide rates for young men in Brazil between the ages of fifteen and thirty are equivalent to those experienced by young men in warzones in the former Yugoslavia and Iraq after the 2003 United States occupation, with Afro Brazilian and moreno men having

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\(^{51}\) Ibid., 61-66.  
“two to three times the probability of dying as white men in the same age range.” Indeed, the risk of being killed by a firearm for a young man in Rio de Janeiro is twenty-four times higher than for a young woman, leaving Brazil with “nearly 200,000 fewer men than women in the age range 15-29.”

Young men face pressure from two distinct arenas regarding how they should properly play their gender role. On the one hand, the prevailing concept of hegemonic masculinity in the favelas emphasizes power, wealth, and violence and puts pressure on young men to become gang members in order to acquire status and material wealth in an area of the city that offers few other opportunities to impoverished young men. Goldstein observes:

There are very few high-status males of black or mixed-race heritage who have risen out of the lowest classes – very few success stories other than soccer players and musicians…. Because members of this generation have so little hope of social mobility in mainstream culture, the gang leaders often become their folk heroes and more realistic role models.

On the other hand, for the vast majority of young men in favelas who choose not to participate in gangs, there is pressure to avoid becoming a victim of violence either when transiting the favela in which they live or when descending from the morro to the asfalto, either for pleasure or work.

Goldstein relates the story of Félix, the son of Glória mentioned earlier in this chapter. Glória had attempted to get an identity card, or carteira de identidade, for Félix, believing that it was a necessity in the event that the police were to stop him. Goldstein notes that Félix:

had always been a bit sloppy with his dress, and also tall and very thin; most important, he was very dark-skinned, a characteristic that made him particularly vulnerable…. Félix had the look – from the perspective of the police (and therefore to some extent the middle and upper classes) – of a young malandro (scoundrel, thief), someone who might be up to no good.

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53 Moreira Alves and Evanson 31.
55 Goldstein 99.
56 Ibid., 168.
By obtaining the identity card, Glória hoped that, should he be detained by the police, they would be able to determine quickly that he was uninvolved with crime and release him. Similarly, Gary Barker points out the example of a young man from a favela in Brasília who told him, “We don’t have the clothes that make us look [middle class]… We change the way we dress when we go into town [to be more formal].”\(^57\) Just as Félix sought an identity card to prove that he was not a gang member, some young men believe that changing their clothing when visiting other areas of the city, particularly the world of the asfalto, causes them to attract less attention and face less discrimination from middle and upper class Brazilians. This also has a protective effect in that it signals to the authorities and other Brazilians that the youth are well behaved and not out to cause trouble.\(^58\) These two examples demonstrate that young men from favelas, cognizant of the way in which society views them as a threat, actively take steps to minimize the discrimination and prejudice that they face on a regular basis and to decrease their chances of becoming victims of state and societal violence.

The Criminalization of Poverty and Active Exclusion of Favela Residents

From 1968-1969, sociologist Janice E. Perlman lived in three distinct favelas in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and carried out a survey with 250 residents in each favela on the impact of the urban experience on recent migrants from rural areas of Brazil to the city of Rio de Janeiro. She summarized and analyzed her observations in great detail in *The Myth of Marginality* published in 1976. At that time, Brazil, along with many other areas of Latin America, was experiencing a large wave of migration from rural areas and becoming increasingly urbanized. Perlman notes that approximately one out of five Brazilians moved from rural to urban environments during the

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\(^58\) Ibid.
Due to a widespread housing shortage in Rio de Janeiro at that time, many new arrivals set up squatter settlements that they built into the mountains surrounding the city, which Perlman views as an improvised solution to the market’s failure to meet housing demand in formalized areas of the city.\textsuperscript{60} In \textit{The Myth of Marginality}, Perlman begins by analyzing common beliefs and prejudices about individuals living in favelas. For example, she notes that one can see the favelas as a pathological agglomeration, in which squalor and broken families are characteristic of the settlements; as a community striving for elevation, in which the favela is inhabited by hardworking industrious people who could further develop their area of the city if only given an opportunity; or as inevitable blight, which, as an area of the city, is undesirable but unavoidable.\textsuperscript{61} Perlman also discusses the negative connotation of the word “marginal,” particularly in the Portuguese language, in which \textit{um marginal} is “a shiftless, dangerous ne’er-do-well, usually associated with the underworld of crime, violence, drugs, and prostitution,” and the opinions of the urban elite who saw the favela communities as urban blight filled with dangerous people.\textsuperscript{62} These beliefs about marginality and the types of people living in favelas translated into repressive public policies, particularly in respect to housing and infrastructure, which compounded the already difficult situation in which many favela residents found themselves and ended up transforming communities that were peripheral in a geographic sense into communities that were actively excluded.\textsuperscript{63}

Through her research, Perlman attempted to change the perception of favelas as areas of urban blight. She points out that, “Houses are built with a keen eye to comfort and efficiency… Much care is evident in… the neat cleanliness of each room…. Most men and women rise early

\textsuperscript{59} Janice E. Perlman, \textit{The Myth of Marginality} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 5.
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid., 7.
\textsuperscript{61} Ibid., 14-17.
\textsuperscript{62} Ibid, 91-92.
\textsuperscript{63} Ibid., 92.
and work hard all day…. There is a remarkable degree of social cohesion and mutual trust and a complex internal social organization, involving numerous clubs and voluntary associations.”

Furthermore, she argued that the marginalization and isolation of favelas was only a myth, as they were actively integrated into the life of Rio de Janeiro, even if asymmetrically. Favela residents frequented many areas of Rio de Janeiro, either for work or pleasure. Additionally, due to the lack of infrastructure in the favelas, residents ventured into downtown areas of the city to seek medical care, education, and other services that were not available closer to home. Indeed, Rio de Janeiro was (and still is) dependent on the steady supply of labor that came into the city each morning from the favelas to take the low wage jobs that others in the wealthier neighborhoods of the city were unwilling to do.

From 1999-2008, Perlman went back to the three favelas in which she had performed her 1968-1969 research to conduct interviews with some of the same subjects of her original study and to compare life in the favelas today with conditions close to forty years ago. Her conclusions are the subject of *Favela: Four Decades of Living on the Edge in Rio de Janeiro*, which was published in 2010. Perlman ultimately concluded that, whereas the term “marginal” had once been a myth or, at the least, a misnomer, it has since become a reality. Today policies actively seek to exclude favela residents from participation in the life of the city, and increasing levels of violence prevent residents of all neighborhoods of Rio de Janeiro, including the favelas, from interacting. Favela residents thus find themselves unable to leave their neighborhoods or even travel across them during police operations or battles between rival drug trafficking organizations, and middle and upper class Brazilians express their unwillingness to enter these neighborhoods and to socialize in areas frequented by favela residents.

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64 Ibid., 13.
65 Ibid., 137.
While Rio de Janeiro is one of the most violent cities in the world as measured by homicide rates, many favelas have only become dangerous since organized criminal networks moved in and took control in the mid-1980s. Rather than actively addressing the criminal networks, the violence serves as justification for the continued marginalization of the favelas by the Brazilian authorities and elite. Furthermore, beliefs about violence in the favelas have contributed to the division of public spaces and stigmatization of favela residents in three main ways. First, the Brazilian mass media thrives on sensational stories of violence and crime statistics. Recent headlines in Folha de São Paulo, one of Brazil’s leading newspapers, read “Assaltos em série assustam turistas de Santa Teresa, no Rio” (Serial Assaults in Santa Teresa, Rio de Janeiro, scare tourists) and in the national media conglomerate Rede Globo, “Reforço na segurança na Barra” (Security Reinforced in Barra, one of the wealthiest neighborhoods in Rio de Janeiro).66 Both of these articles report on violence affecting tourists and the elite of Rio de Janeiro, reflecting the Brazilian upper class’ belief that they are under attack and the true victims of violence. The media networks also tend to pay more attention to crimes committed against middle or upper class Brazilians or in the nicest areas of Rio de Janeiro and ignore those occurring everyday in the favelas.67 Perlman observes that the media networks kindle “public sentiment against the bandidos (criminals) who are often conflated with law-abiding, hard-working favela residents.”68 This leads to the increased exclusion of favela residents from public spaces in Rio de Janeiro, as “no one wants to let favelados (favela residents) into their home or

67 Skidmore 191.
shop or office – it’s ‘just too dangerous.’” Consequently, media coverage contributes to the ongoing criminalization of the poor and makes it even more difficult for favela residents to seek jobs in areas of the formal city, to be present in public spaces, and to participate as full citizens in the life of the city without triggering fear and suspicion by other Rio de Janeiro residents.

Second, as the city and the urban elite look for ways to prevent violence from escalating – and particularly to contain the violence from drug trafficking organizations based in the favelas and to prevent it from affecting wealthier neighborhoods and tourist sites – the isolation of favelas and marginalization of favela residents has become the solution after repeated attempts to physically remove them failed during the years of the dictatorship. Indeed, in 2009, the Rio de Janeiro city government actually implemented a containment policy by constructing reinforced concrete walls around certain favelas – ostensibly to prevent the favelas from growing any bigger and to protect the environment, but in reality creating a geographical separation between the favelas and the rest of the city, and hiding them from the view of World Cup and Olympic event sites. While the construction of walls around favelas is the most visible and drastic example of efforts to divide the city and contain the favelas, public policies and investment in infrastructure in general have tended to neglect the favela communities and favored areas of town in which middle and upper class Brazilians live, work, and visit, further contributing to the segregation of spaces and classes. Professors of Development Studies Dirk Kruijt and Kees Koonings note that “urban segregation refers not only to the geographical distribution of poverty but also to the territorial and social division of cities in ‘go’ and ‘no-go’ areas, from the perspective of the local public administration, even the police. The slums and shanty towns come to be seen as genuine

69 Ibid.
70 Perlman, Favela: Four Decades of Living on the Edge in Rio de Janeiro, 28.
enclaves that obey a different set of rules and codes of conduct.”71 Indeed, geography is not the only boundary that delimits the areas in which it is acceptable for favela residents to be present. Distinct social norms in the formal and informal areas of the city also constitute boundaries impeding the movement of favela residents.

In her book *Laughter Out of Place: Race, Class, Violence, and Sexuality in a Rio Shantytown*, Donna M. Goldstein provides a concrete example of the division of spaces and development of distinct rules and codes of conduct in Rio de Janeiro. In Goldstein’s example, a female employer of a domestic worker gave the domestic worker and her new husband a night at a fancy hotel as a wedding present. She soon realized, however, that the hotel was simply impossible for the domestic worker to access, since the newlyweds had no car and it would not be socially acceptable to arrive at this hotel by bus. The employer ultimately ended up driving them to the hotel, and checking them in since they felt so out of place and uncomfortable in that setting. According to Goldstein, the employer declared, “What they were lacking was the knowledge to have the power to know that this is the place where you belong.” Thus, not only do physical barriers and gaps in infrastructure impede the integration of favela residents in the life of the city, but psychological barriers and societal norms about who should be seen in which places also limit the full exercise of their rights as citizens. Goldstein then notes:

> There is… much greater discussion about how public space for the wealthy is becoming more limited because of crime; the outrage is about their own class privileges being eclipsed rather than about the perversity of class differences. The middle and upper classes seem to have become obsessed with crime and the shrinking of public space, yet…, it is the working classes that in distinct ways continue to be barred from important dimensions of public life.72


72 Goldstein 92.
Favela residents therefore find themselves geographically separated from the city by concrete walls or poor infrastructure and prevented from gaining admittance to certain spaces due to the urban elite’s beliefs about the threat that they allegedly pose for society. This exclusion has a detrimental effect on their ability to access public services and employment opportunities and hinders their efforts to move out of poverty and join Brazil’s growing middle class.

Lastly, perceptions of danger in the favelas as espoused by media networks and by middle and upper class Rio de Janeiro residents have led to increased efforts by the state to “pacify” the favelas, particularly in the run up to the 2014 World Cup and 2016 Summer Olympic Games, and to decrease the control that drug trafficking organizations exercise over the favelas. However, these programs, which are explored in more depth in Chapter Two, result in the increased militarization of urban spaces and criminalization of the poor. Less than one percent of favela residents are believed to belong to a criminal organization or to be involved in other forms of violent crime. Yet, despite the fact that there is enormous variation amongst the favelas in terms of the people that inhabit them and crime rates, the popular belief is that the favelas are dangerous places filled with drug traffickers and their supporters who resist all attempts by the state to establish the rule of law. The perception of high levels of violence leads to a further division of spaces and changes in routine, in which wealthier Rio de Janeiro residents choose to limit themselves to certain areas of the city when they go out at night, to live in gated communities guarded by private security agencies, to purchase cars with bulletproof windows, and to resist from wearing or carrying expensive clothing, jewelry, or purses so that they can hand over cheaper “disposable” items if held up by criminals. Although these

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73 Moreira Alves and Evanson 5.
individuals are statistically less likely to become victims of crime, particularly the types of violent crime affecting favela residents everyday, the perception of increased violence and threats to the middle and upper class way of life leads the urban elite to advocate for repressive policies stigmatizing and isolating favela residents supposedly in the name of public security.

The stigmatization of favela residents has resulted in the development of what Cristovam Buarque, the former director of the Universidade de Brasília and governor of the Federal District, has called “social apartheid,” a de facto system of inequality and injustice based principally on social class.\textsuperscript{75} The overwhelming focus on inequality and social class, however, obscures other dimensions, such as race and gender as explored in this chapter, that are equally influential as causes of discrimination and marginalization of favela residents. These factors together result in what Amartya Sen refers to as “capability deprivation” – the “denial of the ability to use a person’s capability and capacity in pursuit of his or her own best interests” – which he regards as the true measure of poverty, in addition to indices of income.\textsuperscript{76} While this phenomenon certainly has large effects at the individual level, its effect at the national level is even more significant, as Brazil is unable (and perhaps even unwilling) to take advantage of a large part of its population’s skills and capabilities, to increase the standard of living within its borders, and to further develop its political and economic power at the international level.\textsuperscript{77} Therefore, as Brazil strives to increase its strength and influence abroad, it should simultaneously take steps to confront its problems with inequality, racism, and gender discrimination at home in order for more of its population to benefit from its increased wealth and to participate in the life of the nation as full citizens.

\textsuperscript{75} Goldstein 57.
\textsuperscript{76} Perlman, \textit{Favela: Four Decades of Living on the Edge in Rio de Janeiro}, 156.
\textsuperscript{77} Ibid., 8.
Chapter Two
Urban Violence in Rio de Janeiro

Rio de Janeiro’s reputation for high levels of urban violence and crime is well known and, some would argue, well deserved. This chapter begins by looking at statistics and causes of violence in Brazil and particularly in Rio de Janeiro. I discuss the meaning of the word “violence,” taking a wide approach to defining the term in order to include violence in both the public and private spheres, and then move to examine the impact of violence on individuals living in the favelas and on favela communities themselves. Next, I provide background information on the primary non-state actors involved in violent criminal activities in the favelas and other areas of Rio de Janeiro and the state’s response to these actors and organizations. Finally, the chapter looks at two alternative responses of the state to violence in public and private spaces – women’s police stations and Police Pacifying Units.

Statistics, Causes and Consequences of Urban Violence

Rio de Janeiro has experienced high levels of crime since its repressive military dictatorship gradually lost power during the early 1980s and, in 1985, ultimately stepped down. Although the end of the dictatorship meant increased levels of freedom and opportunities for many Brazilians and the growth of new civil society movements – including in the favelas – it also represents the moment in which the state lost its monopoly on violence, giving drug trafficking organizations the opportunity to exploit a power vacuum in the favelas and to seize effective control of many of these neighborhoods.

During the two and a half decades encompassing the end of the dictatorship and restoration of democracy, the total number of homicides per year increased significantly in Brazil

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78 Skidmore 189.
from 13,910 in 1980 to 48,374 in 2005, and the homicide rate per 100,000 people also more than doubled during that same time period from 11.43 to 25.99.\textsuperscript{79} Today homicide rates for the state of Rio de Janeiro, which includes the city itself, are amongst the highest in the nation. In the year 2009, the state of Rio de Janeiro ranked third in terms of homicides, first in the number of homicides by firearms, and first in homicide rates for youth between the ages of 15 and 24.\textsuperscript{80} Sociologist Robert Gay attributes the increase in the total homicide rate mostly to the extremely high youth homicide levels, which as noted in Chapter 1 tend to affect young Afro Brazilian males more than any other demographic group.\textsuperscript{81} More recently, according to the latest data on the webpage for the Ministério da Saúde (the national health department), in the state and metropolitan area of Rio de Janeiro in 2010, 1,744 men died as a result of homicide compared to 117 women, clearly illustrating a wide gender gap in homicide as a cause of death. The majority of men who died as a result of homicide were between the ages of 15 and 39, corresponding with the figures provided by Gay.\textsuperscript{82} However, one should consider questionable reporting practices, discrepancies between Ministry of Health and law enforcement agencies’ data on homicides, and an official definition of the term “homicide” that only includes the deaths of individuals who die immediately from an act of violence, not individuals who die some time later as a result of the same action. The data also excludes those killed while “resisting arrest” – a euphemism for police violence – as well as forced disappearances by state or non-state actors, and individuals whose bodies or skeletons are discovered months or years after their deaths.\textsuperscript{83} While one should not assume that all disappeared individuals are dead, Moreira Alves and Evanson point out that,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{80} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{81} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{83} Moreira Alves and Evanson 115.
\end{itemize}
“areas with high numbers of disappeared people also have high homicide rates, which gives cause to suspect the worst.” Thus, the actual number of homicides in Rio de Janeiro may be much higher than the figures reported by official sources.

Recent research on urban violence in Rio de Janeiro has tended to focus on statistics and the causes of such violence. According to sociologist Janice Perlman, there are ten “essential ingredients” that constitute the feijoada – or stew – that has simmered since the end of the dictatorship and gradually combined to create the volatile environment that exists in many favelas today. These ten items are: (1) stigmatization of territories that are excluded from state protection, (2) extreme inequality, poverty, and lack of job opportunities, (3) the high price of cocaine (and, to a lesser extent, marijuana and synthetic drugs) and allure of easy money and wealth, (4) well-organized drug trafficking organizations that compete for territorial control, (5) the availability of sophisticated firearms and other weapons, (6) underpaid, understaffed, and unaccountable police forces, (7) government indifference, (8) the growth of militias and extortion, (9) the lack of power held by Brazil’s poor, and (10) sensationalist mass media. I would also add racism to the list of ingredients as well. Although racism may be included under item numbers one, two, and nine, it is not explicitly stated as a cause of violence, despite the fact that young Afro Brazilian men are disproportionately the target of repressive police action and of marginalization by hostile Rio de Janeiro citizens. Since racism is one of the underlying factors leading to inequality, poverty, and marginalization, there is reason to evaluate it separately as a factor.

It is also necessary to determine exactly what is meant by “violence.” While the beginning of this chapter focused on high homicide rates, in recent years, Rio de Janeiro has also

84 Ibid.
experienced elevated rates of burglaries and robberies, carjackings, assaults (including against tourists), kidnapings, attacks by armed groups against government installations, and hostage taking on buses and in other public arenas. Indeed, it is the high level of violence in public spaces and its association with the lives of impoverished young men that has attracted so much attention in the media and by state authorities, to the overwhelming exclusion of the effect of urban violence on women, as well as violence in the private sphere. According to Polly Wilding, a professor of Gender and International Development at the University of Leeds, “The predominance of male actors as both perpetrators and victims of urban violence has meant that studies and analysis have only recently begun to acknowledge women’s experiences of the phenomenon.” This includes women’s participation in criminal organizations, their support of these armed groups, and their experiences of police violence. Nevertheless, while Wilding claims that women’s experience of violence in Brazilian favelas has been left out of much of the literature on this subject, sociologist Cecília MacDowell Santos instead argues that it has been included but that:

the hegemonic feminist discourse on violence is contradictory because it defines ‘gender violence’ (for example, conjugal violence and sexual harassment) as the privileged forms of violence against women, therefore silencing other forms of violence against women that are defined not only on the basis of gender, but also social class, race, and sexual orientation.

MacDowell Santos’ concerns reflect a wider debate in the community of gender scholars on whether to take a race, class, or sexuality perspective to broaden the definition of violence as experienced by women. Furthermore, since so few favela residents are actually members of a

86 Gay 30.
88 Ibid., 4.
90 Ibid., 84.
violent criminal organization or are involved in drug trafficking in some way, it is necessary to distinguish between the attention-grabbing, extraordinarily violent actions that catch the media’s attention and frighten the Brazilian elite, and the less noticeable violations of rights that men and women living in the favelas experience on a daily basis due to factors such as race, sexual orientation, and class. Along those lines, a 2005 World Bank study on the urban poor in Latin America broke down the phenomenon of urban violence into four categories – political, institutional, economic, and social – and two hybrid categories of economic-institutional and economic-social. While the types of violent crime often associated with Brazilian favelas and portrayed by mainstream media and much of the literature on urban violence are included in the categories of political and economic violence, the category of social violence instead consists of “gratuitous and routine daily violence,” as manifested through a “lack of citizenship” in public spaces, as well as the more private phenomenon of domestic violence between adults. This categorization, therefore, may represent a more comprehensive and inclusive attempt to define all of the different types of violence that both male and female individuals living in urban environments may face on a regular basis without overemphasizing some forms and neglecting others.

This classification also takes into consideration the fact that urban violence affects Rio de Janeiro residents in distinct ways depending on their socioeconomic profiles. As noted in the last chapter, for Rio de Janeiro’s elite, the fear of urban violence limits their ability to socialize outside of certain designated “protected” zones, such as shopping malls or restaurant districts patrolled by private security or law enforcement authorities. However, urban violence,

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92 Gay 30.
particularly that provoked by armed criminal groups, has a much more detrimental impact on individual favela residents’ lives and on community cohesion in the favelas. First, it can trap favela residents into taking sides with either the police or the local drug trafficking gang, despite many residents’ overwhelmingly negative opinions of both. In fact, the one issue around which there tends to be widespread agreement in the favelas is the dislike and distrust of the police.\textsuperscript{93} Residents are therefore left with no one to turn to in case of an emergency, which perpetuates a general feeling of distrust, and a loss of freedom of expression. Second, the stress from high levels of urban violence has a negative impact on favela residents’ mental and physical health. Janice Perlman notes that this is particularly acute for the women that she interviewed as part of her second investigation conducted in Rio de Janeiro favelas in the early 2000s. Many of these women told Perlman that the loss of privacy suffered during police raids and consequent property damage was particularly traumatizing and anxiety-inducing.\textsuperscript{94} Third, urban violence negatively affects favela communities as a whole, as indicated by a general decline in social cohesion, participation in community organizations, and inability to partake in leisure activities with other members of one’s neighborhood.\textsuperscript{95} Said one resident of the Caxias favela, “Since 2000, when they renovated the praça [town square], it’s never been used. It is the only open space we have here and – just take a look, it is always empty – the one place our kids could play basketball and our elderly could sit under a shade tree, and it is deserted. Everyone is afraid.”\textsuperscript{96} Perlman found that, other than soccer and bailes funk (funk balls, sometimes thrown by drug traffickers), there are few leisure activities for favela residents, particularly women. Many women in the favelas report church attendance as their only leisure activity, a phenomenon that

\textsuperscript{93} Goldstein 203.  
\textsuperscript{94} Perlman, \textit{Favela: Four Decades of Living on the Edge in Rio de Janeiro}, 189-190.  
\textsuperscript{95} Ibid., 192.  
\textsuperscript{96} Ibid., 192-193.
may reflect not just the security situation in the favelas, but also the lack of free time faced by working class women.\textsuperscript{97} Moreover, whereas Perlman’s initial study in several Rio de Janeiro favelas in 1969 revealed a high degree of social cohesion and participation in local Residents’ Associations, today the power of the Residents’ Associations has declined significantly due to the prevailing sense of fear. According to Perlman, by the time of her second study, most of the recently elected Residents’ Association presidents had either been forced to resign or had been assassinated, and almost all of them were under the control of criminal gangs.\textsuperscript{98} This results in a loss of voice for favela residents through collective organization at the citywide level, further marginalizing them and making it more difficult for them to express their opinions before decision-makers about policies that impact their lives.

\textbf{Principal Non-State Armed Actors: Drug Trafficking Organizations}

Rio de Janeiro is home to a number of armed drug trafficking organizations, widely referred to as \textit{traficantes}, and self-defense militias, or \textit{milícias}, which will be covered briefly in the next section. The three principal drug trafficking organizations that fight to control territory in Rio de Janeiro are the \textit{Comando Vermelho} (Red Command), and its rival offshoots the \textit{Terceiro Comando} (Third Command) and the smaller and less powerful \textit{Amigos dos Amigos} (Friends of Friends). All three organizations principally derive their income from bulk drug trafficking; however, they also engage in petty street crime and the provision of irregular taxi services and cooking gas canister delivery to maintain an income stream when trafficking levels are low.\textsuperscript{99} The organizations at times orchestrate large scale criminal acts in order to

\textsuperscript{97} Ibid., 104.
\textsuperscript{98} Ibid., 193.
demonstrate their power and control over certain areas of Rio de Janeiro and over the
government itself. One such incident happened in 2006, during which the Comando Vermelho
brought Rio de Janeiro to a halt as it attacked the police and public transportation networks, shot
at cars randomly and set them on fire, and killed nineteen individuals with no clear motive.100
The gangs represent a real threat to the Brazilian Government’s ability to maintain order in Rio
de Janeiro, especially since the Comando Vermelho in particular is better organized and funded
than Brazilian law enforcement authorities and has more advanced weaponry, including
antiaircraft weapons.101

The three drug trafficking organizations that maintain control over large swaths of Rio de
Janeiro began in the 1960s and 1970s. From 1969-1975, the Brazilian military implemented a
policy in which it incarcerated common criminals on Ilha Grande, an island close to Rio de
Janeiro, with individuals who had opposed the military dictatorship and sought political change
in Brazil through revolution.102 These political prisoners educated the common criminals on how
to unite to form an organization and techniques of urban guerrilla warfare, which resulted in the
birth of the Comando Vermelho as a prison gang.103 The Comando Vermelho eventually rose to
power over much of the Brazilian prison system and financed itself through kidnappings and the
arms trade with the assistance of Comando Vermelho members who had escaped or been
released from prison. It did not, however, enter into drug trafficking until 1982, due to the
relative lack of importance of drug trafficking as a source of revenue until the early 1980s.104

100 Bryan McCann, Criminal Networks in Urban Brazil,” *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs* 8, no. 2
102 Gay 33.
103 Ibid.
104 Ibid.
Drug trafficking became a problem in Brazil in the early 1980s due to several factors. First, Polly Wilding and Alba Zaluar note that Brazil transitioned into a democracy during an economic crisis and period of hyperinflation, resulting in “subsequent problems [that] included the illusion of easy money for those who could manipulate the system, while salaried work became devalued and a source of insecurity, rather than security, leading to a rise in the black market and alternative economy.”¹⁰⁵ Second, the once repressive national government that had been able to maintain its monopoly on force lost some of its ability to control its population and their activities as Brazil democratized. Finally, rising demand for cocaine in the United States resulted in Brazil becoming a transit stop for arms and narcotics trafficking from Colombia and Bolivia, as well as an attractive destination itself as domestic demand for drugs soared.¹⁰⁶

Moreover, the Comando Vermelho was able to establish itself quickly in Rio de Janeiro’s favelas because many of its original members were from these neighborhoods and knew how to gain the approval of the local population. It began providing some basic social services to favela residents on an ad hoc basis to win their support and to recruit new members into its ranks. As it became prevalent in the favelas, eventually many favela residents either openly supported or tolerated it as a stable presence, even if they still viewed it largely as a threat to the community’s security.¹⁰⁷ As Goldstein discovered about life in the Felicidade Eterna favela where she did her research, “Having a local gang that was led by a reasonable person was key to the stability and safety that residents of Felicidade Eterna experienced at that time. Later, when the boss was killed and younger, less reasonable men took over, there was less predictability and stability.”¹⁰⁸ Nevertheless, despite the open existence of drug trafficking gangs, many favela residents today

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¹⁰⁵ Wilding 7.
¹⁰⁶ Ibid.
¹⁰⁷ Goldstein 176-177.
¹⁰⁸ Ibid.
are ambivalent about increased state presence in their neighborhoods, as the state historically has shown a lack of interest in these areas except to repress certain behaviors or groups or to physically remove the favelas themselves. According to Goldstein, “From the perspective of residents… the prospect of being turned to the state [after a police operation to expel drug trafficking organizations and to re-establish the state’s authority in the favelas] is not necessarily any more attractive than remaining under the control of the gangs.”\textsuperscript{109} Indeed, the gangs may be more popular in the eyes of some favela residents due to the presence of popular community members in these organizations, and their ability to provide access to housing and cash services, as well as employment.\textsuperscript{110} The gangs also act as a “parallel state” and play important “law enforcement” style functions by providing a form of internal security for favela residents, by keeping out other drug trafficking organizations and maintaining a monopoly on violence and the drug trade in the area, and by judging and punishing individuals who steal or commit other offenses against favela residents. Sentences handed out by gang members can range from beatings to execution for major offenses, such as rape.\textsuperscript{111}

It is important to emphasize again that only one percent of favela residents are involved in some way with drug trafficking organizations, and the degree of involvement or support that favela residents manifest for them varies, particularly by gender and age.\textsuperscript{112} While most of the literature on urban violence in the favelas has focused on the role of young men in gangs, women and children are also involved in these groups. It is estimated that ten percent of all gang members in Rio de Janeiro are women, who are specifically chosen to fulfill certain roles within these organizations due to the belief that they are less likely to be suspected of drug trafficking or

\textsuperscript{109} Ibid., 181.  
\textsuperscript{110} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{111} Ibid., 208-209, 264.  
\textsuperscript{112} Moreira Alves and Evanson 5.
targeted for arrest. Women often act as messengers, delivering everything from guns to drugs to money, and some are involved in drug trafficking gangs through their connections or relationships with traffickers, either as spouses or partners.\textsuperscript{113} Many favela residents claim that women are less likely than men to be stopped and searched by the police, a claim that was empirically confirmed in 2004 through data showing that men make up 73 percent of individuals who are stopped by the police in Brazil.\textsuperscript{114} Brazilian drug trafficking gangs have also been known to hire children to take part in their operations. A 2006 study of favelas in Rio de Janeiro determined that drug trafficking organizations were the largest employer of children and youth in the city.\textsuperscript{115} Children play minor roles in the gangs, for example, by flying kites in order to let drug traffickers know that a drug shipment has arrived or to alert them of police presence in the favela.\textsuperscript{116} They are also recruited by drug gangs to perform less savory tasks since if caught they will receive lesser sentences than adults.\textsuperscript{117} Therefore, while women and children living in the favelas play a proportionately small role in the activities of drug trafficking gangs, it is important to remember that they are in some cases active members of these organizations and not just the victims of gang violence.

\textbf{Principal Non-State Armed Actors: Militias}

The phenomenon of militia or self-defense groups is relatively new, and I will not spend much time here dedicated to this issue as they play a smaller (albeit growing) role in overall levels of urban violence in Rio de Janeiro. The militias are widely believed to be composed of off duty police and firefighters, who allegedly organized sometime in or around the year 2002 to

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{113} Wilding 33, 56.
\item \textsuperscript{114} Ibid., 33.
\item \textsuperscript{115} Gay 46.
\item \textsuperscript{116} Perlman, \textit{Favela: Four Decades of Living on the Edge in Rio de Janeiro}, 177.
\item \textsuperscript{117} Goldstein 148.
\end{itemize}
defend certain areas of Rio de Janeiro from drug trafficking organizations like the Comando Vermelho. They have since evolved into criminal organizations themselves who fight the drug trafficking gangs for control of territory across the city to further their own drug and arms trafficking activities and who participate in extortion and other forms of racketeering. The militias are primarily economically motivated, but also work to impose a sense of rule of law in the favelas at the cost, however, of even higher levels of intimidation and other forms of violence. Many militias also have ties to local politicians and are capable of buying and winning votes for political candidates. Since they are present in about 200 out of approximately 600 to 800 of Rio de Janeiro’s favelas and earn around $140 million per year through their criminal activities, the militias have significant power to influence state and local politics, particularly in ways favorable to their existence and detrimental to the control of drug trafficking organizations.

**State Response to Urban Violence**

The public security sector in Rio de Janeiro is principally composed of four state institutions—the military, the Federal Police, the Civil Police, and the Military Police (which, despite its name, is no longer part of the military). The Federal Police are responsible for securing the country’s borders and investigating major federal crimes, such as drug trafficking and money laundering. Both the Military and Civil Police, on the other hand, answer to the state governor. The Military Police is in charge of detaining suspects and turning them over to the Civil Police for further investigation. The Military Police also manages an elite unit, the

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119 Moreira Alves and Evanson 20.
121 Ibid.
*Batalhão de Operações Especiais* (known by the acronym BOPE), which responds to especially complex and violent situations and which has been implicated in many incidents of police brutality.\(^{122}\) According to testimony provided by one mother from the Complexo do Alemão favela to Maria Helena Moreira Alves, “… when the BOPE comes, it comes to kill. The military police don’t. When they come we have almost no deaths. They arrest people, they seize drugs, they exchange gunfire, and they leave. The BOPE comes to kill.”\(^{123}\) Rio de Janeiro also has a municipal police force and numerous private security companies that have been granted authority to maintain order throughout specific areas of the city.

Brazilians from all social classes, races, and genders view the police collectively as more of a problem than a solution to the high levels of crime in many Brazilian cities. First, the police are responsible for a high number of civilian deaths both during police operations and during periods of calm. Perlman notes that during 2006 to 2007, police forces in the city of Rio de Janeiro alone killed 1,330 people (out of a population of around 6 million), versus the 347 people killed by police forces in the entire United States (population approximately 316 million) during that same period.\(^{124}\) The Brazilian Military Police in particular have acquired the reputation for being perhaps the most lethal force in the world.\(^{125}\) Until the late 1990s, Military Police could earn awards, including promotions and pay raises, for “acts of ‘special merit’ and ‘bravery,’ which, in essence, meant killing urban youth.”\(^{126}\) Furthermore, many of these deaths are never fully investigated, as police simply claim that they occurred during a shootout or as an individual

\(^{122}\) Perlman, “Megacity’s Violence and Its Consequences in Rio de Janeiro,” 54.
\(^{123}\) Moreira Alves and Evanson 63-64.
\(^{124}\) Perlman, “Megacity’s Violence and Its Consequences in Rio de Janeiro,” 55.
\(^{126}\) Gay 36.
resisted arrest (reported by officials as “autos de resistência” or acts of resistance). Although the number of police killings in Rio de Janeiro declined from 1,330 in 2007 to 855 in 2010, and the number of police deaths also declined from 32 to 20 during that period, the ratio of police killings to police killed was practically the same, from 42:1 in 2007 to 43:1 in 2010. These figures remain unchanged even in the presence of new police pacification programs that began in 2008 and will be discussed later in this chapter.

Second, the police are poorly paid, equipped, and trained, and were once even encouraged to murder suspects or commit other abuses by the possibility of receiving bonuses or other rewards for acts of “special merit” or “bravery,” as discussed above and documented by Human Rights Watch. Police in Rio de Janeiro earn around US $5,250-6000 per year, barely enough to pay for basic necessities in one of the most expensive cities in the world. Many of them originate from the favelas and join the police services as a way to move up in society and to have access to power, often for the first time in their lives. Perlman claims that, as a result, some police end up abusing that power once they have a gun and commit regular violations of the law and human rights, knowing that it is highly unlikely they will be sanctioned. Police training itself does not adequately address human rights, criminal investigation, and other law enforcement procedures, as noted by a public security expert and researcher for the National Congress of Brazil, who noted that, “The [training] courses are poor and very brief. They do not even learn how to fire guns…. After six months, they are assigned to go out on the streets

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128 Ibid.
130 Perlman, Favela: Four Decades of Living on the Edge in Rio de Janeiro, 181.
131 Ibid.
without even knowing how to shoot. They have to learn how to fire on the streets, and many times they end up killing innocent people by mistake.” 132 Furthermore, when police training does include topics such as human rights and the proper use of firearms, newly trained police have remarked that, “We took some courses, but when we finished, our superior officers told us, ‘Ah, you did this course. This is only theory. Now it’s time to get real. Now you’re going to learn to be real police officers. The rest is only talk for the journalist.’” 133 Thus, even when the state requires police to complete courses in human rights, the attitude of high level police commanders demonstrates a lack of commitment to these standards. Finally, in order to get the equipment they need to protect their own lives and additional money to raise their income levels, many police make deals with local gangs to provide the gangs with information and protection in exchange for money. 134 Perlman notes that, “The police can earn a lot more and have much more effective weapons when they act in complicity with the drug traffic. Many police officers meet up with the bandidos to divide the spoils when their workday is over.” 135 Consequently, the combination of insufficient training, low salaries, aggressive attitudes among high level police commanders, and inadequate equipment results in police corruption, the protection of drug trafficking suspects, and high levels of violence against civilians.

The high levels of casualties and police abuses have led Brazilians to speculate as to the true intent of law enforcement authorities. In an interview with anthropologist Cristina Pedroza de Faria, Wanderley da Cunha, a community leader in the Parque de Acari favela, expressed:

As we see it, there is a clear public security policy of extermination, but it’s difficult to accuse the police of extermination as such, because they don’t kill many people at the same time – say, fifty people at once. The police kill five people in one place, fifteen in

132 Moreira Alves and Evanson 157.
133 Ibid., 157-158.
134 Gay 37-38.
135 Perlman 181.
another, twenty somewhere else, and so on. So it’s difficult to say, ‘Those cops are a group of genocidal exterminators.’  

While genocide is perhaps the most extreme of the theories attempting to provide a rationale for police behavior, it is widely believed by many in the favelas and other observers that the state’s actions are designed more to repress favela residents rather than to take down drug trafficking organizations, and that the Brazilian state uses the police as a tool to maintain social control over the lower classes.  

Hence, the criminalization of favela residents has resulted in high numbers of deaths of individuals uninvolved with drug trafficking and other crimes. For example, in an interview with Moreira Alves and human rights activist José Valentin Palacios, a favela resident pointed out, “The state considers all of us bandidos [criminals]. They don’t make any distinction…. People are hit by stray bullets and die and are viewed as bandidos. The other day, a barber was killed at work. They said he was a bandido. He wasn’t a bandido. He had been a resident here for more than thirty years.”  

The chance that an individual in Rio de Janeiro will experience police violence differs based on race, gender, and socioeconomic class with favela residents, even those such as the barber who had lived peacefully for decades in the favela, at greater risk of becoming a target of state violence. Furthermore, the fact that law enforcement authorities frequently disregard civilian lives when conducting operations to arrest drug traffickers may play a role in the disdain and distrust that favela residents feel towards them and make it even more difficult for residents to seek assistance from the police when necessary.  

Even so, popular support for high levels of police repression against alleged bandidos remains high amongst Brazilians of all social classes. Anthropologists James Holston and Teresa P.R. Caldeira note that “the population’s support for police violence indicates the existence not

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136 Moreira Alves and Evanson 103.
137 Goldstein 202.
138 Ibid., 39.
139 Perlman, “Megacity’s Violence and its Consequences in Rio de Janeiro,” 60, 64; and Goldstein 207.
only of an institutional dysfunction but also of a pervasive cultural pattern that associates order and authority with the use of violence and that, in turn, contributes to the delegitimation of the justice system and of the rule of law.”¹⁴⁰ While this may describe why the Brazilian elite would support police violence as a way to maintain law and order, it does not explain the moderate support for it amongst favela residents. Instead, some favela residents may support the existence of police forces in the favelas and use of force due to a simple lack of alternatives. Either one must accept the reign of drug trafficking organizations; take justice into one’s own hands; or tolerate the use of force by the police.¹⁴¹ Consequently, for favela residents who find the presence of drug traffickers in their communities to be distasteful, the only other option is to support a continued police presence and the violence that often accompanies it, or to remain ambivalent about the role of both in one’s neighborhood.

**Alternative State Responses: Women’s Police Stations**

However, in recent years, the Brazilian Government has developed some alternative law enforcement institutions that have had mixed success, including women’s police stations and Police Pacifying Units, which will be discussed in the next section. It is important to remember again that not all violence that favela residents face is due to the activities of drug trafficking organizations in the public sphere. Instead, for many favela residents, particularly women, violence manifests itself inside in the private sphere as domestic violence. In 1985 – the same year as the transition to democracy – feminist organizations and state authorities joined together to create the world’s first *Delegacia de Polícia de Defesa da Mulher* (Police Station in Defense of Women) in São Paulo, Brazil, with all-female police officers. The institution of women’s

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 199.
¹⁴¹ Ibid., 206.
police stations has since spread across Brazil, with the first one opening in Rio de Janeiro in 1986, and around the world. The original women’s police station resulted from the demands of feminists during the democratic transition process to include the rights of women in the development of new public policies and to criminalize violence against women under the law. Women’s police stations therefore were designed to respond to the same types of crimes as any other police station, but were further equipped with psychologists and social workers in order to make these spaces more accessible to women and less repressive than traditional police stations. They played an essential role during the transition to democracy by attempting to change the image of the police as a repressive, masculine arm of the state to one that is more “democratic” or “humane.”

The first women’s police station in São Paulo was an initial success in that high numbers of women were willing to use it to file complaints against their partners or others in domestic violence cases, and the station appeared to take these complaints more seriously than all other police stations. Nevertheless, not all women police officers were in favor of expanding their alliance with local feminist organizations, nor did they all agree on what constituted domestic violence or the appropriate response. Some female police officers even believed that conjugal violence was acceptable. For example, in an interview with a local newspaper, a female police clerk said “she could not accept the fact that a woman had complained about being forced by her husband to have sex with him. ‘He works and makes money, but she still thinks that she has no obligation as a woman.’” Furthermore, some women who utilized women’s police stations to

143 Ibid., 16.
144 Ibid., 29.
145 Ibid., 27.
146 Ibid., 38.
147 Ibid., 37.
report cases of domestic violence were not actually interested in pressing charges against the perpetrators. Instead, they expected that the threat of police action and their partner’s awareness of the filed complaint would serve as a deterrent to prevent future incidents of violence.¹⁴⁸ For individuals living below or close to the poverty line, services such as marriage counseling and mediation are unaffordable; therefore, these women turned to the women’s police station as an alternative dispute settlement mechanism for help in resolving conflicts in both the community and the home.¹⁴⁹

Despite the existence of women’s police stations in Rio de Janeiro, female favela residents facing situations of domestic violence in their homes are unlikely to report incidents to law enforcement authorities. First, in many favelas, residents are prohibited by drug trafficking gangs from speaking to the police or are unable to access police stations, including women’s police stations, because they are located in rival territory. As a result, women’s access to legal or support services, which was low to begin with in many favelas, declines even further.¹⁵⁰ Second, speaking with the police is even more impossible for women facing domestic violence from partners involved in drug trafficking gangs – a situation in which the male partner possesses even more control over his female partner than in perhaps any other case of domestic violence. Finally, women’s police stations are physically inaccessible for many favela residents. For example, the closest women’s police station for residents of the Complexo da Maré favela is in downtown Rio de Janeiro and would take an hour by bus and the necessary bus fare in order for women to access it.¹⁵¹ The head of a women’s police station in downtown Rio de Janeiro confirmed that few favela residents utilize its services, and that most of the women that come to

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 11.
¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 156.
¹⁵⁰ Wilding 4, 58-59, 70.
¹⁵¹ Ibid., 70.
it are from working and lower-middle class backgrounds who do not reside in the favelas.\textsuperscript{152} Travel time and cost of public transportation may prohibit some women from the favelas, particularly those with inflexible work schedules, from accessing women’s police stations; however, women from the favelas are also aware of the authorities’ reluctance to enter these neighborhoods to respond to reported cases of domestic violence. The head of the women’s police station in downtown Rio de Janeiro herself “acknowledged… the limitations of the police, due to the resource implications that intervening in the favelas to arrest perpetrators would entail, unless in the small number of communities currently pacified under the UPP [Pacifying Police Unit] scheme.”\textsuperscript{153} The same police official also suggested that the authorities would be willing to arrest a suspect in another part of the city, rather than enter “unpacified” favelas to attempt such an operation.\textsuperscript{154} Wilding concludes that “both [female] residents and the police were reluctant to go forward with police procedures because of the risk of violent retaliation by local powers [organized criminal organizations.]”\textsuperscript{155} Therefore, while women’s police stations represent one alternative by the state to provide increased security for Brazilian women, they are not especially relevant for women facing domestic violence in the favelas. These women face difficulties in physically accessing women’s police stations due to their inconvenient locations and operating hours, and a lack of resources and support from the authorities in responding to cases of domestic violence that occur in neighborhoods home to drug trafficking organizations or otherwise deemed to be unsafe. As a result, their utility is limited for most women residing in the favelas.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item\textsuperscript{152} Ibid.
\item\textsuperscript{153} Ibid., 71.
\item\textsuperscript{154} Ibid.
\item\textsuperscript{155} Ibid.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Alternative State Responses: Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora (UPPs)

Confronted with the task of securing the 2014 World Cup and 2016 Olympic Games sites, and after a disastrous 2007 operation in the Complexo do Alemão favela that resulted in the deaths of nineteen children and an unknown number of other civilians, Brazilian authorities have decided to try a different approach to public security called the *Unidade de Polícia Pacificadora* (Police Pacifying Unit, or UPP as they are commonly referred to). This new method also sprung out of the realization that favelas need to be incorporated into the city, and that the police should establish a regular presence there, rather than the previous approach which had been to enter the favelas only during massive police operations to conduct arrests and investigations. The UPPs are a specialized force within the Military Police that earn higher salaries than other police units, where recruits are individuals with a college education and no previous police experience, and whose officers are put through regular performance reviews to monitor whether they are involved in acts of abuse or corruption.

Furthermore, as explained by Ashley Morse, Adam Isacson, and Maureen Meyer of the Washington Office on Latin America:

> Before deployment UPP officers receive specialized training in community relations with an emphasis on human rights and conflict resolution. The UPP has traditional policing roles, but great importance is placed on rebuilding community relations. As part of their routine, all officers perform community service, mostly teaching young children… to try to transform the historically conflictive community-police relationship.

Additionally, the new units include a higher number of female officers (around 10 percent of the total, as of September 2013). Having a greater number of women in the police force may result in additional benefits and increase the effectiveness of the new police units. Female officers “may be more effective at defusing potentially violent situations than their male...”

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156 Moreira Alves and Evanson 1-2.  
157 Morse, Isacson, and Meyer 4; and Isacson, “Rio de Janeiro’s Pacification Program.”  
158 Morse, Isacson, and Meyer 4.  
counterparts,” “are reported by the public to act ‘inappropriately’ less frequently than their male counterparts,” “are less inclined to use deadly force,” and “experience less opposition or resistance from male offenders they arrest and/or question.” However, the case of disappeared bricklayer Amarildo de Souza Lima and the indictment of two female officers in relation with this case, as covered in Chapter Three, makes it clear that an increase in female officers does not necessarily guarantee a decline in police violence.

In November 2008, the Military Police conducted a large scale police operation in the Santa Marta favela to drive out local drug trafficking gangs, and then the first ever Unidade de Polícia Pacificadora entered the favela to establish a base. Indeed, this is typically how UPPs establish themselves in favelas – first, the Military Police, including the widely disliked and feared BOPEs, enters a favela to detain or eject as many drug traffickers as possible through large scale military operations that often result in urban combat. Once the traffickers have left and a state of relative calm has descended over the favela, the UPP moves in permanently to take control. In some favelas, once the UPPs finish “pacifying” the favela, Brazilian authorities launch a second program called UPP Social that aims to integrate the favela into the rest of the city through increased access to public services, including land titling, improvements to infrastructure, job training programs, after school activities for children, and increased coordination between federal, state, and local service providers. Furthermore, government officials have solicited feedback regarding social service programming from favela residents to determine the needs and wants of specific communities.

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161 Morse, Isacson, and Meyer 4.
162 Isacson, “Rio de Janeiro’s Pacification Program.”
163 Morse, Isacson, and Meyer 4.
The UPPs have achieved some important successes. In a January 2010 survey conducted of 600 favela residents in communities with UPP presence, 76 percent of individuals agreed that their favela was now secure, and 57 percent said that the security situation had improved over the past year. In regards to the actual operations to occupy the favelas, 80 percent of favela residents said that the BOPEs had been cordial and acted decently, or firm but not violent. Only 10 percent of residents said that the BOPEs had acted violently towards individuals living in the favelas. Moreover, the UPPs have facilitated access to services that favela residents previously lacked, including home delivery of food, electronic appliances, and medicine that, in the past, businesses had refused to deliver to favela residents. Whereas 76 percent of individuals in the favelas said that they had access to these services before the UPPs arrived in their communities, an additional 17 percent gained access upon the arrival of the UPPs in their communities, demonstrating increased integration with the rest of the city. Finally, 71 percent of favela residents that participated in the survey said that their lives today were better, compared to before the arrival of the UPPs, and 72 percent reported that they felt more respected by individuals outside of their community, indicating that the UPP program may lead to a decrease in stigma and exclusion for some individuals in the favelas and open up new opportunities for further education, training, and jobs.  

However, there are reasons to criticize the performance of the UPPs and to question their sustainability. First, one may see the UPPs as yet another expression of the ongoing repression and militarization of favela communities, and the use of the military in traditional law enforcement activities, which has a tendency to increase human rights abuses due to the 

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offensive nature of military operations. Luiz Claudio Martins Baltar, a graphic designer and photographer who lives and works in a Rio de Janeiro favela, argues, “Para o Estado, paz é a ausência de perturbações ou agitação. A chamada ‘Pacificação’ promovida pelo Estado nada mais é que a paz pela força, ou é isso que o governo acredita conseguir.” (For the state, peace is the absence of disturbances or agitation. The so-called “Pacification” promoted by the state is nothing more than peace by force, or this is what the government believes it is succeeding in doing.)

While some favela residents may agree that the state is attempting to impose peace on them by force, rather than through dialogue or other means, from the survey mentioned above, it appears that others are convinced of the UPP program’s value in securing and improving their communities.

Second, it is unclear how favelas are chosen for the UPP program, and it appears that many of the ones already participating in the program are either located near wealthy neighborhoods of the city or near the event sites of the World Cup and Olympic Games. Thus, many observers allege that the state is prioritizing those areas in order to protect the wealthy or to present a good image of the city in front of millions of tourists and media networks, rather than to protect the residents who actually live in the favelas. Interestingly, the government has also prioritized the pacification of favelas with an active drug trafficking organization presence and ignored those controlled by militias, possibly due to the membership of some off-duty police in the militias.

Finally, the UPP program is rather small at this point, and it remains to be seen whether it is sustainable or if it will actually result in long-term change in favela communities. There are between 600 and 800 favelas in Rio de Janeiro, and the Rio de Janeiro State’s goal is to create

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166 Morse, Isacson, and Meyer, 5.
12,000 UPPs in 160 favelas by 2014, leaving out a large proportion of communities and favela residents.\textsuperscript{167} This will also require the Brazilian Government to be able to continuously dedicate a high level of resources, including personnel, to this program in order to maintain it, which will be especially challenging as Brazil’s economy currently shows signs of a slowdown. As a favela resident in one of the original favelas to be “pacified” noted, the number of police working in her community has decreased since the start of the program, and drug traffickers have started to move back in to reclaim the territory.\textsuperscript{168} Another critique of the UPP program is that it does not actually put an end to drug trafficking or criminal gangs, but rather causes traffickers to relocate to other communities that have not gone through pacification. Some of these traffickers, as noted by the resident above, appear to have returned once police presence is reduced. Thus, at this point it is unknown whether the UPPs are just an unsustainable trend or an attempt to secure the city before major media organizations turn their attention to it, or if they represent an actual and legitimate attempt by the Brazilian Government to improve the standards of living and security of favela residents for perhaps the first time.

\textsuperscript{167} Isacson, “Rio de Janeiro’s Pacification Program.”
Chapter Three
Agency and Responses of Favela Residents to Societal and State Repression

Chapters One and Two show how Brazilian society actively excludes a significant proportion of its population, especially young men and women of Afro Brazilian descent, from full integration into Rio de Janeiro society and how income inequality and discrimination also have a large impact on individuals’ abilities to benefit from Brazil’s recent economic growth. Likewise, state responses to urban violence tend to repress favela residents and have only had limited success in actually defeating drug trafficking organizations and restoring order to violent urban neighborhoods, as is the situation in some, but not all, favelas. This chapter explores three responses by favela residents and communities to marginalization and stigmatization – youth organizations, incorporation in protest movements, and favela community associations – and evaluates the strategies of these responses and the successes and failures of each. Ultimately, this chapter shows that, despite high levels of marginalization and stigmatization, favela residents have made progress resisting state and societal repression and have had some success in advocating for their rights and making positive changes within their communities.

Youth Organizations

As noted in Chapter One, young Afro Brazilian men living in the favelas face a wide range of threats to their health and safety and frequent violations of their human rights by both non-state and state actors. On a daily basis, they are the victims of stigma, regularly mistaken for petty criminals and young male drug traffickers by other Rio de Janeiro residents and assumed to be uneducated and unemployed. In response to the challenges faced by young men in poor urban environments, and in recognition of the lack of attention paid to men’s issues by traditional development agencies and programs focusing on gender and gender inequalities – which have
translated into a focus on women and, particularly, programs on violence against women – activist Gary Barker founded Promundo in Rio de Janeiro in 1997. Promundo’s mission is “to promote caring, non-violent and equitable masculinities and gender relations in Brazil and internationally.” The organization works to transform unhealthy masculinities emphasizing power and violence into more positive, healthier masculinities built on the basis of gender equality and social justice. In addition, Promundo finds individuals who defy the hegemonic masculine discourse by acting contrary to the ways of other young men in their communities, and it attempts to determine what has led these individuals to act in gender equitable and non-violent ways and to build on and support these strategies. Promundo’s programs to promote gender equality and to prevent violence against women, children, and youth have reached over one thousand Brazilian citizens directly or indirectly, and the World Bank, UNICEF, and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) have recognized its work to incorporate gender perspectives into a variety of initiatives focused on adolescents and children.

Promundo has developed a three part strategy to affect community and individual change in Rio de Janeiro’s favelas. The first part focuses on “mapping, understanding and building on voices of resistance,” which Promundo does by interviewing young men displaying the atypical characteristics mentioned above, as well as family members and community leaders who do not participate in violence. These interviews have uncovered that individuals who resist violence tend to be more self-reflective in general, more aware of the concept of gender equality, knowledgeable about alternative conceptions of masculinity, and in contact with others who also believe in these alternatives, thus reinforcing the fact that these beliefs exist and that others

171 Barker et al., 173.
accept them. Promundo’s work signals the need to provide young men with role models displaying gender equitable behavior in their own communities, as well as the need to introduce gender equitable and non violent attitudes in small group settings and within the larger community. Furthermore, it reveals that interventions need to be conducted at both the individual and community levels in order to change behaviors and norms within a larger population. Accordingly, Promundo has designed programs for young men to make them more cognizant of gender as a social structure that affects their everyday lives and more aware of gender inequalities. Promundo encourages participants to campaign for gender equality and a rejection of violence in a variety of masculinized forms amongst their peers, and then evaluates the programs’ and individuals’ successes at changing behaviors.

The second part of Promundo’s strategy is titled “from interventions to community and national-level activism,” and the third part is “policy analysis and specific policy advocacy.” These branches focus on engaging youth in large-scale activism and policy development at the city or national level and on encouraging individuals to become activists for gender equality, defined as equal power relations between men and women and an equitable “structural context that reinforces and creates these power relations,” in their own local communities. To this end, Promundo has teamed with Instituto Papai, another Brazilian organization working on gender equality issues, and other non-governmental organizations to form the Men for Gender Equality movement. It has also created a program called JovEMovimento, meaning Youth in Movement, at the national level which involves youth in programs seeking to end violence in their

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172 Ibid., 173-174.
173 Ibid., 174.
174 Ibid. 175-176.
175 Ibid., 180-182.
Within the city of Rio de Janeiro, *JovEMovimento* has focused on issues of stigma, discrimination, and gender equality in the Complexo da Maré favela, which has registered high levels of drug trafficking and violence. In a 2008 survey of 299 male and female youth from this favela, one in ten individuals said that they had suffered psychological violence while at school, and around six percent of young men said that they had suffered physical violence by other young men. Moreover, this survey noted that there was high acceptance of the phrase, “*Se alguém me insulta, defendo minha honra até com força se necessário*” (If someone insults me, I defend my honor, including through the use of force if necessary), but when asked, “*Há momentos em que a mulher merece apanhar?*” (Are there moments in which a woman deserves to be beaten?), the majority of the students responded negatively. Promundo noted this indicates that while youth accept the use of force to defend one’s honor, they also reject the use of force against women in particular. Furthermore, Promundo’s survey revealed that 13 percent of youth had participated in some form of social project in their community in the last three months. However, this figure is half of that reported by a 2005 UNESCO report on Brazilian youth, which found that 27.3 percent of Brazilian youth had participated or actively participate in a social organization.

The *JovEMovimento* program also launched an advocacy campaign in November 2008 to fight discrimination against youth living in favelas. The campaign *Favela, Eu Sou Daqui – Jovens pelo Fim do Preconceito*, or “Favela: I am from here – Youth for the End of Prejudice” was designed and implemented by eight young Rio de Janeiro residents, ages 17 to 22 years.

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177 Barker et al., 180-182.
179 Ibid.
180 Ibid.
181 Ibid.
from the Complexo da Maré, Rocinha, Vila Aliança, Santa Marta, and Complexo do Alemão favelas in conjunction with students at two schools in a middle income neighborhood in the southern part of the city and professionals in the areas of audiovisual media, radio, and graphic design. While planning the campaign, the youth analyzed public policies affecting Rio de Janeiro residents and media coverage, and found that they both largely reproduced the fears of the middle and upper classes, and that they were exclusive and prejudiced against favela residents. In response, *Favela, Eu Sou Daqui* sought to positively influence the opinion that the middle and upper classes had of youth living in the favelas by tackling sensitive subjects such as the criminalization of poverty, social exclusion, and the accountability and responsibility of favela residents for high levels of violence and insecurity. The campaign aired spots on television and the radio, produced a short video for YouTube, and placed posters on public transportation and in other public spaces. Many of the posters had a simple message reading, “*Os mesmos planos, Os mesmos sonhos, Os mesmos desejos, As mesmas necessidades, Os mesmos direitos, A Mesma Cidade*” (The same plans, The same dreams, The same desires, The same needs, The same rights, The same city) and a short message at the bottom educating readers about the youth population in Rio de Janeiro.

The *JovEMovimento* program and other programs run by Promundo show that a certain percentage of Brazilian youth in the favelas actively reject some forms of violence, participate in organizations and civic life in their communities, and work to counter the effects of discrimination and negative perceptions of youth from the favelas. They educate others in their communities and in other neighborhoods of Rio de Janeiro about gender equality and life in the

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183 Ibid.
favelas with the goal of shaping opinions and behaviors, and they display attitudes suggesting that they really believe they are capable of making a positive change in society. These youth care about their communities and seek to improve their lives and others. There is still room to improve in regard to reducing violence even further and encouraging a more active citizenry, particularly since the percentage of youth who participate in these programs is still low and many favelas continue to have ongoing problems with violence. However, with an increasing number of youth in the favelas taking an interest in participating in civic life in Rio de Janeiro, they may be able to gradually change popular perceptions of themselves and decrease their effective marginalization.

The Participation of Favela Residents in Protest Movements

Shortly after winning the bids for the World Cup and Olympic Games, Brazilian authorities embarked on a major effort to “beautify” the city of Rio de Janeiro that focused on decreasing violent crime levels and removing unattractive sites scattered throughout the city by force where necessary. The total cost of both events was originally estimated at U.S. $7 billion, but the original estimate was later adjusted upward by the National Court of Auditors, which determined that the real cost would be around U.S. $13.5-$14 billion. While one may assume that these costs would be happily borne by soccer and sports crazy Brazilians, in fact, the Brazilian public has reacted in the exact opposite way, forcing the International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) to impose stringent demands on the Brazilian Government in order to force it to comply with their requirements for World Cup preparations. In 2012, FIFA even demanded that the Brazilian Government pass the Lei da Copa (World Cup General Law), which

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makes the government responsible for potential damages and other costs associated with the event, such as cash prizes for members of previous World Cup champion teams, all paid for by Brazilian taxpayers. \footnote{Ibid.} Journalist and anthropologist Jaime Amparo Alves observes that, “To protect its corporate interests, FIFA has brought the Brazilian state to its knees…. [The Lei da Copa] undermines the nation’s sovereignty, humiliates its authorities, and violates other national legislation – … including the Brazilian Constitution itself.” \footnote{Ibid.} The high costs of the World Cup, coupled with those of the 2016 Olympic Games, are a major problem for the Brazilian Government, which had originally competed to host these events as a way of showing Brazil’s rise to economic and political power. Instead, they now represent a heavy economic burden that must be shouldered somehow, despite slowing economic growth and a recent rise in inflation.

On June 6, 2013, a relatively small number of São Paulo residents took to the streets to protest a twenty centavo (U.S. $0.09) increase in local bus fares as part of demonstrations organized by the Movimento Passe Livre (The Movement for Free Fare), a group that had advocated for years in favor of free bus fare. The protests continued for several days in São Paulo and provoked the anger of commuters who, accustomed to long commutes already, were even more annoyed that their daily trip to and from work was taking much longer than normal. Consequently, the predominantly conservative Brazilian mainstream media and many Brazilians called for police repression of the protests. Their opinion of the protesters changed, however, after a violent police crackdown on the protests on June 13th, when the police severely injured journalists covering the event – including one who the police shot in the eye with a rubber bullet at close range – as well as protesters themselves, who the police arrested and attacked with stun...
grenades, pepper spray, and tear gas. Following the attacks on its journalists, mainstream media networks also changed the tone of their protests coverage, and individuals across Brazil united with the protesters in large scale demonstrations against all levels of the Brazilian government that were mostly peaceful, although there have been some incidents of violence. In the days immediately after June 13th crackdown, around 65,000 people in São Paulo and 300,000 in Rio de Janeiro attended protests. By the end of the summer, over one million people in 350 cities in Brazil and worldwide had joined the movement. While the protesters were a relatively diverse group, many of them were young, educated, and white. The Economist notes that in São Paulo, there were “many more women, families, and middle-aged folk than at previous protests,” a fact that may affected the agenda and goals of the protest movement and may have also played a role in keeping the protests largely peaceful. Additionally, in the protests that caught the attention of mainstream media networks, the majority of the participants were from Brazil’s emerging middle class, leading one observer to label it “a middle class revolution.”

The reasons for and demands of the various protest movements throughout Brazil were extraordinarily diverse, making it nearly impossible for the government to react in a coherent and satisfactory manner. Furthermore, the protests completely caught the government off guard, since “notwithstanding recent declines in economic growth and increasing inflation, unemployment figures are at historic lows, and there were no obvious crises on the horizon.”

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190 “Protests in Brazil: The Streets Erupt,” The Economist.
191 Muggah.
192 Ibid.
Instead, Brazilian protesters reacted to a wide range of grievances that they had been keeping pent up for years. The protests tended to focus on the exorbitant cost of the World Cup and Olympic Games at the expense of spending on social programs, as well as the motive of the original protest – the high costs of ineffective public transportation services. Some of the protesters’ other concerns included: poor quality schools, hospitals, and infrastructure; government corruption and inefficiency, and a lack of trust in the government; control of inflation (which has been a problem for Brazil in the past, although less so today); high levels of crime and insecurity; the control of conservative groups over mainstream media; and a bizarre demand by evangelical groups lobbying Congress to pass a bill seeking a “cure” for homosexuality.\textsuperscript{193}

The most salient issue of the protests, however, relates to economics and particularly taxes and public finance. Liz Leeds of the Washington Office on Latin America notes that, “while Brazil has been lauded for its middle-class growth, this new group finds itself heavily indebted and reliant on woefully inadequate public services…. Aided by social media, the protests became an outlet for the… frustrations of the broad segment of the middle and working classes that do not profit from Brazil’s economic growth.”\textsuperscript{194} This is the case for a large number of youth, many of whom are university educated, but unemployed and still under-skilled, and a reason for which they felt compelled to join the protest movements. For those individuals who have seen their incomes grow, an increase in income also means an increase in taxes and an increase in demands on the government. Consequently, Brazilians, who pay the highest taxes of any developing country, have come to expect specific public services in return from their


government and a certain degree of quality that the government so far has been unable to satisfactorily provide.\textsuperscript{195} In response to the widespread protests, the Brazilian Government enacted a plan called the \textit{Pacto Nacional} (National Pact), which provided, as one author called them, “band-aid solutions to problems with health, education, corruption, and the electoral system – all with an eye on next year’s presidential elections.”\textsuperscript{196} While the concessions that the government gave are only short term solutions to larger problems, they are evidence of the protesters’ abilities and power to influence policy and to achieve some limited changes.

Besides economic grievances, many individuals joined the protest movements to denounce the high levels of police violence characteristic of Brazilian cities, including Rio de Janeiro. The actions of the police towards demonstrators only provoked them further, as the “criminalization of democratic expression set back the limited advances the police have made in the last decade to improve relations with society.”\textsuperscript{197} Participants in the protests against police brutality came from both poor and middle income backgrounds. Leeds suggests that this occurred because middle class protestors “experienced what poorer segments of the population live through routinely,” making them perhaps more likely to reject the excessive use of force by the police and to express support for movements advocating an end to police violence.\textsuperscript{198} However, the Brazilian Government completely ignored the widespread support for a change in public security policies and did not address this issue at all in its response to the protests, thus maintaining the status quo, protecting the interests of Brazilian politicians and the elite, and

\textsuperscript{195} “Protests in Brazil: The Streets Erupt,” \textit{The Economist}.
\textsuperscript{196} Leeds.
\textsuperscript{197} Ibid.
“allowing the police to become the scapegoat for the very ills of society that [were] being protested.”\textsuperscript{199}

It is also important to note that mainstream media networks have cast the protests as a movement of aggrieved middle class Brazilians, and that they have largely ignored protests by favela residents and the participation (or inability to participate) by these individuals and others with low incomes. Maria Cândido, a cleaner in São Paulo, for example, stated that she would like to participate in the protests, but she has to commute five hours each day to get to her minimum wage job. Cândido noted, however, “The traffic is bad every day. The buses are always full. It’s absurd. If you are going to increase ticket prices you could also improve the service.”\textsuperscript{200} This suggests that even individuals with low incomes desire the same improvements in public services as middle class individuals who had free time to take to the streets. Furthermore, some low income individuals and favela residents did hold their own protests, which focused mainly on the lack of quality public services and police repression.\textsuperscript{201} In particular, many of the more recent protests have concentrated on achieving justice in the case of Amarildo de Souza Lima, an extremely impoverished 42-year-old bricklayer and father of six children who disappeared in the Rocinha favela after he was detained for questioning and tortured during a UPP operation. While protests over the disappearance of De Souza Lima have centered on resolving this case and prosecuting those individuals responsible for his disappearance, they are also symbolic of a larger desire on the part of favela residents and other impoverished Brazilians to prohibit the use of repressive police techniques and the implementation of policies that continue to criminalize the poor in Brazil, especially those living in favelas.

\textsuperscript{199} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{200} Leahy.  
\textsuperscript{201} Leeds.
De Souza Lima disappeared on July 14, 2013, after running an errand to pick up seasoning for his family’s fish dinner. Later that night, his family learned that he had been detained during an operation to arrest drug traffickers in Rocinha. Since then, De Souza Lima has remained missing, and, in October 2013, Brazilian authorities charged multiple individuals in connection with his death, thus acknowledging that he is dead. Despite reported attempts by the police to get her to drop the investigation into De Souza’s disappearance, De Souza’s wife, Elizabete Gomes da Silva, refused. When the police told her that De Souza would appear, Gomes da Silva dismissed their claims, noting “Eles acham que pobre também é burro” (They think that to be poor is also to be a donkey, or stupid.) Instead, she proclaimed, “I could have held my tongue, but I did not…. I knew the truth would appear.” The police’s response demonstrates their belief in a power structure that allows them to diminish the pleas of an impoverished Afro Brazilian woman due to her relative lack of power, and that allows them to remain unaccountable for her husband’s disappearance. This did not discourage Gomes da Silva, who maintains that her husband was innocent, that he had never participated in drug trafficking, that he had problems with epilepsy, and that he had lived and worked in Rocinha for his entire life. According to her, he was well known and liked in the community. Thus, fearing that the police had killed him, Gomes da Silva and her close friends and family began campaigning for an investigation into his disappearance and death and questioning authorities with the phrase “Cadê o Amarildo?”, or “Where is Amarildo?”, a line that became synonymous with this case. An early investigation determined that the police did indeed detain De Souza Lima and take him

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204 Bottari.
to the UPP post for verification of his identity on the night of his disappearance.\textsuperscript{205} Moreover, the cameras on the police car that took him to the station, along with security cameras on the outside of the police station, were not working on the night of his arrest, leading some to suspect police involvement in his disappearance.\textsuperscript{206} The police also claimed that De Souza had argued and gotten into a fight with them.\textsuperscript{207}

De Souza’s family, friends, and residents of the Rocinha favela rejected this explanation and protested the police’s unwillingness to investigate the case of his disappearance and the threats that they had received from the police within Rocinha itself. They organized searches to look for clues into the disappearance and to look for De Souza’s remains, and they managed to shut down the highway between the affluent neighborhoods of Lagoa and Barra twice in protest to raise more attention to this case.\textsuperscript{208} However, as the larger protest movement that swept Brazil in the summer of 2013 came to learn of De Souza’s story, they incorporated it into their protests on police violence and elevated the status of De Souza’s widow, who became an unlikely protest leader and spokeswoman for this issue. Ever since then, the question “\textit{Cadê o Amarildo?}” has been scrawled on placards at demonstrations in Rio and cities across Brazil and abroad, posted on social media, sprayed as graffiti on walls and added as a slogan to pictures people from around the world uploaded of themselves demanding an investigation into his disappearance.\textsuperscript{209} Anonymous Brasil even joined the protests against De Souza’s disappearance when they twice hacked the websites of the Partido do Movimento Democrático Brasileiro, the political party of the governor of the state of Rio de Janeiro, Sérgio Cabral, and the mayor of Rio de Janeiro,

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\textsuperscript{206} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{207} Bottari.
\textsuperscript{208} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{209} Carneiro.
\end{flushleft}
Eduardo Paes. Each time, they posted a message on the website asking, “Sérgio Cabral, Cadê o Amarildo?,” and squarely put blame on the UPP presence in Rocinha by proclaiming that the UPPs kidnapped De Souza and are responsible for his disappearance.\textsuperscript{210}

The protests over De Souza’s disappearance were successful in that the local and state governments in Rio de Janeiro were forced to comply with Gomes da Silva’s and the protesters’ demands and open an investigation into this case. The investigation revealed that, while the cameras on the police car that took De Souza to the UPP station were not functioning at the time of his arrest, another GPS system was working and able to provide information about the itinerary of the police car up to twenty four hours after the arrest.\textsuperscript{211} In late September, a body was also found and is undergoing testing to determine whether it is the remains of De Souza. On October 1, 2013, ten UPP officers, including the former head of the UPP unit in Rocinha, were arrested and charged with torture and concealing a corpse after the investigation concluded that De Souza had been killed during a police interrogation involving the use of electric shocks and suffocation with a plastic bag.\textsuperscript{212} An additional fifteen officers were indicted and arrested later in the month, including Officer Vanessa Coimbra, who learned of the indictment against her while giving a presentation at a technology conference in New York City on the successes of the UPP program and “smart policing.”\textsuperscript{213}

Amarildo De Souza thus became symbolic of the victims of police repression, violence, and to a lesser extent, racism, poverty and inequality, in the Brazilian protest movement of


\textsuperscript{211} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{212} Watts, “Brazil: Rio Police Charged Over Torture and Death of Missing Favela Man.”

summer 2013. His death, while still unresolved, has led Brazilians to question the efficacy and abilities of the UPP program and the government’s claims that the UPPs will be a new, more humane police force, respectful of favela residents, and able to create positive change in their communities. Clearly, despite the fact that the UPP officers receive human rights training and have college degrees and no prior experience in law enforcement, incidents such as the case of Amarildo De Souza Lima and repressive UPP operations in February and March 2014 to suppress an increase in drug trafficking-related violence in the favelas right before the World Cup show that things have not changed much for the better. Favela residents continue to experience harassment and threats when they denounce police brutality, as Gomes da Silva and her family did, and police brutality against favela residents has actually increased in recent weeks, even in “pacified” favelas such as the Complexo da Maré, as Rio de Janeiro enters the final stages of its preparations for the World Cup. However, what has changed is the ability of favela residents, including women of color, to bring claims against the police and to attract the support and attention of residents of other, wealthier areas of Rio de Janeiro, as well as national and international media networks, due to an increase in their use of social media and the assistance of advocacy groups in raising awareness of violations of their rights. As the media has begun to focus on the tumultuous process of getting the city ready in time for the World Cup and the Olympic Games, and as residents have turned out in the thousands to protest the socioeconomic problems from which Brazil continues to suffer, favela residents have created a space for themselves to voice their demands and to denounce the state’s poor treatment of individuals living in these neighborhoods. For once, the media is also eager to tell their stories. Thus, on any given day, it is possible to read stories on what is happening in the favelas in the

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New York Times, The Guardian, BBC News, CNN, and through the major Brazilian media networks such as Folha de São Paulo and O Globo. By following these stories and raising attention to these issues, the media and favela residents have successfully put pressure on Brazilian authorities to take action – both to deflect the negative attention and to resolve problems, such as police brutality, that have long been an issue for individuals from the favelas.

**The Role of Favela Community Associations**

Favela residents have begun to recognize and demonstrate their collective power to create change in their communities and in Rio de Janeiro, not just through the protests associated with the disappearance of Amarildo de Souza, but also through an increased level of community activism aimed at diminishing stereotypes and improving their standard of living. Many of the recently formed activist movements have centered on housing conditions and the prevention of evictions. As Brazilian Government and Rio de Janeiro city officials have increased their efforts to “clean up” the city in preparation for the World Cup and Olympic Games, favela residents in many areas of the city have felt rising levels of stress over their right to continue living in the communities that they founded decades earlier – albeit without legal documentation of property rights – and over the threat of forced eviction. Forced eviction is no longer an official government policy towards the growth of favela communities; however, a Brazilian activist network estimated that around 170,000 Brazilians will face eviction from land slated to be used for the World Cup and Olympics.\(^{215}\) An investigation by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing also uncovered violations of favela residents’ right to housing and even went so far as to admonish Brazil for its lack of transparency in mega-event

preparations, unwillingness to take into consideration and to respect the voices of affected communities, and aversion to engage in fair negotiation and dialogue with favela residents. \(^{216}\) At the same time, numerous favela communities have begun to organize and resist the authorities’ plans to demolish their communities through organizations such as Catalytic Communities and Quilombo das Guerreiras.

Catalytic Communities was founded in 2000 as “an empowerment, communications, think tank and advocacy NGO run as a small, adaptive collaborative network which works to support and empower residents of informal settlements.” It focuses specifically on the “intersection of community development, international networks, media and urban planning,” and utilizes social media and other communications tools to spread the word about conditions in the favelas and to try to change people’s opinions of them. \(^{217}\) One of its most important projects is a webpage called Rio Olympics Neighborhood Watch, or “RioOnWatch,” which has conducted reporting on the favelas at the community level since 2010. The webpage for RioOnWatch is in both English and Portuguese and contains translated news articles about events affecting Rio de Janeiro’s favelas, as well as pieces written exclusively by its volunteers, favela residents, and community organizers. It aims to increase the accuracy of reporting on the favelas, to raise awareness of human rights violations in the favelas, and to implement a monitoring and observation system to protect favela residents’ rights. Thus, RioOnWatch has positioned itself to serve as a veritable source of information on Rio de Janeiro’s favelas and is


able to better inform mainstream and alternative media networks looking to run stories on these neighborhoods, their residents, and the latest widespread evictions.

Recent reporting by RioOnWatch has centered on resistance movements by favela residents and on investigating the questionable reasons for which the government has justified its removal programs. It has explored the Rio de Janeiro city government’s efforts to reassess environmental risk in the Santa Marta favela and its claim that the land on which Santa Marta is situated is unsuitable for housing and at risk of natural disasters, such as mudslides. Indeed, in 2011, parts of Rio de Janeiro suffered catastrophic landslides that killed over 600 people and displaced around 14,000 individuals. However, the government not provided precise and verifiable information about the specific risks that individual favelas face, and its “primary criteria for designating risk on urban land are human occupation and inclined terrain.”

Furthermore, some families in the Santa Marta favela have lived in their homes for over fifty years, demonstrating that their houses are well constructed and have proven capable of resisting environmental hazards, such as high levels of rainfall during the rainy season. RioOnWatch responded to the government’s claims by pointing to studies showing that the land is geologically sound, and other organizations have also concluded that the government’s attempt to designate communities as “risky” is a pretext for removing and relocating favela residents to areas further from Rio de Janeiro’s city center.

Catalytic Communities, through the RioOnWatch program, has also begun to utilize social media networks to document evictions and other violations as they are taking place, and to assist in efforts to prevent the demolition of

221 Heck, “The ‘Area of Risk’ Justification for Favela Removals: The Case of Santa Marta.”
favelas, such as the campaign of the Vila Autódromo favela that succeeded in August 2013 in getting the state to recognize its existence and permanence. In 2010, it trained 180 community leaders from favelas in social media tools in order to increase the visibility of state repression when it occurs, and it sponsored community photographers to observe police pacification operations during the October 6, 2013, takeover of the Lins de Vasconcelos favela. Since Brazil is home to both the second largest number of Facebook and Twitter users in the world, and 40 percent of Brazilians have access to the internet, the use of cell phone and handheld cameras combined with social media gives favela residents a particularly effective tool for raising their voices against state repression, police abuse, and other violations.

Catalytic Communities and RioOnWatch also focus on the topic of gentrification. Gentrification is a relatively recent problem in Rio de Janeiro’s favelas and has arisen in part due to the increased attractiveness of certain favelas that have gone through police pacification programs and that offer stunning views of the city and public services typically found in more formalized neighborhoods in the realm of the asfalto. RioOnWatch noted that in the Vidigal favela, situated between two wealthy neighborhoods, “a large house with a terrace can cost up to R$700,000 (US$313,000).” The increase in housing and other costs has squeezed favela residents’ wallets, making it more difficult for them to afford to live in these particular neighborhoods. Furthermore, gentrification and the perception of increased security after UPP pacification has led to an increase in foreigners buying property and moving into favelas that are conveniently located to attractions and the downtown business district, thus displacing

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224 Muggah, and Romero.
individuals who have lived in these communities for years and simultaneously achieving the Rio de Janeiro city government’s goal of “cleaning up” the favelas. Both Catalytic Communities and RioOnWatch have analyzed the gentrification process in the favelas and have noted that gentrification, rather than making the city more inclusive of favela communities, has pushed their residents in the other direction and essentially priced them out of these spaces.226

Consequently, Catalytic Communities is working to develop new strategies to protect the rights of favela residents, enable them to stay in their communities, increase their access to affordable housing if they so choose to leave, and take advantage of the unique, positive characteristics of favela settlements, such as their proximity to many individuals’ workplaces and their close sense of community. It declares in its mission statement, “Something new is now called for…. How can we take advantage of this moment, with the knowledge we have today about Rio and other cities, plus the information and technologies which we have access to today, to build something better?”227 One place to start making these changes is by shifting Rio de Janeiro residents’ opinions of the favelas, similar to the goal of the Favela Eu Sou Daqui campaign. Since 2011, Catalytic Communities has conducted a survey of over 750 people in Rio de Janeiro, San Francisco, Brisbane, and London, to determine how people around the world think of the favelas. According to their survey, “Across all four locations, one finding in particular stood out loud and clear: those who had visited a favela personally held dramatically more positive views of favelas than otherwise, and the results are statistically significant (p value < .002).”228 That is, “of those who had never been to a favela, only 14% had a ‘favorable’ perception of favelas; most held an ‘unfavorable’ opinion of them (64%).”229 This stands in

227 Ibid.
229 Ibid.
contrast with the opinions held by non-Rio de Janeiro residents who had previously visited a favela, of which “44% had a favorable perception of those neighborhoods, and 27% were neutral—leaving only 29% with a decidedly unfavorable impression of favelas. Further, 71% of those who had been to a favela had a positive view of favela residents.”\(^{230}\) Catalytic Communities uses these surveys to develop their strategy for changing attitudes towards favela communities. It notes that having had prior contact with favela residents or the neighborhoods themselves increases understanding and more positive views of these areas, and it observes that “the more people acquire first-hand knowledge of favelas—either from visiting one themselves, or by reading news produced by favela residents—the more perceptions of favela neighborhoods change for the better.”\(^{231}\) Thus, the work of programs like RioOnWatch is essential to improving the accuracy of reporting and the formation of opinions about favela communities.

Alongside the annual survey, Catalytic Communities has also developed an initiative called “Favela como modelo sustentável” (Favelas as a sustainable model), focusing on the most positive aspects of favela living as a model for sustainable development. It produced a short film shown at the Rio+20 United Nations Conference in June 2012 and available on YouTube, demonstrating the qualities of favela and informal settlements for sustainable urbanization and the ways in which favela residents already practice sustainability in their approach to building and daily life as a result of state neglect of these areas.\(^{232}\) Amongst the qualities noted by Catalytic Communities are: low-rise, high density development, pedestrian orientation, use of public transportation and bicycles, architecture that evolves according to need, residences close to (or literally on top of) workplaces, collective action, community solidarity, and a vibrant

\(^{230}\) Ibid.
\(^{231}\) Ibid.
cultural scene. Additionally, these communities demonstrate a high degree of resiliency and efficiency, creativity and innovation, and act as a center of production for goods and services that the city does not otherwise provide to these areas. Thus, by working to expose individuals with no or little prior knowledge of, or experience in, the favelas, Catalytic Communities hopes to change perceptions, improve the accuracy of reports about favela life, and increase the ability of favela residents to tell their stories, express their desires, and denounce violations of their rights through mainstream and social media.

The recent increase in favela evictions and forced displacement has also led to the creation of movements that are more indigenous to the favelas, in that their founders and members are predominantly or entirely made up of favela residents. One campaign that has seen recent success is that of the Quilombo das Guerreiras, or Settlement of the Women Warriors. The name of the group honors the legacy and bravery of African slave women who escaped from their plantations and founded settlements, known as quilombos, in the backwoods of Brazil. The group was founded in October 2006, when dozens of homeless families, including a large number of female-headed households, occupied the former site of a factory belonging to Companhia Docas do Rio de Janeiro, which had abandoned the property close to one of Rio de Janeiro’s ports over twenty years ago. The community has faced significant challenges in gaining access to water, trash removal, and electricity due to their lack of formal property rights. However, they have injected new life into the derelict property and surrounding area by renovating the former factory building and its grounds, planting urban gardens, removing all of the garbage and dust that had since accumulated, and improving security in their

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neighborhood through their occupation of a formerly vacant property and an increase in the presence of families in the area. The residents of the Quilombo demonstrate mutual support and solidarity with their neighbors by participating in community meetings and working groups responsible for maintaining the property and collective spaces, such as the garden and the Quilombo’s own library. In addition, the Quilombo also provides activities for its residents such as “tutoring children and teens, studying for public [university] entrance exams, youth and adult education and literacy, capoeira, [and] STD and AIDS workshops…,” as well as the maintenance of a community Facebook page and the production of films, including one that was released in March 2013 called “Mulheres Guerreiras” (Women Warriors) in honor of the women of the community.\footnote{“Ocupação Quilombo das Guerreiras,” Favela em Foco, March 9, 2013, http://favelaemfoco.wordpress.com/2013/03/09/ocupacao-quilombo-das-guerreiras/.} The Quilombo has no leaders, and all one hundred families that live there today are encouraged to determine the direction the community should take.\footnote{“Quilombo das Guerreiras Ensures Partial Victory as Repossession for Trump Towers Project is Suspended for 120 Days,” RioOnWatch, September 21, 2013, translated from the Portuguese and reprinted from Pela Moradia, http://rioonwatch.org/?p=11215; and “Mulheres Guerreiras,” YouTube video, 16:06, posted by “Pela Moradia,” March 18, 2013, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q8cYHXxcmL4&feature=youtu.be.} Their work to clean up the former factory site and to make constant improvements provides evidence of the sense of ownership that these individuals and families possess in regards to this property and their willingness to invest in their close-knit community, which many of them refer to as their family.\footnote{“Quilombo das Guerreiras Ensures Partial Victory as Repossession for Trump Towers Project is Suspended for 120 Days,” RioOnWatch.} The Quilombo is a safe environment in which residents can raise their families, and does not appear to be affected by drug trafficking organizations – as is the case with many, though not all, favelas – perhaps due to the high level of community solidarity within the Quilombo, and the relative geographic isolation in which it is situated in comparison with other favelas in Rio de Janeiro.
Since 2007, the Quilombo has sought formal property rights to demonstrate their possession of the former Companhia Docas building; however, the government has never granted them these rights.\textsuperscript{238} Thus, as the local government in Rio de Janeiro began making plans to revitalize the city in preparation for the two mega-events, it included the run down port area as part of its design to turn this space into a revived business district. In December 2012, American businessman Donald Trump announced plans to buy land around the port, including the land on which the Quilombo sits, in order to develop it for the “Trump Towers Rio de Janeiro,” a series of five high-rise luxury buildings with thirty-eight or more floors.\textsuperscript{239} Trump’s investment has since been labeled “the biggest business complex in the nation” by Rio de Janeiro’s mayor Eduardo Paes, and has received significant support from other politicians.\textsuperscript{240}

Donald Trump, however, did not take into consideration the willpower of the Quilombo’s residents and their desire to remain on their site. Despite a general distrust of the legal system, particularly by Brazil’s poor and marginalized, the residents of the Quilombo fought back by forming a resistance movement with the slogan, “Ocupar, resistir, lutar pra garantir” (Occupy, Resist, Fight to Secure), and by taking their case to court with the support of non-governmental organizations and a public defender, demonstrating their increased access to and use of the legal system and their recognition of their right to housing. On September 10, 2013, they faced a setback, when Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff issued a decree authorizing the city to declare the land to be a “public utility, for the purpose of expropriation, or eminent domain.”\textsuperscript{241} However, Judge Maria Lucía Obino Niederauer, of the Rio de Janeiro Court of Justice, took a

\textsuperscript{238} Nitahara.


\textsuperscript{240} “Ocupação Quilombo das Guerreiras,” Favela em Foco.

different view of the case. Although the Quilombo has never received formal property rights over the land on which the former factory is situated, the Companhia Docas do Rio de Janeiro has also demonstrated a complete lack of interest in maintaining or repossessing the area, as noted by their absence at the Rio de Janeiro Court of Justice’s recent hearings on an old repossession process that the company itself had initiated years ago.\textsuperscript{242} Moreover, the Quilombo had assembled a large quantity of documents and other materials proving how long they had occupied the site, the improvements that they had made to the area, the formation of their own organization called the “Guerreiras Occupation Association of Affordable Housing,” and other items.\textsuperscript{243} Thus, while the residents of the Quilombo did not have \textit{de jure} rights over the property, the evidence that they assembled essentially served as proof of their exercise of \textit{de facto} possession of the site. Judge Obino Niederauer agreed, and dismissed the case. She also suspended the process of expropriation for an additional 120 days in a temporary, but significant, victory for the Quilombo residents. Nevertheless, an official from the public defender’s office noted that the judge suspended the legal process in order to negotiate a solution to this conflict – a solution that will most likely involve the relocation of the Quilombo residents, representing yet another attempt by the state to exercise violence against a marginalized community in Rio de Janeiro.\textsuperscript{244}

The Quilombo das Guerreiras demonstrates the agency exercised by a group of individuals living in an informal settlement, and the victories that it has been able to achieve over a much more powerful state apparatus and international business interests. This organization empowers women who society otherwise marginalizes due to their low incomes and, in some

\textsuperscript{242} “Ocupação Quilombo das Guerreiras,” Favela em Foco.
\textsuperscript{243} “Quilombo das Guerreiras Ensures Partial Victory as Repossession for Trump Towers Project is Suspended for 120 Days,” RioOnWatch.
\textsuperscript{244} Nitahara.
cases, lack of male partners. Additionally, the lack of hierarchical leadership in the Quilombo is perhaps an attempt by these individuals to instill a sense of equality and solidarity in their community and to separate themselves from the harsh inequality that characterizes the rest of the city. Both the Quilombo das Guerreiras and the work of Catalytic Communities, and its RioOnWatch project, show that favela residents and those living in other informal settlements have increased their ability to be heard at the level of the state, both through the media and the legal system, as well as their ability to counter stigmatization and to change perceptions of them. With the increased attention on Rio de Janeiro in anticipation of the two upcoming mega-events, favela residents have joined middle class Brazilians in rising up and claiming their rights, giving the state a historic opportunity to permanently change policies affecting these populations for the better.

However, even with some recent positive changes, favela residents continue to encounter numerous forms of violence on a daily basis that contribute to their ongoing marginalization from Brazilian society. Residents live with the ever present threat of violence from armed gangs and drug trafficking organizations, which take advantage of the favelas’ lack of infrastructure and relative isolation to set up networks in these neighborhoods, as well as offensive police operations targeting criminals, and the state’s attempts to evict residents from their homes and the land on which they have settled. Favela residents must also confront popular conceptions of masculinity that favor aggression and violence and various forms of structural violence, including discrimination on the basis of sex, race, and class; persistent poverty; and alarmingly high rates of income inequality. Thus, while poverty and income inequality rates have declined in Brazil in the last decade, and while favela residents should be commended for their efforts to counter attempts by the Brazilian state and society to exclude them from benefiting from Brazil’s
recent political and economic successes, full participation and integration into Brazilian society for favela residents remain elusive.
Conclusion

Over the past decade, Brazil has experienced unprecedented growth both economically and politically, and an increase in media attention focused on its rise and its problems. As a result of high levels of economic growth and stability, income inequality has fallen to a fifty-year low; the percentage of Brazilians living in relative poverty has decreased by half; and extreme poverty has fallen by a third. An increasing number of individuals have joined Brazil’s emerging middle class and have come to expect a certain degree of quality in public services and better treatment from the state. However, for millions of Rio de Janeiro residents living in favelas and low income neighborhoods, high levels of inequality and poverty, discrimination and marginalization, and stigmatization still impact their daily lives and impede their ability to benefit from Brazil’s recent successes. The following recommendations seek to propose several actions that individuals living in favelas and the Brazilian Government could take to address ongoing problems of stigmatization and marginalization, police brutality, and integration into Brazilian society.

1. Individuals living in favelas have successfully captured the attention of international media organizations and utilized technology to raise awareness of their marginalization and exclusion from many aspects of Brazilian society. However, residents should also focus on confronting stigmatization and the criminalization of favelas by domestic Brazilian media organizations.

As the world has turned its attention on Rio de Janeiro prior to the World Cup and the Olympic Games, international media organizations have eagerly published articles related to Brazil’s problems with its preparations for these two events and the recent massive demonstrations against their enormous costs. Nevertheless, they have also shown a willingness to report information about Rio de Janeiro’s favelas, particularly their problems with security and

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urban violence. Consequently, favela residents have taken advantage of this opportunity to
denounce violations of their rights by Brazilian authorities, including cases of police brutality,
with some success and to raise awareness of their lack of access to public services, among other
items. Their advocacy efforts on social media and through favela community organizations have
also raised attention to these issues, in addition to problems with forced evictions, gentrification,
and discrimination.

However, favela residents still suffer immensely from an image problem in both domestic
and international media. As noted in earlier chapters, the press tends to criminalize favela
residents, especially young Afro Brazilian men, and provokes fear in middle and upper class
Brazilians and foreign tourists by running sensationalistic stories filled with gory details of gang
violence and criminal activities. There is little constructive coverage of wholesome activities
occurring in the favelas or information about the positive qualities of these spaces and their
residents. Brazilian society could improve the lives of favela residents simply by changing the
tone of its media coverage on these communities. One way to do this would be to include favela
residents in the actual reporting itself and in the selection of news stories to air on television and
to publish in newspapers. An increased level of citizen reporting from the favelas will help to
change the content of news broadcasts and newspaper articles and may lead to a greater number
of stories about positive events in the favelas, the agency and resilience of their residents, and
high levels of innovation and sustainability in these neighborhoods. These stories will defy the
overwhelmingly sensationalistic coverage of the favelas, and counter perceptions of favela
residents as violent or untrustworthy. Additionally, by including favela residents in the
development of news stories, the accuracy of reporting will increase, contributing to a less biased
view of actual conditions in the favelas and the challenges that residents face.
2. Favela residents should continue to put pressure on the Government of Brazil to end repressive police tactics, to respond to incidents of police brutality, and to complete a full investigation into the disappearance and death of Amarildo De Souza Lima.

Brazil needs to embark on large-scale police reform at all levels. The UPP program offers one way forward in terms of making policing more accountable and respectful of human rights, but violations continue to occur, as seen in the case of Amarildo De Souza Lima. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to completely throw out the UPP program as there are few good alternatives. All other alternative programs would emphasize the same requirements for its officers, such as a college education and no prior policing experience, and training in human rights matters that the UPP program already does. Therefore, the UPP program should be refined by increasing training in investigation tactics and human rights and by hiring more women officers since they may be less likely to resort to using deadly force in tense situations.\textsuperscript{246} Brazilian authorities should hire an independent observation and monitoring agency from either the private or public sectors to monitor the behavior of UPP officers while on the job, and they should de-emphasize militarized aspects of its structure in order to reduce the use of aggressive, offensive tactics in law enforcement operations. Brazilian authorities must also show an ability and interest in increasing police discipline and sanctioning those who break the law, including high level officers whose subordinates commit violations, in order to increase accountability along the chain of command and access to justice for marginalized populations. Furthermore, the state should reward police for respecting human rights and for dealing with complicated situations in non-violent ways through promotions, special titles, or public recognition on television or through other media sources, rather than reward them for killing urban youth as the Military Police has done in the past.

\textsuperscript{246} Denham, “Police Reform and Gender.”
Second, Brazilian authorities should complete a full review of all cases where individuals died “while resisting arrest,” a commonly used police euphemism for extrajudicial killings. While it may not be possible to determine the cause of death in all of these cases with a high level of certainty, it is clear that a large number of urban youth have been killed in incidents of violence in which police brutality was a major factor in causing their deaths and in which the police later absolved themselves of any responsibility. Brazil should especially resolve its investigation into the disappearance and death of Amarildo De Souza Lima and offer reparations to his family if the investigation concludes that the state is responsible for his death, as signaled by the preliminary investigation. This case has attracted a high degree of attention from international and domestic media networks, and protesters around the world have adopted it as an example of repressive police tactics towards the poor in Brazil. Resolving the case will help Brazil to rescue the endangered UPP program and to send a message to all Brazilian police officers of the unacceptability of police violence. It may also offer some degree of closure for De Souza’s widow and her family, as well as official recognition of the state’s violation of an individual’s human rights. However, in order to clarify the events in this case and to determine where responsibility lies, Brazilian authorities need to begin first by locating De Souza’s remains so that his family can give him a funeral with dignity. They must then prosecute and sanction all UPP officers with any relevant connection to his disappearance and death within a reasonable length of time in order to counter allegations of impunity in cases of police brutality against marginalized populations.

Finally, Brazilian authorities should address the root causes of urban violence. The UPP program does not resolve the issue of drug trafficking, but simply relocates it to other favelas previously unaffected by this problem. Furthermore, while some urban youth may join gangs
looking for a sense of community or adventure, most would probably stay away from them if there were other legitimate opportunities to move up in society or to make money in their neighborhoods. Increased access to education and job training and improved urban infrastructure will help some young favela residents to avoid the lure of gangs, and a renewed focus on treatment of drug users, rather than prosecution, will help to diminish the threat posed by drug trafficking and addiction within certain favela communities. The efforts of Promundo and the Quilombo das Guerreiras, and other organizations like these, are also essential in working to create a safe and supportive environment in which children and youth can grow without fear of violence in either the public or private spheres.

3. The Government of Brazil and Rio de Janeiro Municipal Government should accept the permanent presence of favelas and work to further integrate them into the city.

Brazilian authorities need to recognize that the favelas are here to stay. Despite the authorities’ attempts to forcibly evict favela residents and to re-settle them in low quality apartment buildings far from the city center and from their previous places of residence, the lack of affordable housing within city limits remains a problem for many low income and middle class Brazilians. The policy of relocating favela residents to remote areas does not deal with long term problems related to high housing costs and only moves the problem to other areas, similar to the way in which the UPP program moves drug trafficking and drug abuse to previously unaffected favelas. In addition, the gentrification of pacified favelas achieves a comparable effect on favela residents in that it makes the cost of living higher for these individuals and eventually prices them outside of the local market, forcing them to seek lower costs of living in less desirable areas that are far from their workplaces and former homes.
The policy of eviction and relocation of favela residents is simply impractical and unrealistic. Rio de Janeiro has over 600 favelas with approximately 1.2 million residents, representing around 20-22% of its total population. It is not possible to relocate this many people without significant protests and conflict, and a large proportion of favela residents have lived in their communities for generations, with the origins of some favelas dating back to over one hundred years ago. Given their significant ties to their neighborhoods and pride in their houses and communities, many favela residents are hesitant to leave the areas in which they have heavily invested and lived in for years. Therefore, it makes little sense to continue forcibly evicting favela residents from their homes and offering them replacements with few or no additional benefits.

Instead, Brazilian authorities should offer more affordable housing solutions for favela residents who choose to leave their former homes and for low and middle income families. They should also work to incorporate favelas into the city and to integrate their residents into planning processes in order to assess these communities’ needs and desires. This should be done by evaluating the needs of each community from the perspective of different groups, including women and youth, by extending access to public services, and by providing official recognition or formal titles to the land that favela residents have occupied for decades.

Favelas continue to exist despite decades of repression and active exclusion by the Brazilian state and society. Nevertheless, as seen in the examples in previous chapters, if given the chance and the necessary tools, their residents are capable of demonstrating agency, calling attention to violations of their rights as Brazilian citizens, and obtaining a response from state and

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international authorities. Brazil has also proven itself capable of making significant changes to improve the lives of millions of its citizens as the country has grown in political power and economic strength, but significant gaps remain to be filled. Thus, Brazil should take advantage of this historic opportunity to turn away from its legacy of discrimination and marginalization, to begin to incorporate favela residents more fully into civic life and society in Rio de Janeiro, and to make the country more inclusive for all of its citizens.
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