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LEARNING AFFECT, EMBODYING RACE: YOUTH, BLACKNESS, AND NEOLIBERAL EMOTIONS IN LATINO NEWARK¹

Abstract

This article examines everyday constructions of racial subjects, the affective worlds of those subjects, and the potential material consequences behind emotional ethos that are oftentimes in alignment with the interests of state and market imperatives. Under neoliberalism, there has been an intensification in the cultural standardization and organization of feelings and sentiments (Haskell 1985). I examine how feelings and sentiments intersect with everyday evaluations of racial difference and processes of racial learning, particularly among Latin American migrant and U.S.-born Latino youth. What do individuals' affective worlds tell us about multi-scale experiences of race, racial ideologies, and racialization practices? What kinds of emotional work do embodied practices of learning race require? How does becoming a transnational racial subject in the United States alter one's affective world and perspectives on the emotional subjectivities of racialized others? I approach these questions by drawing from ethnographic materials gathered from fieldwork conducted in public high schools in the Puerto Rican area of North Broadway and the largely Brazilian Ironbound, two predominantly Latino neighborhoods in Newark, New Jersey, between 2001 and 2008. To a lesser extent, I also draw from research conducted in private and public high schools in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, and Santurce, Puerto Rico, over several months in 2004, 2005, and 2006. I argue that Latin American and Latino populations in urban areas of the United States navigate unfamiliar racial situations through the development of a quotidian emotional epistemology; that is, through the deployment of a set of rules and assumptions about affect and its adequate expression, interpretations of how others feel or should feel, and the creation or performance of an affective persona. As I demonstrate in the essay, these rules and assumptions are informed by transnational racial ideologies, social practices

around performances of Blackness, socioeconomic hierarchies, and expectations of belonging on multiple scales, like the neighborhood, nation state, and the market. I am particularly attentive to how Latin American migrant and U.S.-born Latino youth engage in a process of racial learning that renders them "street therapists" dedicated to observing and correcting "defective" forms of Blackness, developing appropriate feeling rules, and hesitantly embracing a docility valued in an exploitative service sector economy. [race, affect, Latinos, racial democracy, Puerto Ricans, Brazilians]

INTRODUCTION

The ghetto kids are just the wild kids you see in the hallways, with their baggy jeans, large shirts, chains ... acting hard [AY: When you say 'act hard,' what do you mean?] Like you have to be serious ... not very friendly ... to show you're tough, that they can't step on you ... It's just how they feel inside. If you look behind the surface, there is sadness. They try to fit in and be accepted. But they act hard sometimes for protection, not because they're really like that. It's a way for them to be cool, to pretend they're tough, even if they're not sure why they have to be. But I also know that some of these kids, specially the immigrant kids that just got here, they do that because they're afraid of Blacks. That's the main reason. Maybe they never saw a Black person like the ones here or ... maybe they were picked on. They don't know how to act, so they're just serious and stay out of trouble. But it's a change you notice. You know Robert, right? He's from Ecuador, bilingual program? He was a small skinny kid and people made fun of him, but he was a sweet, friendly kid. Now you see him and he's like a different person ... I don't know, he used to be shy and quiet and now ...

he's still quiet, but in a more, you know, like he's in his own world and doesn't want anyone to talk to him. I personally think he's very depressed and wouldn't be surprised if he quit school and just disappeared one day.

Emília Ribeiro, Brazilian student at a high school in Newark, NJ

An outgoing and thoughtful student who had arrived from Brazil as a young child in the early-1990s, Emília Ribeiro, offered an insightful depiction of the pressure some migrant students experienced to “act hard” when I interviewed her the fall of 2004. Like other Latin American students whom I met in two predominantly Latino neighborhoods in Newark, New Jersey, between 2001 and 2008, Emília attended to the style involved in descriptions of “ghetto kids” and, more significant, to emotive and affective transformations that Americanization required. As suggested in Emília’s narrative. The distinction between “acting hard,” as a protective performance seemed almost objectless and lacking focus, while “being hard,” was an almost unalterable quality attributed to an African American psyche. Like other U.S.-born Latino and Latin American migrants in Newark, Emília identified “fear” as the primary emotion that guided Latin American youth’s reading of African Americans.

While I return to a more thorough analysis and contextualization of Emília’s statement in the next sections, this introductory vignette anchors some of the main theoretical goals of this essay. The present essay seeks to expand scholarly approaches to affect, the anthropology of the body, and racialization. It examines the nexus among everyday constructions of racial subjects, the affective worlds of those subjects, and the potential material consequences of an emotional ethos that is oftentimes regulated by the interests of state and market. I consider how the body serves as a broader conceptual lens to examine how affect and emotion are produced and experienced within the paradigm of racialization. Some questions I consider in this exploration are: What do individuals’ affective worlds tell us about multi-scale experiences of race, racial ideologies, and racialization practices? What kind of emotional work do embodied practices of learning race require? How does becoming a racial subject in the United States and transnationally alter one’s affective world and perspectives on the emotional and racial subjectivities of others? Under neoliberalism, there has been an intensification in the cultural standardization and organization of feel-

ings and sentiments (Haskell 1985). This essay considers how this organization of feelings and sentiments intersect with everyday evaluations of racial difference and on going processes of “racial learning,” particularly among Latin American migrant and U.S.-born Latino youth. Racial learning is here understood as a behavior-contingent aspect of social action and a phenomenological experience, as well as a production of bodies through everyday disciplining and normalization in service of state and market goals (cf. Foucault 1977).

The ethnographic materials presented here are drawn from fieldwork conducted in two predominantly Latino neighborhoods in Newark, New Jersey, between 2001 and 2008, as well as in private and public high schools in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, and Santurce, Puerto Rico, over several months in 2004, 2005, and 2006.² The two largest Latino neighborhoods in Newark, North Broadway and the Ironbound, consist of predominantly Puerto Rican and Brazilian populations, respectively. I examine how Latin American and Latino populations in urban areas of the United States navigate unfamiliar racial situations through the development of a quotidian emotional epistemology; that is, through a set of rules and assumptions about affect and its adequate expression, interpretations of how others feel or should feel, and the creation or performance of an affective persona. These rules and assumptions are informed both by U.S. and transnational racial ideologies, social practices around performances of Blackness, socioeconomic hierarchies, and expectations of belonging on multiple scales, like the neighborhood, nation state, and the market. I am particularly attentive to how Latin American migrant and U.S.-born Latino youth engage in a process of racial learning that render them street therapists of sorts. In Newark, a majority Black city, Latinos filtered race through complicated affective lenses that also drew from Latin American views of racial democracy and what I have elsewhere referred to as a “cartography or racial democracy” (Ramos-Zayas 2008 a,b).

The internalization of racial systems, or learning how race operates in particular contexts, requires the suppression of some emotions and the performance or expression of others. Racial learning is transacted through feelings and transgressions in practice that may lead to unpleasant emotional dissonance, as feelings are produced by and give meaning to racial encounters between individuals and among individuals and context-based racial systems. A critical question

here is: How can we examine affect within the paradigm of racialization when, as it is, racial projects oftentimes produce a racial subjectivity that is affectively excessive and emotionally overdetermined? Inspired by Stoler's "colonial intimacy" and Omi and Winant's "racialization" theory, I argue that studies of the anthropology of the body ought to shift theoretical discussions from culture and "self" to a focus on a socially grounded and politically situated "personhood" that transcends an interiority-focused subjectivity to take into account racial and colonial projects in their everyday manifestations.³ This paradigmatic shift allows us to be vigilant of the ways in which quotidian racialization practices are involved in the regulation of affect for material state and market gains. Approaching what I understand as an embodied racialized affect, in this way, allows us to focus on the complexity of an interiority that always-already occupies a social and political space; a claim to personhood in the midst of social determinism. Rather than flattening the affect of the racialized poor, an embodied racialized affect centers on how the poor and marginal examine their affective and sentimental experiences, enter social consciousness through affect, and might explain conditions of social subordination accordingly.⁴

I am not in search of the "essence" of emotional, passionate, or attitudinal modes of consciousness; nor do I want to delineate their dynamics as if they were independent of the circumstances in which they occur. In this essay, a phenomenological approach is tempered by the political economic context in which affect is grounded, so that a "natural" or "intimate" attitude is not extrapolated from the always-already racial projects in which they are enconced. Like Vincent Crapanzano (2004:103–110), I question the possibility of a full phenomenological reduction given that we are embedded in a linguistically-endorsed universe that prevents a pre-reflexive moment that is fully divorced from its endorsement. While affect may have its own linguistic and cultural logic, it is based on experienced of a socially encumbered personhood, not simply a cultural interior-focused "self." A focus on structure in relation to phenomenology allows the possibility not only for different modes of consciousness to be produced in different linguistic or cultural contexts, but to recognize that these differences are grounded and constitutive of particular political economic and historical conditions of inequality. Approaching affect through a racialization paradigm sheds light on

an anthropology of the body by foregrounding a dynamic perspective on space and context (Lefebvre 1991).

By bridging discourses about affect, on the one hand, and the phenomenology of those affective states, on the other, one is able to examine the collective level of state construction of a racialized affect and the individual, visceral and experiential phenomenology of affect in everyday life (cf. Jenkins 1991). Through an analysis of individual's visceral, intimate experiences of the material environment, perspectives on embodiment can better capture where perception begins, when it constitutes and is constituted by culture, and how the very experience of perceiving might be influenced by social location and experiences of race. Indeed, it is through the study of affect and emotion that anthropology may best be fully re-embodied (Csordas 1990; Lyon 1995).⁵

The argumentative structure of this essay is developed in three main substantive sections. First, I consider how the transition from "happy immigrant to depressed minority" is articulated through an emotional epistemology that draws from national foundational ideologies, especially the American dream, and expectations of migrants in Newark, New Jersey. Secondly, I draw from ethnographic work in Brazil and Puerto Rico, the countries of origin of many of the young people whom I met in Newark and their families, to highlight the transnational racial registries from which Latino and Latin American youth come to understand their own affective worlds in the United States. In particular, I examine how, in context of high return migration in Puerto Rico and Brazil, views of a "depressed American" are associated with having subscribed to a U.S. racial system and foregoing ideologies of racial democracy that dictate, among other things, that there is a distinction between "real racism" and other, presumably more benign, forms of racial difference. Negative affect becomes both local and transnational cornerstone of a structure of feelings that is fundamental to rendering transnational neoliberal subjects emotionally legible. Finally, I turn to the most explicitly material consequences of embodied racialized affect by looking at the emotional requirements which neoliberalism demands of labor and which young people begin to prepare for even before formally entering the job market. Inspired by Arlie Hochschild's (1983) concept of emotional labor, I identify a process that requires Latino and Latin American youth to conceive Americanization in light of cultivating racial learning and refining

affect, while selectively internalizing certain feeling rules, including engaging in a process of “making Blackness right.” This emotionally laborious process requires an embodiment of urbanism that rejects a “defective” Blackness, associated with “resentful” or “angry” African Americans in the United States, while embodying cosmopolitan traits that are in alignment with the interests of neoliberalism. In this final section, thus, discussions of emotional labor are extended to young people who have barely entered the labor market, but whose emotional capital is being measured according to their prospective roles as consumers and workers in potentially exploitative service sector work.

FROM HAPPY IMMIGRANT TO DEPRESSED MINORITY: AN EMOTIONAL EPISTEMOLOGY OF RACE IN NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

As shown in the introductory vignette, Emília adopted a psychological lens to trace Robert’s transformation from happy-go-lucky and almost naïve to somber, “depressed,” and hardened. This is the transformation from “happy immigrant” to “depressed minority” that Americanization in urban United States entailed. Learning negative affect has become a form of racial learning for many of the recently arrived immigrants from Latin America who have settled in Newark, New Jersey.⁶ Being able to be dark and having a different public mood was key to gaining urban competency and letting go of the folksy or backward ways associated with being an “immigrant” in the urban, majority-minority city (Ramos-Zayas 2008a). Among the poor and working class, letting go of that happy or cheery emotional style was an emblematic of a particular kind of Americanization that, in fact, reversed a mainstream U.S. social urging to be peppy, sunny, and cheery. It has been noted that contemporary emotional norms in the United States favor a “good cheer” (Kotchemidova 2005) or “compulsory happiness” (in Wilkins 2008) that represents a cooling of emotions and discourage any emotional intensity by expecting a sociability and exchanged of pleasant-ries as the everyday standard of social interactions in dominant middle-class (white) contexts (Stearns and Stearns 1989).⁷ Among U.S.-born Latinos (and perhaps other U.S. domestic minorities) and, to various degrees, among Latin American migrants, it has been the embodiment of various emotions coded as “depression”—as well as “anger,” “aggression,” and other forms of negative affect that I

examine elsewhere (Ramos-Zayas forthcoming)—what has operated as critique of racialization practices in the United States and re-racialization experiences in transnational contexts of origin, including Brazil and Puerto Rico in my research. Rendering someone “depressed” becomes a form of tacit structural critique because it points to what is lacking or how things should be different. After all, why would a kid like Robert (to whom Emília refers in her comment), who had hailed from the Ecuadorian highlands where he and his family had endured scarcity and marginality not be happy, cheery, and grateful to “America,” the Land of Opportunity? Under these conditions, how could Robert’s “depression” be legitimate or justified?

In Emília’s statement, there are various ways in which depression becomes a structural symbol that suggests the process by which an “immigrant” embodies race in the United States and effectively learns (cognitively and viscerally/phenomenologically) a new racial system. As Emília suggested, among Latin American migrants like Roberto, race is embodied through a performance of Blackness that involves not only wearing a certain style of clothes, but performative alterations in one’s affect; in particular, a shift from a happiness associated with naïvete and even backwardness to a “depression” associated with hardened but also cosmopolitan urban life. In the United States, negative affect in general, and depression in particular, has been highly medicalized (Burr and Chapman 2004). Emília’s insinuation that Robert may one day drop out of school and “disappear” points to how this pathological approach to negative affect is an important aspect of how some racial subjects are rendered legible. Depathologizing negative affect might allow for an examination of how global politics and history manifest themselves at the level of lived, embodied experiences (Cvetkovich 2007:461). Nevertheless, in everyday emotional epistemologies, as individuals imagine how others must feel, depression simultaneously serves as a racializing pathology, a measure of racial learning, and structural critique.⁸

To view migrant kids who “act hard” solely in terms of negative affect would be an incomplete assessment of the emotional epistemology manifested in Emília’s quote. This negative affect, which Emília described as “depression,” must be situated in the context of Newark, New Jersey, a predominantly African American city, associated with urban decay, corruption, gang violence, and unemployment.⁹ While space constraints prevent me from including an adequate history of post-

industrial Newark, it is imperative to emphasize that, in the U.S. national imaginary, Newark has been produced around images of violence, riots and criminality that do not admit the complexity of the city, a city where networks of care, conviviality, and solid community involvement are plentiful. Thus, images of “Newark” are racially saturated, and invariably invoke “angry” blacks in ways that preserve white supremacy and create a totalizing sense of what being African American is.¹⁰ This context exists in contradistinction to a dominant state project that involves reinforcing the foundational mythology of the American Dream (Ramos-Zayas 2003). In relation to migrants, an attitude of gratefulness has been cultivated by the nation state around the image of a “super citizen migrant” (Honig 2001) who is more of a citizen than domestic minorities would ever be.¹¹ This reinforces the American dream mythology, notwithstanding economic crises and impossible upward mobility expectations. Among Latinos, those who cheerfully take on heavy work loads and oppressive work conditions, *without complaining or denouncing injustices*, are counterposed to those who are viewed as lazy, welfare dependent, or who have a “bad attitude” (i.e., who complain, appear “resentful,” and denounce injustice in some way). Thus, as a state project, cheerfulness and appreciativeness can be exploited to serve market goals and interests in creating a tractable labor in a way that “bad attitude” might not be.

An important component of neoliberal policies—including the privileging of corporate and real estate interests, gentrification and urban development through cultural venues, and aiming to attract middle and upper middle classes to the city through the “Newark Renaissance” (Newman 2004)—is that they foster new definitions of “good citizenship.” These definitions of good citizenship oftentimes disconnect the citizen from the state and establish personal responsibility and emotional adequacy as the main qualities necessary for improving urban life (Maskovsky 2001). In Newark, African American Mayor Cory Booker embodies, to various degrees, the success, respectability, and psycho-social adequacy to which a predominantly Black city like Newark should aspire to combat its aggressive national image. Booker’s public persona and image, as it has been circulated and promoted in Newark and nationwide, illustrates the critical characteristics expected of a quintessential neoliberal subject. These characteristics, rather than centering on pro-

fessional achievements, public accomplishments, or even lifestyle, are, in fact, more directly concerned with overall emotional adequacy, quasi-spiritual values, and appropriate affect. Elected in 2006 and re-elected in 2010, Cory Booker ran on a platform that stressed “safety” and “development” as key concerns, while characterizing his government in light of accountability and transparency, in contradistinction to the levels of corruption of the Sharpe James’ administration (Kocieniewski 2006).¹² Throughout his campaigns and election, Booker was described as an “Ivy League-schooled, Buddhist-inspired, vegetarian major who was raised in an affluent Bergen County suburb.”¹³ A guest on an episode of *The Oprah Winfrey Show* dedicated to the spiritual quest for one’s life passions, it was Booker’s emotive and spiritual persona, not his urban policies that gained him national recognition and acclaim. Booker has, in effect, learned how to do Blackness right. This set of psycho-social and quasi-spiritual attributes of a good citizen, although largely under-theorized, are critical to visions of an effective neoliberal city (Ramos-Zayas forthcoming). These affective, quasi-spiritual, and psychological practices have become critical to the differentiation of (neoliberal) citizens, regardless of actual legal status in the United States

In Newark, many U.S.-born and immigrant Latinos acquired racial knowledge through the continuous scrutiny of how African Americans (or even U.S.-born Puerto Ricans) were institutionally racialized and how these U.S.-born minorities themselves actively assumed or rejected such racialization practices; of how such anti-Black subordination operated in historical and political contexts and impacted individual aspirations and opportunities; of how racial performances enhanced one’s cosmopolitanism, modernity, and urban competency, while redefining gender, sexuality, class, and generational subjectivities; and how bipolar (black/white) perspectives of race in the United States converged and diverged from configurations of “race” in one’s country of origin or ancestry. Depression and other forms of negative affect was ultimately associated not with just any form of Americanization, but with an urban Americanization associated with Blackness. Youth of color in Newark, New Jersey, but also in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, and Santurce, Puerto Rico, two secondary sites of my fieldwork, viewed “depression”—or more precisely, the presentation of a depressive or withdrawn persona—as evidence that a migrant possessed urban competency, had devel-

oped racial knowledge, and had become, in effect, Americanized. While in Newark, these characterizations were drawn in contradistinction to a cheerful, happy or friendly disposition associated with being new to the United States, naïve, or being a “Latin American hillbilly,” in Puerto Rico and Brazil the emotional shifts noted in return migrants was more complicated. At times they did signal a connection to a cosmopolitan Third World Blackness, but other times they pointed to a defective process that suggested that these migrants had bought into a U.S. racial system that in Brazil and Puerto Rico was viewed as simplistic and counterproductive and which associated race talk in the United States with a “constant complaining” attributed to African Americans or a condition in which race had become overdeterministic of individuals’ circumstances. In Brazil and Puerto Rico, these perspectives on race were, for the most part, associated with “Black America” and the embodiment of “Blackness” among return migrants.

**EMOTIONAL EPISTEMOLOGIES AND
TRANSNATIONAL RACIAL SYSTEMS:
RETURN MIGRANTS, “BLACK” AFFECT,
AND CARTOGRAPHIES OF RACIAL
DEMOCRACY IN BELO HORIZONTE,
BRAZIL, AND SANTURCE, PUERTO RICO**

The image of “Black America” in Newark is suggestive of and sometimes conflated with possessing urban competency or being Americanized, as well as viewed in terms of gendered forms of aggression (Ramos-Zayas forthcoming). What is important to note is that “Black America” has also become a set of images that are exported and modified transnationally and known to Brazilian and Puerto Rican migrants even prior to migration. Albeit from significantly different political and historical perspectives that are beyond the scope of this essay (Ramos-Zayas forthcoming), the cities of Belo Horizonte (and Minas Gerais more generally) and Santurce (and the San Juan metropolitan area more broadly) have witnessed a significant degree of migration and return migration with the U.S. northeast, including Newark, New Jersey. And have been important spaces in the re-racialization of return Brazilian and Puerto Rican migrants, respectively. While in Newark “Blackness” is associated with urban competency, cosmopolitanism and aggression in complex ways, in Latin America it is embodied in return migrants and circulated through popular conceptions of “America” as

“Black America.” In Brazil and Puerto Rico, Americanization was understood through an emotional epistemology that served as an important transnational, cosmopolitan racial project in and of itself, and was experienced in contradistinction to an enduring ideology of “racial democracy” (Freyre 1956; cf. Sheriff 2001).¹⁴

A connection between Americanization, racialization, and negative affect among Latin American populations has been cultivated in transnational contexts. In the public and private schools that served as fieldsites for the Brazil and Puerto Rico components of my research, the production of a migrant Other was rooted on a view that an emotional repertoire was established, reproduced, and altered through the process of migration and return. In both Belo Horizonte and Santurce, I identified a dominant discourse that constructed migrants returning from Brazilian and Puerto Rican areas of the United States as “emotionally defective.” These returnees oftentimes became a modified proxy for local images of American Blackness or what race in the United States “looks like.” Characterized in terms of negative affect—as being depressed, sad, gloom, detached, aggressive—return migrants were often read in Belo Horizonte and Santurce public and private schools as subjects of pop psychology analyses drawn from self-help literature; as populations in need of counseling or therapy; or as individuals who ranged from being disengaged to being narcissistic. For instance:

Alexis Rodriguez, Senior at one of the public high schools with the highest population of return migrants in Puerto Rico: “The thing is that some of them [students that come from the U.S.], they don’t want to come here. Their parents forced them or they had to come because of something else, but not because they wanted to. They don’t want to come here so they rebel. They don’t follow rules, they don’t do their work, they don’t do nothing. I think it’s mostly the guys that act that way. They get stupid, they don’t want to do work and they think they are the shit. They get this air about them. ‘I’m the shit because I came from there.’ It’s an attitude. They’re like ‘I’m from the ghetto’ and ‘I’m all that.’”

From fieldnotes (08/10/2004) taken on an exchange between three Brazilian high school students at a Belo Horizonte public school. This is a school that a few of the students I met in

Newark had attended before migrating to the U.S.: Mariela, Renata, and Ana Paula commented on how the most recently arrived student, Marcelo, would probably not be interested in being interviewed for my project, because he was very withdrawn. Nobody knew much about him, he kept to his own. He was depressed and could not fit in. Mariela declared: "He's more American than Brazilian. The way he talks, never smiles. They oversized clothes. He really wanted to stay there, because he knew he would not belong here. It was his parents who forced him to come."

While Alexis pointed to an almost chauvinistic "attitude" he noted in Puerto Ricans who had either been born in the United States or spent a significant time there, Mariela, Renata and Ana Paula viewed Marcelo as emotionally defective, as an outcome of migration gone wrong. The fact that Marcelo's family did not appear to have significantly improved their economic condition through migration was central to this psychological reading of Marcelo. What did Marcelo, or Robert, the Ecuadorian student Emília alludes to in the Introduction, or the students who Alexis refers to above, *feel*? Discomfort in their own skin and not knowing how to approach others back home were common ways in which return migrants viewed their own experiences. They were the kids who did not know how to be and that fear of not "getting it right" was what, when expressed, became coded as "depression" in the emotional epistemologies that circulate among their more integrated peers. These returnees experienced a form of anticipatory disorientation, a constant wondering of what might happen if their actions, behavior, and appearance did not come out right. At an affective level, the possibility of humiliation and shame was a constant threat to their dignity and this condition of being indignant was situated in specific class and racial social locations. Although these conditions of being indignant are class specific, they are such a constitutive aspect to a broader emotional epistemology—of discomfort, awkwardness, *et cetera*—that social location gets lost in translation and the focus becomes on questioning intent, genuineness, *et cetera*. Descriptions of disappointment with the unmet expectations of migration in both economic and intimate ways were common among Brazilian and Puerto Rican returnees who had expected to improve their economic relationship, resolve family conflicts, gain educational opportunities, *et*

cetera, yet had returned with little or nothing to show for their stay in the United States.

The significant geopolitical and historical differences between Brazil and Puerto Rico accounted for the ideological and political role that migration, in general, and return migration, in particular played in the social fabric of Belo Horizonte and Santurce, respectively.¹⁵ What is important to highlight for the purpose of this essay, however, is that when I asked students who had not migrated why they thought return migrants were depressed or withdrawn, their responses were remarkably similar in Belo Horizonte and Santurce: they claimed that these returnees not only had experienced the "real racism" of the United States but, more significantly, that they had "bought into" an U.S.-bred understanding of race and racism that could in fact *cause* depression (or resentment or anger). While rarely subscribing to facile assumptions that the United States was "more racist" than their own countries, these Brazilian and Puerto Rican youth, across class, did view race and racism in the United States as qualitatively different in ways capable of directly impacting, not so much institutional racism, but how affect was manifested and embodied. Particularly critical to discussions of negative affect in Belo Horizonte and Santurce was the distinction most individuals drew between a "real racism" associated with the United States and a Latin American racism that was presumably "less real."¹⁶

While it was clear to these young people that structural racism existed (e.g., police brutality, the predominance of the Black poor, etc.), they usually did not see as strong a connections between institutional forms of racism and those more overt, quotidian, or visceral forms. For instance, when I asked a Brazilian student at a public school in Belo Horizonte whether she thought that racist slurs could hurt people, she replied: "If the person is poor or their situation [wellbeing] is depending on that person [who uttered the slur], yes. But if you're rich, what would you care what other people call you? It's just a name." In Puerto Rico, a student at a public high school in Santurce remarked: "It may hurt their feelings, but if you don't let them know [that you're hurt by their racist comments], you're not giving them the satisfaction. It really doesn't matter. It's all about how you react and stay positive. You cannot get resentful ... you'd go crazy!" These distinctions presupposed intense moments of emotional management. They enabled particular

constructions of racism in the United States as both “more real” (than the one manifested in Latin America) and more overdeterministic (even humor-less) in everyday interactions. In redrawing the parameters of what constituted *racismo de verdad* (or *verdadeiro racismo*, in Portuguese), on the one hand, and other forms of racism, discussions revolved about a question of sincerity, or being able to discern between the truth of the feeling and the appearance of the feeling behind a particular racial situation or behavior. A concern with sincerity and, likewise, with authenticity located race on behaviors, practices, and sentiments that were premised on distinctions in trust and intent (cf. John Jackson 2006).

Gabriela (student at a private high school in Belo Horizonte): Here we also have some upper-class people who pretend that they are from the favela. [AY: Really? Why do you think they do that?] I don't understand why they have to pretend they are poor. Maybe they think it's fashionable to be poor. They claim that their sneakers are fake, when they are the real expensive brand. It's the reverse of what you'd expect! They call it favela chic [laughed].

The “favela” in Brazil or areas associated with Puerto Rican Blackness—like “Piñones,” “el caserío,” “la barriada”—served as sites of contestations and reformulations of a racial hegemony in a similar way as did the U.S. “ghetto.” The very disruptions engendered by these contestations relied upon the discursive split between globalization, in terms of system of capital allocation and inequality, on the one hand, and particular localities that symbolize authenticity and valorization of alternative forms of cultural capital, especially conceived as “the street,” “the ghetto,” “the projects,” and so on, on the other. “The ghetto” has become an international space, a space as central to images of the United States as the more iconic touristic sites officially exported by U.S. tourism industry to other parts of the world, although the glamorization of the ghetto ultimately concealed the everyday corporeal dangers faced by its inhabitants (cf. P. Johnson 2003; Forman 2002). These were ideological spaces, not simply context, but the producer and product of social relations (cf. Lefebvre 1991), including racializing practices of defective embodied forms in transnational contexts.¹⁷

What local ideological goals does faking poverty serve in Santurce and Belo Horizonte?

A nationalist goal that preserves foundational myths of racial democracy by focusing on Blackness as not only symbol of oppression, but as marketable commodity without much structural or historical resonance. Young people in both public and private schools in Belo Horizonte and Santurce remarked on what they view as “fake poverty” in ways that suggested that selective identification with the marginalized was a strategic requirement of a Third World cosmopolitanism. Nevertheless, although in some ways racial discrimination was acknowledged, there were numerous references to individuals who actively tried to learn to perform “Blackness” (in its commercial forms, related to fashion, music, and style) even if they were not phenotypically considered “Black” or very dark-skinned to really frame a particular instance as “real racism” rather than “pretend racism.” In the following quotes, the focus is constantly shifting around who the target of racism was. Racism against Blacks is acknowledged, but also blackness is diversified by emphasizing a spatial and cultural complexity—for instance, being “from Piñones,” showing solidarity with “rastafari,” or equating Black with “Dominican,” in the case of Puerto Rican youth.

Frances (public school, Puerto Rico): I've noticed that overall there's a lot of racism against blacks. People saying things like 'monkey,' stuff like that. Some people take it as a joke. It's not only with people from the [Virgin] Islands, but also with Puerto Ricans who are black. I feel like I'm black, even though I'm not very dark-skinned. Because my mother is black and I consider myself black. Maybe it has to do with being from Piñones ... I chose to put "Rastafari" on my senior t-shirt, instead of my name. I've seen that in universities too, that it's an identification with Black movements from the Caribbean. I think that those people that are Rastafari are very patriotic, they want Puerto Rico to be free. It's a mixture, they are Rastafari and they are nationalist. I see other people who have that conscience too. I see that in people coming from New York, from the U.S. You see people saying 'I'm Dominican, I'm black.' I think it's because there was so much injustice there that ... you know. But it's also a problem to say that Blacks are discriminated against. Because you see a lot of prejudice by blacks against blacks.

Mariela: You see all this construction going on around here? All those workers are Dominican.

[AY: *Why do you think that is?*] I think it's in the heritage. I read this work by a psychologist that said that it had to do with the type of indigenous population we had here. The indigenous population here was different from those in the Dominican Republic ... The Tainos here had everything accessible. They had the golden nuggets in the river, everything accessible, so they didn't have to work hard for anything. They had everything they needed right next to them.

Vanessa: *Yeah, even back then they were just happy, not bugged down by those [racial] differences. [Reference to a Swedish study of 80 thousand countries that claimed that Puerto Rico was "the happiest country in the world."]*

Renata [public school, Brazil] commented regarding the Affirmative Action-like quotas begun in Brazilian public universities: "There are more Blacks here now than ever. Everybody wants to be Black to get into the university! ... You hear someone saying 'I'm Black' and I just don't see that person as Black. Maybe they do feel Black or maybe they're just saying that, to feel special."

General perception that Blackness in Latin America "felt" different than the image these youths had of the experiences of African Americans in the United States. While racism was acknowledged among students in both Brazil and Puerto Rico, the targets of racism were less readily identifiable partly because of the still significant tendency to focus not only on color, but more significantly on appearance, socioeconomics, and spatial and symbolic markers, including "looking Black," "being from Piñones," or identifying as "Rastafari." Most Latin American migrants, and many U.S.-born Latino youth, insisted that "Blackness" was predominantly a signifier of skin color, phenotype, and cultural or folkloric practices, not primarily an emblem of structural subordination.¹⁸ Renata's quote was suggestive of how claiming Blackness as such would not be an issue as long as it conferred benefits. In the conversation between Vanessa and Mariela, happiness and other positive affects in Latin America was implicitly counter-posed to complaining, which was also equated with depression and other negative affects. In fact, happiness and humor became a moral sentiment implicated in the creation of certain styles of political order. Contempt toward those who complained, including individuals who

had gained racial consciousness associated with U.S. minorities, was acted as mechanism for ranking people based on their affect. At times it seemed that, unless racism was expressed as open disgust, not just contempt, it did not really count; being the object of someone's disgust rendered racism physiological.

The question of Afro-Latino or Afro-Brazilian identities and Black-Latino solidarity was of central interest (and puzzlement) to me. Through my fieldwork in Newark, Belo Horizonte, and Santurce, I was interested in finding out how dark-skinned youth position themselves in relation to African Americans and blackness more generally. Did Afro-Latin American social movements impact their daily lives and consciousness?¹⁹ In my interviews with Brazilian youth in Newark and Belo Horizonte, only two students—as it turned out, one in each city—identified as "Black" and deployed an Afro-Brazilian pride and solidarity language. Interestingly, the friends of both of these students challenged their "Black" self-identification; they simply did not feel that these individuals "looked black" and, in the case of the Belo Horizonte student, his classmates accused him of wanting to be black because it was "trendy," particularly in light of affirmative action discussions going on at the time. In the case of Puerto Ricans in Newark, one young woman, a student in the bilingual program who had recently arrived from Puerto Rico and was regularly confused for African American. This student developed a salient, gendered identification to approach her self-positioning; she would oftentimes enjoy the attention she got from African American boys in her school and ended up dating one of them, while explaining that African American women were "jealous" of her and were "busca pleitos" (prone to fighting). Among the Santurce youth, Blackness took the form described by Frances above; it was situated in folkloric and spatial terms, based on following a "Rastafari" identity or living in Loiza or Piñones, areas associated with Afro-Caribbean arts and folklore, though not necessarily with explicit struggles for racial justice and empowerment; these perspectives on race were also complicated with the association of blackness with Dominican migration to Puerto Rico.

The cartography of racial democracy which I begin to elaborate here is helpful in trying to make sense of the unexpectedly disjointed racial positionality of students who self-identified as Afro-Latino in some way. For one, racial identity in these context required a very deliberate and

self-conscious expression and, even when markers of music taste, style, or language were mastered, they were also socially questioned. Moreover, in the case of Belo Horizonte and Santurce, the instability of race was highlighted by a continuous shift from black–white racial dyads to multiple forms of constructing race through language that moved between dyadic and spectrum racial configurations (cf. Duany 1994; Godreau 2008; Sheriff 2001). This is not to eliminate the possibility of a pan-African consciousness among youth in Newark, Belo Horizonte or Santurce, but only to suggest that such consciousness happened under very delicate and particular circumstances and were not necessarily manifested as enduring alliances or affiliations.

The tendency to perceive race as a physical property, personal possession, or emotional essence at times obscured the character of race as an aspect of social relations and power inequalities. The closest Blackness was to being staged, planned, and consumed and contained within a language of emotional and psychological pathology, the more it served as cultural capital for Latin American and Latino youth both in Latin America and the United States. In this sense, Latinos viewed African Americans not only (or even primarily) in light of a dominant criminality discourse, but in relation to psychiatric labels—for example, passive-aggressive, depressed, lacking self-esteem, being violent, harboring resentment from childhood experiences, et cetera. This was also how Americanization was viewed in the countries of origin in relation to return migrants.

While a characteristic of the contemporary public sphere might be a denial of the body in favor of the logic of abstraction, racial learning relied on an embodied affect and emotional epistemology that, at times and in certain contexts, appeared liberatory and a source of social critique. As Habermas' examination of “phantom bodies” and the “public sphere” establishes, individuals whose embodied identities are excluded from finding expression in officially sanctioned terms seek it through the formation of “subaltern counter-publics” which rely on “hidden transcripts” that run parallel and counter to the official transcript (Scott 1992). At a phenomenological and visceral level, longing served as an underside of depression.

Cristina (public school, Puerto Rico): I was the happiest in New York. Because my whole life is there. Because I am part Dominican, and I also consider me part Puerto Rican, but I represent

myself to be from New York. That's part of my life and I'll never forget it. Every time I go back there, I feel like 'yeah, this is home.' ... When I moved to the South Bronx, it was Black people, Jamaican people, you know, there we were all together ... I think Dominicans and Puerto Ricans got along better than here, because there they were all immigrants. In the U.S. you see people of all places, so they are used to that.” When Cristina moved back to Santurce, the thing she missed the most was “having a group of Latin peoples like I used to do in New York ... When you migrate from another country, you have to establish yourself to those rules, you know? [When I returned to Puerto Rico] they saw me as a black girl coming from New York.”

Central to Cristina's remarks are her memories of anti-Dominican prejudice in Puerto Rico and oftentimes tense relationships between Dominicans and Puerto Ricans in the United States (Duany 1994). This forms part of Cristina's own “cognitive baggage” (Bloch 1992; Cecilia McCallum 2005)—that is, the practices which structure apprehension of social difference and that subjects bring to and take away from social interactions and remember in other contexts. These memories of significant events are embodied as racial knowledge that may or may not shape present-time interactions for Cristina, but which continued to define her own affective experience.

The emotional epistemology through which the young people with whom I spoke in Belo Horizonte and Santurce emphasized the connection between “Americanization” and Blackness was thus mediated through a perceived negative affect attributed to returned migrants. According to this emotional epistemology, returned migrants were withdrawn, somber, and depressed as a result of encountering “real racism” in the United States and embracing the impact of this racism affectively. For return migrants like Cristina, however, the phenomenological experience of the migration process was quite different and they often disdained their own integration into both host *and* homeland countries. For them affect appeared as a stance for social critique.

While challenging ideas of immigrant passivity and backwardness, the transformation from “happy immigrant” to “depressed minority” unfolded in alignment with the material exigencies of urban neoliberalism and the creation of productive workers and consumers. Developing an

appropriate emotional style—the one that strikes the body knowledge and balance to navigate a racialized Americanization and market expectations—was related to the capacity to being attuned to the emotional needs of the market. Thus an internal emotional alignment (Bourdieu’s habitus and Merleu-Ponty’s perception) in everyday social contexts was imperative to the process by which working-class youths of color were tacitly required to perform a great deal of emotional labor (Hochschild 1983) in the low-end service sector jobs for which they were destined under neoliberalism. In a predominantly Black city like Newark, this urban “emotional regime” (Reddy 1997) required that Latinos manifested negative affect as evidence of no longer being an “immigrant,” while still avoiding an over identification with African Americans. This was a process of holding on to marketable expressions of affect. In this sense, the racial projects of the U.S. nation-state were always-already projects of controlling the emotions of subordinate populations, of disciplining into racial subjectivity not only in the official realm of political institutions, but in the regulation of the most intimate, visceral, phenomenological quotidian forms of existence.

**NEOLIBERAL-FRIENDLY EMOTIVE
SUBJECTS: EMBODYING AFFECTIVE
LABOR AND “DOING BLACKNESS RIGHT”**

“Se busca mesera con buena presencia” [“Seeking waitress with good appearance”] Handwritten sign on the windows of an Ecuadoran restaurant in Newark, NJ.

The inscription upon certain bodies of disciplines of self-control, particularly affective control, and practices of group discipline are often tied up with the interests of state and the market (Appadurai 1996:198; Hochschild 1983). Situating affect in state construction of racial subjects is an element of a social ethos that has to be critical to any anthropological theorizing of the body. Conceiving the body as an interpretive framework of culture or focusing on a symbols and meanings approach to intimate and social worlds cannot fully capture the powerful analytic framework of state and political realities. State construction of racial subject takes place not only in traditional political institutions, but through everyday processes of learning how race operates and appropriate expression of sentiments and emotion. Transnational migrants approached domestic U.S.

minorities and the process of becoming U.S. racialized subjects themselves with trepidation (cf. Waters 1999). They found themselves subscribing to emotional styles that allowed both a display of urban competency and an alignment with market demands for a particular form of emotional labor (Hochschild 1983). “Buena presencia,” while indexing particular class and race locations, also suggests that a good worker in the United States is someone who possesses the fine-tuned, calibrated emotional style that navigated “docility” and nonaggressiveness, while also embracing cosmopolitanism and savvy. This is the emotional style that would appeal to the affluent suburban and metropolitan whites to whom the “Newark Renaissance,” in all its focus on cultural events, ethnic cuisine, and high culture performances, aimed to attract during the years of my fieldwork. In this sense, states and market orchestrate racial projects through the regulation (and induced selfregulation) of affect and come to constitute a politics of embodied racialized affect.

Hinted throughout this essay is the idea that state and market interests generate tacit, indirect mechanisms or affective meta-sentiments (Myers 1986) that go, in most instances, largely unacknowledged in everyday racial encounters and in expressions of public feelings. Many scholars have considered the impact of the rise of capitalism (and neoliberalism)—particularly on what capitalism requires of labor—on changes in emotional styles and sensibilities (Hume 1739; Illouz 2007; Hirschman 1998; Weber 1958; Elias 1982). The control of feelings has increased across historical time and has experienced qualitative alterations across emotional regimes (Reddy 1997). Capitalism produces a particular sentimentality and affect that govern social life and interactions; indeed, significant emotional work is done through capitalism (Hirschman 1988; Weber 1958; Raymond Williams 1977). An embodied anthropology, therefore, ought to remain vigilant to the degree of accord in the nature of affective communication among multiple states and political sources—what has been termed meta-sentiment (Myers 1986), emotional regime (Reddy 1997), or emotional capitalism (Illouz 2007)—and how these forms of affect sediment competing counter discourses of race and racial difference in quotidian practices.

Raymond Williams (1977:134) coined the term *structure of feelings* to describe the interpretative strategies that produce meaning and values as they are actively lived and felt and exist at the “edge of semantic availability,” and which are often not

located within a formalized, classified institutional formation. In this essay, I have identified a structure of feelings that is interpreted through emotional epistemologies in multiple local and transnational locations and which organizes the interactions among migrants, U.S. minorities, and the durability of white privilege in majority–minority urban areas.²⁰ This resonates with Bourdieu’s (1977, 1990, 1998) conception of structuring structures, because in practice they are all lived experiences that change not according to rigid parameters or static categories, but in relation to how individuals see themselves, the world around them, the spaces they occupy, and the people and institutions with whom they interact in visceral, phenomenological ways. Contextualized in this way, communications include symbolic acts and practices—such as readings of “depression,” dress style and mannerisms—that establish a particular affective tone.

In the case of Newark, a predominantly Black city, whiteness operates by disciplining poor and working-class migrants of color, particularly Latinos, to carve a space as a distinct kind of minority, one that cannot attain the privileges of white Americans, but also cannot cultivate a solidarity with African Americans. While being an “immigrant” is a bad thing, being the wrong kind of minority is oftentimes worse, causing great anxiety of not “getting it right” and experiencing anticipatory disorientation. Many Latin American migrants and U.S.-born Latinos have engaged in a process of “doing Blackness right,” as part of an embodied racial learning and in response to visceral and structural aspects of their affective worlds and reflection on that world. “Doing Blackness right” involved overlooking similarities with African Americans in terms of residential segregation, occupational and educational neglect by the state, and equivalent degrees of economic and political marginality, while emphasizing distinctions in affect or psychological makeup. It was the work of a creative imagination, of struggling and creating oneself with and against the limits of neoliberal desires. This is the ultimate way of creating suitable workers from a racialization project that involves controlling affect and naturalizing rules of emotive display.

The socialization of body and emotions, on which the process of racial learning is premised, operates to make some individuals more vulnerable to the effects of emotional dissonance, suppression, and display rules that are aligned with market needs for an emotional labor-dependent

entry level labor market (Syed 2008:192). “Doing blackness right” requires a calibration of knowledge that dictate the kinds and limits of the embodiment of a racialized affect; this entails the capacity to know and know what not to know, simultaneously, and in multiple (seemingly contradictory) contexts like the streets of “inner-city” neighborhoods, the market, school, or country of origin. It involved making a palatable copy of an otherwise “defective” Blackness, so that Blackness among Latin Americans and Latinos was emblematic of Americanization in a neoliberally friendly, cosmopolitan way. Indeed, this process of racial experimentation was central to the constitution of a neoliberally friendly racialized subject. The process of “doing Blackness right” is a critical aspect of the transformation of the body physical through physical labor and productivity–capital accumulation that Marx and Engles describe (in Lock 148). While frequently perceived as counter-hegemonic, when deployed in an emotionally adequate way, such sub-cultures do not spirit its participants away from conventional forms of social participation, but quite the contrary; “making Blackness right” in fact was used to consolidate, not devalue individual’s cultural capital (cf. Wilkins 2008:35). Some Latin American migrant youth could continue to pursue the traits associated with a U.S. “immigrant tale” under a precisely executed urban cosmopolitanism cloak, by becoming experts in the community norms of appropriate emotional displays.

In my ethnographic work, among Latin American and U.S.-born Latino youth in Newark I found that some of these young people had developed keen interpretive and observational tactics to selectively deployed Blackness as cultural practice; they had in fact become, “street therapists” (Ramos-Zayas forthcoming) who filtered their analyses of race in the United States from an imagined or experiential memory of what race in their countries of origin “felt like.”

In a conversation with Giselle, Faviola, and Emilia, the three Brazilian students undermined denunciation of Black oppression by Black and Puerto Rican students, by drawing comparisons that accentuated the presumption of racial democracy in Brazil. Giselle asked disapprovingly²¹: “Why do Blacks here have to complain so much about racism? Racism, racism, racism, that’s all they talk about! In Brazil that’s not important. Everybody gets along. We don’t have to be talking about race and this and that, you know? You have friends of all groups, real friends, like family,

because they do things that you like to do, not because they're Black or white ... or anything." Faviola and Emilia emphatically agreed: "Everybody is mixed there!" From a slightly different perspective, but also rejecting U.S. racial categories, particularly "Hispanic," Pedro, an Uruguayan student who arrived in the United States 2 years prior to our talk, commented: "I don't come here thinking that I'm less than them [white Americans]. I don't come thinking that they are superior. In that sense I'm different from some of the people here. I mean, there are times that I'm like 'Yeah, Hispanics!' [with pride] and I feel good when someone achieves things and he's a Hispanic. But I'm just me, an individual, you know." An assumption behind these comments is that African Americans were excessively "resentful" of their subordination. "Resentment," or at least its articulation, is viewed as a choice one makes based on an implicit emotional capacity. Brazilians, in particular, but many other Latin American migrants as well, insisted that a main difference between "immigrants" and African Americans was that African Americans were "resentful"—in most of the interviews resentment was defined in light of verbally or politically denouncing discrimination and subordination. These perspectives on "resentment" assumed an emotional or psychological weakness.

A focus on negative affect and the imposition of psychiatric labels coexisted and oftentimes collided with notions of "fake" and insincerity, or not being real. While sometimes associated with urban cosmopolitanism, such form of emotional darkness was cultural capital only when it was deployed very selectively, so that it did not interfere with a service sector labor market that required a "good disposition" or "Buena presencia" in its hiring practices. Embracing dark emotional styles meant sincerity (one is not fake happy), but also it came at a cost if one did not take context and situation—and hierarchical expectations of respectability—into account, a process which in itself caused significant personal dissonance. This also suggested a disdain for emotional styles that challenged U.S. conventions of "good disposition"; painful feelings were directed toward forms of self-knowledge in the new context of racial learning, not toward a denunciation of social dysfunction. Some of these forms sustained a dominant cultural capital, as "race" was turned into creativity, artistic displays, and intellectual aesthetics in one's countries of origin.²² The culturalization of Blackness was instrumental in endorsing the belief that there were multiple and fluid (albeit hier-

archically ranked) forms of Blackness, and that the status of "immigrant" or being from another country ranked a person higher, regardless of race, on the scale of desirability and marketability than being American Black. These perspectives on Blackness as "culture" diffused "race"; racism as a system of power and subordination frequently drew from transnational understandings of how "race" was engaged (or not) in Latin American countries and U.S. Latino communities.

Learning these forms of emotional and linguistic self-management was critical in establishing new patterns of social recognition and differentiation in Newark. This was particularly the case when one's identity had been premised on the belief that racial talk is "impolite" and what generates racism in the first place, as was the case for many Latin American migrants who still subscribed to ideologies akin to racial democracy (cf. Goldstein 1999; Sheriff 2001). Limited embodiment was facilitated by a cartography of racial democracy that provided Latin American migrants and even some U.S.-born Latinos with the possibility of inhabiting multiple systems of racial difference at once.

FINAL REMARKS AND FURTHER REFLECTIONS

In this essay, I have examined the intersection of racialization, affect, and the anthropology of the body, by focusing on the nexus between Americanization, racialization and re-racialization practices, and negative affect among Brazilian and Puerto Rican youth in Newark, Belo Horizonte, and Santurce. While these domestic and transnational spaces provided an emotional epistemology to render subjects affectively legible, a question that remains central to this discussion is: How do those very subjects experience, viscerally, their affect in light of these racialization practices? Moreover, in the case of an Americanization that is equated with Blackness and urban competency, how does "being ghetto" or "acting hard" really *feel* and to what degree does the expression of affect suggest individual agency versus spontaneity?

I want to return to Emilia Ribeiro, the Brazilian student who first commented on a peer's depression, as well as to Ricky Acosta, a Puerto Rican student who remembered how he used to try to "act hard" when he first arrived at the Newark high school where I met him. As is sometimes the case, Emilia's assessment of Roberto, the Ecuadorian peer who tried to "act hard," as "depressed" was never far from Emilia's own

personal history. As Emília once explained in relation to her own Americanization, when she first arrived in the United States, she developed a serious depression that was manifested as an eating disorder. Descriptions of developing eating disorders and weight related issues were surprisingly common among Brazilian migrants in Newark, and were often reflective of a “somatic mode of attention” to the body (Csordas 1983). To alleviate her depression, Emília began going to clubs while still being underage, and flirted with various jobs in a budding Newark sex industry (Ramos-Zayas 2009). Likewise, Ricky Acosta was one of the Puerto Rican students whom others viewed as “trying to act hard” or “be ghetto.” He himself acknowledges that: “I wanted to play tough, be quote-unquote ghetto. A little bit to scare the white kids. But then I met the people who are my friends now. We’re more mature now. We have jobs, we want to move out of Newark and do something for ourselves.” As I got to know Ricky better, he explained that having a “ghetto style” somewhat alleviated the prejudice to which he may have been subjected because people suspected him to be gay, even before Ricky “came out” to his closest friends. In Ricky’s case, the deployment of a ghetto identity served as a tool to gain a certain respect that eventually laid a more receptive foundation for a more open expression of his sexuality.

What does Emília’s subjective appraisal of Robert’s “depression” and “acting hard” say about Emília herself? Was Ricky’s “acting hard” instrumental or spontaneous or both? Like other “street therapists,” Emília and Ricky had personal histories that were inseparable not only from their phenomenological experience of them, but from the specific political economic contexts in which they unfolded. Despite the creativity involved in “making Blackness right,” the structural elements in which such a process is ensconced remain: Emília, Ricky, and many of the Newark residents whose voices appear here face the everyday realities of an urban renewal that privileges real estate and corporate interests over the well-being of working-class and impoverished subjects, not only in Newark. They face high levels of unemployment or, at best, a service sector employment that requires the suppression of felt emotions and simulation of unmet ones and which may contradict their very social identities in the goal of producing docile racial bodies.²³

Their ventures into a sphere of racialized “public feelings” (Cvetkovich 2007) are suggestive

of how an embodied racialized affect emerges from the managing of sentiment and emotions in the public sphere and how neoliberalism has dialectically sustained and being sustained on affective grounds. Examining affect in its alignment to the aspirations of urban neoliberalism allows us to analyze the impact of the market and class interests (the consolidation of neoliberalism at its best) on changes in cognitive style and sensibility. It foreshadows the impact of capital on people’s intimate, phenomenological experience of the material environment.

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NOTES

1. A slightly different version of this essay appeared in the *Companion to the Anthropology of Bodies/Embodiments* (Blackwell 2010), edited by Fran Mascia-Lees.

2. The fieldwork consisted mostly of extended participant-observation (beginning in 2001 and continuing on, to various levels of involvement through 2008) and life history interviews with students, parents, staff, and teachers affiliated to these schools, but also with the extended family and kinship networks of these individuals, many of whom were domestic and construction workers, shop owners, and staff at various community organizations. I also conducted thematic focus groups on topics that included “race,” “migration,” “romantic relations,” and “employment experience,” among others. The participant-observation involved going with informants to family reunions, churches, funerals, weddings, work, and witnessing their interactions with kin, local institutions, and strangers. Ethnographic fieldwork, as all methods, is imperfect; yet, it is one of the best ways of generating textured, deeply engaged data, even if not yielding data that can claim representativeness in a quantitative sense.

3. As Ann Stoler (2004) has demonstrated, a focus on “colonial intimacy” or the politics of intimacy complicates our understanding of colonial oppression and anti-colonial resistance. Colonial and imperialist projects have historically identified the intimate realm—of sexual liaisons, childrearing practices, domestic practices, and life in the private

realm more broadly—as powerful sites where colonized populations might develop strategies of anti-colonial resistance. These intimate sites offer an important complement to examinations of colonial and imperial oppression that have focused exclusively on the public realm of official metropolitan policies and governance and open the possibility to challenge limiting (male-centered) interpretations of resistance and counter-insurgency. The making of race, the management of empire, and the congruence of imperial projects about the globe have always been central constituents of the workings of the intimate domain. In relation to my project on U.S.-born Latinos and Latin American migrants in Newark, I situate this politics of intimacy in light of the racial project of the U.S. nation-state. Michael Omi and Howard Winant’s analytic framework of racialization emphasizes the ways that race or racial difference cannot be presumed to be based upon the natural characteristics of identifiable groups or the biological effects of ancestry. Rather racial difference has to be actively produced as such, and continually reproduced and transformed, so that race is always entangled in social relations and conflicts and retains an enduring (seemingly intractable) significance precisely because its forms and substantive meanings are always eminently historical and mutable (Omi and Winant 1986:64–66; De Genova 2003 and Ramos-Zayas 2003).

4. For an excellent work that undertakes this task, see Carolyn Steedman’s *Landscape for a Good Woman* (1987), a memoir on working-class life and family relations in mid-1900s England.

5. Efforts to re-embodiment anthropology have focused on how the body is not only an object to be studied in relation to culture, but is to be considered the subject of culture (Csordas 1990:5). Analyses of perception (like Merleau-Ponty’s (1962) “preobjective”) and practice (Bourdieu’s “habitus”), critical aspects of social scientific inquiry, are grounded in the body. Likewise, it is the physical involvement of self, rather than an absence of rationality, what distinguishes emotion from other kinds of cognition. There still remains the need here for an examination of a socially embodied personhood, not just self.

6. The Brazilian and Puerto Rican youth I interviewed were part of a longer historical trajectory of transnational and diasporic movements, albeit from distinctly different historical and geopolitical perspectives. Although a comprehensive discussion of Puerto Rican and Brazilian migrations to the United States is impossible due to

space constraints, I would like to highlight some of the basic features of these migrations. As colonial U.S. citizens, the early waves of Puerto Ricans arrived in Newark during the heyday of “slum clearance” in the city. In the 1950s, agricultural workers were recruited from Puerto Rico to work in farms throughout New Jersey as part of the federal and commonwealth-sponsored program of rapid-industrialization in Puerto Rico known as Operation Bootstraps. In addition to the earlier agricultural workers, a “second wave” of Puerto Ricans arrived from Puerto Rico and New York directly to Newark in the 1950s and 1960s. They were also attracted largely by factory jobs and informally recruited through the networks developing within the small albeit significant community of Puerto Ricans already established in Newark. After World War II Puerto Ricans occupied the industrial jobs that war recruits had left in cities like Perth Amboy, Paterson, and Newark. The chain migration by which family members who had migrated would inform other relatives and friends of jobs available. Many of the young people whom I spoke and their families, while frequently belonging to a U.S.-born second generation, had also experienced the “guagua aerea” (air bus) phenomenon of spending time in both the U.S. mainland and Puerto Rico. While all Puerto Ricans, on the U.S. mainland and in Puerto Rico, are U.S. citizens, the majority of the Brazilians whom I spoke with had arrived on a work or tourist visa; in some cases, they had overextended the visa to become, in fact, undocumented. A few Brazilians also had the experience of hiring coyotes and crossed the various borders to make it from their towns in Brazil to Newark. The late-1980s and 1990s witnessed the height of Brazilian migration to the United States. Brazilian migration was mostly motivated by economic instability in Brazil in the post-dictatorship period, when inflation acquired astronomical proportions. Most of the Brazilians who had arrived in Newark hailed from towns in the state of Minas Gerais and belonged to the lower working classes. See Meihy (2004) for more details on Brazilian migration to the United States and Hidalgo (1970) for a portrait of Puerto Rican migration to New Jersey.

7. An exception to the “letting go of happiness” as a way to measure American-ness was the case of several evangelical Brazilian girls whom I met in the time of my research. Some Brazilian girls preserved the “happiness” associated with immigrant gullibility by embracing an evangelical Christian identity; evangelical conversion led to

genuine happiness and became embraced around having found Jesus, the Savior (Wilkins 2008:110). Fake happiness, for these Brazilian youth, was distinguished from the genuine happiness they connected with their evangelical conversion. For these evangelical Brazilian girls, the happiness displayed by the youth invested in attaining a cosmopolitan competency was inauthentic and rooted in material consumption that explained their feelings of unhappiness and depression.

8. Relevant to this conception of emotional epistemology is Bourdieu's (1977:72, 1990, 1998) *habitus* a system of enduring dispositions are the collectively inculcated and act as structuring structures that generate internalized principles, practices and representations. This system similarly generates ways of thinking and feeling about the world that are mediated through social experiences and structures. Dispositions toward other people and communities, which in turn influence behavior and action, are always implicated in shifts in meaning and interpretation and how individuals come to view themselves in relation to others (similar to Williams' "knowable communities"). These are grounded in the body, including discussions of taste (cf. Csordas 1990), so that state regulation is now experienced largely as self-regulation and self-disciplining (cf. Foucault 1977).

9. Other informants described these feelings as "anger" and "aggression" in decidedly gendered and sexualized ways (Ramos-Zayas forthcoming).

10. For histories of Newark that focus on the commercial vibrancy of the 1950s, the 1967 riots, and urban renewal projects of the 1960s and 1970s, and the Newark "Renaissance," see Kaplan (1963), and the work of Newark historian Clemens Price.

11. In her examination of "the immigrant as citizen," Bonnie Honig argues that exceptionalist accounts of U.S. democracy are inextricably intertwined with the myth of an "immigrant America": "The immigrant functions to reassure workers of the possibility of upward mobility in an economy that rarely delivers on that promise, while also disciplining native-born poor, domestic minorities, and unsuccessful foreign laborers into believing that the economy fairly rewards dedication and hard work" (2001:73–74). Of course, this also animates the suspicion of immigrant foreign-ness insofar as "their" admirable hard work puts "us" out of jobs, as Honig emphasizes. The association between "becoming American" and "becoming Black" among some Latin American migrants in Newark may perhaps suggest an unearthing of the

hegemonic "immigrant America" mythology in that it places "race" rather than "ethnicity" as a central tenement in the road from "immigrant" to citizen (cf. Honig 2001). Nevertheless, the everyday policing of the boundaries of Blackness by Latino and Latin American migrant youth also reflected a belief at both ESHS and BHS in the "supercitizen immigrant," the migrants whose trajectory involves avoiding both Blackness and "acting white," as well as meaningful associations with Black Americans.

12. The James administration had been notorious for operating on a patronage system that accounted for substantial profits in city real estate for the mayor, his relatives and political allies. James had also been criticized for his close relationship with developers and conflict of interests involving Crown Bank, as well as trips to Brazil and Puerto Rico in excess of US\$48,000 drawn from the city budget (Kocieniewski 2006). See also "Why Newark Matters" (NYT July 17, 2006).

13. See "A New Mayor Tests His Promises on Newark's Harsh Reality"—NYT October 19, 2006.

14. It is not my main goal to contribute directly to the robust literature on "racial democracy" in Latin America, but to consider the ramifications that some of the postulates of this ideology might have on the everyday experiences and interpretations of racial situations among U.S.-born Latino and Latin American migrants in the United States. For most of the 20th century the Latin American ideology of "racial democracy" and its caveat of "racial mixing" (*mestizaje/metizagem*) and "whitening" (*blanqueamiento/embranqueamiento*) served as benchmark of racial tolerance, deployed in academic and activist circles in contradistinction to a legally segregated and racially intolerant United States. Brazil, in particular, became emblematic of "anti-racialism" as the "racialism" of the United States insisted in the existence of discrete—largely black or white—racial groups (Telles 2004). The view of Latin America as a "racial democracy" was thus, since its inception, a relational racial logic that existed mostly in contradistinction to a U.S. segregationist logic. This project aims to reconcile a perspective of "race" as a deeply emotional and intimate aspect of people's everyday life which, only under certain circumstances, is explicitly articulated, enunciated, or engaged with politically.

15. The role that "Brazil" and "Puerto Rico" have played in U.S. academic research and popu-

lar interest influences how the migrants from these countries (and, in some instances, the subsequent U.S.-born generations) are classified in Newark; as Jemima Pierre (2004) eloquently argues, the way in which immigrant countries are imagined supply the tools for the racialization of those migrants in the United States. The role of “migration” was qualitatively different in Brazil and Puerto Rico. While Brazil still considers itself a “Country of Immigrants,” rather than one that supplies any significant percentage of its population to the global migration flow, migration is ubiquitous in the political and economic history of Puerto Rico. Nearly as many Puerto Ricans live on the Island of Puerto Rico as they do in the U.S. mainland. In fact, in Puerto Rico, migration to the United States was central to the creation of a Puerto Rican middle class on the Island in the 1940s and 1950s (and a continuing strategy for economic survival into the present).

16. A view of U.S. Blackness as a stylistic or commercial culture provided yet another space for slippage between “real racism” and a racism perceived as more “malleable,” a distinction which was coded in forms of humor, the glamorization of poverty-stricken urban spaces, the commodification of Blackness, and highlighting differences in nationality rather than race (especially in the case of how Dominicans were viewed in Puerto Rico).

17. Space is constructed in alignment with dominant racialization practices that, in turn, contribute to an emotional aesthetics of U.S. urban contexts. An obvious example of this is the “ghetto,” as a physical and symbolic space, and “being ghetto,” as an embodiment of such a space. Initially it was used to describe a place of poverty and pathology (e.g., many sociological studies of U.S. urban poverty deployed this term). Then the term is applied to people who live in this places, and in the process of using the physical referent of the ghetto to describe a person residing in that physical space, the word “ghetto” becomes an adjective that is not only applied to “bad areas” but also to “bad people.” But there is a third or even fourth transformation of the term: The term can be taken completely out of context and used by two people who have no relationship to the urban space of the “ghetto,” nor are they really always performative of “ghetto identity,” to refer to a bounded instance of “ghetto-like” behavior (e.g., as in ‘that was so ghetto of you’ used in an affluent context). Another dimension to this is the ghetto not only as not negative but actually a batch of authenticity, hip-ness, belongingness, et

cetera. Likewise, the processes by which the characteristic of a built environment are transformed into behavior and used to create bodies that possess those built environment characteristics deserve some critical attention in contemporary understandings of “race,” “illegality,” and citizenship in the United States.

18. Patricia de Santana Pinho (2005) argues in the case of Brazil, a U.S.-centric Black experience has been viewed as the most modern form of Blackness within the African diaspora. U.S. Blackness is viewed as a modern and politicized racial identity in contradistinction to Brazil’s Africanness which is viewed as “excess” of culture. This also reinscribes dichotomies between tradition and modernity, culture and politics, backward and advanced. The hegemonic project of the Afro-Brazilian movement is situated between an “African past” and a “U.S. American future,” thus introducing Pinho’s main question: “Why are Afro-Brazilians urged to follow the U.S. model of race politics that rely on a liberal multiculturalism in which the idea of diversity is inert?” Pursuing a Foucaultian line of argument, Pinho notes that it is precisely disciplinary power that produces social identities under liberalism. Understood as such, the performance of race did away with the racialized subject and inadvertently displaced and fetishized race onto traits like hair, clothes, musical tastes, and consumption patterns; it was from these traits that many young Latinos drew from to create their racial presentations.

19. For a stellar analysis of Afro-Colombian social movements in the everydayness of race and racial practices in Bogotá, Colombia, see the work of Fatimah Williams (2011).

20. Structures of feeling are a kind of sentiment and thinking which is social and material, but in an embryonic phase before it is fully articulated and defined; they are defined by the ways in which they actively produce and regulate particular impulses, restraints, and tone in structured sets that concern “specific feelings, specific rhythms ... particular linkages, particular emphases and suppressions” (1977:133–34). Unlike categories like ideology or world view, structures of feeling are less codified and formal and can be more easily assigned to different social groups and classes).

21. Not surprisingly, many of the Brazilian migrant students, particularly the women who had greater access to a process of self-marketing, were divided about their interest in exploring American-ness through Blackness. Nevertheless, they almost always rejected civil rights and racial struggles.

22. Perspectives on “resentment,” while most commonly attributed to African Americans, also characterized the U.S.-born and “immigrant” in Newark. For instance, Javier Otero, a young Puerto Rican man who had graduated from Barringer High School and lived in North Broadway, explained: “I think we in this society have cast that [distinction between U.S.-born versus ‘immigrant’] out. The last one in has always been the one you don’t want, whether they be Italian, Irish, or Eastern ... Polack. I think the African American probably has all the emotions that you can expect [them to have]. I mean, you know, [they may think] ‘We worked hard to get this, this may be the bottom of the barrel, but it’s our barrel.’ So they see Puerto Ricans, and they see people getting their barrel, and they don’t think we have fought for it, which is not true, but they think that.” Interestingly, Javier further added: “For Blacks here, you’re either Black or you’re white. They don’t know what to do with us [Puerto Ricans], so it’s more like ‘If you’re not black, then you’re white.’ I think they see us as sort of white, even if we’re dark or look darker than the whites. We’re still not Black. Whatever we are, we’re stealing what they fought for, in their eyes, so they resent us for that. We got the easy ride.”

23. “Between Two Worlds” how Latino Youths Come of Age in America,” a report from the Pew Hispanic Center, found that Latinos aged 16–25 (which include all of the Latino youth in my Newark research) were satisfied with their lives and optimistic about their futures. They valued education, hard work, and career success, although they were more likely than other youths to drop out of school, live in poverty, and become teen parents. While in 1995, half of Latino youths were “foreign-born,” in 2009 only 34 percent are (most of these youths -37 percent- are U.S. born). Perceptions of discrimination were more widespread among the U.S. born (41 percent) than those among the foreign born (32 percent). A large majority of Latino youth (76 percent) said that they did not see themselves fitting into the race framework of the United States, and only 16 percent of them saw themselves as white.

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