Linguistic Representations of Black Woman Beauty in Print and Social Media in the United States and Ecuador

Diamond C. J. Ray

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Abstract
Language has the power to unite and uplift societies as well as divide and exclude. In this investigation I identify how language is incessantly utilized as a tool to exclude, erase, and publicly shame Black women within the African diaspora, and specifically in the United States and Ecuador. I analyze how Monica Chalá and Deshauna Barber winning their national beauty pageants in their respective countries condemned them to being socially rejected and publicly misrecognized because of the intersection of their Black womanhood. 12 tweets, 22 Facebook comments, two semi structured interviews, eight newspaper excerpts and participant observations are deconstructed to demonstrate how language perpetuates racism and is

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strategically evoked in the process of “othering”. Furthermore, the data suggests that through language Black women are delineated into a Third Space, in which they are policed and consumed by others in a manner that racializes them as their bodies are actively objectified.

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1. Introduction

The racialization of Black women in national beauty pageants is perpetuated through linguistic representations of Blackness in mass modes of communication. Language is a significant factor in how Black women are excluded and erased while simultaneously being exotified and viewed as something ‘other’ on a national scale. For example, the term racialization is being used here to describe how the identity of two Black women, Deshauna Barber, Miss USA 2016 and Monica Chalá (Miss Ecuador 1995), was singularly scrutinized through public perception of their racial identities. Language was used as a method of both excluding and erasing these women in their respective countries. I analyze the way in which the public reacted to and narrativized the crowning of Barber as Miss America and Chalá as Miss Ecuador on social media (Twitter and Facebook), and in print news. Additionally, I provide discourse analysis of interviews from two Ecuadorians who were present in their country while Chalá was crowned Miss Ecuador in 1995. This paper explores how language contributed to the public rejection of the nation-wide selection of two Black women in historically non-Black spaces. Language was an instrument in the shaming and positioning of these Black women in a Third Space, where neither their womanhood nor Blackness was socially recognized as their own.

I chose to consider the United States and Ecuadorian contexts because I lived in each region for an extended amount of time. While in residence I experienced racism in a plethora of ways from people whom I had least expected. Being racially profiled by the police in the United States and harassed because of my black womanhood have made me hyperaware of my race and forced me to embrace what W. E. B DuBois called “Double Consciousness”, in his book The Souls of Black Folk (DuBois 1903). This double consciousness of being an American and a Black woman has made me more perceptive to the lack of privilege I experience in both areas of my life. This intersection of my identity and my experience of how it is excluded and erased in many spaces has proven to me that these types of studies are essential in establishing academia that reflects the diversity of ideas and people of the world.

How is language used to perpetuate racism and othering? I am hypothesizing that the language used to describe both Monica Chalá and Deshauna Barber after their national wins
highlights the fact that language is used as an instrument in the racialization and exclusion of Black women in the U.S, and that mass modes of communication have been used in these processes. The overarching theme of this investigation is the depiction of language as a tool in the positioning of Black women in a multifaceted space of liminality, erasure, platformed racism, and public shaming. Additionally, womanism and the ideology of the standard’s connection to linguistic representations of Blackness are especially significant in the narrative of the Black woman experience across the African diaspora. All of these notions interact with how the Black woman is policed, politicized, and possessed by others and how this is realized linguistically. She lacks ownership of her body and the intersectionality of her identity is overlooked and often compartmentalized. The narrative of Black women is rarely projected by Black women; instead they are only stakeholders in regard to how their identities are presented in society. Existing in two places at once and at the opposite end of what is considered standard is the particular place in which Black women reside. The data here is intended to deconstruct how this erasure happens and contains two interviews, 12 tweets, 22 Facebook posts, eight newspaper excerpts, and participant observation notes.

African Americans account for about 13 percent of the United States population (United States Census Bureau 2016). This population includes generations of Black citizens whose ancestors were forcibly brought to the U.S during the trans-Atlantic slave trade, which started in the 1500’s. Additionally, this demographic includes African and Caribbean immigrants who are also members of the African Diaspora. Although, this population has been integral to the economic growth and success of the United States since the 16th century, there is significant exclusion that Black Americans face on a national scale, which perpetuates their external positionality as something other than American, in the narrative of the United States. This exclusion is highlighted in their lexical classification as African-American. This racial category as used in the United States census is an instance of how language has the ability to exclude. This is just one instance of this type of positioning through language.

From August to December of 2016 I studied abroad with the International Education Abroad program in Quito, Ecuador. I lived with a host family in Quito, and was able to fully immerse myself in the culture and the Spanish language. Living as a Black woman in
Ecuador was not something that was easy or uplifting. I knew before embarking on my journey abroad that it would be a transformative experience for a variety of reasons. I was sexually harassed and racialized on the street. I was visibly different than the other Black Ecuadorians there. I was an American in Ecuador; my demeanor was such that I did not put my head down when I was stared at by other mestizo and white Ecuadorians.

Demographically Ecuador is a diverse country. Afro-Ecuadorians are about 4.3 percent of the population (Ecuador- World Fact Book 2017). With this being said, many Afro-Ecuadorians do not self-report that they are indeed Black because of the stigma that is associated with Blackness. Most of the Black people in Ecuador live in their own communities isolated from both the indigenous and mestizo populations. Upon my first few weeks living there I was told that Black people are designated into two different groups based on gender. Black men are universally considered “criminals”, while Black women are considered “prostitutes”. This was later reaffirmed in an interview with one of my respondents. Often times when I would get up and ready for the day I was constantly called beautiful by my mestizo host mother, and even though at first I was flattered I soon realized that this was a way of her celebrating my personhood as a means of ignoring my Blackness. Similarly, one morning while getting juice, there was a Black woman on television and my host mother exclaimed to me that she was a former Miss Ecuador, Mónica Chalá and the only Black one in history. Again, my host mother told me how beautiful she was and I knew she subconsciously meant, she was beautiful despite her Blackness as is seen again in the following event (Appendix F, 3).

Midway into my host stay she showed me pictures of other American students she had hosted in the past, one of which was a Black woman. My host mother then exclaimed to me how the student got married and proceeded to show me wedding pictures. She then repeatedly told me how pretty the Black woman was and quickly added, that ‘you wouldn’t even know she was Black’.

This is the type of data I am concerned with, because it not only speaks volumes of the racial climate in Ecuador, but also directly reflects the theory I discuss and my lived experiences while in the country. Language and words are strategically chosen to create a narrative, and the way that these choices interact with race and beauty affects society in a multitude of ways.
This investigation is necessary because it presents a nuanced perspective on the intersection of race and language on an international scale. Many of the data points are striking because of the way they cross reference each other, and also because they are supported by my legitimate observations in both countries respectively. I have experienced racism domestically in the United States and abroad in both Mexico and in Ecuador. One might ask why I decided to profile two Black beauty queens winning national titles. In his article, Public Indigeneity, Language Revitalization, and Intercultural Planning in a Native Amazonian Beauty Pageant, Wroblewski rightfully contends that, “National beauty pageants bear major significance in the commercial branding of a country. They provide spaces wherein national, regional, or local groups ‘re-emphasize values and concepts fundamental to their sense of self and survival,’ (Wroblewski 71:2014). Thus, the collective choice of each set of judges to choose a Black woman as the national representation of what its citizens and the rest of the world should consider to be a part of the most beautiful women in the world is an anomaly. This aberration precisely conflicts with each nation’s sentiments of Black women and is an extraordinary occurrence, as is clear in the lack of frequency of Black women winners in each region. Although the United States has had other Black winners of Miss America, Barber is the most recent and has had the most blatant backlash on social media by means of ‘platformed racism’, which is a term offered by Matamoroz-Fernandez to describe how racism is infiltrated through social media websites like Facebook (2017:931).

This paper addresses how language is used to perpetuate racism, and othering. I am hypothesizing that the language used to describe both Chalá and Barber after their national wins highlights the fact that language is used as an instrument in the racialization and exclusion of Black women in the U.S and that mass modes of communication have also been used in these processes.

In section 2, I discuss the data in the appendices, which include participant observations, semi-structured interviews, screen shots from Twitter and Facebook, and newspaper excerpts. With each type of data I explain its utility and motivation for being chosen. In section 3, I analyze and deconstruct the data with careful consideration to each’s relation to the other. The analysis is subdivided into three sections, Words as Labels,
Stereotypes and National Identity. Words and Labels illustrates how language surrounding Blackness positions people who are identifiably Black as something ‘other’ than the norm. The Stereotypes subsection addresses how the Black woman identity is policed with the use of intentional language in stereotyping and typecasting temperament characteristics based singularly on race. Section 3.3 examines how the data exemplifies the lack of national identity for Barber and Chalá. The analysis is both evaluated and extrapolated in the conclusion, in Section 4.

2. Methodology

The data I have examined include two semi-structured interviews, newspaper and online articles, 12 tweets from Twitter and 22 Facebook comments. I first started collecting data while I was studying abroad in Quito, Ecuador. I conducted the two interviews in Quito and both of the interviewees were present in Ecuador while Monica Chalá was crowned as Miss Ecuador. Likewise, both women identify as mestiza and have general knowledge of the race relations within the country. Although they are both practicing professors in academia, they serve as a representation of of Ecuador’s collective rejection of Chalá as a true representation of the country. Both interviews took place in the beginning of December of 2016 in Quito at my study abroad center, IES Abroad.

The interviews in Appendices A and B provide first person accounts of racial relations in Ecuador. Evelyn and Angelica are both middle aged mestizo Spanish professors who teach at IES Abroad Quito and other universities. It is understood that although they might not encompass the thoughts and feelings of a “regular” Ecuadorian because of their experiences in academia, they are still a source of public opinion throughout time in the country. The interviews may be limited in that I, the interviewer, am a Black woman and my identity may have influenced the data. The information about Black people elicited by the professors in each interview reflects not only their thoughts but also what they were comfortable telling me as a researcher and member of the communities in question. It is important to note that the significance of these interviews is even higher because there was no social media in 1995. Appendices C and D, the Twitter and Facebook screenshots, allow for a more intimate
observation of the thoughts and feelings of many people who may not be heard from otherwise. These interviews are an attempt at supplanting the lack of social media and the responses that would be public if Chalá had won Miss Ecuador a decade later.

The eight newspaper excerpts compliment the interviews in that they complete the picture of how Chalá was projected by reporters and newspapers to the country’s audience. They were retrieved from an article by Jean Rahier’s *Blackness, the Racial/Spatial Order, Migrations, and Miss Ecuador 1995-96*. While living in Ecuador I had limited access to newspaper articles that would have been featured after Chalá’s win in 1995. Thus, when a professor shared Rahier’s article with me it proved to be an excellent historical source for this study. Otherwise it would have been extremely difficult to obtain digital copies of print news from that time period because the internet and its technological abilities were not fully utilized during the 90’s. In addition, there are two newspaper data from Maxine Craig’s *Aint I a Beauty Queen?: culture, social movements, and the rearticulation of race* that feature advertisements for the Miss Black America beauty pageant in the 1950’s and 60’s. The news articles augment more of a representation of the language that was viewed as acceptable in print. Because both of the social media sites I have extracted data from did not exist in 1995 when Chalá was crowned Miss Ecuador, the interviews and articles are intended to supplant what would have been tweeted and posted online by Ecuadorians at the time. There is value in print journalism because the narratives that are projected to Ecuadorians on a daily basis have an irrevocable effect on how they view themselves, and anyone who is painted as something other. The data gathered in this specific format are essential in dissecting how stereotypes contribute to how Black Ecuadorians are racialized on a daily basis, and also in debunking why they are not included in the ‘imagined’ community of Ecuadorians. Similarly, the online articles that feature excerpts of social media posts about Barber aided me in assimilating the role of print media in her narrative of victory and ridicule.

The 22 Facebook posts and 12 tweets from Twitter are notable because social media provides a platform unlike any other. I searched in each websites’ search engine using the hashtags #MissUSA2016, and #DeshuanBarber. After considering my results I suspect that several of the tweets that gained attention because of the users’ racist language were deleted after gaining significant negative attention. Luckily, there were other news websites that
were able to screenshot the racially insensitive tweets and three of the tweets in my data were retrieved from an article of the like by Prager in 2016 (Appendix C, #1,2,3). Internet users across the country and the world are able to communicate with one another in a matter of seconds. Given this fact, the internet is accessible to those who are not visually disabled and can afford either a smart phone or computer with data or internet. Children, academics, and people whose generation never had internet now have the possibility of conversational exchange on a variety of different platforms with the internet. Although social media has its limitations, like fostering an environment of digital inequalities and unevenness in digital literacy skills (Hargittai 2011), it is what Matamoros Hernandez calls both “an opportunity to perform racial identity (Nakamura 2002) and a forum to reproduce power relations and hierarchies (Kendall 1998; McIlwain 2016) or amplify racism”(Daniels 2009) (Matamoroz-Fernandez 2017). Thus, by analyzing the linguistic commentary of Deshauna Barber’s win on Facebook and Twitter I have highlighted evidence of her platformed racialization.

Appendix C includes data extracted from Twitter. Most tweets were retrieved with the hashtag “#MissUSA2016,” and an online article featuring ‘racist tweets” about Barber after her victory by Danielle Wiener-Bronner in 2016. I intended for Twitter to be one of the major sources of data, in addition with Facebook, and the interviews, because it is one of the most widely used social media sites globally. Likewise, Twitter allows its users to share ideas through language with a limit of 250 characters at the time. Consequently, this requires the user to be clear and concise in exhibiting whatever they wish to say. Twitter also permits its users to use hashtags in their tweets, which when entered in the website’s search bar can be utilized to discover other tweets that include the same hashtag. The hashtag is almost always used in live tweeting, which is the practice of tweeting during an event broadcast in mass media. Thus, the tweets in Appendix C are live tweets from people who were the presumable home audience of the televised Miss America 2016 pageant. Considering this, such a platform has the ability to connect wide audiences and their opinions with one another, positive or negative, in one place. These tweets are data points because they are the setting in which, Matamoroz-Fernandez’s ‘platformed racism” often thrives. “Platformed racism has dual meanings: first, it evokes platforms as amplifiers and manufacturers of racist discourse and second, it describes the modes of platform governance that reproduce (but that can also
address) social inequalities.” Matamoroz-Fernandez (2017:930). When the users tweet with a hashtag, they are fully conscious of the fact that their tweet will appear publicly. This is an invaluable source of uncensored opinions on race, and in the case of Deshauna Barber, platformed racism.

Facebook was chosen for the same reasons that Twitter was. The one major difference between the two platforms is that there is no character limit on Facebook posts or comments. Thus, when users want to post live with hashtags, they are free to commentate as freely or as little as they desire. Appendix D is comprised of a cluster of Facebook comments collected from the article about Barber’s Miss USA win by Weiner-Bronner. A slight but significant distinction in the manner of posts on Twitter and Facebook is that it is more common for Facebook users to operate throughout the site with their first and last name publicly broadcast on their page. As a result, whatever they post will have their full name above so that there is no anonymity for the user. Contrastingly, it is commonplace for Twitter users to not have their full names on their account, and instead post with usernames that may or may not have any relation to their true identities. This known anonymity has the possibility of changing the dynamic of posting, which was clear in the data. Both Facebook and Twitter have a means of showing positive reinforcement between users. On Twitter there is an option to retweet tweets, which will post the original tweet on the retweeter’s page. It is often thought that retweets are a public endorsement of the original tweet, although, some people deny this claim in their Twitter profile bios. Similarly, tweets can be favorited, which can also be found on the liker’s page if one clicks on the ‘liked posts’ or ‘share’ tab of the liker’s profile. Conversely, Facebook only has the option of liking comments or posts. Both sites permit comments or replies on posts. Likes and retweets are a method of publicly endorsing posts on these sites.

Appendix E presents newspaper data from Rahier’s article on Blackness, the Racial/Spatial Order, Migrations, and Miss Ecuador 1995-96. The first two data in this appendix E are newspaper excerpts from a famous, now discontinued, Ecuador newspaper called Hoy. Rahier underscores the way in which Black Ecuadorians are racialized as Ultimate Others (Rahier 1998:422) on a daily basis when crime and violence are being reported on in Quito. This data demonstrates how stereotypes are reinforced with the strategic use of language. The last
newspaper excerpt is a direct response to Chala’s victory as Miss Ecuador. The author exotifies and objectifies her as something alien and other worldly, which directly reinforces the general idea of Black women as reported in the interview data and in Perry’s three archetypes of the Black woman identity, which will be discussed later. The language used also is a raw example of how acceptable the language used was at that time and how that language is similar to how Black women are racialized with language today in Ecuador, the United States and beyond.

3. Results and Analysis

The results and analysis are divided into three subsections. Words as Labels, Stereotypes, and National Identity. These were the most constant overarching themes in the data and they operate complimentary with one another. At times, specific information in the data was cross referenced in more than one, or even all three sections. In these instances, I spoke about the data in the section that it connected with the most. Words as Labels focuses on the meaning of the words and language used to describe Barber, Chala, and Black women in general. It examines language as an instrument for othering, and erasing other aspects of each woman’s identity. The second section, Stereotypes, capitalizes on how language is expressed as a means of promoting one single narrative of the Black woman experience. Specifically, the theoretical framework of Melissa Harris Perry’s *Sister Citizen: Shame, Stereotypes, and Black Women in America* is used to analyze the role of language in the positioning of Chala and Barber as the abnormal exceptions to the three caricatures of acceptable Black women. National Identity highlights how language is used in the data to critique how the national identities of the two Black women in question can only exist in a mutually exclusive manner.

3.1 Words as Labels

This section of the analysis hone in on the use of language as a method of labelling and distancing within the context of Blackness. A striking term that was used ten times throughout Evelyn’s interview (Appendix A, lines 6-80) and twice in Angelica’s interview (Appendix B lines 10 and 22), was *Afro-descendientes*, which translates to “Afro-descendants”. The racial/spatial framework in Rahier’s *Blackness, the Racial/Spatial Order, and Miss Ecuador 1995* (1998) is helpful in analyzing why this word rather than *Afro-Ecuatorianos* (or Afro-
Ecuadorians) was used to describe these Black Ecuadorians. Whitten (1984) is cited for recognizing the process of *blaqueaniento* or gauging Ecuadorianess as "mestiznoness".

"In this imagination of Ecuadorianness, there is logically no place for blacks; they remain invisible. Afro-Ecuadorians constitute the Ultimate Other, some sort of a historical aberration, a noise in the ideological system of nationality, a pollution in the genetic pool, the only true alien, the 'noncitizen' par excellence; they are not part of mestizaje" (Rahier 422:1998).

Mestizaje refers to the miscegenation that results from Spanish and indigenous people. It is racial mixing that is commonly promoted as what should be considered the norm in Ecuador. Likewise, the lack of mention of blackness in the narrative of *mestizaje* highlights the erasure that Black Ecuadorians are subjected to nationally (Rahier:1998). Rahier's *Blackness, the Racial/Spatial Order, Migrations, and Miss Ecuador 1995-96* (1998), locates blackness within the racial/spatial order in the cultural topography of Ecuadorian society. He asserts that the movement of Afro Ecuadorians from rural communities to urban centers represents a threat to the white-mestizo Ecuadorian society. He deconstructs the foundations of the mestizo as the prototype of Ecuadorian national identity while highlighting how the erasure of Afro Ecuadorians positions them as their shared identity as "the Ultimate Other" (Rahier 1998:422). Furthermore, he discusses Monica Chalá, Miss Ecuador 1995, and raises the question of how a black woman was elected as a symbol of Ecuadorian femininity. While answering this Rahier provides news articles about Chalá and other Afro Ecuadorians that reveal the public's negative opinion of the country's Black citizens. His work underscores the fact that Black people—and black women specifically—are positioned spatially and racially as some alternative to the default, and are treated as such.

To that end, I assert that the use of Afro-descendant rather than Afro-Ecuadorian is a tactic of excluding the Black Ecuadorians from their Ecuadorian nationality because of the utter absence of their *mestiznoness*. As seen in Appendix F, I first noticed how this term contributed to the erasure of their national identity one day while in a Sociology class, during my semester abroad in Quito. I immediately became cognizant of the fact that Black Ecuadorians---in the few instances they were mentioned---were referred to as "Afro descendientes" more frequently than "Afro Ecuatorianos." This seemed odd to me because the only distinction that I saw between the two terms was the acknowledgement or omittance
of Ecuadorian nationality. After inquiring with my professor, Angelica, she answered that Afro descendants was more politically correct. After hearing this I aimed to challenge her response with a question. What position does erasure though language play in the narrative of Ecuador? Angelica’s answer to my question was implicit confirmation that erasing their Ecuadorianess is more politically correct than acknowledging it. By only calling attention to the Black Ecuadorians’ African ancestry with this ethnic descriptor as a means of adhering to political correctness, other Ecuadorians are underscoring their complacency with positioning their Black counterparts as something completely opposite from themselves. This labelling practice not only creates exclusion on a racial level, but also nationally. Utilizing language to deem a more inclusive term as less “politically correct” signifies the systemic othering that is taking place in Ecuador. This coincides with Rahier’s conclusions about Black people as the Ultimate Other because this exclusionary language effectively illustrates how Black Ecuadorians are the Ultimate Others. However, as I will discuss, this linguistic exclusion is not unique to Ecuador. This data relates to Monica Chalá and her being crowned as Miss Ecuador because her Ecuadorian identity is being erased when she is constantly referred to as the first “Afro descendant” winner of the beauty pageant. Not acknowledging her as an Ecuadorian linguistically distances Chalá from the rest of the mestizo and indigenous Ecuadorians. She is neither mestizo nor indigenous and her existence is socialized as something entirely ‘other.’

How Black Ecuadorians are classified is reminiscent of how Black Americans are linguistically categorized in the United States. All Americans who have African ancestry are classified as African American². This means that regardless of whether you are a first generation American with parents from Nigeria, or a Black identifying American who has never set foot in Africa, you are called an ‘African American’. Everyone in the United States, besides White Americans have hyphenated linguistic classifications for their ethnic identities.

“There is no room in this country... There is no such thing as a hyphenated American who is a good American. The only man who is a good American is the man who is an American and nothing else” (Higham 2002:98). In light of this quote from Theodore

² Black is also used to describe these people, but my focus in this investigation is on the above classification.
Roosevelt, who was the 26th president of the U.S at the time, it is crucial to analyze what having a hyphenated identity can exemplify linguistically and systemically. At times the physical hyphen in between African and American is omitted, the impact of the isolation of the hyphenated identity in this language remains. Roosevelt's words are useful in that he explicitly argues that those Americans of color---because the only Americans whose ethnicities are not hyphenated are White---are something other than American entirely even though the word is nationally recognized in their categorization. It is instead their proximity to whiteness, rather than their "Americaness", which uniformly characterizes them as something 'other'. In like manner, Whites who are Irish or Italian can also be excluded in this way. Hill's ideology of the standard is helpful in deconstructing why the linguistic classification of the African American and Afro Ecuadorian is a method of excluding and erasing (Hill 2008:35). One of the major tenants of the ideology of the standard is that if there are two variants of a thing, one variant is innately correct. Although, the second part of this ideology focuses on speech variety, the first point can be extrapolated to explain the inherent damage in the creation of the 'other' with the use of language and labelling as seen in the hyphenated African-American, and the Afro descendant in Ecuador. With respect to the mestizo identity in Ecuador, the Afro Ecuadorians are seen as the incorrect type of Ecuadorian because of their lack of "mestizoneess" which is realized as their lack of correctness in proximity to other non-Black Ecuadorians. The systemic use of the hyphen in labeling of this demographic inevitably positions the people in this population outside of the quintessential "normal" American or Ecuadorian identity and into a group of hyphenated Americans who do not deserve the title. On one hand, Afro Ecuadorian is a more racially sensitive linguistic classification, but on the other it is still problematic because it does establish the Black Ecuadorian as something other than the quintessential Ecuadorian citizen. I have offered the two terms Afro descendant and Afro Ecuadorian in relation with one another to contend that the latter is more reflective of the true identities than the other, but still not utterly inclusive. Thus, the language that is used nationally to describe and discuss this population of Black Americans can only either be inclusive or exclusionary. The United States and Ecuador are alike in more ways than one. Black and Ecuadorian are mutually exclusive as is Black and American. This is evident historically, with the segregated beauty pageants in the United States during the mid 20th century.
The Age, was a Black owned newspaper that advertised and promoted the first Miss Black America beauty pageant in the 1950s. Black beauty pageants constitute a complex history, stretching back over a century in which black institutions variously ignored, addressed, incorporated, contested, or rejected white standards of beauty and white depictions of blacks. Accounts of African American beauty contests, which predated attempts to integrate all-white contests, can be found in the black press as early as the 1890s. Articles on black beauty contests report sponsorship by black newspapers, black cosmetics or hair care companies, the music industry promoting black entertainers, fraternal orders, social clubs, the NAACP... (Craig 2002:46).

The advertisement includes descriptions of the the ideal negro woman. “The ideal Negro woman was of the ‘Egyptian’ type, with a touch of the “Spirit of the New World… A well balanced and symmetrical head, full slender neck, the features clear cut, with the appearance of being chiseled rather than cast; the forehead broad and slightly expansive, a fine Negro nose with a trace of the Egyptian and a slight aquiline curve”” (Craig 2002:47). These words are powerful in that they were presented by a Black man, towards an audience of Black women whose physical appearances vary greatly from what is being projected as the desired standard of black woman beauty. It is helpful to deconstruct with what Jane Hill deems ‘black exceptionalism,’ which is the positioning of Black people as the opposite to everything associated with White. On a surface level goodness, purity and positive attributes are commonly associated with the color white, while more negative ones like darkness, and evil are associated with black. In The Everyday Language of White Racism, she introduces a nuanced method of critiquing the role of racism through the lens of language in the United States. She utilizes the Folk Theory and its false assertion of race as a biological fact to explain the negative social implications that the word race has come to materialized. Hill scrutinizes the Black and White binary by expounding on the fact that African Americans were uniquely and historically damaged in the country by being the "Prototypical Others" (Hill 2008:16). Thus, being socialized to be the utter opposite of what is seen as normal, good, and the default Black women are left with limited options in regard to standards of beauty. By prescribing a specific type of Black woman as acceptable, Lewis is implicitly arguing that there is a type of Black woman whose physical appearance is not acceptable for the rest of the Black community. This ‘other’ Black woman should not be represented as
beautiful to other racial groups in the United States. Although the author of these exclusionary words is a Black, they are still being utilized as a tool that supports white supremacy and the systemic othering of Black women in the United States. The Black woman and her liminality within the race and gender spectrum is also being highlighted here. At times, even Black men are the perpetrators of the erasure of Black women in a white supremacist society. Alice Walker introduced the term ‘womanism’ in her *In Search of Our Mother’s Gardens: Womanist Prose* she explained that it was the intersectional racial and gender oppression of Black women. A classification of this type of oppression is essential because often when Black men are spoken about when racism is the subject, as white women are when sexism is. I intend for my work here to address womanism on a national perspective. This leaves virtually no space for intersection of Black woman issues. It is an overarching theme of this investigation because most of the data highlights the lack of space and acknowledgement that Black women within the Africa Diaspora are subjected to. Hill mentions the significance of language ideologies linked with notions of social rank and respect, which directly corresponds to acceptance or rejection of specific groups of people. Lewis is rejecting Black women who do not meet the aesthetic he intricately describes. He is rejecting the majority of Black women in America.

Moreover, an instance of even more linguistic descriptions of acceptable Black women is found in the following data point (Appendix E,2). It elaborates on the type of beauty they possess and how their temperament is a result of their more desirable phenotypes. This data is from a Black newspaper called *Our World* that along with *Jet, Tan, Sepia, and Ebony* provided an alternative to the barrage of degrading images of African Americans produced by Whites. Number 2 includes a description of the ten most beautiful Negro women from an *Our World* publication, “Barbara Trevigne, the light skinned exotic type, obviously had Caucasian background. Lena Horne is the olive tan sophisticated type. Mary Smith, New York model, is the kind that attracts many wolf-calls. She’s often mistaken for white. Has no trouble passing. Carmen de Lavallade is the graceful creole type” (Craig 2002: 58). Here, the role of language is integral to describing both the beauty and temperaments of the Black women in question. Notice that sophistication, gracefulness and overall agreeableness is attributed to these women because of their physical proximity to whiteness. These women are being branded as some of the most beautiful Negro women even though they do not reflect the diversity of
Black women in the United States. Black women appear in many distinct shades and this complexity is captured by the fact that there is an entire diaspora which they belong to on an international scale. The lack of diversity in skin tone in these Black women negatively contributes the ideology of the standard that Hill makes note of as was mentioned earlier. The language used here by Our World expresses that there is a correct standard version of the Black woman, so there must be an incorrect, abnormal version of her. This language negates the idea of a legitimate and valuable Black woman who has non-European features. The ten most beautiful negro women description portray a narrative of Black women that isolates, and delegitimizes the right for Black woman with African features to take up space. This language is an example of how Black women are constantly designated to an existence marked by shame on a global scale. Barber and Chalá were presented as the best and most beautiful of their respective countries when they won their titles, but many thought their victories were not deserved because their identities as Black women were “incorrect” representations of their countries.

Craig introduces the concept of “racial rearticulation” by examining the historical construction and practice of Black beauty pageants and their position with regard to race relations in the United States. She dismantles the white gaze that Black women are perceived through on a national scale. The white gaze is the capturing of the Black existence through the White imagination (Grant 2015). This is achieved by her demonstration of how the contestants of these pageants were racialized, exotified, and sexualized in a manner that would catalyze the movement of rearticulating what Blackness meant. She pays special attention to language and its power in framing public perception of what type of beauty is and is not acceptable. Visual and print data from casting calls and newspaper clippings of these historical events offer invaluable linguistic data about how these women were politicized and policed with the use of language. “Each day of their lives, black women rearticulate the meaning of black racial identity as they position themselves in relation to culturally available images of black womanhood” (Craig 2002: 9).

Here, a direct response to Monica Chalá winning by a pageant bystander is broadcast. A viewer of the competition reacts to Chalá saying that she is a “tall and curvy young women...[who] transmits with her own radiation or osmosis, an ingenuous gentle breeze that her race still virgin from external contamination, keeps original and without damage...a
Venus of ebony and jet…” (Appendix E: #4). Here Chalá is not being spoken of as a human being but rather as an other worldly object that is so unlike the mestizo woman she becomes alien like. Her humanity is erased and replaced with her curvy physique, ebony skin, and radiating energy as was said with the author’s strategic use of language. He is celebrating Chalá’s ‘otherness’ by objectifying and sexualizing her with his words. This language accentuates Chalá’s physical qualities so that her body is promoted as her best quality intended solely for mass consumption.

Conclusively, the women who do not fit into the ten descriptions are seen as other, not standard, and neither sophisticated nor graceful. This perfect light-skinned Black woman that is being described in Our World offers an alternative to the three stereotypical archetypes that Perry centers in Sister Citizen: Shame, Stereotypes, and Black Women in America, explored below in section 3.2.

3.2 Stereotypes

Perry illustrates the three most stereotypical archetypes of Black women that have been continuously perpetuated in the United States. “Sapphire” —representing the angry black woman, “the mammy” —the unfeminine heavy set Black woman present only for other’s support, and “Jezebel”—the sexually promiscuous Black woman whose body is objectified for public consumption (Harris-Perry 2011:33). Perry executes her argument in light of the media’s role in producing these caricatures with both pictures and quotations about the narrative of Black women in the United States.

“African American women are structurally positioned to experience shame more frequently than others (Harris-Perry 2013:107). As a group they possess a number of stigmatized identities and life circumstances: they are more likely to be poor, to be unmarried, to parent children alone, to be overweight, to be physically ill, and to be undereducated and underemployed. Black women who escape many of these circumstances must still contend with damaging racial and gender stereotypes. They are aware that others see them through a distorted lens that renders them socially unacceptable. This sense of social rejection and undesirability may express itself in experiences of chronic shame, with both psychological and physiological effects. Skin color and hair texture, for example, have both been found to
evoke a sense of shame that affects black women’s feelings of attractiveness, infects familial relationships, shapes expectations for romantic partnership and economic success, and manifests in disordered eating. In this sense, shame is the psychological and physical effect of repeated acts of misrecognition (107).

Throughout all of the data in the appendices there is an unspoken shame that is centered around Blackness and Black womanhood. The shame that Perry depicts is especially clear in the context of Black beauty. Shame and stereotypes are connected because stereotypes are the generalization of a single narrative. The following data both highlight how specific language was used to shame and exclude Deshauna Barber, Monica Chalá and myself. When Black women do not adhere to the three caricatures that Perry establishes, there is either celebration in her racial ambiguity or punishment through shame.

Figure 1.

Twitter users and their reactions in tweets are provided next. Here, a twitter user reacts to Deshauna Barber, from Washington D.C, being crowned as Miss USA 2016. She laments that the runner up Ms. Hawaii should have won and that Ms. D.C is so “ugly” (Appendix C,1). Beauty pageants allow the citizens of a region to choose how their state or country should be commercially branded with the choice of one woman. The tweeter who did not agree with a Black woman winning the title of Miss USA over a lighter-skinned competitor intended to publicly shame Deshauna. Why would anyone call someone crowned as Miss America ugly? If one of the most crucial criteria for a beauty queen is her attractiveness what would make this tweeter say otherwise? Given the views of beauty discussed in 3.1, Barber is a dark skinned Black woman and this fact alone disqualifies her
from being more beautiful than any other of the fair skinned women in the Miss America pageant.

Another tweeter states that Barber’s coronation was one of the most ‘fugliest’, or extremely unattractive, that she had ever seen (Appendix C,5). This practice of shaming is further emphasized by the Facebook data that follows. One of the commenters mentions that Barber is not her choice for Miss America and that Miss Hawaii is her choice. She then exclaims that there is a Miss Black America pageant and asks, why don’t all the Black girls compete there instead? These posts underscore how Facebook and Twitter are instruments in platformed racism and also how Barber was being rejected because of her Blackness and as a result publicly shamed for it. The word ‘my’ is significant here because having ownership and choice in who represents you is apparently important to the Facebook user mentioned. Barber is a United States citizen who won the crown adhering to all the pageant regulations, and won because the judges chose her. When the Facebook user says that she is not her choice, she is explicitly saying that she does not agree with the choice, or the fact that a dark skinned Black woman should be chosen to represent her country. Although Barber was just as much of a citizen as her, the Facebook user shamed Barber by using exclusionary coded language.
The twitter user pictured above in Figure 3 critiqued Barber’s temperament by saying Barber seemed “arrogant” and “smug” seconds after winning the Miss USA title. The tweeter...
highlights the distinct way that darker skinned Black women are both racialized and scrutinized for eliciting specific emotions. Barber is being policed through language, and this tweet underscores the fact that Black women who are not racially ambiguous have more negative characteristics projected onto them. This was seen in the data from *Our World*, in which positive personality traits were associated with Black women that were classified as “white passing” (Appendix E.2). Additionally, this tweeter’s words are a linguistic representation of Barber’s social rejection because of the absence of shame in her demeanor upon being crowned. This misrecognition performed through Twitter is an example of what Perry characterizes as public shaming, and it is achieved with the strategic use of language as a method of policing Barber (Harris-Perry 2013:107).

The interviews also exhibit the danger of coded language that is projected through stereotypes about Black Ecuadorians. When I asked Evelyn about possible stereotypes about the Black people in her country she answered that none of the stereotypes were good and that the most common was that the Black Ecuadorians consume alcohol, rob and kill (Appendix A: line 8). She also mentioned that the women are stereotyped as prostitutes with many children. She then mentions that the Black Ecuadorians are in a cycle of poverty and that it is sad because their community is so small (Appendix A: line 21). When Evelyn told me that many Black women were assumed to be prostitutes I immediately thought about how, while living in Ecuador, it became a normal occurrence for men in Quito to sexually harass me while I walked down the busy city streets home. I felt both sexualized and objectified and it did not take me long to discover that it was all because of my Black womanhood (Appendix F,4). When I asked her what language was used by different modes of communication to describe Black Ecuadorians she said that reporters and newscasters were very careful when speaking about Black people. This opinion was refuted by my interview with Angelica which is seen below. Evelyn exclaimed to me that the reason why Chalá is the only Black Miss Ecuador is because the beauty of Black women is not considered equal. “.. we have only one type of beauty, the mestiza” (Appendix A: line 64).

My interview with Angelica illustrated a different perspective of the stereotypes of the Black Ecuadorians and how they are spoken about in print news. Many of her opinions are supported by the newspaper articles from the time of the pageant. Angelica describes the Afro
Ecuadorians as having some positive and negative stereotypes. She admits that they are nationally acknowledged for their athleticism and innate physical strength and agility. She said that the women are specifically known for being sexually free, and lazy (Appendix B: line 16). This sexual objectification of Black women is mentioned as one of the major stereotypes that Black women are subjected to as described by Perry. The Jezebel is only a tool for sexual satisfaction and nothing more—the Black woman is to be consumed because she has no ownership of her own body. This is how I felt when I walked down the street and was relentlessly catcalled with words like *negrita* “little black girl” and *mi reina* “my queen”. When a man touched my hair and asked what my locs were called I felt like my voice and ownership of myself was highjacked (Appendix F,4). Apparently, the only moments when Afro Ecuadorians are praised is when the subject is sports or food (Appendix B: line 44). When I asked about the type of language that the media employs to describe Afro Ecuadorians she said that it was a mix, unlike what Evelyn said. Angelica explained that Black people in Ecuador are equated to animals and that when they are athletes they are often called ‘feline’ because of their strength and agility. Furthermore, she said that when Black people commit crimes it is thought that they do so because they are seen as ‘savages’. She claimed that the news reporters make no effort to portray the Black community positively when there is incorrect information and when they are involved with crime the Black Ecuadorian’s physical strength is compared with the physical strength of an animal (Appendix B: line 32), I then questioned why she believed that Chalá was the first and last Black Miss Ecuador. Angelica answered that she is not sure if Chalá is the last, but that she won the crown in 1995 most likely because the Miss World competition that year was going to be in South Africa (Appendix B: line 55). Angelica’s explanation for Chalá’s victory was something that many Ecuadorians believed. Stating that the only reason she was chosen was to gain sympathy from the judges of the Miss Universe pageant solely, because of its location in the continent of Africa misrecognizes Chalá and her victory as a simply a gesture and not legitimate. In fact, Rahier identifies this as the collective explanation for a Black women being crowned Miss Ecuador.

Chalá’s Blackness was publicized as a token for the judges of the Miss World competition in 1995. Strikingly, Rahier noted that the Ecuadorian public also believed that Chalá won the crown to appease the South African judges as well. Her Black identity
representing Ecuador had to be debunked socially, “To explain this aberration, a rumor circulated: the jury had decided to elect Monica Chalá because the next Miss Universe contest, at which the new Miss Ecuador would represent the country, was to be held in South Africa. Therefore, to augment Ecuador’s chances to win and to please Nelson Mandela, his government, and the Miss Universe jury, they had chosen the black candidate” (Rahier 1998:425). The fact that this rumor was believed by regular Ecuadoreans, like Angelia, exhibits the public shaming that Chalá underwent because of her contaminating her Ecuadorian identity with her Blackness.

This data is invaluable to deconstructing how the coded language utilized to describe Black people contributes to the erasure and othering of Black women particularly. The Black community is characterized as being animalistic, sexual objects that exist purely for other non-Black peoples’ entertainment. The men are celebrated for their physical prowess when they help Ecuador win soccer games but as soon as one Afro Ecuadorean is involved with crime they all are considered ‘savages’ and ‘prostitutes’. Evelyn mentioned that the Black athletes on Ecuador’s soccer team are publicly shamed and called ‘negritos’ if they lose a point while playing (Appendix A: line 55). This is not valuing this community as human beings, instead it is the active dehumanization of them by way of language. Ecuadorian newspapers further convey the negativity associated with Black people within the print news specifically in Quito, the country’s capital. Rahier notes that, “the ‘black race’ of the victims [of a murder] makes them automatically suspect” (Appendix E: #2).

The data expressed here narrates the racial climate in Ecuador and the United States, and how language plays an inextricable role in the dehumanization, erasure, and exclusion of Black people on an international scale. What does it mean if your entire community lies within its utility for entertainment and sexual satisfaction? Moreover, what if the language employed to depict your people almost always attempts to exemplify their otherness and lack of humanity? These questions hone in on the perception of Black people that is perpetuated with language by both Ecuadoreans and Americans.
3.3 National Identity

Barber and Chalá’s national recognition in the Miss World competitions is striking not only because of their positions in marginalized communities, but also because they both were seen as representations of nationalistic citizens despite their blackness. The Third Space was coined by Homi Bhabha and was further used by Feston Kalua as a way of demonstrating the method of fluidity and hybridity with which those within the African Diaspora live in a post-colonial era (Kalua 2009:26). Both women exist in a Third Space in society where they survive and somehow thrive while actively consumed by other non-Blacks in parts rather than as whole persons. They both were not publicized as autonomous agents in their lives but, rather as representatives of their race and for Black women as a whole. Being seen as an individual agent of your life rather than the spokeswoman for everyone that is phenotypically similar to you is not a privilege that Black women have. That privilege belongs to groups of people that have benefited from racial hegemony and white supremacy. Black women are not benefactors from these systems and it is clear in the data because their existence is constantly being policed, controlled, and consumed by everyone other than themselves. This hypervisibility and erasure is what positions them in a land liminality and within the Third Space. Because of the constant questioning of their identity and not having a true place of belonging in the countries that would otherwise be their homes.

![Image of a tweet](image)

Figure 5.

Recall the Facebook post when the poster claimed that Barber was not her choice and that Ms. Hawaii was instead (Appendix D,1). This calls into question the national identity of Barber and the commenters’ rejection of Barber claiming America as hers. In a similar vein, one tweet in figure 5 reveals that many Americans believed that Barber won the title solely
because of her experience as a soldier (Appendix C, 1). Militarism is a crucial part of American culture and the fact that Barber is a war veteran undoubtedly aided her in her likeability as a contestant. However, the tweeter expressing that this reason was the only reason why Barber won intentionally erases other favorable aspects of her identity and limits her value to that which is possessed by anyone who has served in the American military.

Another online user tweeted, “Of course #MissUSA2016 must be black, God forbid a white person! Majority of the military is white! #Racist” (Appendix C, 3). Here the tweeter is claiming that it is racist that Barber won because she is Black and the judges chose her as a means of accommodating a politically correct United States that is overcompensating in racial sensitivity as is also true in the tweet in Figure 6 (Appendix C, 2). Once again, Barber’s veteran status is being called into question because of her victory. This tweeter’s language use suggests that he or she is outraged that Barber could be recognized as a standard of what a member of the United States military looks like. These people are implicitly expressing that blackness and military service are mutually exclusive and Barber being a veteran is disrupting this racist assumption. Compellingly, there is also celebration of Barber’s army experience as is seen in other tweets (Appendix C: 4, 6). Regardless of whether Barber was being celebrated or rejected her national identity is entirely based on her color and army experience judging from the language employed by the online users.

Correspondingly with Barber, Chalá’s national identity was offered as an explanation for her victory. Monica Chalá is the sibling of Cleber Manuel Chalá, a renowned Ecuadorian
soccer player. In Evelyn’s interview she explained to me, “Soccer helps the Afro-descendants” (Appendix A: line 55). Soccer is one of the only contexts in which the Black body is collectively celebrated and allowed to take up space (Appendix F,6). Entertainment is the only time that Blackness is celebrated and this is why many people found Chalá to be more palpable as Miss Ecuador.

4. Conclusion

I started this investigation wondering if and how language perpetuates the systemic othering, erasure, and exclusion of Black women. In consideration of my findings I have concluded that language is indeed a tool that is utilized to dehumanize and exclude Black women from having legitimate places and spaces to exist in their own right. Black women exist in a Third Space, and although this term was coined by Homi Bhabha to describe Black people in a postcolonial era, I have asserted that Black women exist in another Third Space within the first (Kalua:2009). This is a position of hybridity in which she is being policed, often by way of language, and spoken for but never spoken to. Womanism is necessary because Black women are rarely acknowledged when feminism or racism is the subject. It is this misrecognition that has permitted the constant public shaming that they are subjected to when they are projected as something more than just their attractiveness, race, or sexuality and in this study, that shaming was infiltrated through platformed racism. Often, Black women are racialized and are not afforded their humanity because of the intersection of their race and gender. Thus, it was so peculiar that Barber and Chalá were chosen in the collective commercial branding of their countries, when they as Black women are not projected. The damaging effects of the ideology of the standard was seen because if the white women is projected as being the ultimate symbol of femininity and beauty, the opposite of her—the Black woman—cannot be those things. Those qualities are negated by Blackness and are mutually exclusive with the Black woman in white supremacist society. The Black woman can never be seen as standard, normal, or a default and as a result she is racialized as something ‘other’, alien, and the complexities of Black women within the African Diaspora granted the space to exist in their own right.
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Appendix A: Interview 1. Evelyn Rodriguez

This interview took place on 12-5-17, at IES Abroad in Quito, Ecuador. I was the interviewer (DR). Evelyn Rodriguez (ER) was the interviewee. The interview was in Spanish and the English translations are my own. This interview was proofread by a native Spanish speaker after my initial transcription and translation.

1. DR: Gracias por tu participación.
   DR: Thank you for your participation.
2. ER: De nada.
   ER: You are welcome.
3. DR: ¿Cuál es la idea general de los negros en Ecuador?
   DR: What is the general idea of the Black people in Ecuador?
4. ER: Sí Sí. Las ideas que las personas piensen sobre la gente negra. Bueno
   ER: Yes. Yes. The ideas that people think about Black people. Well sadly, there are bad stereotypes. Bad stereotypes, true. There is nothing good about the afro-descendant community. The men are lazy and do not like work. Mmmhmm. They have a lot of alcohol... and well unfortunately they are people that rob and kill.
5. DR: Sí Sí
   DR: Yes yes
6. ER: Entonces son todos malos estereotipos y lamentablemente las mujeres negras tienen
   ER: Therefore they are all bad stereotypes and unfortunately the Black women have the stereotype that they are prostitutes in the state and they have many children and for this reason they cannot leave the poverty. Now well now also a stereotype that is not bad, but is the only good one. That is the Afro-descendant women cooks very delicious. Therefore we can understand that those machista stereotypes that nothing more than the woman is only a cook. Do you understand? This is that want to change in actuality to change this stereotype but and not only actuality to give some years. I am more than 30 years old, I am in my first years of university but unfortunately no change... because the stereotypes are very strong and also like a [the] afro-descendant community is very small.
22. DR: Sí
   DR: Yes
23. ER: ¿No? Entonces realmente es como circulo de la pobreza, no pueden salir. Por
24. ejemplo, la mujer negra tiene dos estereotipos malos. Que es pobre, que es negra.
25. Entonces es realmente duro.
   ER: No? Therefore really it is a circle of poverty, they cannot leave. For example, the
   Black women have two bad stereotypes. They are that they are poor and Black.
   Therefore, it’s really harsh.
26. DR: ¿Y estos ideas son más Nuevo o?
   DR: And these ideas are more new or?
27. ER: No. No son nuevos. Lamentablemente no son nuevos. Desde que yo tengo la razón
28. de que yo puedo tener razón solado esto. Cuidado con las personas de raza negra.
   ER: No. No they are not new. Unfortunately, they are not new. Since I have reason that I
can to have reason alone is this.[?] Be careful with the Black people.
29. DR: ¿Porqué?
   DR: Why?
30. ER: Es muy triste. La verdad es muy triste con motato... la comunidad es muy
31. pequeño. Es difícil para ellos. Hemos tenido sin embargo Diamond ha visto sin gente de
32. la raza negra muy importante hemos tenido un político, como se llama, yo no recuerdo,
33. segundo año. Escritores hay un escritor que tiene un famoso libro se llama Cuando los
34. guaycanas... es un libro que un estudio en
35. los Estados Unidos. Pero no más. Y la cultura de los Afro-descendientes es buenísima
36. y también su música.
37. La marimba todos de las tradiciones las... de las esmereldanas son poetas que no dar
38. más.
   ER: It’s very sad. The truth is very sad with motive. The community is very small.
   It’s difficult for them. They have had, however Diamond has seen people of the Black
race very important they have had a politician, what is his name, I do not remember,
second year. Writers there is a writer that has a famous book that is called Cuando Los
Guayanas... It’s a book that was a study
in the United States. But no more. And the culture of the Afro-Descendants is very good
and their music is too. The marimba all of the traditions the... of the Esmereldans are
poets that don’t give much.
39. DR: Qué tipo de la languaje que utilizan los modos de comunicación para hablar sobre
los
   afrodescendientes?
   DR: What type of language do the modes of communication use to speak about the Afro-
descendants?
40. ER: Tienen mucho cuidado en Ecuador. Por ejemplo los nunca vas escuchar
41. personas... periodistas que tengan hablende del negritos. Nunca vas eschuchan de
42. negritos.
   ER: They are very careful in Ecuador. For example they never hear people... reporters
   that speak about the Black people. You’ll never hear about Black people [in media].
44. DR: Sí
   DR: Yes
45. ER: No son como la gente. Los periodistas tienen mucho respeto cuando hablan sobre
46. los afrodescendientes pero los medios de comunicación utilizan respeto.

ER: They aren’t like the people. The reporters have a lot of respect when they speak about the Afro-descendants but the modes of communication use respect.

47. DR: ¿Siempre o?

DR: Always or?

48. ER: Yo veo este cambio de hace unos veinte años en Ecuador. Especialmente en la la mayoría de jugadores de futbol.

ER: I have seen this change since 20 years ago in Ecuador. Especially in the majority of soccer players.

49. ER: Son los de raza negra. Desde que el equipo de la selection Ecuatoriana fue al mundial como hay más respeto.

They are of the Black race. Since the selection of the Ecuadorian team was country wide there is a lot of respect.

50. DR: Si

DR: Yes

51. ER: Futbol es lo que les ayudó a los afrodescendientes. Pero también es peligroso si gana el equipo.

ER: Soccer helps the Afro-Descendants. But also its dangerous if they win the match.

52. DR: ¿Um porque crees que ha vido solo una negra “Miss Ecuador”?

DR: Um why do you believe there has only been one Black “Miss Ecuador”?

53. ER: Es una Buena pregunta. Porque pienso que la mujere Afro-descendiente en Ecuador no es considerada hermosa. La mujere afro descendiente no es considerada porque no hay muchas mujeres asi por ejemplo. No podemos saber cual es el tipo de belleza no puede ser igual, de calquier otro raza, entonces yo creo esto es un problema que nosotros tenemos solamente un tipo de belleza mestiza. Yo he oido mucho ala mujere afrodescendiente el fisico, su contextura fisica, que ... pero nosotros no tenemos la acustombre. Yo veo este cambio de hace unos veinte años en Ecuador...especialmente mayoría de jugadores de futbol.

ER: It’s a good question. Because I think that the Afro-descendant woman in Ecuador is not considered beautiful. The Afro-descendant woman is not considered because there aren’t many women like this for example. We cannot know which type of beauty is considered equal, or another race, therefore I believe this is a problem that we have only one type of beauty, the mestiza. I have heard much of the Afro-descendant woman’s physique, her physical makeup... but we are not accustomed to it. I see this change for 20 years in Ecuador ... especially [in] majority of the soccer players.

54. DR: Mhm

55. ER: La idea es la identidad. Yo creo que es igual y negativamente es un comunidad más grande aquí en Ecuador que se llama Chota Chiquito, sabes el Chota, Chota es muy norte de Otavalo.

ER: The idea is identity. I believe that its equal and negatively is a community very big called Chota Chiquito that is known as the Chota, Chota is north of Otavalo.

56. DR: ¿Valle Chota?
DR: Valley Chota?
70. ER: Si Valle de Chota. Entonces ahora hay un barco que toca se llama el Chota Chiquito que está arriba la avenida occidental. Sí en el norte. En el sector Pinchincha está en las faldas de Pinchincha y hay está hay viven muchísimas personas Afrodescendientes que han venido El Chota. Entonces este es un sector, pernita no es u sector peligroso. Pero no es un sector donde vamos. Los mestizos no vamos por respeto.
71. ER: Yes the Valley Chota. Therefore, there is ship that is named the Chota Chiquito that is above the avenue occidental. Yes in the North. In the sector Pinchincha in the skirts of Pinchincha and there many Afro-descendants who live in The Chota are there. Therefore in this sector, danger is not permitted. But this is not a sector we go to. The mestizos do not go out of respect.
72. DR: ¿No respeto?
73. ER: Yes because many people there are in a closed community, that the same Afro-Descendants of this sector don’t allow the entry of the mestizos. Therefore, there is this sector and unfortunately we are stereotyped. Not like for protection, but now... the school Afro-Descendants is full of vendors. But, unfortunately Afro-descendants are not in important positions.
74. DR: No respect?
75. ER: Si porque a menos a muchos personas saben que es una comunidad cerada, que los mismos Afrodescendientes de este sector no permiten el ingreso de los mestizos. Entonces hay este sector y lamentablemente están estereotipados. No como para proteccion, pero ahora tú[?] en las escuelas afrodescendientes hay muchos vendedores.
76. DR: Sí
77. DR: Thank you. I have to collect data about your identity. ¿Esta bien?
78. DR: Yes
79. DR: Yes. I am 50 years old, I am from Ecuador.
80. ER: Yes. I am 50 años, soy de sur de Ecuador.
Appendix B: Interview 2. Angelica Ordoñez

This interview took place on 12-9-16, at IES Abroad in Quito, Ecuador. I was the interviewer (DR). Angelica Ordoñez (AO) was the interviewee. The interview was in Spanish and the English translations are my own. This interview was proofread by a native Spanish speaker after my initial transcription and translation.

1. DR: ¿Cómo se llamas?
   DR: What is your name?
2. AO: Angelica Ordoñez
3. DR: ¿Y cuántas años tienes?
   DR: And how old are you?
4. AO: Soy de Quito, Ecuador
   AO: I am from Quito, Ecuador.
5. DR: Y por su identidad, ¿mestiza?
   DR: And for your identity, mestiza?
6. AO: Mestiza
7. DR: Ya.
   DR: Okay.
8. DR: ¿Cuál es la idea como de la gente negra en Ecuador?
   DR: What is the idea of Black people in Ecuador?
9. AO: Hay mucho racismo y hay mucho esceletipos entonces hay estereotipos muy fuertes
10. de la población afrodescendientes como a buena para deportes pero e tal vez mala
11. [carreras?] como la derecha medicina carreras universitarias tienen este estereotipo de
12. que solo tienen fuerza física y que esta fuerza física es ignata es natural para ellos. Que
13. ellos ni si quiera necesitan es [forcase?] ... ejercicio si no que ellos nacieron así. Mm y
14. también hay tal vez una frecuencia con las mujeres. Hay como que son mas libres
15. sexualmente y eso también crea mucho discriminación em, que no les gusta trabajar y
16. creo que estos estereotipos se mantienen en la ciudad de hoy.

AO: There is a lot of racism and stereotypes therefore there are strong stereotypes of the afro-descendant population like they are good for sports but maybe bad [carreras]? Like [the right medicine?] expensive universities have this stereotype that they only have physical strength and that this physical strength is [innate?] is natural for them. That they don’t want or need [forcase?] ... exercise if they weren’t born like that. Mm and also maybe frequent with the women. There are that they are very free sexually and this creates a lot of discrimination em, that they do not like to work and I believe that these stereotypes hold in the city today.

17. DR: ¿Um qué tipo de lenguaje utilizada los medios de comunicación para describir la gente negra en Ecuador?.
18. DR: Um what type of language is used in mass media to describe the Black people in Ecuador?
19. AO: E depende del contexto hay un artor, John Trajer que heche un estudio que de como
20. la presencia ha visto a los afrodescendientes o la población negra y por ejemplo
21. cuando son las deportistas les compara con animales como un felino, como que son
22. muy rápidos o muy fuertes. Em pero que cuando son por ejemplo hay una linka
23. [cometen?] un crimen entonces igual es compara o con para una persona muy salvaje.
26. No hay una forma positiva del tratar del en los medios entonces estos, e estos extremos la pobreza no...pero no como no hay una conocimiento por ejemplo las culturas Afro que hechan en historia o de profesionales. Que si existen, obviamente los políticos, no hay una representación, se ve en los medios solo cosas muy negativas en cuanto a crímen por ejemplo o positivas entres [convillas] porque no es positivo, no comparando con su fuerza física como más como animal o como así.

32. AO: It depends on the context. There is an author, John Trajer that did a study on the presence of Afro-descendants or the Black population and for example when the athletes were compared with animals like a feline or that they were very fast and very strong. Em but that there is a link with crime, therefore its equal with comparing them with a savage. There is no attempt to make them have a positive [view] in the modes of communication. They are extremely poor, there is no knowledge for example the Black culture does not have a professional history. There exist politicians obviously, but there is still no representation. In the modes [of communication] there are only negative things as soon as crime emerges...there is a comparison between their physical strength and the physical strength of an animal.

33. DR: ¿No representación en los políticos?

34. AO: No mucho. Casi nada, no sé conoce casi nada hay un político famoso que se llama Jaime Ortado es un más famoso Afro-Ecuatoriano pero ya murió y su hija ahora está también política y tal vez ellos son como digamos los únicos que tal vez son mas conocídgos. Pero cuando hay otros funcionarios que están trabajando por ejemplo gobernador de Guayas y otros profesionales. No se les conocen. O hay un intres por conocer. Si quiero añadir que incluso los medios comunicaciones. Pero yo he visto información muy erronia?, no científicas, en os periódicos y no tienen ningún intres de corregir la información correcta ni investigar.

35. AO: Almost nothing, I don’t know much. Not much. Jamie Ortado is a famous Afro-Ecuadorian politician and now his daughter is a politician as well. These are the only ones I know of, they might not be the only ones. But, there are others that function in work for example the governor of Guayas and other professionals. I don’t know of them. I have an interest to know. I want mor inclusion in the media. But I have seen a lot of incorrect information, no logical information [about the Afro-Ecuadorians] and the reporters have no interest in correcting the information or investigating.

42. DR: ¿Pero este es todo?

43. AO: Sí.

44. AO: En todas las temas pero yo vi cosas muy tantas sobre la población Afro y porque eran superiores entre comidas en el deporte en el periódico y no era información científica.

45. DR: Hmm, sí. ¿Por qué crees que hay solo una Miss Ecuador negra en la historia del país?
DR: Hmm, yes. Why do you believe that there has only ever been one Black Miss Ecuador in the history of the country?

47. AO: No sé si solo uno o dos pero yo recuerdo que uno que fue famosa. Que es Monica Chala.
48. Yo creo que sinceramente fue dicide porque mis universos se iba a [...] un país Africa Negra, pero no recuerdo que país era. Entonces quisieras tomar una representante Afro-
49. Ecuatoriana no fue un...yo no creo fue un proceso de reconocimiento de los pueblos de la billesa que tampoco estoy de acuerdo con los concursos feminina este es mi opinión personal. Pero no creo que es un proceso de estilo creo que había pensado en que país se 
50. iba relizar universo y vaso y elijeron a Monica Chala no digo que considera de meditos que no era bonita pero creo que ese fue una de las ideas que permito que ya pudeiran. I sincerelly beleive that it was because it was decided that the Miss Universe pageant would be in an African country after. But, I do not beleive that it was a process of style I beleive that they though of what country the Miss Universe pageant would be in and elected Monica Chala without paying attention to her type of measure of beauty. I beleive that these ideas are what permitted her being able to win.

51. DR: ¿Es la indentidad Afro-Ecuatoriano más negativo en total?

52. AO: En las univerisitarias no enseño sobre las culturas, no sobre personajes famosos, poesía, escritores, no nos enseñan y entonces es una ignorancia desconocimientos de sus culturas. No estar en contacto con ellos porque en ciertos bamins de Quito no les permiten añadar este historia.

AO: In the universities they don’t teach about the cultures, famous characters, poetry or writers, we are not taught it. Therefore, there is ignorance and misinforation of the Afro-Ecuadorian cultures. There is truly no contact with them and Quito does not permit this addition to its history.
Appendix C: Twitter

Unless otherwise stated, above the tweet, I searched for and found these tweets individually by searching with the hashtags #MissUSA2016 and #DeshaunaBarber.

1. Retrieved from Prager (2016)

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Hawaii deserves it more! DC is so ugly... Just won because is a soldier. So sad... #MissUSA
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2. Retrieved from Prager (2016)

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Everyone knows Miss Alabama would have won...if she was black. #MissUSA
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Of course #MissUSA #MissUSA2016 must be black, God forbid a white person! Majority of the military is white! #Racist
```
4. Lyndy Louise Oracion @lyndzkieghay92 · 4 Jul 2016
Wow... the winner of #MissUSA2016 is a military... congratulations!! :)

5. saw kang daniel live @shamsampuu · 4 Jul 2016
She's so pretty and she's a soldier she deserves it #MissUSA2016

6. paulee 🌼 @Paulepeptide · 4 Jul 2016
Aw. She's crying lol #MissUSA2016

Tweet
@AmberSocialLA
And this one has the audacity to throw in Jesus as her savior. You need more saving #MissUSA #DeshauanaBarber.
6. OK that's gotta be the fugliest coronation ever HAHAHAHA sobrang walang poise pag-iyak ni District of Columbia 😂😂😂
#MissUSA2016
Sat 2 AM - 4 Jul 2016
1 Like

7. #thehistorytheydontteach Ironic because when #DeshaunaBarber won the MAP they told her to compete in the black one. 😢

Miss Black America Beauty Pageant ended in 1972 because whites claimed the pageant was racist.

Army Reserve officer crowned Miss USA 2016, Now that's BEAUTIFUL! #armywomen #missusa #deshaunabarber #imageskincareproudsponsor #truebeauty
6/6/16, 4:21 PM
8.

Zee Codizar:
@zecodizar

I really thought Hawaii got it in the bag. I sense some arrogance and smugness from District of Columbia 😢😢 #MissUSA2016

3:53 AM - 9 Jul 2016

Tweet your reply

9.

JetsetterBanker
@ivanbodongan

Ugh. I was rooting for Miss #California in the recent #MissUSA2016 but that Q&A though. Grr

6:51 PM - 9 Jul 2016

1 Like
Appendix D: Facebook

1. Retrieved from Prager (2016)

Maureen Conway I turned it on for the last 10 minutes. I saw the white girl, Miss Hawaii, and knew that she had no chance of winning. My husband thought I was crazy. I said she has no chance. Look at what they did to the Oscars. They will be afraid not to pick the black girl from District of Columbia. She may be a nice woman, but not as beautiful as Miss Hawaii. I was right. Obama's world.

Donna Wilson Not my choice! Miss Hawaii was my choice! And there is a Miss Black America, so why don't the black girls enroll in that pageant?

Sandra Holmes Wow! What a surprise—NOT. We have to be politically correct; you know. I knew it would be a black person that won, and I didn't even watch it. Now I wonder if a white woman's will win the black Miss America in their pageant. Of course not! That would be racist! Maybe a man?

Daniel Marino poor skinny bony woman... this is the best America has to offer???????????? I don't care about race...... I have seen transgenders who look physically better than this skeleton.

Laraine Walker WHY DID SHE WIN>CAUSE SHE IS BLACK?? TO SHUT UP RADICAL BLACKS????

Theresa Marmero Sochacki Why is she in it at all. We are not allowed in MISS BLACK AMERICA PATENT. And they say we are racist.

Quentin Hanna She only won because he's black they basically gave it to her at the dam if you're black you got it made give everything to your country.

Sandra Afflerbach Fehr She's very pretty, and I'm happy for her, but they probably just picked her because she was black. It's hard to know anymore!

2.

3. As is presented in tweet (Appendix C, 7).
THE HATE FOR OUR NEW MISS USA IS REAL...

Miss USA Deshauna Barber 'Absolutely Breaking the Stereotypes' in Military, Pageant Worlds, She...

Ashley Jackson
She doesn't even look American!!!

Like · 2 · Reply · More · 24 minutes ago

Tahiya Reza
Lol how does an American look like? Please do tell!
Like · 51 · Reply · More · 22 minutes ago

Ashley Jackson
Not like her. she looks nigerian or something

Mike Combs
She looks downtrodden and oppressed to me.
Like · 5 · Reply · More · 23 minutes ago

Mike Combs
If she was white she wouldn't be getting half the attention.
Like · 5 · Reply · More · 26 minutes ago

Arais Basanta
She ugly AF
Like · Reply · More · 6 minutes ago

Jake Brumley
I think she looks rough as hell lol but either way being in the military has nothing to do with beauty pageant so why is that constantly mentioned in this story??
Like · 5 · Reply · More · 18 minutes ago

Rick Seidel
Another black person getting the job that didn't deserve it

Amanda Mendoza
These people are blind
Like · 5 · Reply · More · 11 minutes ago

William Travis
She's ugly AF.
Like · 5 · Reply · More · 15 minutes ago

Cristina Arriola
You are miss USA I'm not exactly sure good your title does for humanity?
Like · 5 · Reply · More · 20 minutes ago

XIII
Appendix E: Newspaper Excerpts from Rahier’s *Blackness, the Racial/Spatial Order, Migrations, and Miss Ecuador 1995-96* (1998)

1.

**The Racist Comments of Two White-Mestizo Police Colonels**

On September 5, 1995, the daily Quito newspaper *Hoy*, usually regarded as a progressive paper, reported on several criminal events. The first one had taken place right after a black music festival organized by black groups and funded by the municipality of Quito:

While many were still present on the plaza, gunshots killed four people. According to witnesses, everything began when a couple and their four-month-old son were assailed by gang members near the bus stop. One of the assailants stabbed the child to death, and in retaliation the father shot his son’s murderer. The gang members responded by firing in all directions. Almost at the same time, machine-gun fire was heard at another corner of the plaza. According to witnesses, an unknown individual, who was driving a Suzuki Forza, was turning around as if he was waiting for the end of the cultural event. Around 9:00 p.m., the driver of the Forza came out of his vehicle with a machine gun and began to shoot into the crowd, as if he wanted to kill everybody who was there…. The criminal, presumably disturbed, escaped in his car and is being sought by the police. [*Hoy* 1995a:12B]

Under the subtitle “Kidnapping, Suicides and Something More,” the journalist continued describing more crimes.

In addition to this, other violent events occurred. There was, for instance, an attempted kidnapping. The young woman María Bernarda Bonilla (16 years old), who was driving a new Jeep Trooper, was attacked by *people of color* [*sujetos de color*] who wanted to kidnap her. Finally the teenager escaped, but she was very frightened. [*Hoy* 1995a:12B, emphasis added]

I include these passages because they are informa-
On Saturday, September 9, 1995, Sylvia Mejía reported in Hoy various interviews she conducted on that story with the police colonel who heads the Oficina de Investigación del Delito, or OID (Bureau of Investigation of Crime), a sort of local FBI, and the colonel/commandant of the police regiment “Quito.” “Is it the fault of the blacks?” Mejía asks the reader.

Both the chief of the OID and the commandant of the regiment “Quito” have their own theories about the cause of this outbreak of violence. . . The four persons who were murdered on Saturday, as well as the majority of the wounded, were of the black race. Perhaps that is why the two colonels do not hesitate to propose an unusual version of the genesis of this “wave of violence”: “This migration of blacks has attacked the city,” says the chief of the OID . . . while the commandant of the regiment “Quito” offers a more extended explanation: “There is a type of race that is inclined toward delinquency, to commit horrible acts. . . that is the black race [raza morena] that is taking over the urban centers of the country, forming belts of poverty conducive to delinquency because of their ignorance and their audacity.” [Mejía 1995b:5B, emphasis added]

The “black race” of the victims makes them automatically suspect. On September 21, 1995, Hoy presented a series of protests from various organizations: the Human Rights Committee of Esmeraldas, the Department of Afro-Ecuadorian Pastoral of the Ecuadorian Episcopal Conference, and the dance company Azúcar, created by young blacks residing in Quito. Azúcar presented the following manifesto:

How is it possible that police authorities, in charge of guaranteeing peace and order, maintain racist prejudices [and] encourage with their statements racial discrimination, a situation that causes social violence? . . . Do not generalize. . . Do not try to offend people, do not try to hide the incompetence or the impotence of a state and its institutions, behind the blacks, the Indians, the poor, and the different. Are the high officials involved in the garbage
there is still a sneaky racism. [Mejia 1995a:6]

On September 24, 1995, Hoy printed a letter sent by the general commandant of the national police to the editor, in which he complains about the alleged distortions in Sylvia Mejía’s printed interviews with the two police colonels. At his letter’s end, the general tries to validate the idea that blacks are more involved in violent criminal activities than others. This is the case, he adds, because of the negative influence of Colombian delinquents.

According to the statistics, a percentage of national delinquents, influenced by the delinquents of other neighboring countries, are black men [hombres morenos] who commit crimes with firearms. In these commentaries, one can appreciate that the police identified victims of the violence, as well as others who committed it, as members of the black race. If this indication, presumably offensive, has hurt the sentimental fiber of a respectable group of Ecuadorians, I fulfill my obligation by giving them my personal and institutional amends, with the assurance that there never existed, not even remotely, a stinging intention and consequently a shade of separation between the national police and the Ecuadorian civil population. [Hoy 1995b:9A, emphasis added]

None of the journalists who covered the story after the publication of the general’s letter questioned the value of the statistical information that he vaguely referred to: “According to the statistics, a percentage of national delinquents . . . are black men who commit crimes with firearms.” Statistics are never presented to identify what this percentage is.10

The geographical and ideological exclusion of Ecuadorian blacks from national identity is reaffirmed in the statements of the police colonels and the general commandant, the quote from the nurse, the comments I
A tall and curvy young woman of the black race triumphed in a national beauty contest. . . . The actual interracial consensus, although it is only in the matter of aesthetic appreciation, cannot be but the result of an acknowledgment by the majority that Ecuador is a crucible of a variety of pigments, oversubtle mixture of ancestral lineages, amalgamated in a symbiosis with diverse epidermic contributions from other continents . . . . The silhouette and features of Mónica go beyond the frivolous and prosaic concept (of "sexual symbol"). She transmits, with her own radiation or osmosis, an ingenuous gentle breeze that her race, still virgin from external contamination, keeps original and without damage . . . . Mónica Chalá is a Venus of ebony and jet, of the ones engendered the nights of the full moon, conceived when the light shines in the penumbra. [Bejarano 1995: C5]
5. During my time working in an after-school program in Quito, one of the mestizo children asked if I was born as dark as I am today. Another student who was upset at being reprimanded said that “I looked I should be in a cacao field working”.

6. During a conversation with Angelica, (Appendix B), she explained to me that Monica Chalá was likeable to a lot of Ecuadorians because she had a famous sibling who was a soccer player for Ecuador

Appendix E: Newspaper Excerpts from Craig’s Ain’t I a Beauty Queen

1. (49) “..The Age featured a new caption under its weekly photographs of beauties that read: ‘Various types from which the Ideal American- Negro Beauty may be evolved.’...The ideal Negro woman was of the ‘Egyptian’ type, with a touch of the ‘Spirit of the New World’. She would have:
   A well balanced and symmetrical head, full slender neck, the features clear cut, with the appearance of being chiseled rather than cast; the forehead broad and slightly expansive, a fine Negro nose with a trace of the Egyptian and a slight aquiline curve; the mouth fairly small but well proportioned and a slightly pointed, round, firm chin; the eyes should be large but slightly elongated; surmounted by a fine brow that is not too sharp, delicately arched, and last but not least, with the marvelously fine curving eyelash of which the Negro race can be justly proud.”

   “Lewis Africanized his preference for light skin.”

2. (58)“Ten Most Beautiful Negro Women,” Our World, November 1950, 15, 17-19

   “Our World employed an inclusive rhetoric of pride in all of the race’s varieties to describe photographic portraits of ten “types” of Negro beauties:

   Barbara Trevigne, the light skinned exotic type, obviously had Caucasian background.
   Lena Horne is the olive tan sophisticated type.
   Mary Smith, New York model, is the kind that attracts many wolf-calls. She’s often mistaken for white. Has no trouble passing.
   Mildred Smith is the light brown sparkling type.
   Edith Chandler is the sweet nut brown type.
   Carmen de Lavallade is the graceful creole type.
   Ann Lamb is the dark seductive type. Ann has that dreamy eyed quality, flawless complexion and a body to fit.
   Valenica Butler is the light fragile type.
   Jane White, daughter of NAACP secretary Walter White, is the light entertaining type.