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**POLITICAL COMMUNICATION AND ECONOMIC  
REFORM: THE USE OF CONSUMERIST FRAMES  
IN BRAZIL, 1985-2005**

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POLITICAL COMMUNICATION AND ECONOMIC REFORM:  
THE USE OF CONSUMERIST FRAMES IN BRAZIL, 1985-2005

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Abstract:

An enduring puzzle for scholars of Latin American policy reform asks how policy makers push through reforms with short term costs but long term benefits in mass democracies. Many answers have been given, including international pressures, cultural and ideational factors, the nature of political institutions, deceptive policy switches, and the power of concentrated interests. These explanations and others disregard the question of how policy elites attempt to build mass legitimacy for reforms through political communication strategies such as framing and agenda setting. In the case of Brazil, I argue, policy elites and media messages framed arguments about reform policies in terms of the consumer interest in competitive economic markets. I present an analysis of newspaper coverage of consumer issues in Brazil to show that attention to the critical competition frame increased during the first reform attempts under President Fernando Collor de Melo and, more clearly, during the main period of reforms under Fernando Henrique Cardoso.

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\* The views in this paper are personal and do not necessarily represent the position of the Universidad del Cema.

## POLITICAL COMMUNICATION AND ECONOMIC REFORM STRATEGIES

Much analysis of neoliberal, or market-oriented, economic policy reforms argues that while such reforms may be very costly in the short term, in the long term they promise real benefits to society as a whole. Politicians and other policy elites who wish to implement reforms thus are presented with the problem of how to create stakeholders as quickly as possible in order to assure the continuation of the reform process. How do reformers build legitimacy for reforms with short term cost but potentially long term benefits for ordinary people? What strategies do they use to go through the difficult first years of the reforms, when they face many concentrated opponents and still have not established actors with interests in sustaining the reforms? Many answers have been given to explain the implementation of neoliberal policies, including alliances with powerful international actors, deceptive post-campaign policy reversals, the political manipulation of crises under the previous economic model, the distribution of side-payments to particularistic interests, and electoral coalitions based on constituencies that are overrepresented in national legislatures. These answers and others illuminate how politicians implement unpopular reforms in spite of powerful opposition, but with few exceptions they tend not to explain how such politicians and other policy elites (such as intellectuals, lawyers, business people, and, crucially, journalists) try to persuade large segments of the mass public that reforms may be worthwhile. Recent calls for an increased focus on the political process of policy change in Latin American democracies lend support to the argument that scholarly attention to political communication is overdue in the literature on economic reforms.

In this article I discuss an important component of strategies that Brazilian policy elites have used to legitimize reform policies during the initial years: the framing of reforms in favorable terms to ordinary people, and, in particular, in terms of consumers' interest in competitive economic markets. Pro-consumer discourse, occasionally but not necessarily combined with the securing of real protections for consumers in policy packages, is a heretofore understudied communication strategy that politicians and other policy elites may use to make reforms more palatable to large numbers of the middle and working class public. I refer to the use of consumerist discourse as the consumerist strategy of economic reform, and I show that, via media messages, policy elites have used it to legitimate policies of price stabilization, privatization, and trade liberalization in Brazil during the New Republic (1985-2005). I conclude

that more attention to political communication strategies in general, and to consumer issues in particular, is a promising response to the recent calls for greater attention to the political process of reform.

Surprisingly, thus far political economy analysis of market reforms in Latin America mostly has ignored the possibility of consumers as an important group of stakeholders, even though both neoclassical economic theory and elite reformers invoke the consumer interest as a principal rationale for reform. There are two major reasons for the omission in the literature: the lack of attention to political communication with mass publics generally, and the market-centered conceptualization of the consumer interest in economics and political economy. In order to analyze the framing of the consumer interest politically, I argue, it is necessary to recognize that it has various dimensions, including an interest in competitive markets, protection from markets, and the use of economic power to effect social change. Then, through a brief review of the historical context of consumer protection, I show that Brazil is a “most likely case” (Eckstein 1975) for the study of the use of consumerism as a political communication strategy because political activists interested in the protection of consumers from the excesses of capitalism succeeded at putting consumerism on the political agenda during the transition to democratic rule. Indeed, Brazil’s well developed consumer protection legislation was a component of the institutional constraints that contributed to its relatively slow implementation of some market reforms. Somewhat paradoxically, Brazilian politicians and policy advocates also employed consumerist frames, but of a different type --emphasizing the virtues of market competition--in debates about three components of economic policy reform: price stabilization, utility privatization, and trade liberalization. Along with political competition, the history of how consumerism became part of the political agenda in Brazil, and therefore part of the standard used in the media to evaluate public policy, helps explain this apparent paradox.

In the principal empirical section of the article, I test the hypothesis that consumerism has been an important political communication strategy in Brazil through an analysis of coverage of consumer issues by major Brazilian newspapers during the period 1985-2005. The analysis shows that attention to the critical competition frame of consumerism increased during the first reform attempts under President Fernando Collor de Melo and, more clearly, during the main period of economic reforms during the administration of Fernando Henrique Cardoso. By the time the main reforms had already been implemented and economic crisis hit Brazil, attention to

the competition-oriented frame of consumerism had declined, while appeals based on protection-oriented frames surged. The results support my contention that the consumerist approach adds something new to our understanding of the puzzle of how economic policy reform is carried out in democracies. In particular, this approach leads to a clearer specification of the messages political and policy elites attempt to send to the mass public about policy reform.

## POLITICAL COMMUNICATION AND CONSUMERS IN THE LITERATURE ON MARKET REFORMS

For several decades now, scholars of political economy have debated the puzzles of when and how neoliberal reforms may be implemented in the emerging democracies in Latin America and elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> The political obstacles, at least in the short term, are many: mass publics, labor unions, business organizations, bureaucrats, politicians, and political parties all have been argued to have vested interests in blocking reforms. Yet market reforms have been implemented to some degree across the Latin American region, even in Brazil, a country that had achieved greater success with the old import substitution industrialization policies than most, and certainly had plenty of vested interests in the status quo. Explanations for why reforms occurred at all and for the patterns they followed that have been offered include structural theories of economic dependency, which cite pressure from and alliances with international financial institutions and global business (Stallings 1992; 1995; Robinson 2004; Whitehead 2002), economic ideas (ideational and cultural explanations) (Biersteker 1995), the incentive structures provided by political institutions to serve particularistic interests (Haggard and Kaufman 1992; Geddes 1994; Mainwaring and Scully 1995; Schamis 1999; Gibson and Calvo (2000); Ames 2001), deceptive policy switches (Stokes 2001a), and the cognitive psychology of both politicians and publics facing economic crises (Weyland 2004).<sup>2</sup> Most of these theoretical perspectives consider the relationship between politicians, policy ideas and discourses, and the mass public at least somewhat important, but they rarely have much to say about the nature of this relationship

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<sup>1</sup> Arguments specifying the tradeoffs between short term costs and long term benefits of neoliberal economic reforms are found in Nelson 1989; Haggard and Kaufman 1992; Williamson 1994; World Bank 1997, and Kaufman and Nelson 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Also on crisis, see Drazen and Easterly (2001). Corrales (1997-1998) disagrees with the crisis thesis.

beyond the idea that publics are unlikely to support reforming politicians because the benefits of reforms, if any, are likely to occur only over the long term. Few specifically address how policy elites may use discursive techniques such as framing to construct broad groups of stakeholders in reforms, and fewer still specifically mention that consumers may be an attractive target of such messages.

The omission of the consumer perspective from the literature matters. Some of the earlier analysis of structural adjustment underestimated the detrimental effects of inflation on the lives of poor people. Early studies of privatization paid little attention to details of how increased prices for basic utility services affected peoples' lives and political views. Studies of free trade overlooked the importance some groups of consumers have attached to access to inexpensive imports. Because of the agenda setting by policy activists, and also because their careers partly depend on doing so, as I show later in this article, Brazilian policy elites were quicker than scholars have been to notice that the media and the mass public would evaluate policies from the consumption angle. Scholarly attention to political communication is necessary to correct important gaps in the various approaches to economic reforms.

One of the most important schools of thought about neoliberalism is structuralism. Works on the structural causes of policy reforms emphasize the constraints that international economic markets and international financial organizations impose on countries' policy choices and how reforming politicians have little control over policy or, alternatively, avoid taking responsibility for difficult decisions (Stallings 1992; 1995; Robinson 2004; Whitehead 2002). Often, though not always, rooted in the dependency perspective, this literature generally expects the domestic costs of market reforms to be very high and therefore to generate opposition, although, as Weyland (2004) points out, it also tends to take the view that domestic protest against neoliberalism faces high obstacles, if it is not entirely futile (Walton and Ragin 1990). This literature is especially guilty of not mentioning consumers, whether as a group potentially hurt or helped by economic reforms. Recent consumer reactions against aspects of the privatization of utilities such as telecommunications, water, and gas in countries such as Argentina, Bolivia, and Brazil indicate that consumers do indeed sometimes form part of the struggle against neoliberalism (Olivera 2001), however, suggesting that structuralists who take domestic protest seriously should consider the distributional impact of reforms on consumers more than they have done thus far. Scholars outside the structuralist tradition, such as Arce (2006), also have begun to

study the distributional impact of reforms on other societal groups, including labor, business, and civil servants. While real distributive impacts clearly are important, closer attention to the political communication strategies of reformers would contribute much to this discussion by illuminating that some societal groups, including consumers and consumer organizations, may be more relevant politically than they were in the past.

Changes in economic theory often are argued to be an ideational cause of market reforms in developing countries. Specifically, economic studies that emerged in the 1970s emphasized the inefficiencies of state intervention in the economy and, in the case of Latin America in particular, the exhaustion of the import substitution industrialization model (ISI) (Biersteker 1995). Classical economic theory defines the consumer interest as the maximization of individual utility by acquiring more and better quality goods and services at lower prices. In the neoclassical view, one of the main purposes of economic activity is to satisfy the demands of consumers, which ISI had failed to accomplish: thus, the economic reform literature that draws from neoclassical economics is founded on the assumption that consumers are key long term stakeholders. This consumer-centered model is something of a conventional economic wisdom; indeed, some economists and pundits have gone so far as to argue that policies favoring producers are one of the factors that keep some countries poor (Cristaldo 2003). Although the economic literature clearly values the consumer interest, it also oversimplifies it, at least for the purposes of political analysis.<sup>3</sup> Because of the oversimplification, this literature tends to accept, usually implicitly and occasionally explicitly, the assumptions that consumers are unlikely to organize to lobby on behalf of their interests and that, as such, they play no other role in the political process.<sup>4</sup>

Like economists, political scientists interested in Latin American policy reform may have been less inclined to study consumers than other groups because consumers are relatively unlikely to organize. More than two centuries ago, Adam Smith pointed out almost the same idea

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<sup>3</sup> The neoclassical treatment of the consumer has been criticized from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, including anthropology, sociology, marketing, and history, but few political scientists have joined the debate. Much of the criticism centers around the causes of consumer tastes and preferences. For a synthesis of critiques from other perspectives, see Ackerman (1997).

<sup>4</sup> For example, in an important article about privatization, Tornell (1999) mentions consumers in the first paragraph, but does not mention them again.

that Mancur Olson (1965) would turn into the foundation of the new political economy school of collective action: consumers have less incentive than producers to cooperate with one another and lobby governments on behalf of their joint interest. Political scientists also know, however, that massive organization is not necessary for consumerism to work well as a political strategy. As R. Douglas Arnold (1990), a scholar of United States congressional politics has pointed out, during the heyday of the U.S. consumer protection movement, even the prominent advocate Ralph Nader was not able to organize consumers in large numbers for sustained periods of time. After a few instances of showing that the public could become angry about consumer protection, however, it no longer was necessary for advocates like Nader to try to provoke mass demonstrations because the mere existence of anti-consumer framing of issues in the media served as a check on the behavior of legislators. In effect, what Nader had succeeded at was convincing the media to discuss and label votes as pro or anti-consumer. Suddenly, Arnold tells us, “a formerly inattentive public was alive” (p.69). Consumerism is not just a resource for activists like Nader to use to threaten politicians, however: it also can be a political resource that politicians actively use to build support for their policies. U.S. president John F. Kennedy, for example, drew public attention to his various proposals for extending federal consumer protection legislation.

A substantial literature has established that politicians are constrained by the institutional environment in which they operate. The institutional approach to economic reform in Latin America considers variables such as legislative coalitions and institutional powers of the presidency to be key explanations for the onset, nature, and sequencing of market policies. Centralized presidential authority and coherent party systems are argued to be conducive to the effective implementation of reforms (Haggard and Kaufman 1992; Mainwaring and Scully 1995; Ames 2001). Institutions have become an important component of political economy analysis, but even institutionalists agree that their theories are incomplete without linkages from policies to constituents or stakeholders: “...reforms must eventually appeal to a new coalition of beneficiaries” (Haggard and Kaufman 1995, p.10). Thus far, most of this literature has not tended to examine the relationship between political institutions and policies favoring groups in the mass public, especially consumers, although lately some literature on the advanced industrial countries has moved in that direction (Vogel 1986; 1995; Rogowski 2003).

Attention to political communication strategies would help flesh out the literature on how Latin American politicians behave given the constraints of institutions by identifying strategies politicians may follow to implement reforms. Most often, the existing theories focus on how politicians overcome anti-reform coalitions. Works by Geddes (1994), Weyland (2001), and Roberts (2002) help explain why neopopulist outsiders sometimes were able to initiate reforms that more established politicians, mired in patronage obligations, were unable to advocate. Other authors, such as Przeworski (1991) and Harberger (1993), emphasize that implementing reforms swiftly, in an authoritarian style, preempts effective popular opposition. Still others show how reformers can use old political patronage strategies in new ways to build coalitions of supporters for reforms: favoring supporters in privatization deals is one key example of this kind of behavior (Corrales 1998; Hellman 1998; Schamis 1999), as is subsidizing certain powerful constituents such as subnational units that are overrepresented in national legislatures (Gibson and Calvo 2001). As some critics of this literature have pointed out, however, clientelism and authoritarianism are not the only effective reform strategies: at least some of the time mass publics have supported market reforms as well, where it really matters to politicians, at the polls (Nelson 1992; Gervasoni 1999; Stokes 2001b; Armijo & Faucher 2002).<sup>5</sup> Baker (2003) specifically argues that people experience the outcome of trade liberalization policies as consumers (who are more or less able to purchase cheaper imported goods), and form their opinions accordingly. Baker's emphasis on consumers helps fill in the gaping hole in the literature on the distributive impact of reforms, but it does not address the behavior of policy elites. Nor do other scholars who write about the public reaction to reforms tend to examine political communication strategies specifically. One exception is Stokes (2001a), who analyzes campaign messages to show that neoliberalism may be imposed without democratic mandates through post-campaign policy reversals, but she is less concerned with the political process of constructing support for policies through specific types of argument framing.

The cognitive-psychological approach offers a nuanced understanding of human decision-making to political economy analysis that does help explain how politicians may convince publics to tolerate market reforms (Weyland 2004). The principal contribution of this

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<sup>5</sup> Other authors have identified conditions under which specific groups predicted to oppose reforms actually supported them. See Kingstone (2001) for a discussion of the factors that led Brazilian industrialists to support trade liberalization.

literature is the idea that people--politicians and members of the public--calculate risks differently in the midst of crises than in normal times. Thus, politicians are more likely to initiate, and publics are more willing to support, risky market reforms during situations of economic emergency, such as hyperinflation. Together with other economic problems such as inefficient public utilities and low quality or poorly made products, this literature recognizes, hyperinflation is experienced acutely by people in their role as consumers. A focus on political communication can help link the ways that policy elites translate people's willingness to try radical solutions into support for specific policies.

The incorporation of political communication into studies of policy reform is overdue. In the recent literature on political economy literature there is a new consensus that the political process of reform matters, both for distributional outcomes as well as political outcomes (Korzeniewicz and Smith 2000; Stiglitz 2000; Bresser Pereira 2004; Montero 2005; Stein et al 2006). Economic studies already have begun to analyze the distributive impact of some market reforms. Two newer volumes evaluate the distributive impact of privatization and yield similar conclusions, namely, that privatization often does lead to inequity, but that a lot depends on the details, including political process (Nellis and Birdsall 2005; Chong and Lopez de Silanes 2005). Yet in the political science literature, as I have argued above, very few works examine the political processes by which broad groups of potential stakeholders, such as consumers, may be constructed. Fortunately the new emphasis by political economists on the policy process indicates a willingness to consider alternative approaches to the study of policy reforms. Communication strategies are an essential component of political processes, and therefore merit more scholarly attention. Although not always completely costless (it may involve specific consumer protection provisions in legislation), appealing to consumer interests is a relatively inexpensive way to turn people into stakeholders, and therefore is an especially attractive strategy for politicians and other policy elites. The argument that consumerism can be a significant political communication strategy is a new contribution to the emerging consensus that the political process of policy reform is just as important as economic outcomes.

Before proceeding, it is imperative to respond to an obvious potential objection to a comparison of consumerism in Brazil and the United States: when half of all Brazilians live in poverty, is it not irrelevant to discuss the notions of consumerism or consumer protection? The answer I offer is that consumption refers not just to luxury purchases in shopping malls but to all

market transactions. Almost all of Brazil's poor make purchases in the market. Indeed, because the poor must devote most or all of their resources to consumption, consumer protection may matter at least as much as and likely more to them than it does to members of the middle class. When considering the distributional impact of any economic policy it is crucial to analyze the impact on consumption for the poor. It now is well established that poor people suffered disproportionately from hyperinflation and therefore especially welcomed price stabilization (Ahumada et al 1993; Lustig 2000). The effects of privatization on the poor vary (Nellis and Birdsall 20005; Chong and Lopez de Silanes 2005), as does the impact of trade liberalization, and of market reforms in general (Sheahan 1997; Stallings and Peres 2000; Portes and Hoffman 2003; Huber and Solt 2004). Because everyone is a consumer, at least under some circumstances, large numbers of the poor as well as the middle class are likely to be receptive toward political messages in favor of protecting consumers.

Specialists in Latin American democracy have expressed serious concern about the decline in representation based on class cleavages.<sup>6</sup> The economic literature long has agreed, at least implicitly if not usually explicitly, that in principle consumers may be important stakeholders in large economic changes. The new conventional wisdom for the political economy of policy reform in Latin America holds that the political process of reforms matters. It follows logically from these bits of consensus that that it is imperative for political economists to begin to analyze how politicians construct appeals to groups, such as consumers, that may be more politically relevant than they were in the past. This kind of study requires attention to the field of political communication, which offers concepts, such as agenda setting and issue

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<sup>6</sup> Kenneth Roberts (2002) argues that the decline of class as the leading societal cleavage represented by political parties (and its replacement by new forms of oligarchic patronage networks) in Latin America in recent years has made it difficult to build broad political coalitions of stakeholders in effective economic reforms. Marcus J. Kurtz (2004) adds that the decline in social mobilization is a more significant threat to democracy than ideological or class polarization; Weyland (2004b) also suggests that neoliberalism's effect on democracy has damaged democracy by restricting mobilization and policy choice. Ben Ross Schneider (2004) outlines four types of possible coalitions for policy reform: electoral, legislative, distributive, and policy. Consumerism appears unlikely, at least at present, to have much effect on coherent party organization and legislative coalition building, but it does allow politicians and parties to make short term political appeals to their constituents, thereby constructing Schneider's "electoral coalitions." As I argue here, at least some of the time, these appeals have affected peoples' voting decisions: the 1994 election of Fernando Henrique Cardoso is a clear example.

framing, that are useful for understanding how politicians connect with the mass public via the media. Such study requires an operational definition of the consumer interest that incorporates greater complexity than the classical economic model allows. In the next section, I draw from multidisciplinary literature in the United States (a country with a long history of public and scholarly attention to consumerism) to develop a conceptualization of how the consumer interest may be used to frame issues and set political agendas. I then turn to how both consumer protection advocates and politicians set a consumerist agenda and helped bring to life a formerly inattentive consumer public in Brazil.

## CONCEPTUALIZING THE CONSUMER INTEREST AND HOW IT IS USED IN POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

Classical economic theory defines the consumer interest as the maximization of an individual's utility by acquiring more and better quality goods and services at lower prices.<sup>7</sup> Because political behavior may be driven by motivations other than material self-interest, however, this definition is overly simplistic for political analysis.<sup>8</sup> Recent work on consumerism in the United States has developed a more complex conceptualization of the consumer interest and shown how different dimensions of consumerism may be manipulated politically. For example, in *A Consumers' Republic* (2003), historian Lizabeth Cohen argues that consumerism formed the basis for the development of democracy and citizenship in the United States in the twentieth century. Cohen juxtaposes the idea of the "purchasing consumer" pursuing her own private interest in the marketplace in order to get her "money's worth" with the "citizen consumer" seeking to use her market power to contribute to the public good. Cohen further contends that different conceptualizations of the consumer have been dominant at different times

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<sup>7</sup> As one reviewer pointed out, non-individual actors, such as government agencies and corporations, also purchase goods and services on the market, and therefore it may be necessary to incorporate their interest as consumers into economic analysis. Because political appeals to consumers are much more likely to be directed at individual citizens or households than corporate consumers, my conceptualization is based on the interest of citizen consumers, or the mass public.

<sup>8</sup> See Vogel (1999) for an interesting discussion of how Japanese consumer advocates consistently have advocated policies that clearly require consumers to pay more for basic products because they believe such policies favor the greater national good.

in United States history, and that the dominance of a particular consumer category can tell us a great deal about the constellation of political and economic power in a given period. “Citizen consumers,” for example, were supposed to be active political participants and protectors of democracy in their role as consumers, either by saving and rationing during wartime, or working for better health and safety standards in products. In the view of political elites, “purchasing consumers,” in contrast, were supposed to help the economy by spending their money during the more materialistic, business-oriented postwar period. Cohen also adds a third category, the “purchaser as citizen,” to fit the consumer who demands that the state protect her (more often than not women were the consumers making such demands) from abuses in the marketplace. Meg Jacobs’ (2005) *Pocketbook Politics* presents an interpretation of American history that is similar to Cohen’s, arguing that for much of the twentieth century, consumption was the foundation of civic identity. “Purchasing power for the people” helped legitimize state power and was ever present on the political agenda.<sup>9</sup>

I use a tri-dimensional conceptualization of the consumer interest that incorporates the various motivations discussed in the U.S. literature. What I call the “competition dimension” corresponds to Cohen’s “purchasing consumer” and the benefits she obtains from competitive markets, most commonly more or better goods and services at lower prices. A political frame based on the competition dimension might promote policies favoring the entrance of a new firm in the market, arguing that such a policy will result in a greater amount of consumer choice and lower prices. The “protection dimension” of the consumer interest refers to the expansion of consumer rights and guarantees under law. It can include state shielding of consumers from the abuses of producers and merchants in both perfect and imperfect markets as well as broader protections related to health and the environment. A political frame based on the protection dimension might emphasize the need for laws requiring firms to compensate consumers who purchase defective products. The protection dimension corresponds to Cohen’s compromise category, the “purchaser as citizen.” Finally, my “social action dimension” involves consumers’ active use of their market power as agents to bring about broader social or political change,

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<sup>9</sup> According to Jacobs, the importance of consumerism in the United States declined along with the reputation of the labor union movement. It does not follow that consumerism is necessarily linked to labor in all cases, however. Indeed, on occasion politicians may even pit labor against consumers. The consumption-production cleavage played a role in Latin American debates about privatization, for example.

coinciding with Cohen's "citizen consumers." A political frame based on the social action dimension might urge consumers to avoid purchasing products manufactured by child laborers. Thus, my tri-dimensional conceptualization does not insist that people's behavior is driven purely by a materialistic self-interest.<sup>10</sup> Table One summarizes the dimensions and provides an example of each one.

Insert Table One here.

In the literature on consumerism in the United States, the broader political economic context affects when and how politicians appeal to which constituents using which dimension or dimensions of consumerism. For example, the mass consumption society came about to a large degree because of the expansion of credit in the post-war era. Installment credit was one of the major reasons the poor were able to afford previously unreachable consumer goods, such as stoves and refrigerators. Politicians were happy to take the credit for the new prosperity; however, a negative aspect of this benefit was that the development of installment credit was accompanied by exploitation and fraud. As benefits from competition and growth increased, consumers demanded more of the benefits of rights and protection under law. Ralph Nader waved the banner of consumer protection at a time when Americans were likely to be receptive to messages about the dangers presented by flammable children's pajamas and many other consumer goods that had been abundant for several decades. As Arnold (1990) demonstrates, activists like Nader succeeded at convincing the media to evaluate policy decisions and political candidates according to the consumer perspective. Politicians responded by at a minimum taking the consumer perspective into account..

The political communication literature provides a framework for analysis of the process of contestation over the consumer interest. Three concepts lie at the core of the political

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<sup>10</sup> As Cohen discusses in *A Consumers' Republic*, in the history of the United States, as well as in many other countries, there are numerous examples of consumers voluntarily sacrificing choice and quality for the sake of other goals such as victory in war. Vogel (1999) argues the same is true of consumers in Japan. In the Latin American context, some surveys suggest that Brazilians opposed privatization even when they believed it would bring about positive changes for consumers (Baker 2003). Frajman (2003) has argued that protests against privatization in Costa Rica had little to do with perceived benefits or drawbacks to consumers.

communication field: framing, agenda-setting, and priming (Kinder 1998). Evidence shows that people base their political opinions on how issues are framed (Gamson 1992). Thus, language and discourse should be regarded as an important component of political strategies. The consumer interest may be framed in terms of one or more of the three dimensions of the definition of consumerism. A proponent of trade liberalization might argue that reducing tariffs would benefit consumers by lowering prices (in other words, by framing the issue in terms of the competition dimension), for example, while seeking to avoid discussion of the impact on employment (or framing in terms of production rather than consumption), or the obligation of consumers to be patriotic by purchasing locally manufactured goods (the social action dimension).

In mass democracies, of course, politicians must communicate with citizens through the media, and it is elite messages in the media that set the political agenda (Lazarsfeld & Merton 1948). Thus, media coverage is widely used to operationalize the content of political communication strategies. Scholars of American politics have found empirical support for the idea that people's interest in issues closely corresponds with national media coverage. If the media consistently report on consumerism and evaluate economic policy in consumerist terms, political appeals to consumers are reinforced. Priming refers to the idea that the media does not just set the agenda, but that it frames issues in ways that may or may not connect to politics (Kinder 1998). For example, the media may "prime" citizens to assess the performance of politicians based on whether privatized utilities are more efficient or prices are too high. In the case of Brazil, I argue that, during the first twenty years of the New Republic, consumerism was firmly on the political agenda and that messages about economic policy often were framed (and citizens primed to receive them) in consumerist terms. Before proceeding to the analysis of consumerist frames and media coverage, I provide the historical context for the establishment of consumerism on the agenda.

## PUTTING CONSUMERISM ON THE PUBLIC AGENDA IN BRAZIL

Consumerism became an established component of the public agenda in Brazil even before the end of the period of military rule. As in the United States, policy elites put consumerism on the political agenda through a process of contestation over the consumer

interest. In the 1960s and 1970s, progressive lawyers and other activists looked for ways to protect people from capitalism that could be developed in the context of authoritarian rule. Other political and economic elites viewed capitalism more benignly, and began to highlight how increased attention to consumers could help make businesses more competitive.

Beginning in the 1970s, consumer protection activists succeeded at drawing media attention to scandalous instances of deception and abuse of consumers. They also began working toward legal protections for consumers. As first explained in a historical account by a participant in the movement, Josué Rios (1998), the Consumer Protection Code of 1991 was the product of years of quiet work by Brazil's professional law association and a handful of lawyers, journalists, and legislators. These activists tended to be people associated with the political center left, but part of their success is attributable to the fact that consumer protection was a relatively non-threatening issue to the right. Indeed, Deputy Nina Ribeiro, a member of the official party ARENA, introduced a bill to create a national consumer protection council in 1971.<sup>11</sup> Some activists created consumer protection associations in the wealthier cities of Rio de Janeiro, Porto Alegre, and Curitiba.<sup>12</sup> In 1977, lawyer Othom Sidou published *Proteção ao Consumidor*, a book proposing a consumer protection code, sparking a trend in the field of law. São Paulo state governor Paulo Egydio Martins issued a decree creating a state system of consumer protection in 1976. In 1978, the state assembly converted the decree into law, with the addition of a provision for legal assistance to individual consumers. The first Procon, as the new agency charged with the mission of consumer protection was called, thus became the first consumer protection agency known to the population. It earned some legitimacy in public opinion, and influenced other states and municipalities to create their own associations, which generally had the same name. By 1989 only three Brazilian states did not have Procons. The same year, there were 144 municipal Procons in São Paulo state. The Ministério Público, or public defender's office, also was becoming more proactive during the 1970s and 1980s (Arantes 2003). The Public Civil Action Act of 1985 granted the Ministério Público gained the ability to represent diffuse rights,

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<sup>11</sup> The constitution and justice committee decided Ribeiro's bill was unconstitutional as only the executive branch could initiate laws that would increase public spending.

<sup>12</sup> Some of the new consumer protection associations were mere fronts for private law firms, which used free initial consultations to lure potential clients. I am grateful to a private sector attorney in São Paulo (who wished to remain anonymous) for making this point (author's interview, law office, São Paulo, 2000).

including the right to file civil actions, or class action lawsuits. Consumer-related cases would come to constitute a substantial component of the Ministério Público's workload.

At the same time that progressive activists worked to implement state protection of consumers, private businesses began to show increasing attention to the idea of increasing their competitive edge by improving customer service. Such businesses began to create consumer relations departments, consumer hotlines, and ombudsmen. In 1989, twenty professionals formed the National Association of Consumer Services Professionals (SECAMP). In four years the group grew to 220 members. One of its activities was maintaining a record of the number of businesses with consumer relations departments. In 1979 there were 50, and by 1985, the number had reached 1,500 and was rising (Rios 1998).

The transition to democracy in the mid 1980s emboldened activists' push for greater consumer protection at the national level. In 1987, at the seventh national meeting of consumer protection organizations in Brasília, the participants collected 45,000 signatures in five days in favor of including a consumer protection clause in the new constitution. The same conference saw the creation of the Carta de Brasília, which contained 26 specific proposals for consumer protection (Rios 1998). Because of these efforts, the 1988 constitution contained a clause calling upon the national congress to pass a consumer protection code. The congress passed the law, with some unimportant partial vetoes, in August of 1990, and it went into effect in early 1991. In combination with the newly available recourse of class action lawsuits, the Consumer Protection Code became an important resource for activists outside and within the state, particularly the Ministério Público.

The new legislation clearly led the business sector to take notice (Vergara 2003). The Consumer Protection Code was relatively visible to the public as well.<sup>13</sup> Rios (1998) shows that media attention to consumer issues increased after the passage of the Consumer Protection Code. Of the nine newspapers that he investigated, seven created a consumer section after the Code was passed, and newspaper employees he interviewed claimed that demand for consumer services had augmented. Consumers' use of the justice system in cases of consumer protection also gradually increased in the 1990s.

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<sup>13</sup> A public opinion survey in Salvador in 1995, with 400 respondents, showed that 56% had heard of the Consumer Protection Code and 43% had heard of consumer defense organizations in Salvador. More than 75% of the respondents said they complain when their consumer rights are violated. Cited in Rios (1998).

Although the state had a very significant and growing presence in the consumer protection network, independent actors in civil society increased in importance as well. In 1987, a group of people formerly affiliated with the São Paulo Procon, under the leadership of Marilena Lazzarini, created the non-governmental Brazilian Institute for Consumer Protection (Idec). A long list of other well-known persons, mainly scholars and activists from the political center-left, such as the anthropologist and future first lady Ruth Cardoso, economist and PT leader Paul Singer, and the future education minister of the Cardoso government Paulo Renato de Souza, participated in the initiative. Idec began to provide seminars for lawyers on consumer protection law, represent consumers in groups in their disputes with companies and to test the quality of products, divulging the results in its news magazine, Consumidor, S.A. Between 1989 and 1995, Idec performed 50 tests of products. The organization joined standard-setting bodies, such as the advisory committee on medicine to the Minister of Health. Between 1992 and 1995 its membership increased from 5,700 to 30,000 persons, and by 1995, Consumidor, S.A., had a circulation of 35,000.

Brazilian consumer advocates succeeded both at building institutional resources through the Consumer Protection Code and establishing consumerism as a permanent part of the public agenda. Indeed, Brazil has an exceptionally high level of “judicialization” of political issues related to economic reforms (Arantes 2003). For example, interest groups have continued to use the discursive discourse of consumerism as well as legal resources such as the right to file class action lawsuits. Quite often, they have used them to contest aspects of economic reforms. Examples include lawsuits against the seizure of bank assets in price stabilization efforts and against higher prices charged by privatized utilities. In the past few years, Brazil’s consumer protection legislation even has led to some thorniness in trade negotiations with its neighbors in Mercosul. Thus, institutional protections for consumers have imposed constraints on the policy reform process. Indeed, they are one reason for the relatively slow pace of reform in Brazil.

Brazil has both the best developed consumer protection advocacy network in Latin America (in place since the 1970s) and the most comprehensive consumer protection legislation in the region (in place since 1991). Because such networks and legislation both serve as institutional resources for politicians, activists, and policy advocates who wish to invoke consumerism in favor a particular policies, their existence means Brazil is a “most likely case” for the study of consumerism as a political communication strategy in economic reforms

(Eckstein 1975). In the next section, I explain how politicians and other policy elites used consumerist frames to build support for several types of market-oriented policies.

## FRAMING THE CONSUMER INTEREST IN PRICE STABILIZATION, UTILITY PRIVATIZATION, AND TRADE LIBERALIZATION

Politicians and policy advocates employed consumerist rhetoric to different degrees and with varying success to promote policies such as price stabilization, utility privatization, and trade liberalization during the New Republic. President José Sarney made a highly prominent political appeal to consumers when he launched the heterodox Cruzado Plan, which relied on price controls, to stop hyperinflation in 1986. Specifically, Sarney asked consumers to enforce the price controls by boycotting businesses that were attempting to charge higher prices than was allowed and also reporting them to the authorities. Sarney's request framed consumerism in terms of the social action dimension, referring to consumers as “os fiscais do Sarney” and appealing to their sense of patriotism.<sup>14</sup> By most accounts, consumers took on this social action enthusiastically at first, but became disillusioned after inflation returned. Perhaps in part because of the eventual failure of the Cruzado Plan, politicians who implemented later price stabilization policies made little or no use of the strategy of appealing to the social action dimension of consumerism, although they did frame consumerism in other terms.

President Fernando Collor de Melo made an appeal to consumers' material interests, or the competition dimension, when he promised to stabilize prices and modernize the economy through the 1990 Collor Plan. The specifics of this plan, particularly the freezing of bank assets, shocked middle class consumers, and ended up sparking a consumer protection battle in the courts that has had ramifications for the banking industry to this day. One of the most prominent battles of the consumer protection NGO Idec has been the “National Movement to Recover the Stolen Savings of 1990,” to help people whose money was confiscated by the Collor government. In this and a number of other ongoing lawsuits, the banking sector has argued that it should be exempt from the Consumer Protection Code, although consumer protection advocates maintain no such exemption exists.

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<sup>14</sup> See O'Dougherty (2002) for an anthropological account of middle class life during the Cruzado Plan.

The Real Plan, launched by Minister Fernando Henrique Cardoso under President Itamar Franco, was accompanied by rhetoric about transparency and letting markets work, meaning the end of price controls. The Real Plan succeeded at taming hyperinflation, guaranteeing Cardoso's victory in the 1994 presidential elections. Cardoso's supporters framed its accomplishments in terms of consumption, alleging that the plan's success had turned millions of Brazilians into consumers overnight. The successful political framing using the competition dimension of consumerism reinforced the consumerist strategy, which President Cardoso subsequently employed to build support for his privatization and trade policies during the late 1990s.

It was relatively easy to point to the problems of customer abuses under the old state system and to use economic arguments that private investment and market orientation would improve service. Nevertheless, a component of the protection dimension of consumerism was added to debates about privatization as well. Most of the utility privatizations were accompanied by closer attention to building regulatory regimes in Brazil than had occurred in other countries. This attention had some costs, the most important of which was to slow down the privatization process. It was not extremely expensive, however, in part because the consumer protection code was already on the books, and regulatory regimes required privatized companies to abide by it. Interestingly, consumer advocates have said that politicians were reluctant to promote consumer protection in the 1980s against state owned firms.<sup>15</sup> The consumerist logic of privatization under Cardoso in part may be viewed as transferring the ire of consumers from the state to private companies.

In The Devil's Dictionary, American satirist Ambrose Bierce defines the word tariff as "a scale of taxes on imports, designed to protect the domestic producer against the greed of his consumer." Trade liberalization policies in Brazil under President Cardoso also were accompanied by appeals to consumers' interest, if not their "greed," and almost always were framed according to the competition dimension. For this set of policies, we also have public opinion evidence that consumers themselves interpreted trade liberalization through the lens of consumerism, and therefore may have been especially receptive to politicians' consumerist framing in consumerist terms. Baker (2003) argues that the consumer perspective of trade liberalization has been more prominent than that of the producer in Latin American public

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<sup>15</sup> Idec director Marina Lazzarini confirmed this point in an interview in São Paulo on August 24, 2005. She also is on record making the same argument several years earlier (Bornstein 1998).

opinion. Using survey data from four cities in Brazil in 1999, Baker shows that trade liberalization tends to be popular with the middle class because it results in improved access to better and less expensive goods for consumers. This connection translated into political support for Cardoso's trade liberalization policies and is further evidence that the consumerism is a viable strategy for politicians attempting to implement market reforms.

## CONSUMERIST FRAMING AND PRIMING IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: AN ANALYSIS OF NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF CONSUMER ISSUES, 1985-2005

In this section, I present an original empirical analysis of coverage of consumer issues in seven national newspapers (Correio Brasiliense, Estado de São Paulo, Folha de São Paulo, Gazeta Mercantil, Jornal do Brasil, Jornal de Brasília, and O Globo) in Brazil throughout the New Republic. The literature on political communication has established that the media send the messages of political elites to the mass public. In this study, media coverage therefore serves as a measure of the prevalence of the consumerist strategy of market reform on the public agenda. The analysis of media coverage of consumer issues in Brazil shows that attention to the critical competition dimension increased during the first reform attempts under President Fernando Collor de Melo and, more clearly, during the main period of economic reforms during the administration of Fernando Henrique Cardoso. After the main reforms had already been implemented and economic crisis hit Brazil, attention to the competition-oriented dimension of consumerism had declined, while protection-oriented appeals increased.

The analysis includes a total of 2450 newspaper articles classified as relating to “consumidores” by the staff of the Senate Library in Brasília for the period 1985-2005.<sup>16</sup> The Senate Library staff tracks coverage of a variety of political issues in newspapers of national circulation. While I had no control over which articles about consumers were selected by the

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<sup>16</sup> The library staff began to include “consumidores” as a category in 1983. Very few articles were clipped that year, or in 1984, however. Those two years are omitted in this analysis because of the low number of articles as well as the standard recognition of 1985 as the beginning of the New Republic. Articles from three newspapers—Jornal da Tarde, Tribuna de Brasília, and Valor Econômico—that were not in operation throughout the twenty year period also were excluded. Articles for this analysis were collected through July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2005. The totals were then multiplied by 1.83 to create time-adjusted estimates of coverage for the full year.

library staff, the selection criterion they use--they clip all articles in which the words “consumidores” or “consumo” are prominent in the text--is straightforward and unlikely to have produced important biases in the results.<sup>17</sup> Compiling an equivalent collection of newspaper articles independently, if possible at all, would have increased the expense in time and money by several orders of magnitude, and likely would not have significantly improved the representativeness of the sample. It would have been desirable to conduct an analysis of television coverage as well, but an equivalent study, in other words, monitoring twenty years of news coverage by all the national television news networks, would have been infeasible.

If the argument that consumerism is a political communication strategy associated with market reform is correct, we would expect the prominence of consumerism on the public agenda to correspond temporally with the prominence of the reform agenda. Figure One depicts the frequency of the coverage of consumerism in all seven newspapers collapsed into one line. There are five periods in which coverage increased: 1986, 1990-91, 1996-1999, 2001, and 2005. The 1986 peak coincides with President Sarney’s price stabilization plan, and therefore is consistent with the theoretical expectation. The sharp increase in coverage in the 1990 and 1991 coincides with the Collor Plan, and therefore also is consistent with the theoretical expectation, but it also reflects coverage of the passage of the Consumer Protection Code. The steady growth over the period 1996-99 is consistent with the argument that a consumerist discourse accompanied the market-oriented reforms implemented during the administration of President Cardoso. The dip in 2000 corresponds to a period of economic depression and some disillusionment with economic reforms, and thus also conforms to the theoretical expectation. The sharp rise in 2001 (based on coverage of blackouts and debates about regulation) seemingly does not conform to theoretical expectations, and is less explicable without a more complex analysis (which I provide below). The small increase in 2005 conforms reasonably well to the theoretical expectation that consumerism increases in tandem with the market reform agenda, as President Lula conformed to and even deepened some market policies. (The 2005 increase also relates to discussions of consumer protection in Mercosul negotiations.)

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<sup>17</sup> The most probable exception is that to the extent that consumerism is more of an urban phenomenon, this study is, of course, biased in that direction. National newspapers are those from major cities. Comparable collections from smaller newspapers based in other parts of the country were not available. This selection has the advantage of easy replicability, as the consumers file is available for anyone to consult in the Senate Library.

Insert Figure One here.

All the newspapers followed the same general pattern through the year 2004, although some papers display greater variance than others. The apparent divergence in 2005 may be related to newspapers' differing views of the Lula administration, but also may reflect the incomplete data (as explained in footnote 10, the study included only the first five months of that year). Figure Two depicts the breakdown of coverage by newspaper.

Insert Figure Two here.

Although the pattern of media attention shown in Figures One and Two overall supports the notion that reformers have employed consumerist communication strategies in Brazil, it does not incorporate the various dimensions according to which the consumer interest may be framed and therefore does not capture the nuances of the theoretical argument. If reformers wish to convince consumers that market reforms will expand benefits along the competition dimension, we would expect the competition dimension of consumerism to be closely correlated with the market reform agenda. The expectation for the protection dimension is more ambiguous, because, although reformers may implement protections for consumers under law as part of reform strategies, reform opponents also may frame political appeals in terms of protection to persuade the public to support opposing policy agendas. Finally, although the logic of consumerism as a reform strategy relies most heavily on the competition dimension, we also might expect the prominence of the social action dimension to increase with the prominence of market reforms, as people become more accustomed to thinking of themselves in terms of consumers exercising power in the market.

In order to incorporate more complexity into the analysis, I coded each of the 2450 newspaper articles as relating mainly to the protection, competition, and social action dimensions of the consumer interest to create a picture of the frequency of news coverage of these dimensions over time. I used a very simple coding scheme. Articles that made any mention of consumer protection laws, or monitoring of business behavior by either government or consumer protection activists or NGOs, were coded as belonging to the protection dimension. Articles that

made any mention whatsoever of consumers' exercise of their market power to effect social or political change, whether to bring about the end of hyperinflation, environmental protection, the avoidance of child labor, or other causes, were coded as belonging to the social action dimension. Articles that referred to goods and services available in the market and made no reference to protection or social action were coded as belonging to the competition dimension. Because this coding scheme likely under-represents the competition dimension, it provides a tough test for my hypothesis that the prominence of the competition dimension on the public agenda should coincide with the political fortunes of market-oriented economic reforms.

Figure Three shows a graph of the trajectory of newspaper attention to the three dimensions of the consumer interest. As the figure illustrates, newspaper coverage overwhelmingly emphasizes the protection dimension of consumption throughout the New Republic, by a ratio of more than three to one.<sup>18</sup> Only in 2004, the second year of the administration of President Lula da Silva, does the number of articles relating to competition equal the number relating to protection. The figure also confirms that there has been a pattern of growth of the competition and protection dimensions in tandem (although the protection dimension displays greater variability),<sup>19</sup> with only two exceptions: protection grows in 2001 and 2005 while competition remains flat.

Insert Figure Three here.

Not surprisingly, the protection dimension of consumerism dominated in the coverage of the entry into effect of the Consumer Protection Code. In conformance with the theoretical expectation, the competition dimension increases in 1990 with the advent of the Collor Plan, and then decreases again in the aftermath of the unsuccessful attempt to curb inflation. Also in keeping with the theoretical expectation, after 1995 the figure depicts a gradual increase in both the protection and competition dimensions of consumerism after 1995. These increases reflect

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<sup>18</sup> The protection dimension is overrepresented because of the coding scheme, but the dominance is so overwhelming as to indicate that the coding cannot be the only reason.

<sup>19</sup> The mean number of articles per year for the competition dimension was 23.33, with a standard deviation of 19.01 and a variability coefficient of 0.81. The mean number of articles for the protection dimension was 97.38, with a standard deviation of 99.58 and a variability coefficient of 1.02.

the political rhetoric about the consumption boom that followed the Real Plan (note the near disappearance of the inflation line in 1995)<sup>20</sup> as well as debates about the privatization of public services and trade liberalization, which the Cardoso administration framed in terms of benefits to consumers. After 1999, as the country entered a recession and market reforms became less popular, the competition dimension dips, showing little or no increase until 2004, after a year of Lula's maintenance of his predecessor's market-oriented economic policies. This dip and increase also are in line with the theoretical expectation regarding the pattern of prominence of the competition dimension.

The results for the protection dimension also are consistent with the theoretical argument. The peak in the protection dimension in 2001 is attributable to a proposal put forth by the Cardoso administration to form a new agency that would be responsible for both antitrust and consumer protection as well as to the numerous electrical blackouts (and corresponding debates about the regulation of privatized utilities) that occurred that year, acknowledging some of the less than desirable effects of privatization. The increase in coverage of the protection dimension in 2005 reflects the negotiation of consumer protection issues in Mercosul and also includes some editorializing on the fifteenth anniversary of the Consumer Protection Code as well as legal actions against companies for violations of the code.

Even allowing for its overrepresentation in the coding scheme, protection was by far the most important dimension in all newspapers, followed by competition. There were only slight differences among the distribution of coverage of the different dimensions of consumerism in the ten newspapers, as is shown below in Table Two. The Estado de São Paulo devoted somewhat more attention to competition and less to protection, as we might expect from its reputation as a publication that slants toward the political center-right. The business oriented Gazeta Mercantil emphasized social action no less than the other newspapers. Consumerism as social action has received far less media coverage overall than the other two dimensions throughout the twenty year period: fewer than two percent of all the articles analyzed were classified as relating to social action, and the only period of growth Figure Three (above) shows is the small increase in coverage in 1986 during the Cruzado Plan. Thus, the expectation that the prominence of social action would increase in tandem with market reforms was not confirmed. In 2003, veteran

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<sup>20</sup> Inflation is measured as the annual percentage growth in consumer prices. The source is the World Bank's world development indicators.

consumer advocate Marilena Lazzarini was elected president of the international NGO Consumers International. Lazzarini believes strongly in the power of consumers to effect social and political action, and plans to lead the consumer movement in Brazil and worldwide in that direction (author's interview, 2005). This analysis reveals that civil society leaders like Lazzarini working to build environmental and social consciousness among Brazilian consumers have a lot of work ahead of them.

Insert Table Two here

## CONCLUSION

The question of how market oriented reforms occur under democratic rule has been an ongoing puzzle for scholars of Latin American politics. I have argued the strategies used by policy elites to communicate with the mass public matter more than scholars have acknowledged in the literature thus far. Consumerism in Brazil is an example of a political communication strategy that politicians have used to persuade important segments of the public to accept short term costs in exchange for the possibility of long term gains. I have presented a framework for political analysis of consumerism that allows for more complex motivations and is more useful for understanding how consumerism relates to mass politics than the traditional neoclassical economic view of the consumer interest. The analysis of media coverage in Brazil supports the hypothesis that appeals to the consumer interest in market competition increased during the main periods of neoliberal reforms.

Policy elites chose to use consumerist frames in Brazil because grass roots consumer activism had placed consumer protection on the public agenda even prior to the transition to democratic rule. It may be the case that elites in other countries elected to employ different kinds of content in political communication because of other kinds of activism or economic contexts. The nature of political communication can direct scholars toward the various perspectives from which it is necessary to evaluate the overall costs and benefits of economic policies.

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**Table One. A Tri-Dimensional Conceptualization of the Consumer Interest**

Dimension	Goals	Example
Competition	Benefits from market competition	New firm in the market leads to more consumer choice and lower prices.
Protection	State protection from markets	Law requires firms to compensate consumers who purchase defective products.
Social action	Effecting social or political change through market power	Consumers avoid purchasing products manufactured by child laborers.

**Figure One. Coverage of consumer issues in national newspapers, 1985-2005**

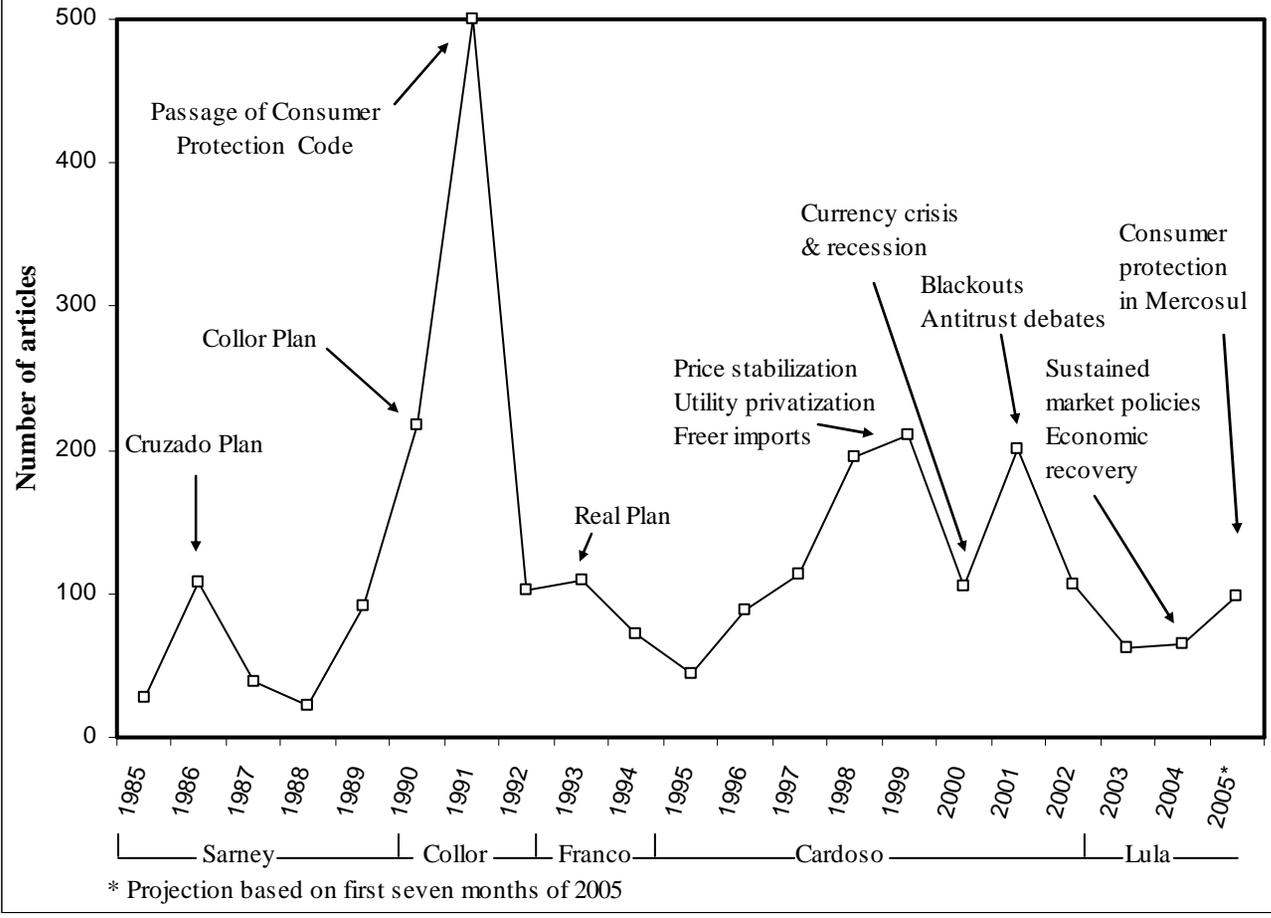
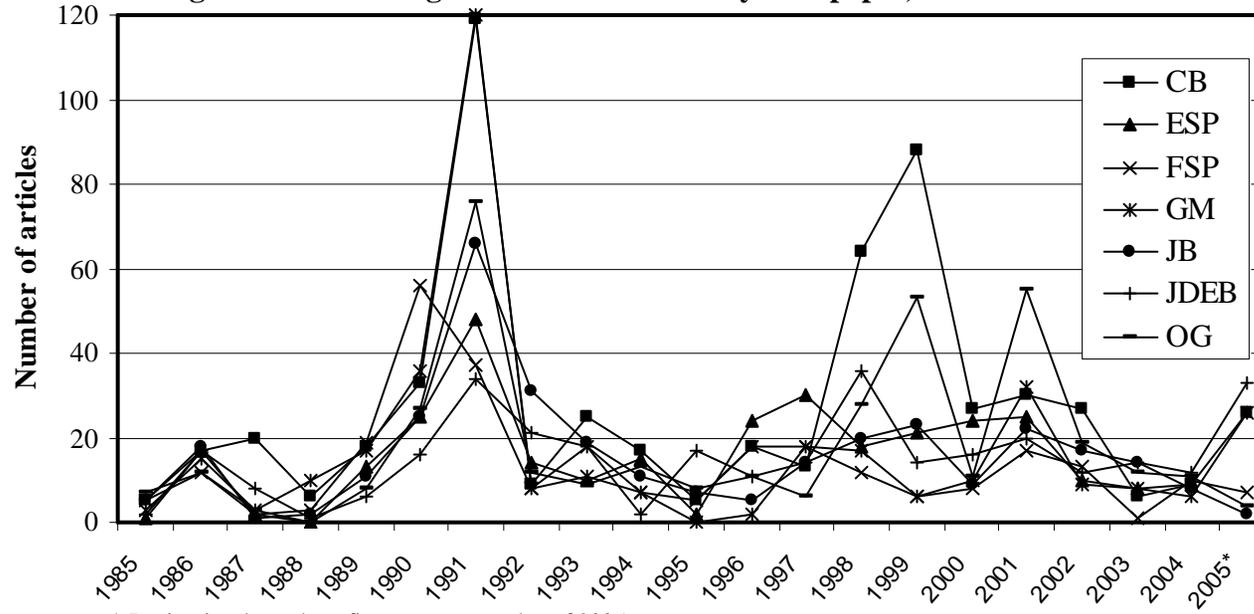
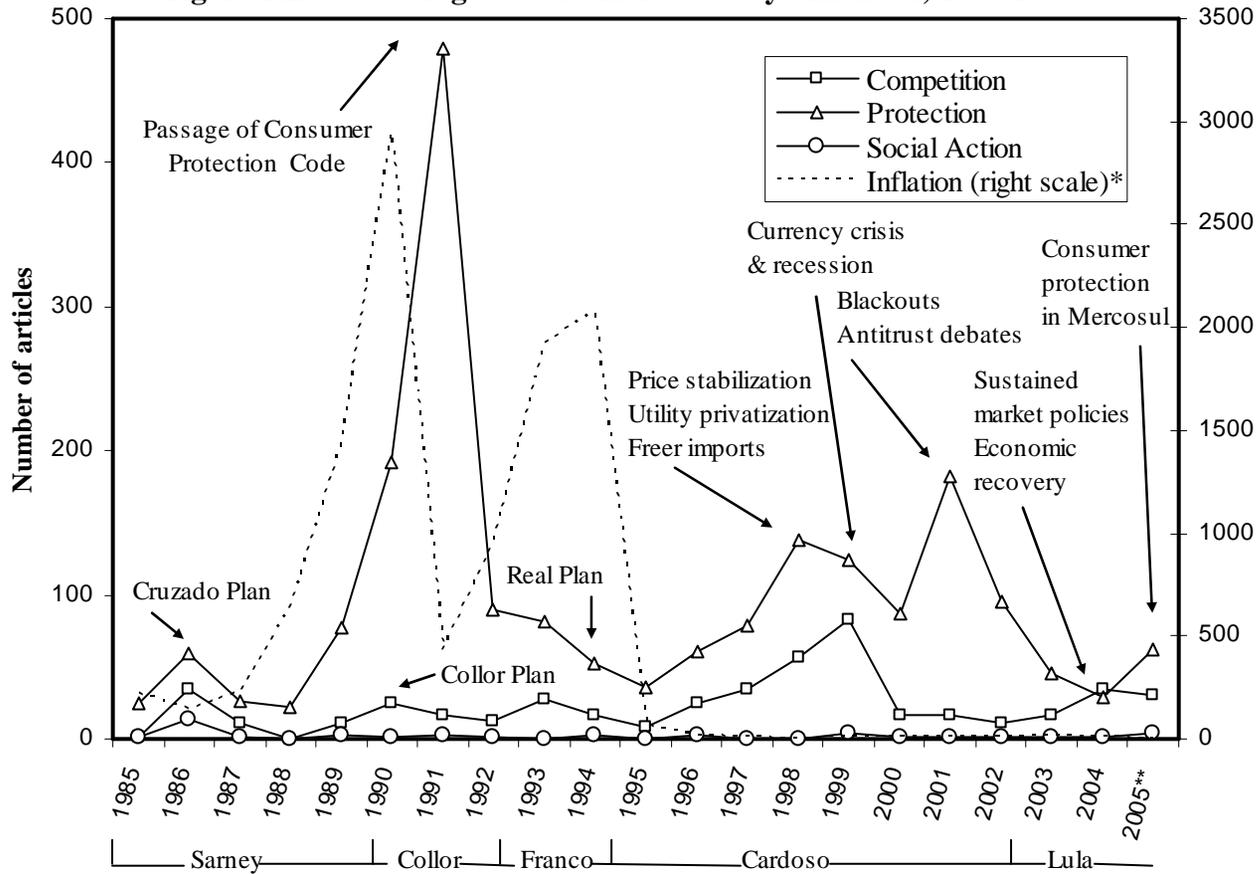


Figure Two. Coverage of consumer issues by newspaper, 1985-2005



\* Projection based on first seven months of 2005

**Figure Three. Coverage of consumer issues by dimension, 1985-2005**



\* Annual percentage growth in consumer prices

\*\* Projection based on first seven months of 2005

**Table Two. Newspaper Articles on Consumer Issues and Dimension of Consumerism, 1985-2005**

	Competition		Protection		Social Action		Total	
Correio Brasiliense	99	17.4%	463	81.2%	8	1.4%	570	100%
Estado de São Paulo	83	26.3%	227	71.8%	6	1.9%	316	100%
Folha de São Paulo	49	17.5%	226	80.7%	5	1.8%	280	100%
Gazeta Mercantil	55	15.6%	290	82.4%	7	2.0%	352	100%
Jornal do Brasil	74	22.5%	248	75.4%	7	2.1%	329	100%
Jornal de Brasília	47	15.2%	259	83.5%	4	1.3%	310	100%
O Globo	72	18.8%	305	79.6%	6	1.6%	383	100%
Total	479	18.9%	2018	79.4%	43	1.7%	2540	100%