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Immigrants in the United States are often forced into racial and ethnic groupings of which they might not previously have considered themselves members, or in some cases, into categories they do not understand or did not realize existed before immigrating. In this paper, we discuss the results of semi-structured interviews, focused on perceptions of race, class, and identity in Brazil and the U.S., with first generation Brazilian immigrants to north Georgia. We were interested in comparing the stories of Brazilians in the Atlanta metropolitan area with ethnographic studies of Brazilian immigrants in other parts of the U.S. Our purpose was to uncover ways in which the Atlanta area, where there is a significant Black middle and upper class and a burgeoning population of immigrants from Latin America, affected perceptions of race and class held by Brazilians of different skin tones and socioeconomic backgrounds. Participants discussed problems they felt existed with the black/white binary in the United States as well as the categories "Hispanic" and "Latino." Participants also deconstructed the differences they felt existed in the race/class hierarchies in their communities in Brazil as contrasted with the U.S. and north Georgia specifically.

In early fall of 2009, the editor of the newspaper *Atlanta Latino,* Judith Martinez, contacted the principal author of this article for an anthropological perspective on a new, federally-mandated survey being distributed in the public schools in Georgia. In the survey, students (or their parents, on their behalf) were required to self-identify in two categories: "race" and "ethnicity." In the category of "ethnicity," there was only one choice: "Hispanic/Latino," which refers to "a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race," or "not Hispanic/Latino" (Georgia Department of

Education 2009a). The terms for "race"—American Indian or Alaska native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and White—were explained in terms of region of ancestry; for example, "White" refers to "a person having origins in the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa" (Georgia Department of Education 2009a). Respondents could choose more than one category for "race". In some ways, this is a novel approach by the United States government, in acknowledging that a cultural and linguistic group may include people of different phenotypes and ancestral regions. However, it also implies that Hispanic/Latino is the only "ethnicity" that exists in the United States and further "others" Hispanics/Latinos as "ethnics". In her article, entitled "Cartas Racistas?" ("Racist Letters?"), Martinez (2009) reported that members of the Latino community in Atlanta were confused and distressed and some parents "entered into an existential crisis" after receiving letters informing them of this new requirement for self-identification (Martinez 2009). Suddenly Hispanic/Latino was no longer a race, as they had previously been led to believe, and questions arose in the Latino community in Atlanta about whether the survey was specifically targeting them in an attempt to further stigmatize or penalize this group.

The principal author, engaged in research with the Brazilian community in north Georgia, considered the implications of this survey for Brazilian Americans, who are typically classified as Latinos (or, erroneously, as Hispanics) by non-Brazilians in the United States; this new survey maintains the traditional invisibility (Margolis 1994, 1997) of this group in the United States, but outside of, rather than within, the panethnic category Hispanic/Latino, which is limited to people with origins in Spanish-speaking nations/cultures in this particular survey. Following the wording of the survey, Brazilian students would have to classify themselves as "not Hispanic/Latino" in terms of ethnicity. This survey is one of many examples of the complexities of negotiating racial and ethnic categories in the United States.

In this paper, we discuss perceptions of racial and ethnic categories and social class held by 28 first generation Brazilian immigrants who live in the Atlanta metropolitan area. The majority of Brazilians to North Georgia are recent arrivals, with most immigration taking place within the past 10-15 years. Though fewer than 5,000 Brazilians were recorded in the 2000 census (Atlanta Regional Commission 2004), distributed primarily in North Fulton, Cobb, Dekalb, and Gwinnett counties, many Brazilians in Atlanta remain uncounted; though some are undocumented, some may have been undercounted in the census. Also, many Brazilians have arrived in the area since 2000. Unofficial estimates of the numbers of Brazilians in metropolitan Atlanta range from 20,000 to 50,000 (Pascual 2004, Menezes et al. 2008). In this region, there are a number of strip malls where it is possible to recreate a regional Brazilian experience, with Brazilian-owned and -themed restaurants, grocery stores, bakeries, clothing stores, beauty salons, money-transfer agencies, and bookstores. Brazilian Protestant (of a variety of denominations) and Catholic Churches, with services held in Portuguese, are also prominent and provide important networks for recent Brazilian arrivals to north Georgia.

Caroline Brettel (2003) has given excellent examples of how the city or region of context of immigration plays a vital role in immigrant experiences. A place's history, economy, and geography (including not only the geographical layout of the urban, suburban, and rural areas but also spatial arrangement of ethnic communities and racial minorities) influence decisions people make about migrating to that area and shape what their experiences will be. Atlanta and particularly its suburbs have been appealing destinations for many immigrant groups in part because of the low cost of real estate in the wake of the relative abandonment of these areas by working class Whites in the 1970s with the movement of their jobs overseas (Holt 2004). It has also been a major destination for many middle- and upper-class African Americans from other parts of the United States in recent years, with over 371,000 African Americans moving to a 20-county segment of the Atlanta metropolitan region between 2000 and 2006, "which is approximately 41 percent of all growth experienced during the period" (Atlanta Regional Commission 2008:1). A number of immigrants from Latin America and internal Latin American migrants from other North American cities to Atlanta brought the "Hispanic" population from seven to ten percent of the region's population between 2000 and 2006 (Atlanta Regional Commission 2007). Given the cultural, ethnic, and racial backdrop of the region, we were interested in asking Brazilians how they viewed themselves in relation to pre-existing categories of race in the United States, particularly in terms of conceptions of Black, White, and Hispanic or Latino. In addition, we were interested in how class associations with certain racial categories and phenotypical traits in Brazil affected self-perception and understandings of class and race.

"Brazuca" Studies

The first major wave of Brazilian immigrants to the United States occurred during the Brazilian economic crisis of the late 1980s and early 1990s, a time characterized by rampant inflation and government policies that took a heavy toll on the middle class. Because of this crisis, a large number of Brazilians emigrated to work in the United States, Europe, and Japan. Maxine Margolis (1994) conducted ethnographic research on Brazilian immigrants in New York City during this time period. She noted that many among this group of immigrants came from middle class backgrounds; some had advanced degrees but took service-industry jobs in the United States. Their intention was, generally, to save enough money to return to Brazil in a more secure financial position. Margolis was the first to note that Brazilians in the United States were under- or unrepresented by the U.S. census because of the lack of a "racial" category for them. For example, in the 1990 census, if Brazilians chose not to include themselves in the "Spanish/Hispanic" category, which as Portuguese-speakers would not apply to them, they would not be counted as Brazilians (Margolis 1994: 252-257).

Recent research suggests that today, more Brazilians from a variety of social classes and backgrounds within Brazil are immigrating to the United States, some with plans to stay permanently and others who plan to eventually return home. Recent social science research on Brazilian immigrants to other parts of

the United States has been conducted in the Boston area (DeBiaggi 2003, Marrow 2003, Martes 2000), South Florida (Alves and Ribeiro 2002, Resende 2009), New Orleans (Gibson 2008), and Los Angeles (Beserra 2003, 2005). *Becoming Brazuca[1]: Brazilian Immigration to the United States*, an edited volume published in 2008, contains chapters from many of the contemporary scholars on this topic (Jouët-Pastré and Braga, eds. 2008).

Due to its recent formation, only a handful of studies have been conducted to date on Brazilians in north Georgia. The Atlanta Regional Commission (2004) and Brazilian-American organizations in Atlanta, such as ASCOMBRA (Associação da Comunidade Brasileira) (Menezes et al. 2008) have compiled preliminary demographic and basic ethnographic data on this community. A recent study (Vasquez, Ribeiro, and Alves 2008)[2] focused on the important roles that Brazilian churches play in the lives of Brazilian immigrants to this area. In particular, services provided by church members extended well beyond spiritual goals to include assisting parishioners with finding employment and housing and with accessing healthcare. In addition, human geographer Alan Marcus included the Brazilian community of Marietta, Georgia in a transnational study of sending and receiving communities that also entailed extensive research in Framingham, Massachusetts and two small cities in Brazil (Piracanjuba in the state of Goiás and Governador Valadares in Minas Gerais) (Marcus 2009a, 2009b). Both are important sending communities for Brazilians in the United States, and a significant portion of immigrants to the Atlanta area come from Minas Gerais and Goiás. Marcus noted how Brazilians in both Massachusetts and Georgia recreated familiar spaces and maintained "Brazilianness" through satellite television, which offered access to major Brazilian television networks, and through the services offered by Brazilian-American restaurants, groceries, salons, and churches (Marcus 2009a). He also noted how frequent movements of Brazilians between the United States and Brazil, in the kind of "yo-yo migration" also described by Margolis (1994: 263), creates new perceptions of the United States within sending communities in Brazil and new expectations for potential migrants.

Since 2006, the principal author has conducted qualitative research on the Brazilian community in Atlanta. This research has consisted of participant observation at a number of events of the Brazilian community, social visits to the homes of Brazilian Americans, and meeting with representatives of Brazilian churches, businesses, and organizations (in particular, the Atlanta-Rio de Janeiro Sister Cities Committee). The principal author has also collected a number of publications of the Brazilian community in north Georgia, including the magazines *Viver*, *Cia. Brasil*, and *Jornal Moderno*. Through a series of fundraising events held in Atlanta that were organized by her students at Georgia State University for

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1 *Brazuca* (sometimes spelled *brazuka*) is a slang term in Portuguese for Brazilians in the U.S.

2 This research was conducted as part of a multi-year Ford Foundation grant led by Manuel Vásquez, Department of Religion, and Phillip Williams, Department of Political Science, University of Florida.

a Brazilian NGO, the principal author has also had an opportunity to meet several Brazilian business owners and artists. Finally, in co-organizing and presenting research results (White 2008) at "Brazilian-Americans in Georgia and Beyond: a Multi- Disciplinary Symposium," held April 25-26, 2008 in Athens and Atlanta, the principal author had an opportunity to meet representatives of the recently reopened Brazilian Consulate in Atlanta as well as other prominent members of the Brazilian business and religious community.

The above contacts and experiences in the Brazilian community prompted some of the questions that we addressed in formal interviews. As a picture of the Brazilian population in north Georgia came together, several features stood out that led to a focus on race, class, and ethnicity in this study. Brazilians of a number of social classes, including many from the working class, seemed to be immigrating to Atlanta.[3] A number of questions arose from these experiences with Brazilians in the Atlanta area, including: How do Brazilians of different social classes and racial identities in Brazil interact in the United States? What aspects of "community" exist that unite these groups? Do interactions with non-Brazilians or with Brazilian immigrants of different social classes change embodied notions of Brazilian class structures (as reported in interview exchanges reported by [Resende 2009: 100-

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3 The principal author has met Brazilians who reside in Georgia and elsewhere in the United States who come from the most modest of backgrounds, from favela or shanty-town communities, for example.   The large number of Brazilian Protestant Evangelical Churches in the Atlanta area is another possible indication that many working class immigrants were migrating to Atlanta, since participation in Evangelical Protestantism is more common among the working class in Brazil. A publication that first alerted the principal author to the fact that there were a number of Brazilian Evangelical churches in the area was the 2003-2004 *Páginas Amarelas Brasileiras e Guía de Recursos de Atlanta* (*Brazilian Yellow Pages and Guide to Resources in Atlanta*) (Longshore 2004). This book lists 29 Brazilian churches and several others with services in Portuguese in the metropolitan Atlanta area. Among the Brazilian churches , numerous branches of known Brazilian Evangelical/Pentecostal Churches were listed, including six branches of the Brazilian Assembly of God Church (Assembléia de Deus), one branch of the Igreja Universal Reino de Deus, one branch of the Igreja Videira, one branch of the Igreja Nova Vida. In addition, four churches with "Evangélica" and/or "Pentecostal" in their names and one Seventh-Day Adventist church were in this guide. However, the link between working class background and Evangelical Protestantism was an assumption and is not necessarily the case in the context of immigration, in which, as Martes [2004] has noted, many Brazilians join churches they did not belong to in Brazil for the social capital they provide. The principal author's previous research experience in Brazil focused on experiences of Hansen's disease (leprosy) treatment in Rio de Janeiro, and through conversations with Brazilians in Atlanta she learned of a small number of people in treatment for this disease in this city; this also led to speculation about the socioeconomic background of migrants. Although rich and poor can contract this disease, there are correlations between certain living conditions (crowded housing, for example, and unplanned urban development) that are associated with this disease (Kerr-Pontes et al. 2004).

103] in her recent Ph.D. dissertation on Brazilians in South Florida)? [4] How are Brazilian attitudes about class and color affected by exposure to corresponding attitudes and practices in the American South? How do Brazilians who self-identify as "black" in both Brazil and the United States interpret their racialized identities in both locations? Another long-term goal of this research was to identify areas for future research with the Brazilian community in north Georgia, including unmet needs of this community, which will be discussed further in the conclusions of this paper.

Culture, Identity, and Immigration

This study fits within a wide body of literature that addresses the ways in which racial, ethnic, and social class identities are understood and transformed in immigration and transnational contexts. Kearney and Bessera (2004:3) suggested that worldwide, "[c]oncern with social class has been eclipsed by a fascination with identity and identity politics," in which race/ethnic categories or nationality takes precedence. We focus on "class" and "race" together as elements of analysis because the cultural constructions of these two concepts are tightly intertwined in Brazil, and because we were interested in how Brazilians' perceptions change with migration. When people immigrate to the United States, they are usually pressured to classify themselves, on official documents and in social contexts, in terms of "race." They are also exposed to a different system of class relations and are compelled to position themselves in relation to other immigrants of the same nationality, recent immigrants from other nations, and other residents in the host country. The categories they choose may be related to a number of factors, including the class associations that accompany different ethnic/racial terms in host and sending nations, language abilities and phenotypical traits of immigrants, and the composition of the population in the region of settlement.

Phenotype can create expectations of "racial" and cultural affinity, particularly in the United States. Immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa or nations of the African diaspora, such as Haiti or Brazil, may or may not choose to adopt an African American identity. However, the cultural differences between black immigrants and African Americans are vast, as Philippe Wamba (2000) noted in his autobiography, *Kinship: A Family's Journey in Africa and America*. He expressed the mixed feelings of solidarity and disconnection with African Americans, who he thought were generally uninformed about African cultures, history, and politics, even within academic circles in the United States. Alan and Carol Stepick, in ethnographic research with immigrant youth in Miami, found that Haitian adolescents rarely used the term "African American" or "Black", though they associated with African

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4 Resende (2009:100-103) presents the stories of three Brazilian women whose acceptance of the norms of the Brazilian class system changed after immigrating to the United States. One woman ("Raquel Elis"), for example, from an elite São Paulo family, felt that she had been raised in a bubble, and "[d]espite having lived in one of the world's biggest metropolises, filled with the social problems of urban poverty, Raquel Elis had somehow missed 'reality' until encountering it in South Florida" (Resende 2009: 102).

Americans frequently and adopted certain cultural features of this group (Stepick and Stepick 2003). In his ethnography of Nuer immigrants in Minnesota, Jon Holtzman (2008:117) observed that while "there is a tendency for younger Nuer to emulate the styles of African Americans . . . the Nuer report instances of tension with some African Americans that far exceed those experienced with whites."

The propensity in the United States to create panethnic categories can be problematic for many immigrants, as these categories fuse peoples of different nationalities and backgrounds under a single label. Several authors have noted that many Latin American immigrants prefer to identify with their national background and often reject the label Hispanic/Latino label (Calderón 1992, Lopez and Espiritu 1990, Stepick and Stepick 2003, Yarborough 2008). In the Atlanta area, for example, "Hispanic" is often assumed to be synonymous with "Mexican" among many native-born Americans. Central American migrants, who may often share phenotypical traits with Mexican immigrants, reported that their national identity is often erased in interactions with Whites and Blacks who were born in the U.S. (Yarborough 2010).

In this study, we focused primarily on first generation adult immigrants. In looking at immigration and identity, however, it is important to consider how generational differences and length of time spent in the United States affect self-perception in terms of racial and class identities (Stepick and Stepick 2003). Second generation children may be more willing to adopt U.S. categories of race, class, and identity than their parents. Bernadete Bessera, in her ethnography of Brazilian immigrants in California, has a good example of this in the story of a Brazilian American boy, born in the U.S., whose father was "black" and mother was "white" and who "had difficulty finding the right group to socialize with." His family strongly discouraged him from associating with Chicanos or African Americans "because they were seen as 'marginal,'" even though he felt more comfortable with these groups. Bessera wrote that Brazilian parents often do not understand that "the process of 'whitening' that is so common to Brazilian racist ideology does not work in the United States" (2003: 115-116). In general, the negotiation of identity in a foreign context must be looked at as a complex and ongoing process for immigrants and for their children.

Methods and Population

The information presented in this paper is based primarily on formal, semi-structured interviews conducted between 2006-2008 with first generation Brazilian immigrants who were residing within the metropolitan Atlanta region (designated as a 28-county area by the U.S. Census) (Atlanta Regional Commission 2008). A 2007-2008 Research Initiation Grant from Georgia State University provided funding for a portion of this research. We conducted formal interviews with 28 participants (15 men and 13 women, ranging in age from 20-54 at the time of their interviews in 2007-2008), all of whom were first generation immigrants to the United States. We used a detailed interview schedule that included 45 questions about participants' backgrounds, conceptions of class structure in

Brazil and the United States, racial identity (both how people identify themselves and are identified by others in Brazil and the United States), motivations for immigration, maintenance of Brazilian identity, perceptions of solidarity in the Brazilian community, and degree of participation in this community. Participants were encouraged to expand on the questions they were asked. Interviews took place in a variety of locations, including the café sections of Brazilian grocery stores, private homes and apartments, and, in a few cases, via e-mail response. Participants were recruited through snowball sampling and convenience sampling (Bernard 2002: 184-186). In-person interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed by research assistants and the principal author. All research assistants conducting interviews (co-authors on this paper) were also Brazilians living in the Atlanta area; all had undergraduate and graduate training in the social sciences and completed the requisite IRB training before conducting interviews. For this paper, the principal author extracted relevant background information on each participant and compiled participants' answers to the following three questions:

> How did you identify yourself in terms of race or ethnicity in Brazil? In the United States?

> How do non-Brazilians categorize you in terms of race or ethnicity here in the United States (if you have any examples of this from your acquaintances, employers, or others)?

> Could you discuss any differences you see in terms of how race is understood in Brazil and the United States?

The principal author tallied the basic answers to the first two questions. For many participants, all three questions generated narratives. Using a grounded theory approach (Bernard 2002, Glaser and Strauss 1967), the principal author took note of changes in self-identification and identification by others in the context of immigration and identified themes in qualitative answers related to these changes.

Though there is a significant presence of Brazilians from the states of Goiás and Minas Gerais in north Georgia (with supermarkets and restaurants catering specifically to these populations), the diverse regional backgrounds of study participants indicate that Brazilians from all over Brazil consider making Atlanta a permanent or temporary home. Interview participants were born and/or grew up in the states of Rio Grande do Norte (8 interviewees), Goiás (6), Rio de Janeiro (5), São Paulo (3), Bahia (2), Amazonas (3), Pará (1), Tocantins (1), and Maranhão (1).[5]

Most interview participants came to the U.S. by plane. Some came legally for work or to study. Atlanta was the first destination for some, but others had lived

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5 Some respondents mentioned living in more than one state before coming to the United States.

elsewhere in the U.S. before deciding to come to Atlanta. Others came on tourist visas, which they overstayed. A few interviewees, however, traveled to Mexico and entered the United States through undocumented border crossings. Housecleaning is a common profession for many Brazilian immigrant women in Atlanta, as in other cities in the U.S. (Margolis 1994; Martes 2000) and was the most common profession among women participants interviewed for this study. One man also worked as a housecleaner; in participant observation research, the principal author met whole families involved in housecleaning businesses, in which parents and adult children work together. Many Brazilian men in the Atlanta area are involved in construction, which was also a profession of several men interviewed. Other occupations among the participants in this study were painter, taxi driver, graphic designer, jiu-jitsu instructor, grocery store supervisor, computer programmer, government program coordinator, university student, and intern at the Centers for Disease Control.

The primary motivations for coming to the United States were economic, and many interview participants who struggled financially in Brazil have seen an improvement in their financial situation. For example, Ivanete[6], (born in 1953, from Rio Grande do Norte state) who worked in housecleaning in Atlanta, noted that in a short period of time in the U.S. it is possible to save money and buy a house. She said, "In Brazil, no! In Brazil you would have to work years, years, and more years to be able to get a house." She said that in the U.S., "you have money to buy things; you're not always owing. You're not always waiting until the end of the month, like in Brazil; money is easier as it comes weekly when you need it, giving you a better quality of life."

Despite the financial advantages of living in the U.S., several participants said that the difficulties they (or friends and family members) faced in obtaining legal status or improving the status that they currently held was a major drawback to living here. Stringent immigration laws have also made life difficult for many Brazilians in Georgia. In February of 2008, for example, the Georgia Senate passed a bill that increases penalties for driving without a license and that allows for checks on immigration status if someone is pulled over and does not have a license (MSNBC 2008). People who work in housecleaning are especially dependent on driving to homes for their livelihood, so this restriction was particularly harsh and has prompted some immigrants to the Atlanta area to return to Brazil.

New Categories in the Context of Immigration

Helen Marrow, in research on Brazilians in Boston, noted that while Brazilians are initially forced into categories such as Hispanic or Latino by non-Brazilians in the United States, many distance themselves from these categories, emphasizing that they are "Brazilian-Americans," as they become aware of stigmatizing associations with the Hispanic/Latino ethnic identification (Marrow 2003). Judith McDonnell and Cileine de Lourenço had a similar finding in interviews focused on race, ethnicity, and gender roles with Brazilian women in the Boston area. These women

6   All interviewee names are pseudonyms.

also expressed frustration with the available ethnic and racial categories in the United States, and "[often] they lay claim to a 'fourth space' that teeters closely to the space of 'other' because Brazilians often do not see themselves in the racialized categories of Latina, Latin American, and certainly not Hispanic" (McDonnell and de Lourenço 2008: 164).

Most participants in this study gave distinct answers to the two questions about what they believed their racial category to be in Brazil and how they were identified by others (principally non-Brazilians) in the United States. Participants included Brazilians who said they were identified as black (*preto*), brown (*pardo*), mestizo (*mestiço*), white (*branco*), and Japanese-Brazilian, with the majority identifying as white. Most said that they were identified by non-Brazilians as Latino/a or Hispanic.[7] A few respondents said they did not know their racial category in Brazil because they had never had to consider it before.

Some people reflected on how changes in category in the host country changed their experience or self-perception. For Daniel and Carlos, this involved a reinforcement of Brazilian identity over others. Daniel, a twenty-seven year-old graphic designer originally from Salvador, Bahia, said:

> I consider myself mestizo [*mestiço*] or brown [*pardo*], despite my family having come from Portugal, but I also have indigenous ancestry. In the United States, I really don't know how to place myself [*me encaixar*]. At first I considered myself Latino, but as I stayed longer in this country, people confused me for Greek or Italian, but I think I am just Brazilian. I don't feel included in the Latino community that lives in the United States.

Carlos (born 1970), a Japanese-Brazilian originally from São Paulo who works as a Java developer, had an interesting comment about race and identity in the immigration experience. He said he felt more Brazilian among other Brazilians since he came to Atlanta: "Culturally, I'm totally Brazilian here or in Brazil, but by appearance I'm Asian or Japanese." He was seen by non-Brazilians in the U.S., though, as "Asian, without a doubt." He was "othered" in similar ways in Brazil and the United States, but among Brazilians in the United States, the solidarity of "Brazilianness" in a foreign context trumped the otherness of his Japanese heritage. Tsuda (2003) found a similar phenomenon among Japanese-Brazilians who immigrated to Japan as they discover they stand out as foreigners in Japan and are culturally very Brazilian. One of his interviewees said that while in Brazil he felt "really Japanese," since moving to Japan his "identity is more on the Brazilian than on the Japanese side" (Tsuda 2003: 167).

In research with Brazilians in Newark, Ramos-Zayas (2008:281) reported that

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7 These two answers (white in Brazil/Latino or Hispanic in the U.S.) did not go together in every case (for example, one participant identified as "white" in Brazil but was considered "black" by non-Brazilians in the U.S.; some said they were considered "white" in both countries, with no "Latino" label).

"various versions of Brazil's 'racial democracy' discourse were deployed in most of my conversations with Brazilian migrants." Racial categories are flexible and far more numerous in Brazil than in the U.S., often consisting of physical descriptors of skin tone or hair type but, as anthropologist Marvin Harris (1964:60) noted, after conducting extensive research on racial terms in Brazil, "there is an ideal racial ranking gradient, in which whites occupy the favorable extreme." Despite this assessment, Harris still saw discrimination as a product of class membership primarily. However, Brazil is far from a racial democracy, and active discrimination (in the workplace, on the street, in the media, and in popular discourse) against those with phenotypical traits commonly associated with sub-Saharan African descent is still present in Brazil (Caldwell 2004, Goldstein 2003, Hanchard 1999).

In response to the question, "Could you discuss any differences you see in terms of how race is understood in Brazil and the United States?," most Brazilians interviewed in this study perceived more "racism" (*racismo*) in the U.S. than in Brazil (though "racism" was not mentioned in the question). However, participants used the term "racism" to talk about a number of forms of discrimination (e.g., based on skin color, language ability, or immigration status). Some cited an overemphasis with categorizing peoples in the U.S. For some participants, the interview questions for this project further illustrated to them that discussing and deconstructing "race" was a typical obsession in this country.[8]

One interviewee elaborated on the differences she felt existed between the Brazil and the United States in terms of specific examples of classism vs. racism, respectively. Marilda was born in 1981 and grew up in the state of Tocantins, from a self-described poor background. She identified herself as white (*branca*) in Brazil and said she was identified as Latina or Hispanic in the U.S. She commented, "Here, your color, your ethnicity, is a motive for racism; if you went shopping here (in the U.S.) wearing flip-flops (*chinelos*), you would get good service," whereas she claims that would not be the case in Brazil.[9]

Marilda also gave an example of a hypothetical U.S. interaction that illustrated the importance of skin color here:

If you were in line at a bank trying to solve a problem, if you had an

8   In research with Brazilians in South Florida, Resende (2009:103) chose not to ask people about their "race" or "color" because she thought "it would taint our interactions by characterizing me as an American researcher (because many participants reported that Americans are obsessed with racial classification)."

9   The principal author, in thinking about her comment, remembered multiple times in Brazil when she had received excellent service despite wearing flip-flops in Brazil. As a white, blonde North American woman, the principal author believed the privileges of skin and hair color typically outweighed dress and shoe type, although her status as a foreigner could also have played a part in these interactions. In general, though, flip-flops are more typically associated with the working class in Brazil. It is also interesting to note that Brazilian Havaianas brand flip-flops have in recent years have come to be considered a "designer" label abroad and in Brazil, as Rodrigues (2006) notes in a thesis entitled, "Havaianas: Do Pobre ao Nobre" ("Havaianas: From Poor to Rich/Elite").

attendant who is not your color, and if you had someone behind you in line that was his (the attendant's) color, he would help the other person first. Especially the Blacks (*negros*). They are very racist, principally with Latinos, Whites—in general.

By "Blacks" here, she is referring to African Americans (as opposed to Black Brazilians). Although Marilda does not include herself in this example, it seems to reflect her perception of something similar that happened to her or to acquaintances in the United States. While such a scenario could theoretically occur, her interpretation of motives on the part of the hypothetical attendant may be influenced by embodied notions of authority, social class, and color in Brazil, where it might be rare to see a person who would be considered "black" in Brazil in the position of bank teller (as is quite common in Atlanta). In addition, regardless of the skin color or racial identity of the bank teller in Brazil, bank clients who would be considered "black" in Brazil would be less likely to experience privileges over "white" clients.

Julia (born in 1976) grew up middle-class in São Paulo and studied at the University of Massachusetts in Lowell before moving to Atlanta; she said she "never had to think about" her racial category in Brazil, but "in the U.S.A, I don't even know, there are so many terms (*existe tanta denominação*) that it's difficult to know where I fit, or rather, into what box the country puts me." Non-Brazilians, she said, classify her as Latina. When asked about differences in race relations between Brazil in the United States, she said:

I just had a 30 minute discussion about this [with someone else, before the interview], so I'm a little tired of this issue. I was raised to not differentiate someone because of their color or because of their appearance. The U.S.A. and especially ATL [Atlanta] are extremely divided between whites and blacks. This question of "division" is one of the things that makes me most uncomfortable about this country.

Her comments reflect a colorblind paradigm, in which the white/black binary is construed as furthering hostility between these groups (rather than reflecting a legacy of slavery and discriminatory practices based on skin color and racial category).

In contrast, Rosane (born in 1980, from a middle class background in Rio de Janeiro) thought that racism was more pronounced in Brazil than in the United States. Rosane, who said her racial category in Brazil was "white" in Brazil and is "Latina" in the United States, believed that "in America, they have more respect than in Brazil with regard to this issue." Márcia (born in 1959), from Manaus, Amazonas, also said that racism among "Whites in Brazil" was much stronger than it is in the United States, a conclusion she based on personal experience. The example she gave in her interview was related more to issues of social class and linguistic difference rather than skin color. Márcia, who said she was viewed as "white" in both Brazil and the U.S., grew up in an upper class family in Manaus, Amazonas but worked as a housecleaner in Georgia. She said that when she first

came to the United States, she "couldn't even say 'bye-bye', and yet they accepted me. In Brazil, they would never accept a *gringa* in their homes who didn't speak Portuguese, and yet here they do." As someone who grew up with servants in the home, the role reversal and the positive experience she had with employers here led her to critique what she saw as discriminatory practices in Brazil.

Francisco (born in 1978) emphasized the importance of class as it relates to racial relations in Brazil. He grew up in Rio de Janeiro in a working class family; his mother was a manicurist and father was a taxi driver, and he attended public school in Brazil. He said he identified as *preto* (black) in Brazil but was identified by non-Brazilians in the U.S. as "Latino." What he found most interesting about race relations in the United States was that here, "the poor and rich use [the terms] white and black." In other words, middle and upper class people of African descent in the United States do not abandon their racial category or identity as Black Americans. This is in contrast to Brazil, where traditionally it is said that "money whitens." A person's racial category can become lighter (from *preto* to *mulato* or even *branco*) with an increase in socioeconomic status. However, it is important to note that this practice is not universal in Brazil, where a growing number of Black Brazilian artists, writers, politicians, and business people willingly identify as *preto* ("black") or as Afro-Brazilians and embrace Black heritage.

Some scholars of Brazilians in the U.S. have noted that Brazilians who considered themselves "white" (*branco*), *mulato*, or *moreno*, or other categories that were not "black" (*preto*) in Brazil, are surprised to find themselves categorized as "black" or "African-American" in the U.S. or forced to choose between "black" or "white" (Fazito and Martes 2004, cited in Margolis 2008; McDonnell and de Lourenço 2008; Ramos-Zaya 2008). Stepick and Stepick (2003: 141) note that the same is true for many Latin American immigrants: "It is a cliché in Miami to hear a Caribbean immigrant proclaim, 'I didn't know I was black until I came to the United States.'" Ramos-Zaya found that Brazilians in Newark, New Jersey "rejected identification with Blackness, except in instances when Blackness equated with urbanness, a desired attribute deployed in contradistinction to the rural 'folksiness' of other Latin American immigrants" (2008:280). One of the participants in this study, Wilma (34 years old at the time of interview), from a working class background in Goiás, said that she sees herself as "white" ("I think I'm white, not black" [*Acho que sou branca, negra não*]), but in the United States she is seen by others as "*negra*" (black), though she did not perceive discrimination in the United States because of this.

For several interviewees, racism in the United States was discussed in terms of discriminatory attitudes and policies in the United States towards immigrants. As Alexandre (27 at the time of the interview, from Maranhão), who identified himself as "Brazilian" but is often seen as "Hispanic" by non-Brazilians in the U.S., commented, "There (in Brazil), there is [racism] against blacks in general, that is still very strong. Here there's the prejudices of blacks and white not liking each other, but there is also [racism] against immigrants, Catholics, Hispanics, Hindus, Muslims; Americans have prejudice against these people that come here and don't learn American culture." Marcelo (born 1973, from Rio Grande do Norte) stated,

"I, thank God, am legalized here, but I really hope the situation improves. I think the current situation is not good. First they need to legalize the people who are already here because if that is not done, the U.S. will suffer, and if this is done, everyone will gain, because the majority of the force that moves this country is made up of immigrants." Gerson (born in 1976), from Goiás, who recounted a harrowing journey to the United States via the Mexican border, believed that anti-immigration laws were "pressuring people to not treat [immigrants] well," that stringent laws have created a "sub-society" (*sub-sociedade*) within in the United States, in the sense of an underclass subject to racism and discriminatory practices. The forms of exclusion that resulted from undocumented status in particular were a major concern and resulted in a diminished quality of life for several participants.

Discussion: Implications and Applications for Future Research

Anthropologists Claudia Strauss and Naomi Quinn (1994:287) have discussed how humans learn, from infancy, cultural schemas or ways of seeing and perceiving the world, but these schemas "are not rigid cognitive structures." They provide people with a certain worldview, but "schemas do not act as gatekeepers, preventing inputs from being sensed. An incident that fails to fit one's existing schemas can be perceived as such and may even be long remembered because it was surprising" (Strauss and Quinn 1994:290). In the principal author's earlier research on Hansen's disease in Brazil, she observed the ability of people affected by the disease to shift or adapt to new ways of conceptualizing their illness, when presented with the biomedical model and throughout the experience of treatment. Just as explanatory models of illness are quite flexible (White 2003, Kleinman 1989), so too are cognitive models for understanding identity in transnational contexts. The process of coming to terms with new racial categories and a different class system fits with what Sherry Ortner has termed "serious games" (Ortner 1996:12-16). Immigrants are active agents in negotiating identity and often play "with "skill, intention, wit, intelligence" (Ortner 1996:12), but there are high stakes in the sense that the choices they make can affect daily life and opportunities in the host country.

How might immigrants apply or interpret newly acquired knowledge of new models of race, ethnicity, and class in the host society? What are the practical implications of identifying or not identifying with a particular racial or ethnic category? In the United States, membership in different minority groups affords privileges in some contexts and disadvantages in others.   Most Brazilians interviewed for this study were very aware that they were seen as "Latino" by non-Brazilians. However, they did not necessarily feel a part of that category. To reiterate Daniel's statement above, he does not "feel included in the Latino community." It is possible that Brazilians who do not feel they are a part of the wider Latino community (or who are explicitly excluded from this ethnic grouping, as in the survey mentioned at the beginning of this article) will miss out on access to services that may be available to this group. Non-profit organizations with Spanish titles or who advertise their services strictly in Spanish may leave Brazilians

feeling excluded. For example, Brazilian youth may not realize they are eligible for Latino scholarships. Outreach to the Brazilian community is one means through which Brazilians can be made aware of social services that can be helpful to them. For example, at a breakfast (attended by the principal author) sponsored by the Brazilian airline TAM and intended for Brazilian-American business, church, and community leaders, a physician who worked with a clinic for women in north Georgia spoke and requested that attendees disseminate information about the clinic to the wider community, as Portuguese, as well as Spanish, translators were available at this clinic. Providing the Brazilian community with information on the services to which they are eligible as "Latinos" or as immigrants in general also could be accomplished through outreach activities in public schools with large numbers of Brazilian students, Brazilian churches, and Brazilian supermarkets in north Georgia.

Through qualitative research beyond the interviews discussed in this paper, the principal author has been able to identify several pressing concerns for Brazilians in north Georgia. These include difficulties in seeking legal residence and citizenship in the United States, problems in accessing healthcare for those who are undocumented and/or uninsured,[10] and educational needs (including teaching materials in Portuguese) for first and 1.5 generation Brazilian children in the public schools. Racial and ethnic identity, both in terms of self-identification and identification of Brazilians in the United States on official documents, are relevant to all of these concerns, in order to ensure that Brazilians are counted and that in formulating policy for different immigrant groups, the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of Brazilians are made visible.

Acknowledgments

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10 In addition to the challenges associated with simple access to health services, some Brazilians affected by illnesses that are less common in the United States, such as Hansen's disease and Chagas disease, have a hard time getting a diagnosis and subsequently finding a proper course of treatment. The principal author is currently conducting research with a small number of Brazilians affected by Hansen's disease in the Atlanta area.

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