

CHAPTER FIVE

Mixed and Unequal

New Perspectives on Brazilian Ethnoracial Relations

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The idea of racial democracy, which is attributed to Gilberto Freyre (1933), has been traditionally used to portray Brazilian race relations as harmonic and tolerant.¹ Although Freyre did not deny the violence of Brazilian slavery and colonization, he argued that national racial divisions had been overcome by the miscegenation of African slaves, Portuguese colonizers, and the indigenous population.

Early twentieth-century Brazilian arts quickly embraced this image. In literature (e.g., Jorge Amado, Mario de Andrade), music styles (e.g., samba), food (e.g., feijoada), and the arts (e.g., Caribé, Portinari, Di Cavalcanti, Lasar Segall), miscegenation and mixture were celebrated as the national essence. Even in sports, miscegenation and African stock were invoked to explain the success of Brazilian soccer (Rodrigues 1964). In short, during the twentieth century, racial mixture came to be seen as the basis of Brazilian national character and was widely called the tale of the three races. This portrait of Brazil as a racial paradise was further enhanced by Brazil's contrast with pre-civil rights United States. This contrast, which was implicit in Freyre's works, was also supported by studies comparing Brazilian and North American slavery and racial inequalities (e.g., Degler 1971; Tannenbaum 1992 [1946]).

As early as 1950, however, various studies showed that the picture of Brazilian race relations was not so bright. These studies revealed that racial inequalities persisted even in the most developed regions of the country, like São Paulo (Fernandes 1969). They also provided evidence that blacks' and whites'

chances of mobility were unequal (e.g., Nogueira and Cavalcanti 1998) and that discrimination against blacks persisted even after upward mobility (e.g., Costa Pinto 1995 [1952]).

In the 1960s and 1970s, the growing availability of statistical data as well as the rising sophistication of statistical methods allowed social scientists to show not only that racial discrimination was persistent in Brazil but also that it affected browns (*pardos*, as those of mixed racial background were described in official statistics) and blacks (*pretos*) almost equally (Hasenbalg 1979; Silva 1978).² In other words, there was little evidence that miscegenation was the solution for racial inequality or that mixing was, in Degler's (1971) famous phrase, "an escape hatch." Nevertheless, the idea of Brazil as a country without racial problems was still strong in the national imagination.

Since political democratization in the 1980s, racial inequalities have become much more visible in Brazilian public and policy debates. The black middle class, even if still small, has grown and, largely, adopted a more political racial identification as "negro" (Silva and Reis 2011). A black consumer market has emerged, and black aesthetics have become much more visible in the media (Fry 2005). Noting such changes, Brazilian television networks have also made an effort to portray blacks in a different, more positive light. While previously blacks would appear only as slaves in historical narratives or as maids in modern soap operas (Araujo 2000), today blacks appear as main characters and upper middle-class characters in Brazilian television and cinema. Even if they are still underrepresented in the media, a new and more positive image of blackness has gained currency in the country. Yet studies about the black middle class confirm the persistence of racial discrimination, which cannot be overcome by social mobility (Figueiredo 2002; Silva and Reis 2011).

Joaquim Barbosa, who became the first black member of the Brazilian Supreme Court in 2003, is probably the best-known face of this new black middle class. In 2012 Barbosa was responsible for writing the legal decision in one of the most important corruption cases in Brazilian history, the so-called *Mensalão*.³ His decision to convict important government leaders was televised nationwide, making him one of the most popular figures in the Brazilian political scene. For the first time, a black political figure was seriously considered as a potential presidential candidate, although Barbosa denied having political ambitions. In 2013 he became the president of the Supreme Court and *Time* magazine (2013) lauded him as one of the one hundred most influential people in the world. Incidentally, Barbosa has long denounced Brazil's racial discrimination.⁴

But the most conspicuous change in Brazilian race relations is the growing implementation of affirmative action policies. Due largely to strong black

mobilization (Paschel 2011), some public universities have implemented race-targeted affirmative action policies, in the form of racial and social quotas, since the early 2000s.⁵ Quotas became mandatory in all federal universities, which tend to be the most prestigious and selective in the country, after the Supreme Court declared them legal in 2012 and the legislature passed the law of quotas in 2013.⁶

Today, survey results show that most Brazilians recognize the existence of racial prejudice and discrimination against blacks (Datafolha 1995; 2008). The availability of data on racial attitudes and other aspects of race relations has contributed significantly to this growing awareness. Unlike nearly all the other countries of the region, racial data have been collected in Brazilian censuses since the late nineteenth century,⁷ allowing academic research to thoroughly document the persistence of racial inequality for decades, as well as giving support to the demands of social movements. Largely for this reason, and in contrast to other Latin American countries, Brazil's race dynamics have received much academic scrutiny. While this chapter cannot offer a thorough review of this vast literature, which other scholars have already done (Telles 2004), we do make reference to contemporary works and research results that are tackling similar questions.

We note that the PERLA data make at least two broad contributions to this literature, in addition to presenting new data on race identification and perceptions about race relations in Brazil. First, PERLA enables us to compare Brazilian race relations to those of other Latin American countries. The Brazilian race literature has largely been built upon implicit and explicit comparisons to countries of Northern European origin like South Africa and especially the United States (Marx 1998; Moutinho 2004; Nobles 2000; Skidmore 1972; Winant 2001). Such comparisons usually present racial mixture as a unique national characteristic, as either a positive solution or an ideological tool to hide racial inequalities. In this chapter we argue that racial mixture and racial inequalities coexist as equally important facets of Brazilian race relations. Borrowing Lamont and Molnár's concepts (2002), we understand that the key puzzle of Brazilian race relations today is how persistent socioeconomic boundaries can coexist with weak symbolic boundaries among racial groups. PERLA enables us to tackle this puzzle from a different perspective by comparing Brazil to countries with a similar history of racial stratification and mixture (Telles and Sue 2009).

However, Brazil is different from other Latin American countries in that its racial inequalities have been largely acknowledged and evidenced in the past couple of decades; the implementation of affirmative action is proof. Also,

Brazilian racial categories have been largely understood as skin color categories rather than ethnic or cultural categories, which Sansone (2003a) argues makes Brazil distinct from other countries.

PERLA's second important contribution, with the support of the color palette, is an understanding of how racial identification and skin color categories overlap or diverge in the shaping of racial boundaries, racial mobilization, and racial inequalities in Brazil. In addition, as we discuss later, the color palette serves as an important tool for reducing the endogeneity between racial identification and racial outcomes.

In the first section of the chapter, we present an overview of the social history of race relations in Brazil. We discuss the role of race in the nation-building project, right after independence, and the emergence of the idea of "racial democracy" in the early twentieth century, as well as its demise in the second half of the twentieth century. Then, we provide a brief review of how official statistics have reflected ethnic and racial categorization and identification in Brazil since the first census in 1872. In the third section, we present the results of the PERLA survey, with an emphasis on the different practices of categorization and identification in contemporary Brazil, and an analysis of how these are related to social inequality and perceptions of discrimination.

Brazilian History in Black, Brown, and White

The Historical Origins of Brazilian Racial Inequality: Independence and Slavery

Two distinctive features of Brazilian history have shaped its race relations. First, Brazil, a Portuguese colony between 1500 and 1822, was the only South American colony that did not have an independence war and the only country that remained united after independence. Second, Brazil was the largest importer of African slaves in the Americas. Behrendt (1999) estimates that between 1519 and 1867, 11,569 million Africans were brought to the Americas, with approximately one-third going to Brazil. Andrews (2004) calculated that 67 percent of the Brazilian population was of African descent by 1800 and maintained that blacks had become part of every sphere of Brazilian social life by the early nineteenth century, though most African-origin peoples (nearly two-thirds) were slaves. From plantations to small business and technical service, nearly all manual and service work was performed by African slaves or their descendants.

Because most Latin American countries abolished slavery by the mid-1800s, shortly after their independence wars, Brazil's absence of wars has been

a prevalent explanation for the continuation of slavery until the end of the nineteenth century (e.g., Andrews 2004). Despite growing challenges from abolitionist movements and numerous slave revolts, the slave trade actually intensified through the first half of the nineteenth century until it was finally prohibited in 1850.⁸ Slavery, however, lasted for nearly half a century more: Brazil was the last country in the region to abolish it, in 1888.⁹

By the time of abolition, a considerable part of the elite no longer considered slavery economically viable. Many slave owners had spontaneously freed their slaves, and sectors of the rural elite supported abolition (Reis and Reis 1998).¹⁰ In fact, a considerable part of the black and mixed population was already free at the time of abolition (Skidmore 1972).¹¹

The early literature comparing slavery in Brazil to other countries has commonly identified the high rates of manumission and close personal relationships between masters and slaves as characteristic of Brazilian slavery (Freyre 1933; Tannenbaum 1992 [1946]). If such characteristics were invoked to praise Brazilians' race relations, the very low survival rates of Brazilian slaves, especially when compared to the United States and even other Latin American countries, contradicts the allegedly beneficent character of Brazilian slavery (Boxer 1963).

Scientific Racism and Whitening

The establishment of the first Brazilian republican period in 1889 followed the abolition of slavery.¹² While the First Republic (1889–1930) was dominated by liberal economic ideas, hardly any social policy was designed to integrate the newly freed slaves. Even though no blatantly segregationist laws were created, land restriction laws demanding formalized legal papers to prove landownership (Silva 1998), repression of popular cultural and social movements by the 1890 Penal Code (Moura 1988), and massive subsidized European immigration (Skidmore 1990, 25) were strongly influential in excluding blacks from opportunities for social mobility.

In academic and political circles, elites openly debated whitening through immigration as the solution for Brazilians' racial inferiority, just as scientific racism theories endorsed. As a result of these ideas, European immigration was encouraged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century with the goal of "whitening" the population. At the Brazilian Eugenics Conference in the early 1930s, Roquete Pinto estimated that, by 2012, the racial composition of Brazil would be 80 percent white, 17 percent indigenous, and 3 percent mestizos, with no blacks at all (Schwarcz 1993).

Between 1884 and 1913, approximately 2.7 million white immigrants came to Brazil. Not only did these European immigrants receive subsidized ship passages and other inducements such as land grants, but they also took most of the recently opened industrial jobs in the new economic center of the country, São Paulo: by 1915 the industrial labor force was 85 percent immigrant (Foot-Hardmann and Leonardi 1988). Andrews (2004) and Fernandes (1965) estimated that by 1920 the immigrant population in São Paulo was substantially larger than that of Afrodescendants. In contrast, blacks and browns were (and still are) largely concentrated in the North and Northeast, the poorest regions of the country and, in this period, mostly rural areas.

Nation Building through Racial Mixture: The Rise of Racial Democracy

During the late 1920s and early 1930s, Brazil experienced political turmoil and important social transformations. Through a bloodless coup d'état, Getulio Vargas, a politician from the South, took power in 1930 and in 1934 was elected and passed a new Constitution, inaugurating what is known as the Brazilian Second Republic. To avoid stepping out of power because of his disagreement with the old regional elites from São Paulo and Minas Gerais, he staged another coup, and inaugurated what is known as the New State (Estado Novo). He remained in power until 1945. Still today, nearly sixty years after his death, Getulio is one of the most popular politicians in Brazil. Getulio's strong popularity (he was known as the father of the poor) was based on his support for inclusive social rights (labor rights, especially), even at the expense of civil rights and political rights. Vargas also had a strong nationalistic ideology, which presented Brazil as the country of the future.

Economically, the 1930 Revolution was related to the decline of the old agrarian elites, who were replaced by new elites, mostly from the industrial and financial sectors. Politically, it meant a state that defined itself as the manager of an industrialization and urbanization process, supporting protectionist policies like import-substitution-industrialization (ISI), which were also adopted in other Latin American countries. Socially, the new government proposed, on a limited basis, new legislation that recognized the need for social policies to integrate the lower classes into the new urban society (*a questão social*). This integration, however, was conducted through top-down models that guaranteed social rights to a minority of workers in the formal and urban sector, mostly industrial and government jobs, while at the same time restricting political and civil rights (Santos 1979). The clearest illustration of these policies is found in

the Work Laws of 1943 (Consolidação das Leis do Trabalho, CLT), which instituted centralized models of state-controlled unions.

Understanding the consequences of Vargas's economic and social policies for Brazil's black and brown population is not simple (e.g., Fischer 2008).¹³ A farmer from the south of Brazil, Vargas was intellectually influenced by positivist philosophy. At least until the beginning of 1940s, he supported European authoritarian ideologies, such as Mussolini's fascism. In this ideological vein, he maintained immigration restrictions against blacks and Asians and implemented new ones to guarantee and develop "the ethnic composition of the population and the most convenient characteristics of European descent" (Skidmore 1976).

At the same time, as part of his authoritarian project to modernize the country, Vargas strengthened the national labor force's participation in the modern industries. The 1937 authoritarian constitution created quotas for hiring foreign employees (insisting that they should not be more than one-third of any Brazilian firm), which indirectly benefited urban Afro-Brazilians. Even though these changes did not affect the large number of blacks and browns living in rural areas and working in nonregulated occupations, like domestic workers, it benefited many low-income Brazilians, black, brown, and white. Many blacks and browns migrated from rural areas and the Northeast and started working in the industries and other public jobs like gas, electricity, and transportation. Furthermore, the minimum wage, which was adopted in 1940, had an indirect effect as a reference value for the informal labor market where blacks and browns were concentrated because most of the population was in the informal sector, not subjected to the same regulations.

Vargas's nation-building strategy also contributed to the acceptance of Afrodescendant cultural expression, since then considered an essential element of the national identity. For example, the 1940 National Penal Code suspended previous restrictions on popular cultural expressions, such as samba, capoeira, and others related to African traditions. Accepting black cultural expression as fundamentally Brazilian was part of a new understanding of racial mixture as the basis of national identification rather than as a problem to be solved. As discussed in other chapters, this acceptance of ethnoracial minority cultures also mirrored transformations in other countries of the region. In Brazil, this transformation was personified by the alternative narrative presented by Gilberto Freyre, an anthropologist trained at Columbia University, in his 1933 masterpiece *Casa Grande e Senzala (Masters and Slaves)*.

Freyre presented Brazilian history as the "marriage" of three races—indigenous, Portuguese, and African. The three races were described by their cultural

contributions to the unique Brazilian character, a perspective attributed to the influence of Franz Boas's cultural anthropology.¹⁴ Instead of a country cursed by miscegenation, Freyre presented Brazil as a nation blessed by racial mixture, which was a source of tolerance, malleability, and affection. The Portuguese inheritance, in particular, was celebrated. Freyre described the Portuguese, themselves a mixed race, as the most adaptable of the European, capable of assimilating and mixing with native groups.¹⁵ This emphasis on the Portuguese contribution partly explains the ambiguity in Freyre's writings: if on one hand, mixture is praised, on the other it was led and dominated by white Portuguese.

These social and cultural transformations in the 1930s and 1940s were followed by the emergence of a small black middle class, which demanded greater social integration. Yet the discourse of integration usually meant desiring to be part of the nation and sharing opportunities for mobility, while rejecting black traditions and African culture (Andrews 2004). The Black Brazilian Front (Frente Negra Brasileira, FNB), a political party created in the 1930s, expressed these demands. Although it was initially very supportive of the Vargas regime, it was outlawed in Vargas's *Estado Novo* (1937–45).

The brief return of democracy (1945–64) and the hegemony of development and modernization theories in the years after the Vargas dictatorship strengthened the belief in Brazil as a racial democracy by intensifying structural social mobility and nationalistic discourses about Brazil's economic potential. Brazil's image as a racial democracy was further solidified with comparisons to the segregationist policies and racial conflicts in the U.S. South and to South African apartheid laws during the 1940s and 1950s. Brazil's international reputation reached its highest point in the early 1950s, when UNESCO funded studies in different regions of Brazil to better understand this "racial paradise" (Maio 1999).

From Racial Democracy to Affirmative Actions

Unfortunately, the results of the UNESCO studies were not so uplifting. Scholars such as Florestan Fernandes, Costa Pinto, and Oracy Nogueira verified the persistence of racial prejudice and inequalities in studies ranging from ethnographies to descriptive statistical analyses.¹⁶ Yet, maybe because of the hegemonic Marxist paradigm in Brazil, the key conclusions of these studies can be summarized in two main points. First, they noted that racial discrimination had largely been replaced by class discrimination, which they believed was the main cause of black exclusion at that time (Fernandes 1965). Second, the authors concluded that discrimination and prejudice in Brazil were not

about race, that is, based on ethnic or racial origin as in the United States, but rather about phenotype (Nogueira and Cavalcanti 1998). These findings contested the mainstream racial democracy approach by openly acknowledging Brazil's continuing racial inequalities and racial prejudice. Yet even they underestimated the role and strength of current discrimination, sometimes treating racism as a residual feature that would disappear as Brazilian society modernized or as class relations were transformed through social policies or socialist revolution.¹⁷

The military coup of 1964 ushered in an era of violent repression, silencing most social and democratic causes, including debates about racial inequalities. The hegemony of the racial democracy narrative proved very efficient in ensuring national unity and stability. On the one hand, it supported a strong national identity based on cultural symbols shared across racial groups. On the other hand, it made racial inequalities almost invisible in national narratives. The mainstream narrative was that Brazil should make "the cake grow before splitting it," a narrative similar to "the rising tides lifts all boats." Such a narrative denied any particularity to racial inequalities and placed the focus on economic growth as the solution to all social problems. Massive urbanization, industrialization, and even stronger economic growth during the Brazilian military dictatorship (1964–88), however, did not prove sufficient to reduce socioeconomic or racial inequalities.

By the end of the military dictatorship, Brazil was considered one of the most unequal countries in the world, with the highest recorded Gini coefficient of 0.633 in 1989 according to the World Bank. But even while the existence of socioeconomic inequalities was accepted, racial inequalities were perceived as residual. The mainstream ideology, shared by the government and popular opinion, was that Brazil did not have a racial problem.

During the 1970s, some black organizations began openly challenging the description of Brazil as a racial democracy, calling it a "myth." Some organizations were based on cultural membership and others were more political. The Movimento Negro Unificado (MNU, or Unified Black Movement) is probably the best-known and was able to mobilize a number of militants (Hanchard 1994).

Also during the 1970s and 1980s, some scholars began to revisit the history of Brazilian slavery, questioning Freyre's widespread arguments about the beneficial character of Portuguese colonization and slavery (e.g., Mattoso 1986). At the same time, statistical studies appeared that relied on the availability of official data on race; these data had been collected through most of the twentieth century, though not every decade, and when it was, it was gathered with

distinct methodologies, as we discuss later. Carlos Hasenbalg and Nelson do Silva (1978) produced analyses that evidenced strong and persistent inequalities between whites and nonwhites in Brazil. These studies openly challenged theories that defended the greater possibilities of integration among pardos when compared to pretos, as laid out by Degler's (1971) mulatto escape-hatch theory. The fact that blacks and browns were similarly disadvantaged socioeconomically and that pardos were also of African descent (sometimes assumed but not always correctly) was used by some scholars and black activists as justification to combine these two groups under the label of nonwhites or *negros* (blacks); thus Brazil became known as the country with the largest black population outside Africa.¹⁸

Democratization during the 1980s encouraged new black organizations to emerge and consolidate. It also strengthened a repertoire of human rights demands and made possible the international funding of local social movements and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) denouncing racial discrimination in police treatment, health access, media portrayals, and other structural realms. In particular, "celebrations" of one hundred years of abolition (1988) and five hundred years since the discovery of Brazil, or rather its colonization (2000), triggered public demonstrations that scorned such celebrations and gave visibility to black and indigenous causes (Lippi Oliveira 2000; Schwartz 1990).

A turning point in Brazilian race relations was the 2001 United Nations Conference against Racism and Discrimination in Durban, South Africa. Many Brazilian NGOs and social movements attended the Conference against Racism and Discrimination, where they openly denounced the persistence of racial discrimination and inequality in Brazil. Up to that point, the Brazilian government's approach to discrimination had been to deny or understate the issue. Now, for the first time, the Brazilian government acknowledged the country's continuing racial discrimination (Telles 2004).

The Brazilian state began opening itself up to black demands in the past two decades, in part because of domestic pressure (Paschel 2011) but also to preserve its international image (Htun 2004). The government created federal agencies to deal with racial inequalities (Fundação Palmares during the Cardoso administration, and SEPPPIR during the Lula administration), passed laws including those granting land rights to communities that were historically lands of fugitive slaves (Quilombolas), and made the history of Africa mandatory in high school curricula (Federal Law Number 10.639).

But the most visible and controversial project of racial redress was the implementation of affirmative action initiatives in the form of racial quotas. Ini-

tially implemented in public offices, racial quotas became widespread in access to public universities, including many of the most prestigious in the country. Since they were enacted in the early 2000s, racial quotas have been extensively debated in the Brazilian mass media (e.g., Globo 2006a, 2006b; Kamel 2006; Silva 2007) and academia (Bailey and Peria 2010).¹⁹ Initially, the academic debate focused on the reasons and justifications for implementing racially targeted policies (e.g., Bernardino and Galdino 2004; Hofbauer 2006; Medeiros 2004; Mulholland 2006; Peria 2004). A few authors called such policies the Americanization of Brazilian race relations (e.g., Bourdieu and Wacquant 1999) and charged that they created “dangerous divisions.” Such criticisms are largely based on the perspective that race does not exist and that adopting a multicultural approach to address Brazilian racial inequalities is nonsense since people do not perceive themselves as belonging to different cultures. The issue should be about class, not race. Numerous authors responded to these criticisms, insisting on the historical authenticity of ongoing racial inequalities in Brazil and the need for racially targeted policies to address them (e.g., Hanchard 2003; Telles 2003). Other authors have argued that, despite such limits that a multicultural approach may have in Brazil, social policies based on racial identities can play an important role in overcoming racial inequalities (Guimarães 2006; Sansone 2003b).

Now, ten years after the first universities implemented affirmative action policies, the debate has moved to understanding the consequences of such policies. These studies have been divided roughly between those who try to understand how quotas have had an impact on students’ self-identification and experiences (Cicalo 2012; Schwartzman and Silva 2012) and those who try to measure the impact of racial quotas on students’ performance and graduation rates (e.g., Guimarães 2011; Mello and Amaral 2012; Paiva 2010). Results show that quota students are performing well, and sometimes even better than nonquota students. There is also some evidence of growing racial identification but little evidence of new racial tensions or divisions, even if socioeconomic divisions, which also have a racial element, are much more salient inside the university (Telles and Paixão 2013).

Finally, affirmative action policies have changed substantially in the past decade, from focusing mostly on race to targeting socioeconomic inequalities more broadly. A growing number of universities now have quotas for students from public schools (considered a good proxy for a low socioeconomic background) with the understanding that those quotas should reflect the racial diversity of the state in which the university is located.²⁰ Therefore, Brazilian affirmative action policies are increasingly understood as policies of socioeco-

conomic inclusion rather than policies of recognition (Paschel 2011; Silva 2006). Although this move from race to class can be interpreted as a backlash against racially targeted policies, a 2012 Supreme Court decision declared racially targeted affirmative action legal, and a federal decree made affirmative action mandatory in all federal universities, using both race and public school quotas (Telles and Paixão 2013). All these changes make it clear that Brazil has officially abandoned its self-image as a racial democracy and adopted policies to redress the historical and current exclusion of blacks.

Ethnicity and Race in Brazilian Official Statistics

In the debates preceding the implementation of affirmative action, policy makers, social scientists, and journalists relied on official statistics of race.²¹ As mentioned earlier, the Brazilian state has classified its population by race during the twentieth century with much more consistency than other Latin American countries.

In the past, states counted their populations by race for political and social control, which was especially the case by colonial powers, in slave economies, in the United States during segregation, or South Africa during Apartheid. In the twentieth century, noncounting by race became progressive either in the name of national integration and color-blindness, as currently in France, Germany, and Spain, or with a discourse of hybridity, as was the case historically in Latin America. The growing use of counting by race and ethnicity in national censuses throughout the world, however, indicates that ethnoracial categorization has returned, but now as state tools for monitoring social inclusion (Morning 2009).²² In the United States, enumeration by race occurred throughout all of its censuses, as it was clearly critical to its regimes of slavery and segregation, although it would continue after segregation and be defended as a tool for monitoring inclusion by the 1960s (Nobles 2000).

Most Latin American countries were conducting censuses by the end of the nineteenth century. According to Loveman (2013), there were three main reasons why Latin American countries started to take national censuses more seriously in the late nineteenth century (almost a century after the first North American census, in 1790). First, by collecting national statistics on population size and major characteristics, these recently independent countries aimed to present their population as united, as part of the same nation. Second, conducting a census was a way to evidence the existence of a modern bureaucracy, capable of following international rules. For example, according to Loveman, most Latin American censuses made a point of following the prescriptions

of the First International Statistical Congress. In other words, conducting a census and having a National Statistical Office were presented as evidence of the “modernism” of newly born Latin American states. Finally, Latin American countries felt they had to challenge nineteenth-century European and U.S. theories of racial degeneration, which presented them as examples of how racial mixture inevitably leads to degeneracy (e.g., Gobineau 1853). Counting their population by race was key to such a goal.

Two opposite strategies demonstrate the centrality of racial classification during these first censuses. On one hand, a few countries chose to underplay the presence of African, Asians, or Indians (the so-called degenerated races) and did not include racial counts. Their census reports simply stated their numerical insignificance, which was used as justification for their exclusion from national statistical descriptions. Argentina, for example, deliberately did not present numbers of blacks and Indians, although more than 50 percent of the population was estimated to be black in 1800 (Andrews 2004). On the other hand, countries like Brazil chose to present their numbers but stressed the growing presence of white or European immigrants as evidence of their racial, and therefore civilizational, improvement.

Since its first census in 1872, Brazil counted by race. The categories used were very similar the ones used today: *preto* (black), *pardo* (brown), and *branco* (white).²³ The population of Brazil numbered nearly 10 million (9,930,478) in 1872, 15.2 percent of whom were slaves: 10.4 percent were classified as blacks and 4.8 percent as browns. The total percentage of whites was 38.1 percent, all of whom were free. The indigenous population, officially classified as *caboclos*, was already a tiny minority at 3.9 percent; all of the indigenous were free.²⁴ African slaves and their descendants (those classified as *pretos* and *pardos*) made up 58 percent of the population. *Pardos* (browns or, roughly, mixed-race persons) were the largest category at 38.3 percent of the total population, most of whom were free (87.4 percent). Blacks were 19.7 percent of the population, and within that group slightly more than half were slaves (52.9 percent) (Paixão et al. 2011).

Brazil instantiated the centrality of slavery and its overlap with race by the way it depicted its population in tables. According to Loveman (2009), no single table of all Brazilians residents was presented in the 1872 census report. The first table of the report accounted only for the free population, classified according to race (even if the questionnaire asked about color) as *branca*, *parda*, *preta*, and *cabocla de raça indigena* (mixed from indigenous race). Of course such a strategy presented an initial picture of Brazil as much whiter than the total reality, since more than half of the total black population (52.9 percent of

19.7 percent of all blacks) was enslaved. The slave population appeared only a few pages later, divided between brown and black, since whiteness and even indigenous background were perceived as irreconcilable with slavery.

In the 1890 census, Brazil had just become a republic (1889) and abolished slavery (1888). The 1890 census has been criticized for its technical flaws, yet the reduction of the total black population (from 19.7 to 14.6 percent) and the growth of the white population (from 38.1 to 44 percent) were celebrated by all sectors as desirable for progress: whites had become the largest racial group in Brazil.²⁵

The 1900 census did not include questions about race or color. There was no census in 1910 and race or color questions were not included in 1920. Although the official justification for excluding race in 1920 was the difficulty, if not impossibility, of an accurate measure of race, a few scholars (e.g., Nobles 2000) attribute the exclusion to a deliberate strategy of hiding the real number of Afro-Brazilians. At this point it was clear that Brazilian immigration policies were not as successful in whitening the population as in neighboring countries like Argentina and Uruguay.

Nobles (2000) also argues that, despite the omission of the race question, race, color, and national origin occupied a central position in all General Department of Statistics (Departamento Geral de Estatística, DGE) publications. Immigration policies were discussed at length in the 1908 report. For the 1920 census, Oliveira Viana, one of the most important supporters of eugenics, wrote the introductory essay in which he presented “optimistic predictions” about the progressive whitening of the Brazilian population. Even though Viana was criticized for his language and “imported” ideas at the time, his overall positive perception about the whitening of the country, which was seen as a sign of progress, seemed to be widely shared by most of the Brazilian elite. In short, the presentation and interpretation of these early censuses were part of an elite project devoted to transforming the Brazilian racial profile.

If whitening was a shared national value among the elite, Brazilian intellectuals had to adapt scientific racism (or eugenics) to the Latin American demographic and economic reality. As Stepan (1991) argued, eugenics in the region had to put almost equal weight on race, political economy, and social policies. If, as in the case of Argentina, guaranteeing racial purity could be presented as a road to progress, that was not the case for most Latin American countries with majority nonwhite populations. In Brazil, racial mixture and social policies were perceived as more viable alternatives. In particular, understanding racial mixture through a positive light—as Gilberto Freyre did in Brazil—had a strong impact in reestablishing the national racial project.

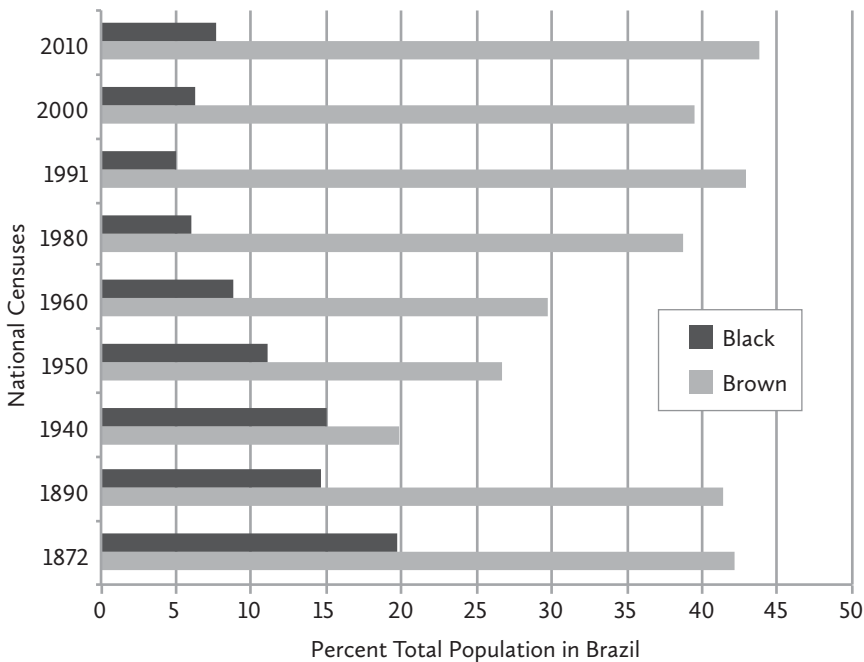


FIGURE 5.1 Size of Black and Brown Population in Brazilian National Censuses

While Brazil had no census in 1930, the introduction to the 1940 census, written by the sociologist and educator Fernando Azevedo, illustrated the strong impact of Freyre's interpretation. Diverging from Oliveira Viana's desire for whitening, Azevedo celebrated Brazil as a country of mixture (Azevedo 1944). Yet, perhaps ironically, census results supported the previous conclusion that the indigenous and blacks were disappearing and seemed to confirm whitening predictions. As Figure 5.1 shows, blacks and browns, who represented 66 percent of the population in 1890, had diminished to 34 percent in 1940 while whites went from 44 percent to 63.5 percent.

Nevertheless, the growing percentage of whites between 1890 and 1940 does not tell us the whole story for several reasons. First, it hides important regional differences. In the early twentieth century, blacks and browns were still a majority in the Central-West, North, and Northeast. Second, differences in censuses and census results have to be analyzed as indicators not only of demographic transformations in the population but also of changing racial identification. Several studies have already shown that in almost every country, demographic transformation (i.e., rates of mortality and birth) cannot account for racial differences (Perz et al. 2008).²⁶ An analysis focusing on bound-

ary shifting and the expanded definition of whiteness, similar to Loveman and Muniz's (2007) analysis of Puerto Rico at the beginning of the twentieth century or to Carvalho et al. (2004) arguments about the importance of reclassification in the growth of pardos and decline of pretos in Brazil in the following decades (1950–80), would also apply here.

Finally, the 1940 census did not offer the option of identifying as pardo or mestizo, encouraging census takers to choose between white and black. Using Statistical Bureau (IBGE) records, Nobles (2000) argues that the decision to exclude a mixed category derived from the rejection of racist ideas, namely that mixed races would be inferior. When census agents could not classify respondents as white, black, or yellow (a new category created to incorporate the growing population of Asian immigrants), they added a line which was later recoded as pardo. Documents also show a new conception of race, including not only phenotype but also cultural characteristics. Therefore, "well-educated and well-mannered people of mixed race were also considered white, even if clearly brown in appearance" (Nobles 2000, 100).

The 1950 census allowed, for the first time, self-classification of racial identity. People were asked to identify their color and were given four options: *preto* (black), *pardo* (brown), *amarelo* (yellow), and *branco* (white). As Figure 5.1 shows, the percentage of pardos grew in comparison to the 1940 census, but the percentage of blacks shrank. The 1960 census, which relied on the same methodology and categories, showed a similar pattern.

The race question was excluded from the 1970 census. This exclusion has been described as a clear illustration of the 1964 military regime's adoption of the racial democracy. However, the debates around racial inequality that occurred in the IBGE during the 1970s challenge the view of IBGE as a passive institution. The reinclusion of the race question in the 1976 Annual National Household Survey (PNAD) and in the 1980 census (following the 1950 model) further shows that the census bureau was not so submissive to the military ideology (Powell 2011).²⁷

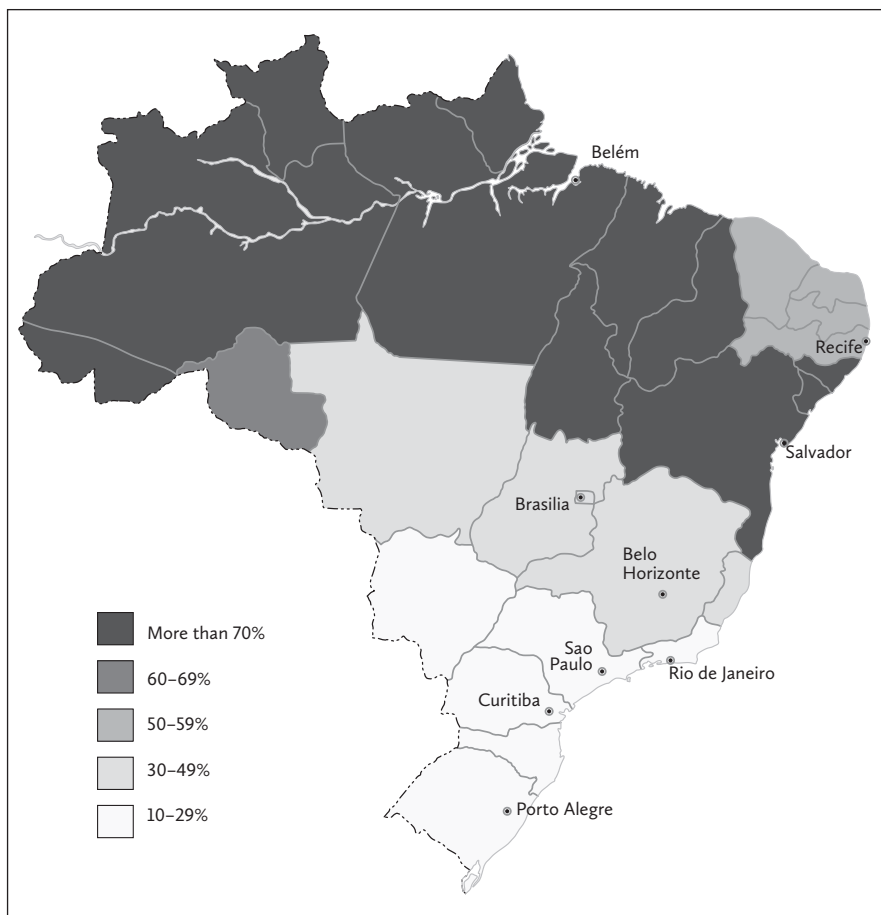
The 1976 PNAD, a landmark in studies on Brazil's racial categories, included a special supplement with two questions about color. One was an open-ended question that asked respondents to identify their color, without providing any options to choose from. The other asked respondents to select their color on the basis of the traditional census options (*branco*, *pardo*, *preto*, or *amarelo*). The results are well known: 136 different color type responses to the open-ended question. This led to the general belief that racial categories were hollow in Brazil, because they were so diverse. Yet nearly 90 percent of respondents chose one of four categories, three of which were the traditional census catego-

ries (branco, pardo, or preto).²⁸ Such a high concentration in official categories supported retaining these categories. The race question has been presented in every Brazilian census since 1980 (i.e., 1991, 2000, and 2010) and every Annual National Household Survey questionnaire since 1976, and has used the same categories: preto, pardo, branco, and amarelo. Having historical data on race has allowed scholars to show the persistence of racial inequalities across time and to analyze the racial dimension of various issues covered in national household surveys such as intergenerational mobility and health.

Nevertheless, debates about racial categories have continued through the late twentieth century and into the early twenty-first century. In 1991 the race question was changed to “What is your race or color?” from “What is your color?,” and a new option was included: indigenous.²⁹ In the 1990s, the black movement exerted a growing pressure to change the census racial categories to a dichotomous classification, excluding pardo and preto and including negro, a more politicized racial category that would encompass all Brazilians with African ancestry. In 1998 the president of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, which carries out the census, himself a sociologist, conducted a study similar to the 1976 PNAD (but relying on the Pesquisa Mensal de Empregos, or Monthly Job Study) and came to similar conclusions as those of the 1979 PNAD (Schwartzman 1999). Supported by a special panel, he decided to retain the historical categories of black, brown, and white.

Media, government reports, and sociodemographic studies, however, increasingly grouped blacks and browns together and labeled them negros, influenced by the large number of studies that showed socioeconomic indicators for blacks and browns to be very similar and equally different from those for whites. Combining blacks and browns allowed the media to report that, according to 2010 census data, the percentage of negros in Brazil was higher than that of whites. Besides the race question,³⁰ the 2010 census also included a question about indigenous language.

The changes in racial demographics, in particular the percentage growth of blacks and browns shown in Figure 5.1, raises questions about the dynamics of racial classification. It also stresses the importance of racial statistics in Brazil, where these changes are much more visible than in other countries of the region. Although counting by race was initially closely related to eugenics ideologies and therefore to racial exclusion, it became a tool for inclusion and identity politics. Documenting racial inequalities through the years has given support to the implementation of racially targeted reform policies. In contrast to other Latin American countries, where not counting by race allowed race to be invisible, Brazil’s racial statistics allowed scholars and policy makers to make



MAP 5.1 Percent Black or Brown in Brazil, by State. Source: Census of Brazil, 2010

race visible and to think about its consequences for social exclusion as well as for the need to target it for social inclusion.

Second, it is clear that transformations in the country's racial distribution are due not only to demographics but also to a transformation in the meaning of racial categories. With this awareness, the IBGE created a national survey in 2008, the Study on Ethnic and Race Characteristics of the Population (Pesquisa sobre as características etnico-raciais da população, PCERP) about Brazilians' perceptions of race.³¹ In addition, studies and surveys focusing on race have been conducted in Brazil since the 1990s: Datafolha 1995, 2008; Fundação Perseu Abramo 2003; and Pesquisa Social Brasileira 2003. PERLA Brazil benefits from being able to dialogue with and contribute to these previous results.

Regionally, Map 5.1 uses 2010 Census data to show that the white population is concentrated in the Southeast and South, while nonwhites constitute the numerical majority in the Northeast and North. This racial concentration by region is largely a result of Brazilian development and the association of its labor force with race. In the twentieth century, Brazilian modernization involved large investments in industrialization, which attracted the large majority of mass European immigration (ca. 1880–1930), which Brazilian elites had encouraged to both whiten the country and provide industrial labor. In the centuries before that, enslaved Africans had been brought to work in the most economically dynamic places in the country, particularly in the large plantations of the Northeast. Although such a regional distribution by race remains in place today, the various economic cycles and crises since then have produced intensive internal migration that have attracted many nonwhites to the Southeast and some whites to the Northeast.

The PERLA Survey

Ethnic and Racial Identity

The Brazilian PERLA survey was distributed in August 2010 to a countrywide representative sample of one thousand people.³² One of its main goals was to examine and analyze the impact of different categories and self-identification in Brazil. In this section we analyze and discuss the results of these measurements and their implications for the processes of categorization and ethnoracial self-identification in Brazilian society.

Racial categories have been among the most venerable and contentious topics in the Brazilian literature about race relations. One often hears that it is impossible to know who is black or white (*quem é negro e quem é branco*) in Brazil. The recent implementation of race-targeted public policies has brought this concern to the center of the political stage.

The PERLA survey included multiple ways to approach the ethnic or racial status of respondents, including self-identification in an open-ended format, self-identification when shown a list of ethnic categories, classification of skin color and hair texture by survey takers, and information on parents and ancestors. Figure 5.2 summarizes the results of these multiple indicators for Afro-descendants. It shows that, according to how one operationalizes blackness, the percentage of blacks in Brazil varied from 6 percent of interviewees who self-identified as negros to more than 59.4 percent of respondents who were classified by interviewers as black or brown.

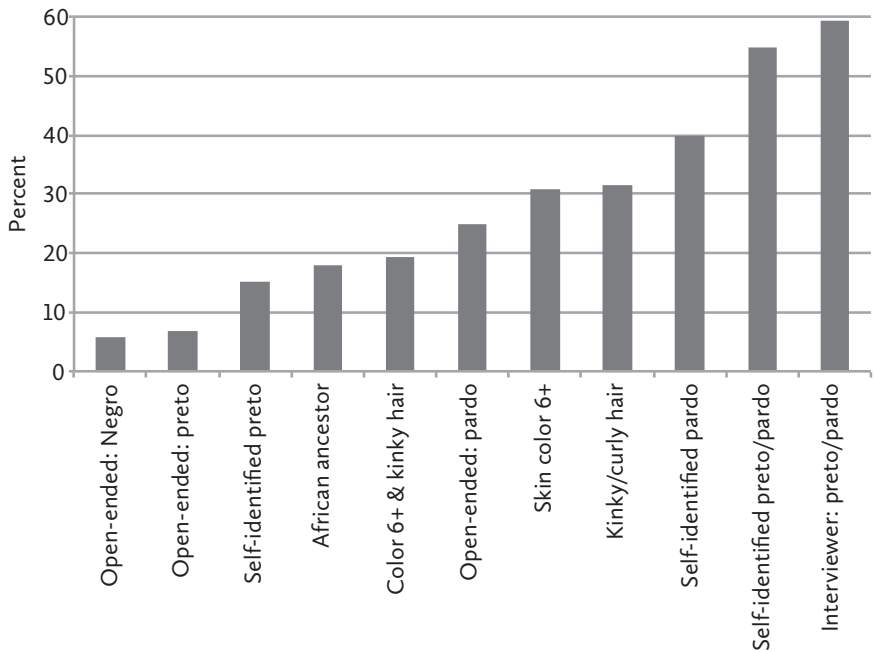


FIGURE 5.2 Percent Afrodescendant according to Various Criteria, Brazil

As noted previously, sociodemographic studies (Henriques 2001; Paixão and Carvano 2008) commonly refer to blacks (in Portuguese, *negro*) as the sum of those who identify as black (*preto*) and brown (*pardo*), because of these two groups' socioeconomic similarities. According to the 2010 census, negros represent 50.7 percent of the Brazilian population, and are thus the majority group. In the PERLA sample, they represented 54.9 percent.

Figure 5.2 also shows that, when respondents were allowed to openly identify by race, only a minority of the population self-identified as either preto or negro, the two possible translations of black. Although the negro category was never used in official census categorization, other surveys have shown that it is increasingly favored by black respondents. As a more politicized category, it is commonly used by black movement activists, although not exclusively. Nevertheless, other national surveys have already shown that, in an open-ended questionnaire format, the percentage of respondents choosing negro was always less than 10 percent; PERLA data similarly showed that 6 percent of respondents so identified. In PERLA's open-ended format, another 8 percent identified as preto, while only one out of the survey's one thousand interviewees chose to identify as Afro-Brazilian.³³ In contrast, 11 percent identified themselves as *moreno* (dark) and 25 percent as *pardo*.

Another possible way to define who is black in Brazil is to ask about African ancestry or family origin. These two measures, however, yielded very different results. While a bit more than 20 percent of respondents affirmed having African ancestors, more than 60 percent identified one parent as black or brown (data not shown). These results closely resemble those found by Bailey, Loveman, and Muniz. Relying on the 2003 PESB (Pesquisa Social Brasileira), the authors compared a range of classification strategies and found that the percentage of blacks ranged from 31.6 percent when interviewers were forced to choose between black and white to 59.3 percent when respondents were categorized according to the descent rule (i.e., having at least one black or brown parent).³⁴

As explained in chapter 1, PERLA also provided data on how interviewers classified interviewees by the color of their skin, using a color palette with eleven shades (ranging from 1 = very light to 11 = very dark) and by their hair type (straight, curly, kinky, and other). As Figure 5.2 shows, 31 percent of the respondents were classified as negro because they were darker than 6 on the scale, 32 percent were so classified because of their hair type (kinky), and 19 percent because of both skin color (darker than 6) and hair (kinky).

In the rest of this section we discuss in detail what we see as PERLA's two main contributions regarding ethnoracial categorization: the overlap between self-classification and classification by others, with a special focus on the original phenotype-based classification; and the different meanings attributed to racial identification.

Classification by Others versus Identification

One argument commonly presented by those who claim that racial boundaries in Brazil are too blurred to be defined in "black and white" is the difference between self-classification (or identification) and classification by others. While these debates are relevant to the measurement of racial inequalities, as we discuss later, they are also key to implementing racially targeted policies since administrators have used different measures to define who should benefit from the programs (e.g., Mulholland 2006).

PERLA data confirm previous findings that identification and categorization by others largely overlap (Telles and Lim 1998; Telles 2004; Datafolha 1995, 2008; Bailey et al. 2013); these results are in Table 5.1 with the percentage of overlap in bold. Over 80 percent of interviewees who identified as white, black, and brown were categorized the same way by interviewers, with no significant

TABLE 5.1 Interviewees' Racial Identification (Q. 11) versus Interviewers' Categorization (Q. 4) (%)

	Interviewers' Classification				Total
	Branco	Pardo	Preto	Other	
Self-identification					
Branco	83.0	13.2	0.8	3.0	100.0
Pardo	6.5	82.6	8.8	2.0	100.0
Preto	1.3	9.2	88.1	1.3	100.0

Source: PERLA 2010

difference among racial groups.³⁵ For blacks and browns, those above the bold were lightened by interviewers. For whites and browns, those below the bold were darkened.³⁶

Such a strong overlap is understandable because interviewers and interviewees used similar criteria to define racial categorization. In previous surveys, most interviewees explained their choice of racial identification/categorization by their skin color (e.g., Fundação Perseu Abramo 2003; PESB 2002; PCERP 2008). Other phenotypic traits, like the shape of the lips and nose, and hair type, were also commonly mentioned. According to the 2008 PCERP, 60.5 percent of interviewees defined their racial identity by phenotypic traits, followed at some distance by family origin (28.4 percent) and culture or tradition (6.5 percent).³⁷ These findings confirm the centrality of phenotype and skin color in the definition of racial categories in Brazil (Banton 2012).

In view of skin color's centrality, the use of a color palette allowed us to differentiate perceptions about skin color from perceptions about race (See chapter 1 for discussion of its use, including its innovations and limitations).

The boxplot graph in Figure 5.3 confirms the importance of skin color in racial classification by interviewers. In this graph, the box represents the middle 50 percent of cases and the ends of the whiskers represent where 95 percent of the cases fall. Again, there is much overlap between interviewers' use of the official IBGE racial categories and their perception of skin color according to the color palette. Most persons (70.3 percent) who were rated light (between 1 and 3 on the color palette) identified as white. Among those who identified as browns, the dispersion was greater, yet 52.4 percent of brown respondents were classified as having a medium skin tone (either 4 or 5 on the palette). The remaining 47.6 percent were ranked as dark (32.5 percent) twice as frequently

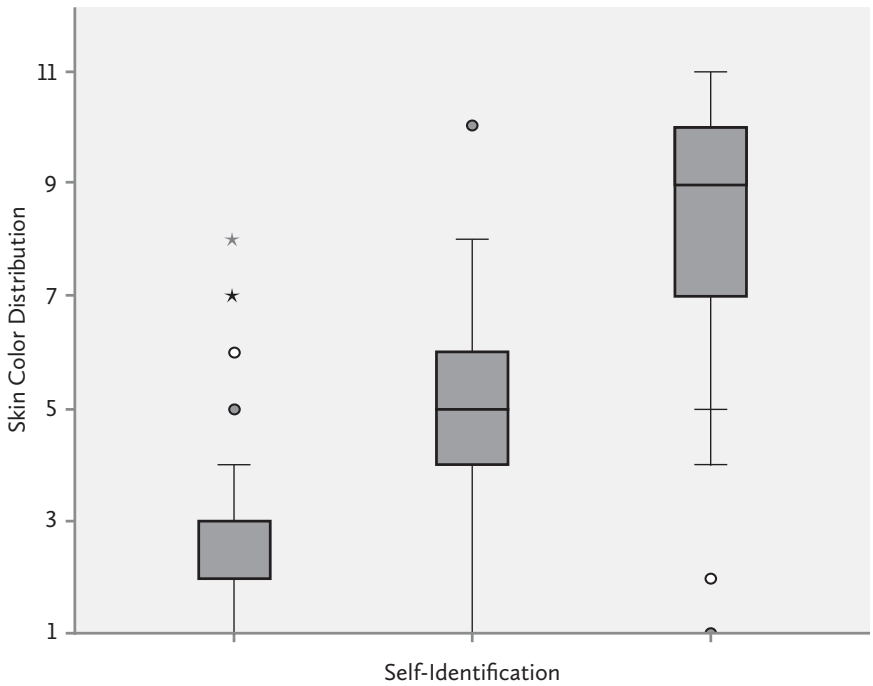


FIGURE 5.3 Boxplot Showing the Skin-Color Distribution of Persons Who Self-Identified as White, Brown, and Black, Brazil

as light (15.1 percent).³⁸ The consistency was even stronger among those who identified as black, more than 90 percent of whom were ranked as dark skinned (6 or more).³⁹ In short, Brazil showed great consistency between *census* racial categories, especially those of black and white, and the color classification of respondents based on the color palette. When viewed in comparison to other countries discussed in this book, this overlap is even more striking and should not be minimized.

Interviewers' classification of hair type also strongly overlapped with racial identification using IBGE categories, although not as strongly as with skin color ranking. Those who self-identified as white also tended to be classified as having straight hair (69.7 percent) and those who were identified as black tended to be classified as having kinky hair (77.3 percent). Once again, browns were more spread out: 33 percent were classified as having kinky hair, 38.6 percent as having curly hair, and 25.4 percent as having straight hair. In short, racial categories and phenotype traits (hair or skin color) also overlapped in Brazil, although less so among browns (data not shown for hair and census self-classification).

Different Dimensions of Racial Identification

The low rates of open-ended self-identification as negro and the strong overlap between racial identification or categorization and skin color have been interpreted very differently in the literature about Brazilian race relations. On one extreme, it has been understood as evidence of lack of black consciousness or even a desire for whitening. More optimistic (or naïve) interpreters have seen it as evidence of blurred racial boundaries, or the celebration of racial mixture. Yet, as Guimarães (2012) argued, it would be misleading to believe that the Brazilian racial classification and identification system is reduced to skin color.

PERLA allows us to think about this issue in a more sophisticated way, taking into account different meanings and dimensions of racial identification (Ashmore et al. 2004). In the survey, we asked questions about the attachment, importance, and centrality of racial identification as well as about the sense of interdependence among the respondent and other people from the same ethnoracial group.

Figure 5.4 shows that nearly all interviewees had pride in their racial identity (83.3 percent). Pride was slightly more frequent among browns (87.2 percent) and blacks (92.7 percent) than among whites (78.7 percent).⁴⁰ The majority of interviewees (66 percent) also agreed (or agreed completely) with the statement that belonging to their racial group determined many aspects of their lives, even if less emphatically. Those who identified as black tended to agree more often (75 percent), but the majority of whites and browns also agreed (63.2 percent and 64.4 percent, respectively).⁴¹

By racial group, interviewees were roughly divided regarding their perceptions of the interdependence of their lives with others in their racial group. Approximately half of whites (48.8 percent), browns (45.2 percent), and blacks (50 percent) agreed with the statement, “What happens to members of my racial group influences my own life.”

Yet racial identification lost its strength when compared to national identification. When asked to choose between racial and national identification, only a small minority of white (3.3 percent), brown (6.2 percent) and black (10.5 percent) interviewees choose racial identification, with only a small (although statistically significant) reduction of national identification among those who identified as black.

This can be seen as illustrating the insights of the racial dominance literature regarding the interface between race and national identities. Sidanius and his coauthors (2001, 847–48) seemed to interpret similar results in the Dominican Republic as the false consciousness of their black respondents, who sup-

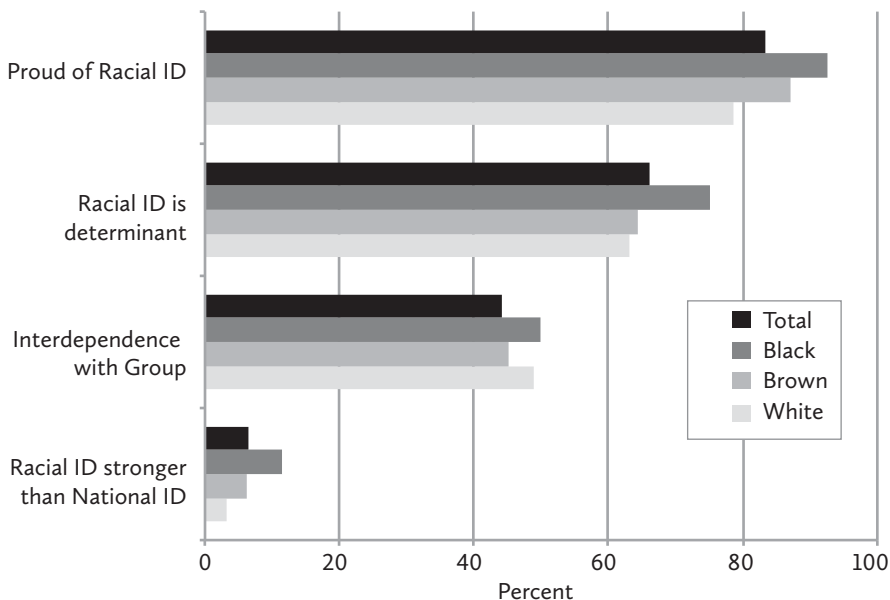


FIGURE 5.4 Multiple Dimensions of Racial Identity by Racial Self-Identification according to IBGE Racial Categories, Brazil

ported a nation that had historically excluded them through what they termed “inclusionary discrimination.”⁴² An alternative interpretation maintains that, although racial identification is central, it does not preclude acknowledging racial mixture as an important and positive feature of Brazilian society. PERLA results show that most interviewees across racial groups (more than 80 percent) believed Brazil to be a mixed country, in contrast to the less than 10 percent who believed the country to be mostly negro (8 percent) or Portuguese (7 percent). In addition, 78.8 percent agreed that racial mixture is a good thing for Brazil (data not shown). These results are confirmed by other national surveys and more qualitative studies that have pointed to the centrality of racial mixture in Brazil, which has successfully eroded cultural boundaries, even if not reducing racial inequalities (Silva and Reis 2012; Telles and Sue 2009).

Our results also confirm that, even if racial identification is perceived as important and racial inequality and discrimination are acknowledged in Brazil (as surveys such as PESB 2003, Datafolha 1995 and 2008, and data in this chapter show), these perceptions do not translate into racial differences or divisions, because blacks and whites do not see themselves as belonging to different collectivities. PERLA’s questions about similarities and differences among racial groups show that, with the exception of the indigenous, Brazilians tended not

TABLE 5.2 Similarities and Differences among Racial Groups (%)

	Treatment of kids	Culture and Habits	Sexual Practices
Whites who perceive <i>negros</i> as different (or very different) in:	16.9	24.9	9.9
Browns who perceive <i>negros</i> as different (or very different) in:	11.1	16.5	7.0
Blacks who perceive <i>brancos</i> as different (or very different) in:	16.6	20.3	12.9
Browns who perceive <i>brancos</i> as different (or very different) in:	14.9	14.3	9.1
Whites, browns, and blacks who perceive <i>Indigenas</i> as different (or very different) in:	60.0	80.0	50.0

Source: PERLA 2010

Note: Groups based on racial self-identification IBGE categories.

to identify strong cultural differences between racial groups. According to Table 5.2, of those who identified as white, only a numerical minority believed that negros were different or very different in the way they treat their children (16.9 percent), in their culture and habits (24.9 percent), and in their sexual practices (9.9 percent). Among those who identified as brown, perceptions of difference toward negros regarding this question were even lower, 11.1 percent, 16.5 percent, and 7 percent, respectively. Among those who identified as black, few believed that whites were different or very different in the treatment of their children (16.6 percent), in their culture and habits (20.3 percent), and in their sexual practices (12.6 percent). Likewise, among those who identified as brown, only a minority identified differences toward whites in the way they treat their children (14.9 percent), in culture (14.3 percent), and in sexual practices (9.1 percent).

In contrast, whites, blacks, and browns similarly believed indigenous people to be different or very different in the treatment of their children (60 percent), in their culture and habits (80 percent), and in their sexual practices (50 percent). These findings confirm Wade's (1997) contention that in Latin America, indigenous, unlike blacks, are the "cultural other," at least for the Brazilian case (Table 5.2).

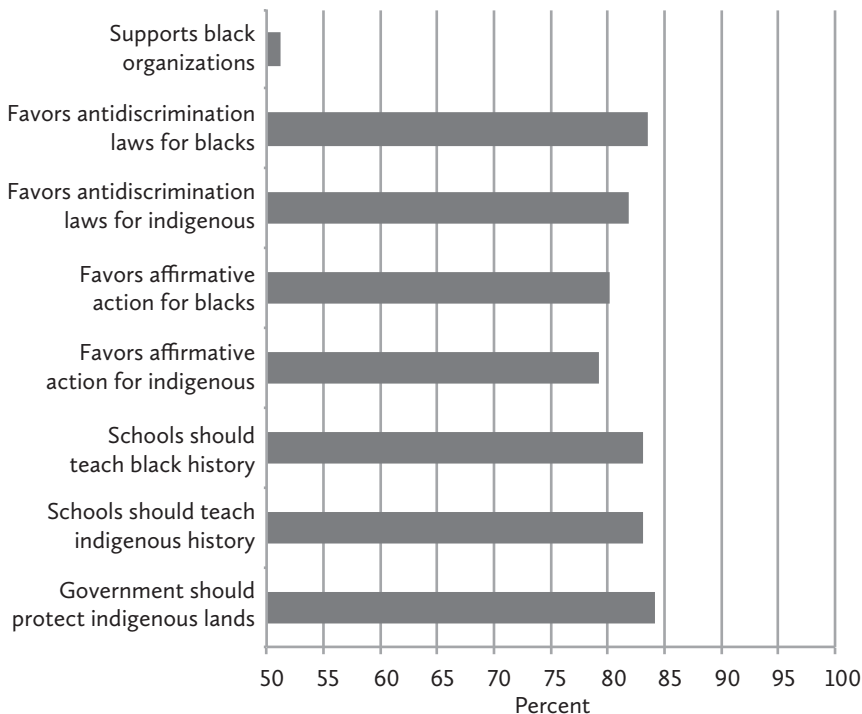


FIGURE 5.5 Support for Multiculturalism and Multicultural Policies, Brazil

Sansone (2003a) argued that this lack of cultural boundaries between blacks and whites reduced racial identification to individual and superficial choices, something similar to symbolic ethnicity, or what he calls “blackness without ethnicity.” Because race does not create group solidarity, Sansone’s interpretations might lead to the conclusion that, although people recognize the importance of race and are proud of their racial background, they may reject multicultural policies, racially targeted policies, and black mobilization.

However, as we show in Figure 5.5, most Brazilians support affirmative action, antidiscrimination laws, and the teaching of black and indigenous history. A large majority of respondents (more than 80 percent), without significant differences across racial groups, agreed with race-targeted policies to improve the situation of blacks.⁴³ Nearly all respondents (more than 90 percent) also agreed with the teaching of black and African history, the protection of land rights of traditional black communities (*quilombolas*), and more rigorous laws to punish those who discriminate. Other national surveys conducted since the implementation of affirmative action policies (e.g., Fundação Perseu Abramo 2003; PESB 2003; and Datafolha 2008) have found similar results. In fact, com-

paring the 1995 Datafolha survey results with the 2008 Datafolha results, Guimarães (2007) argued that support for racially targeted policies had increased in the past decade in Brazil.

Again using innovative questions, PERLA also asked respondents about their perceptions on black political mobilization. A small majority of interviewees (59.8 percent) agreed or agreed completely that black people should organize politically to fight for their rights, without significant difference among those who identified as white, brown, or black (56.5, 52.1, and 59 percent, respectively). Nevertheless, only 35 percent of interviewees had heard about any such organization (data not shown).⁴⁴ These results suggest that black mobilization, even if supported by a considerable majority, is still largely invisible in Brazil.

This widespread support for black mobilization and racially targeted policies shows that most Brazilians were not concerned about the possible “dangerous divisions” that Fry and Maggie (2007) have warned about and which he and other critics of racially targeted initiatives have seen as a threat (e.g., the various authors of articles in Fry et al. 2007 and Kamel 2006). This widespread popular support might be a result of the growing visibility of studies and public statistics that consistently demonstrate the persistence of racial inequality, as we argue in the next section.

Racial Inequalities in Brazil

As discussed previously, evidence for racial inequalities in education, income, access to jobs, and social mobility have been gathered in Brazil since the 1950s’ UNESCO studies. They were further verified in the pioneering works of Silva (1978) and Hasenbalg (1979) in the 1970s. Relying on official statistics and regression analysis, Hasenbalg and Silva showed that the effect of race was significant and independent of that of class, and that racial inequalities were stronger between whites and nonwhites than between blacks and browns.

Since then, racial inequalities have been documented in nearly all realms of social life (e.g., Paixão and Carvano 2008; Paixão et al. 2011). Although some of these inequalities may be attributed to changes in identification within and across generations (e.g., Schwartzman 2007), studies have shown that racial inequality in opportunities for social mobility are strong and persistent (e.g., Hasenbalg and Silva 1988). Although there is some evidence that educational inequality between whites and nonwhites has declined in the past twenty-five years (e.g., Marteleto 2012), several studies have shown that racial inequalities are even stronger on the top of the socioeconomic structure, which can contribute to further racial disparities (e.g., Campante et al. 2004; Osorio 2008; Santos 2005).

Nearly all of the recent studies on Brazilian racial inequalities—which are so numerous that reviewing them here is impossible—benefit from having official statistics on race and color. This is an important difference between Brazil and the other countries discussed in this book. In countries where there are no public statistics on race, PERLA makes an important contribution to exposing racial and ethnic inequalities. However, these inequalities are well known in Brazil. Moreover, Brazilian census and household surveys, with their large number of cases, are much more suitable than PERLA for analyzing persistent socioeconomic inequalities.

Yet exactly because they use official statistics, most of these studies relied on a single categorical measure of race, identification according to census categories.⁴⁵ In contrast, as we described, PERLA used different types of racial classification and thus adds significantly to the literature by comparing inequality across these different types of racial categorization. Such authors as Bailey et al. (2012) have undertaken recent and similar efforts.

The hypothesis that racial inequality in Brazil might be strongly related to the criteria used for racial classification and identification dates back to the 1950s, when Charles Wagley (1952) proposed the idea of “social race” in his studies of the Recôncavo da Bahia. The hypothesis of social race refers to the impact of socioeconomic status on race identification and categorization and proposes that color or race as measured in demographic surveys would be influenced by the socioeconomic status of each individual and would darken or lighten according to whether the individual’s socioeconomic status is lower or higher, respectively. For example, a person would classify herself in lighter categories as she gains upward mobility. As a consequence, the strong correlation between race and class was due to the impact not only of race on socioeconomic outcomes but also of socioeconomic status on racial categorization. This interrelationship created a difficult problem of endogeneity in trying to isolate the causal impact of race in socioeconomic outcomes.

It has also led several authors to claim that, in comparison to the United States where race is based on hypodescent (or “one drop” rules), Brazilian racial boundaries would be more imprecise because they are highly influenced by socioeconomic status. In addition, Brazilians would be able to move across distinct racial categories when socially mobile. For example, in his mulatto escape-hatch hypothesis, Degler (1971) claimed that upwardly mobile mulattos would be able to whiten.

Another consequence of this “racial mobility” is that demographic research would inevitably overestimate color or racial inequalities, since lower-income

whites would be seen as darker while higher-income blacks would be whitened (a trend exemplified by the popular expression “money whitens”). Indeed, Schwartzman (2007) found that more educated nonwhites were likely to marry whites, and more educated interracial couples were more likely to label their children white than less educated interracial couples, thus creating intergenerational whitening and confirming the “money whitens” hypothesis.

Nevertheless, comparing 1996 and 2006 PNAD data, Schwartzman also showed that the effects of whitening have declined, perhaps related to the recent shifts in Brazilian racial politics. Relying on the 1995 Datafolha census, Bailey and Telles (2006) showed that identifying as negro was significantly correlated with higher levels of education. In contrast, identifying as moreno was correlated with lower levels of education and with living in areas with a lower percentage of whites. Similarly, Marteleto (2012) attributed part of the reduction of educational inequality between browns and blacks between 1982 and 2007 to the darkening of more educated browns. These results may indicate an important change in contemporary Brazil: education, and therefore income, can now darken browns rather than whiten them.

In order to compare the impact of different types of racial categories in measuring racial inequalities, we recall that PERLA used four types of racial categorization: racial self-identification according to census categories; racial categorization by interviewer according to census categories; racial categorization by interviewer according to color palette scale; and a joint measure of categorization by interviewer according to the color palette and hair type. Because the first measure is the only one derived directly from interviewees, we contrast it to the other three types of interviewer classification. This first measure is also comparable to official statistics.⁴⁶ The comparisons relying on the color palette and on phenotype are the most important contributions, because of their originality as a measure of racial categorization and their possibility of reducing the Brazilian endogeneity of racial categorization and socioeconomic status. In these comparisons, the interviewee’s average schooling was used as a proxy for socioeconomic status. We chose this indicator because of its lower potential for dispersion in relation to the average; other socioeconomic indicators such as earnings or occupation would be subject to either high variance or dispersion, which would be especially problematic given the sample size.⁴⁷

Before comparing these different categorization types, we stress that educational inequalities between those classified as lighter and darker were significant in PERLA analyses regardless of the racial categories used (with one exception, described later, concerning occupational status and the color pal-

ette). Therefore what we propose here is not to discuss the fact of ethnoracial categorization and discrimination but to analyze its underestimation (or overestimation) when relying on official statistics.

Racial Self-Identification and Classification by Others

In the literature, the contrast between racial self-identification and classification by interviewers has traditionally been fundamental to discussing the impact of whitening (Telles and Lim 1998; Valle e Silva 1994). Scholars have argued that if more educated blacks tended to whiten themselves, racial inequalities measured by heteroclassification would be smaller than the ones found in official statistics. Therefore, comparing categorization by interviewers and self-categorization would be a way to measure the tendency (or lack of) of higher-status blacks to whiten. The first studies had divergent results. Silva's (1994) findings for the city of São Paulo in 1986 found that interviewer's classification tended to reduce racial inequality, supporting the hypothesis that money whitens. However, Telles and Lim's (1998) nationally based study from 1995 data showed that racial inequalities in income were greater when interviewer classification was used.⁴⁸ More recent studies have tended to confirm Telles and Lim's findings (e.g., Bailey et al. 2012), indicating that official data, which is presumably based on self-identification, underestimate racial inequalities. Our comparison of respondents' average education level by self-identification and interviewer classification are shown in Figure 5.6 (Telles 2004).

The strong overlap between interviewee and interviewers classification explains why the apparent differences are small. Nevertheless, racial inequalities in average years of schooling were slightly stronger when PERLA used interviewer categorization according to census categories. Using interviewees' racial self-identification, the average years of education for whites were 7.9, for browns 6.8, and for blacks 6.9. Using interviewers' racial classification, whites had 7.8 average years of education, browns 6.8, and blacks 6.5. Therefore, whites' and browns' average years of study were fundamentally the same with the self-identification and interviewer categorization, and the difference between them remained statistically significant.⁴⁹ The difference between whites and blacks grew and remained statically significant.⁵⁰ With the interviewer classification, the difference between blacks and browns increased, although the difference was not statistically significant.

Recalling an earlier analysis, we found a strong correlation between the census categories and the ranking of skin color according to the color palette (see Figure 5.3 and its related discussion), although not as strong as interviewer

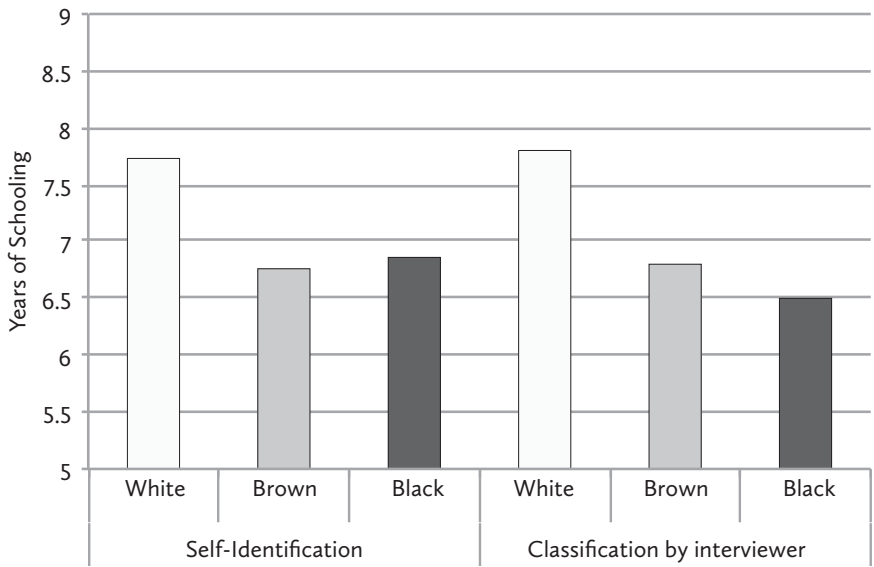


FIGURE 5.6 Mean Years of Schooling by Racial Self-Identification and Classification by Interviewer, Brazil

classification according to census categories (Table 5.1). Nevertheless, small differences might have a significant impact in the measurement of inequalities. Figure 5.7 shows a comparison of average years of education by racial self-identification and interviewer categorization according to the color palette. Once again, the color tones were combined into three groups: light (tones 1–3; 355 records), medium (tones 4–5; 337 records), and dark (tones 6–11; 308 records).

As we saw with interviewer categorization, those who self-identified as white and those who were categorized as lighter had similar levels of schooling. As in the previous set of findings there were clear differences between the lighter and darker groups. While the education status of browns and blacks, according to the census, was similarly lower (with a difference of nearly one year of education when compared to whites), respondents classified by the interviewer as medium and dark according to the palette had more striking differences between themselves in years of education. Those whose skin color was ranked medium had an average of 7.0 years of education, only 0.7 less than those who were ranked as light and higher than those who self-identified as browns. In contrast, those whose skin color was rated as dark had, on average, 6.3 years of education, or nearly 1.6 years less than those rated as light and

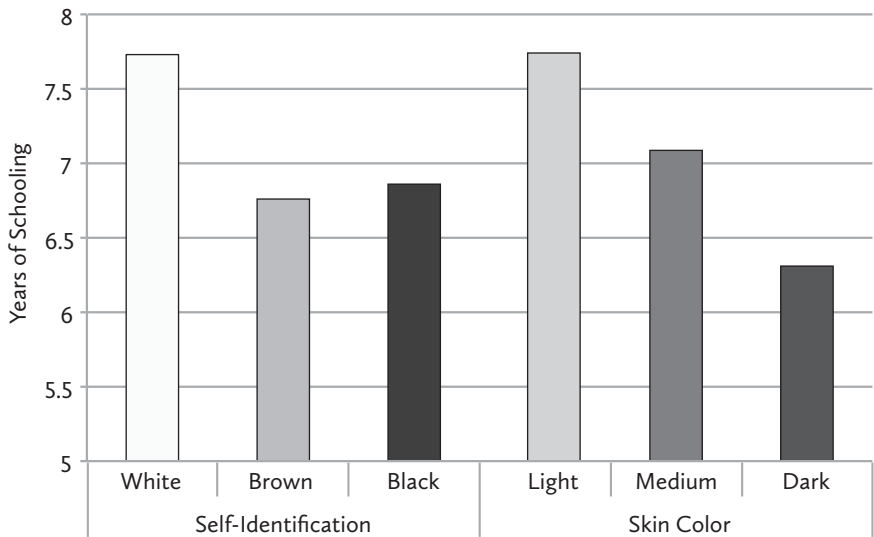


FIGURE 5.7 Mean Years of Schooling by Racial Self-Identification and Skin Color, Brazil

0.6 less than those who self-identified as black; only the differences between the light and dark groups were statistically significant.

We used the color palette to analyze another important measure of inequality, access to white-collar jobs. Figure 5.8 shows contrasting percentages of those in high-status nonmanual occupations by racial self-identification and interviewer categorization according to the three groupings of the palette colors.

Light-colored respondents had the highest percentage of high-status, nonmanual occupations (33.5 percent), similar to those who identified as white (33 percent). Those who self-identified as pardos were similar to those rated as medium color (22.5 and 2.3 percent, respectively). Likewise, those who identified as preto and those who were rated as dark were the least likely to be in high-status, nonmanual occupations (20 percent for both).

These results support Nogueira's (1998 [1954]) classic findings that discrimination in Brazil was more about phenotype than about racial background or ancestry. Nogueira, however, defined phenotype not only on skin color but also on facial features and hair texture. Usually, straight hair is more socially valued in Brazilian society, whereas curly and kinky hair tends to be stigmatized or disdained.

Because PERLA asked survey takers to classify respondents' hair type, we are able to analyze other phenotypic traits beyond skin color. PERLA interviewers

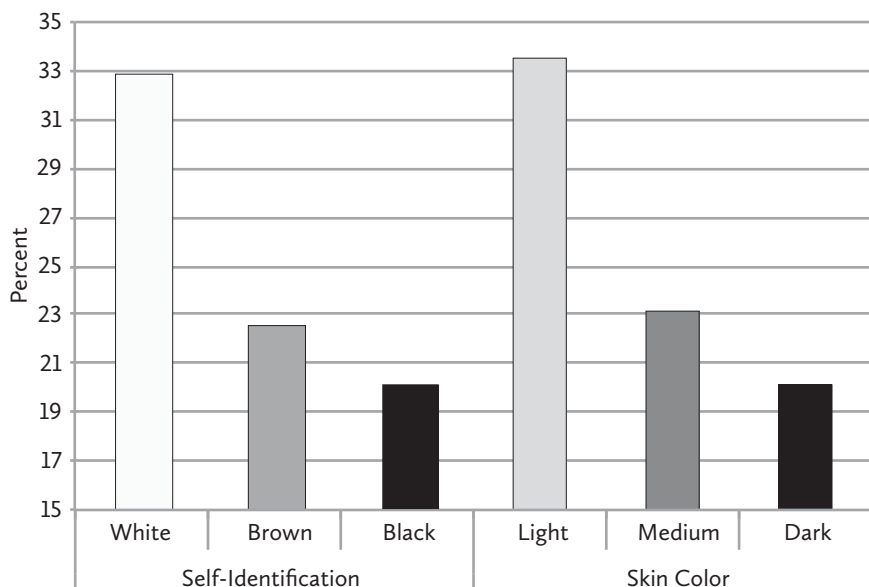


FIGURE 5.8 Percent in High-Status Nonmanual Occupations by Racial Self-Identification and Skin Color, Brazil

classified hair type using the following categories: straight (353 cases), curly (271 cases), and kinky (294 cases).⁵¹ Looking at hair type alone (table not shown), we find a positive correlation between straighter hair and higher average years of education. Straight hair respondents had the highest level of educational attainment (7.6 years), those with curly hair occupied an intermediate position (7.2 years), and those with kinky hair presented the lowest levels of formal schooling (6.4 years).

More interestingly, we explored the correlation between a combined measure of phenotype, which joined palette-based skin color classification and hair type, and educational achievement. Combining the three skin color groups with the three hair types, we created six groups: light—straight hair (204 records); light—curly and kinky hair (123 records); medium—straight hair (118 records); medium—curly and kinky hair (183 records); dark—straight and curly hair (104 records); and dark—kinky hair (186 records). Figure 5.9 summarizes the results.

Respondents who were classified as lighter with straight hair had more years of education, on average, than those who were lighter without straight hair, who were better off than those ranked darker with straight hair, and so on, to those who were classified as dark with kinky hair. The difference in average

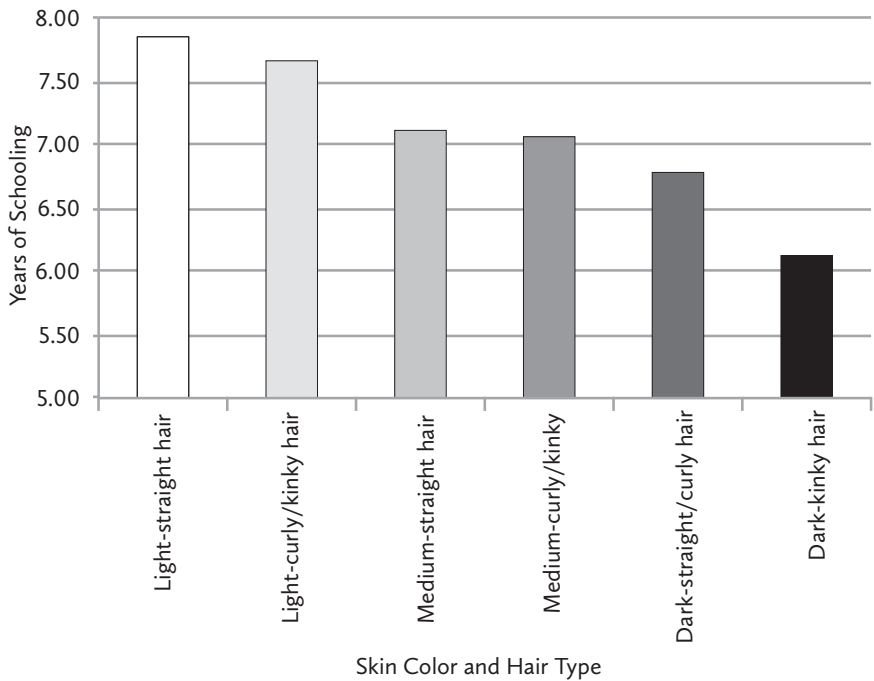


FIGURE 5.9 Mean Years of Schooling by Hair and Skin Color, Brazil

schooling years between those who were classified as light— straight hair and those classified as dark— kinky hair was nearly two years. Perhaps because of the small number of cases, only the difference between the two extremes was statistically significant.

Although these results have statistical limitations, they still offer important insights on previous theories about racial classification and inequality in Brazil. They suggest the hypothesis of a Brazilian pigmentocracy, in which darker individuals with kinky hair are on the bottom and lighter individuals with straight hair are on the top. Results in Figures 5.7, 5.8, and 5.9 also indicate that interviewers' categorization relying on the color palette was more strongly correlated to socioeconomic outcomes, especially average educational attainment, than interviewee's identification or interviewer's categorization using census racial categories. Therefore, racial or color inequality is probably underestimated in official statistics.

Two mechanisms, likely occurring simultaneously, might explain these findings. Low-socioeconomic-status browns might reject black categories and lighten themselves in search of status or simply because they are lighter than average in their social network. Ethnographic studies have shown low-income

respondents' preference for mixed categories (e.g., Sheriff 2001). Also, high-socioeconomic-status browns might be darkening themselves as a result of the important transformation in Brazilian racial politics or, again, as a consequence of context, (i.e., they are darker than average in their social network). Black and brown professionals' stronger perception of discrimination gives further support to the latter hypothesis (Silva and Reis 2011). The increase in the relative size of the black and brown populations in the last census alongside the decline in racial inequality according to government statistics (Paixão and Carvano 2008) also suggests this latter mechanism.

Yet all these findings tell us little about the mechanisms that produce racial inequalities. Some scholars still question the role of race (and racial discrimination) as an independent variable in explaining racial inequalities, attributing current racial inequalities instead to history, educational inequalities, and broader socioeconomic exclusion (e.g., Fry 2005; Harris et al. 1993; Schwartzman 1999). In the next section, we discuss PERLA's contributions to the debate about perceptions of discrimination in Brazil.

Racial Inequality without Racial Discrimination?

Most studies examining perceptions about race relations emphasize a key contradiction: in surveys, Brazil appears to be a racist country without racists (Datafolha 1995, 2008; Fundação-Perseu-Abramo 2003). Similarly, PERLA found that nearly all respondents believed there to be substantial racism in Brazil but did not see themselves as racist and did not express blatant racist attitudes. PERLA also confirmed that most respondents consistently affirmed their commitment to racial integration: 97.9 percent stated that they would not mind if their children went to a school in which the majority of students was black, 96.2 percent said that they would not mind if their children married a black person, 83.2 percent affirmed feeling comfortable with people from all races, and 81.4 percent said that they would like to have a black president (data not shown).⁵²

Respondents, however, were more divided in acknowledging unequal treatment toward blacks. When asked if blacks in Brazil are treated better, similar to, or worse than whites, PERLA respondents were slightly more likely (considering a 4 point margin of error) to believe that blacks are treated worse than whites (54.0 percent) than to believe that they are treated equally (44.3 percent).⁵³ There were some statistically significant differences across racial identification groups: blacks (54.3 percent) tended to identify unequal treatment more often than whites (46.4 percent) and browns (46.4 percent).⁵⁴ Yet,

these differences were not as large as in other contexts (such as the United States or South Africa) where stigmatized groups mostly acknowledge racial discrimination.

When the question was asked as an affirmation of equality of treatment, respondents were equally divided, although slightly more believed in racial equality: 44.7 percent agreed that all people in Brazil are treated equally regardless of their skin color or race (versus 32 percent who disagreed) and 44 percent of respondents agreed that blacks receive the treatment they deserve in Brazil (versus 31.9 percent who disagreed).⁵⁵ As with the other questions, there were no notable differences across groups by racial self-identification.⁵⁶

In short, although respondents accepted the existence of racial inequality and even racial prejudice, they were more ambiguous about the existence of discrimination, here understood as inequality or unfairness in treatment—a new paradox suggesting a racially unequal country without racial discrimination. PERLA data allow us to further explore these Brazilian paradoxes by exploring dimensions previously neglected, such as different explanations for Brazilian racial inequality, perceptions of racial advantages and disadvantages, and the relationship between perception and experiences with discrimination, racial self-identification, and interviewers' skin color classification.

The Sources of Racial Inequality

If respondents were ambiguous toward unequal treatment but acknowledged racial inequality, how would they explain the persistence of black poverty in Brazil? PERLA asked this question, giving respondents a few options that were not mutually exclusive: because blacks do not work hard enough, are not as intelligent, are treated unfairly, do not want to change their culture, have less schooling, and attend bad or inefficient schools. Figure 5.10 summarizes the results.

Once again, respondents were divided about unfair treatment, although they tended to recognize it more often than other causes of inequality. Nearly half of the respondents (40.3 percent) agreed (or agreed completely) that discrimination (defined as unfair treatment) is one of the causes of racial inequality in Brazil. A similar percentage (41.8 percent), however, disagreed (or disagreed completely) with such a statement. As Figure 5.10 shows, however, unfair treatment was by far the most cited and least rejected explanation for racial inequality. It was followed by attending bad schools (accepted by 23.3 percent, rejected by 60.4 percent), low levels of education (accepted by 19 percent, rejected by 65.7 percent), lack of desire to change their culture (accepted by 13.6

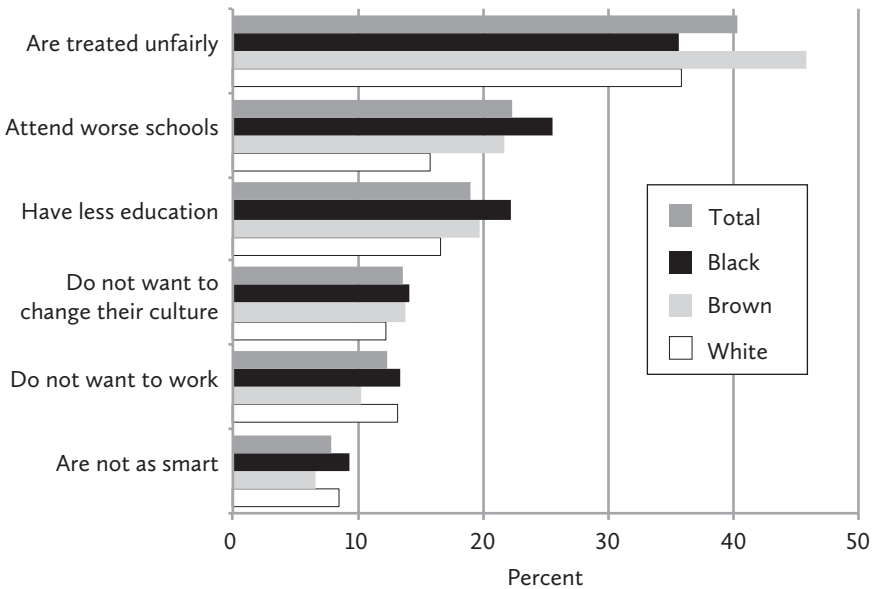


FIGURE 5.10 Reasons Given as to Why Blacks Are Poor, Brazil

percent, rejected by 67.7 percent), lack of work ethic (accepted by 12.3 percent, rejected by 80.2 percent), and lower intelligence (accepted by 7.9 percent, rejected by 85.3 percent). Figure 5.10 also shows that these perceptions did not vary much across those who identified as white, black, and brown, although browns identified unfair treatment slightly more often.⁵⁷ Overall, Brazilians across racial groups still seem divided in their acknowledgment of racial discrimination, even while rejecting other explanations for racial inequalities.

Unveiling the Brazilian Racial Hierarchy

These results confirm Bailey’s (2002; 2009a) findings regarding the equal propensity of blacks and whites in Brazil to endorse structural accounts of racial inequality—a finding especially striking in contrast to the United States, as discussed by the author. To further investigate this issue, the Brazilian survey included a series of questions, not included in the other sites, about the advantages and disadvantages of being white or black in Brazil. These questions allowed us to capture perceptions about the Brazilian racial hierarchy without using such loaded terms as “privilege,” “injustice,” and “discrimination.” Table 5.3 summarizes our findings.

TABLE 5.3 Advantages and Disadvantages about Being White, Black, and Indigenous (Multiple Choice) (%)

	Advantages in Being			Disadvantages in Being		
	White	Black	Indigenous	White	Black	Indigenous
Jobs	50.1	6.4	3.4	1.9	41.5	33.8
Opportunities	45.2	6.3	4.4	3.0	39.4	29.7
Looks	18.2	11.6	4.7	3.0	8.4	10.5
Happiness/ well-being	10.5	11.9	14.1	3.0	4.6	5.8
Aptitude for music and sports	7.8	20.6	4.9	3.2	4.8	6.2
Favored in public policies	14.0	5.8	10.2	2.6	11.0	13.9
Other	2.0	1.3	1.5	3.2	1.7	0.9
None	1.2	2.6	2.2	3.1	1.2	1.3
Do not know/ want to answer	29.1	48.7	62.7	77.8	38.3	47.8

Source: PERLA 2010

We note first in Table 5.3 that the benefits about being white related to structural advantages (jobs and opportunities), while for the black and indigenous they were largely based on stereotypes (better musicians, better in sports, happier). Disadvantages tended to show opposite responses: they were more structural (fewer jobs and opportunities) for blacks and indigenous, while more stereotypical for whites (worse musicians and worse in sports). Finally, we found no evidence of a backlash against affirmative action policies: only 5.8 percent of interviewees identified blacks as having any advantage in public policies, while 14 percent mentioned whites as being favored by public policies, and there were no significant differences among those who identified as white, brown, or black (Table 5.3).

In addition, and maybe more importantly, the questions had strikingly different rates of giving no response (which in general were very low throughout the PERLA questionnaire). More than 80 percent of respondents declined to identify any disadvantages related to being white in Brazil. In contrast, about 40 percent did not mention disadvantages to being black, and 50 percent iden-

tified no disadvantages to being indigenous. In identifying advantages, the findings were reversed: nearly 50 percent of respondents did not know or did not want to mention advantages to being black in Brazil, and 65 percent did not know or did not mention advantages to being indigenous. In contrast, less than 30 percent could not mention advantages to being white. In short, while some interviewees did not perceive unequal treatment, the advantages of whiteness and structural disadvantages of blackness seemed to be largely accepted.

Experiences with Discrimination

Despite acknowledging the advantages and disadvantages about being black, white, or indigenous, 72.2 percent of interviewees believed that skin color did not affect their lives positively or negatively.⁵⁸ Although blacks identified color as a negative influence slightly more often than the other racial groups, there were no significant differences across them.

Nevertheless, 71.3 percent of respondents also said that their socioeconomic background had no influence in their lives. Therefore, rather than an affirmation of racial equality and fairness, these denials of the influence of class and race in one of the most unequal countries of the world might result from the strength of an ideology of individualism and self-reliance, already proven to be surprisingly powerful in some Latin American societies (Scalon 2004).

When asked directly about their experiences of discrimination, those who identified as black, brown, and white showed significant differences, as illustrated in the first rows of Table 5.3. Nearly half of those who identified as black (46 percent) reported having experienced or witnessed situations in which people were treated unfairly because of the color of their skin (even though 31.7 percent of them reported only a few instances).⁵⁹ In contrast, 28.7 percent of whites and 26.3 percent of browns said they had experienced or witnessed such a situation. For classification according to the color palette, those classified as light, who witnessed skin color discrimination less often (24.1 percent), contrast with those classified as medium and dark, who saw it more often (31.1 and 37.4 percent, respectively). These are statistically significant differences.

Interestingly, differences were also significant (although not as strong) among those who claimed to have experienced or witnessed situations in which people were treated unfairly because of their socioeconomic status, as shown in Table 5.4. While 42.8 percent of those identifying as black affirmed having witnessed discrimination due to socioeconomic status, 30.9 percent of browns and 29.2 percent of whites stated the same. Looking at classification according to the color palette, 26.0 percent of those judged to be light, 31.4

TABLE 5.4 Percent experienced or witnessed situations in which someone was discriminated due to the color of their skin or their socioeconomic status

	Economic Situation	Skin Color
Witnessed by Racial Self-identification		
White	29.2	28.7
Brown	30.9	26.3
Black	42.8	46.0
Experienced by Racial Self-identification		
White	18.8	7.7
Brown	22.8	10.0
Black	30.7	36.9
Witnessed by Color Palette		
Light	26.0	24.1
Medium	31.4	31.1
Dark	40.2	37.4
Experienced by Color Palette		
Light	18.3	6.6
Medium	21.4	8.2
Dark	29.7	26.8

Source: PERLA 2010.

Note: Percentage of yes, at least a few times, by racial identification according to IBGE categories.

percent of those considered medium, and 40.2 percent of those considered dark had witnessed situations of socioeconomic discrimination. In spite of these differences across ethnoracial groups, it is impressive that only a third of respondents reported having ever experienced or witnessed situations of socioeconomic discrimination in such an unequal country as Brazil.

When asked directly about personal experiences of discrimination (bottom rows of Table 5.4), the differences between those who identified as black and those who were classified as dark was stronger in comparison to those who identified as brown and white. While 7.7 percent of whites and 10 percent of browns said they had experienced discrimination due to their skin color, 36.9

percent of blacks said the same.⁶⁰ In addition, respondents who identified as black mentioned skin color discrimination most frequently, while whites and browns acknowledged discrimination due to socioeconomic status more commonly.

We found the same pattern when we analyzed perception of discrimination by classification according to the color palette. About one-quarter (26.8 percent) of respondents rated as dark reported having experienced discrimination at least a few times; this percentage fell to 8.2 percent among those classified as medium and to 6.6 percent for the groups ranked lighter. Even if interviewers' classification of interviewee skin color does not explain everything, it certainly points to the importance of this variable.⁶¹

These results also indicate that respondents who self-identified as black saw discrimination more often than respondents whom interviewers rated as dark-skinned. The debate about the endogeneity between racial identification and measurement of perception of discrimination makes this particularly interesting (Pager and Shepherd 2008) and tends to confirm the importance of racial identification beyond skin color. In other words, the perception of racial discrimination might increase the likelihood that people identify as black rather than as brown. Because identification as brown (or mixed) can be perceived as downplaying the role of racial discrimination, as claimed by black movement activists, people who see themselves as experiencing discrimination might be more likely to identify as negro, as discussed more qualitatively in Silva and Leão (2012). Nevertheless, the differences between those who identified or were seen as lighter and the others were significant in both cases. Even if more racially conscious blacks acknowledge discrimination more often, the advantages of whiteness are still visible.

It is important to consider, however, that because the impact of skin color can be contextual and relative, it might have different effects in different social groups. Therefore, the high perception of discrimination among those identifying as black should not be interpreted as an overestimation. For example, people considered to have a medium shade of skin color may be considered dark in particular situations where others are overwhelmingly light-skinned or white; this may, in turn, affect their racial identification. In addition, as discussed, the profile of discrimination in Brazil has become highly elitist; those who are able to cross certain socioeconomic boundaries might experience discrimination more strongly. Studies about the Brazilian black middle class, for example, have shown that this group tends to report higher rates of discrimination and identify more often as negro and that those two processes are interconnected (Silva and Reis 2011). In short, although discrimination seems

to vary by skin color, how your skin color is perceived (as light, medium, or dark) also may vary according to the context. In an upper-middle-class or elite environment, a medium-skinned person might be considered dark, while that same person in a working-class environment might be considered medium or even light.

Finally, qualitative data show that discrimination is much more common than acknowledged (Figueiredo 2002; Sheriff 2001). Therefore, the reports of discrimination presented here, based on self-identification and skin color classification, probably underestimate the frequency and impact of everyday discrimination, which is a key mechanism for the reproduction and persistence of Brazilian racial inequalities discussed earlier.

Conclusions

With the PERLA survey results, we hope to have contributed to developing a few key issues in the Brazilian academic debate concerning the different dimensions and forms for defining blackness in Brazil, the persistence of racial inequalities across these definitions, and the perceived role of discrimination in explaining these inequalities. In analyzing PERLA data, we benefited from and were also challenged by the rapidly growing (quantitatively and qualitatively) academic literature about race in Brazil. It gave us strong parameters for supporting our findings but also challenged us to specify the originality of our findings, perhaps more so than in the other chapters of this book.

Broadly, we believe that the Brazilian PERLA data analyses provide original insights about the large consistencies, small inconsistencies, and multiple dimensions of racial categories and measurement in Brazil; the centrality of skin color in shaping racial identification and stratification; and the multiple relationships among racial categories, racial inequalities, and perceptions of racial unfairness and discrimination. In this conclusion, we review these findings.

Regarding racial categories, PERLA confirms the impact of different types of measures in defining who is black in Brazil. The data provided unique evidence that perception of skin color (and, to a lesser extent, phenotype traits) and racial categorization or identification largely overlap in Brazil—a finding especially striking in contrast to the other cases discussed in this book.

Yet, such a finding should not lead us to believe that racial categories in Brazil are simply about skin color: PERLA's novel results about the strength of the evaluation, attachment, and importance of racial identification confirm the relevance of Guimarães's (2012) warning against a simplified understanding of race in Brazil. If it is true that cultural boundaries among racial groups are not

salient and that national identification appears as more important than racial identification, PERLA showed that most Brazilians legitimize black political organizations to fight for black rights as well as most policy initiatives targeting blacks. The support for black mobilization and racially targeted policies might result from the growing visibility of studies and public statistics that evidence the persistence of racial inequality, debunking the suggestion that Brazilians see the strengthening of black identification as a threat to national unity.

Following other recent studies (e.g., Bailey et al. 2012), PERLA also confirms that regardless of the type of racial category, racial inequality between white/lights and nonwhites/blacks/darks remains significant in Brazil. But one of the most original contributions of PERLA is the contrast between inequality measured by census categories and by phenotype. By using interviewer-based racial classification according to the color palette and hair type, the PERLA data suggest Brazilian racial or color inequalities more strongly than other studies, which have used census categories for capturing race.

Maybe more importantly, the color palette also allowed us to discuss the endogeneity between race and class categories in Brazil (the so-called social race hypothesis) from a new standpoint. Because interviewer categorization relying on census categories might also be biased by socioeconomic status, asking about skin color and phenotype is a strategy for reducing this endogenous effect and better perceiving the impact of race or color on socioeconomic status. The stronger racial inequalities found when relying on the color palette strengthen the arguments that race or color matter, regardless of socioeconomic status, and that the official categories probably underestimate the racial gap.

Despite the widespread evidence of racial inequalities and the general acknowledgment of the existence of racism and racial prejudice in Brazil, PERLA showed that Brazilian interviewees were ambiguous in their perception of racial discrimination and unfairness. Respondents were largely divided in their acknowledgment that race or skin color causes differential treatment in Brazil. Even though unfair treatment was the most cited cause of black poverty, few respondents were ready to accept that race was important in shaping people's (and their own) life chances.

Nevertheless, PERLA responses to a question about advantages and disadvantages of being black and white showed a broader acknowledgment of the burden of blackness. Most respondents were quick to point to structural advantages of whiteness and had a harder time discussing any disadvantage of whiteness. In contrast, the disadvantages of blackness were concentrated in structural features (work, networks) while the advantages were fewer and more stereotypical (better musicians, better in sports).

These findings gain new and more precise contours once we look more closely at perceptions about racial unfairness and discrimination and how they vary according to racial identification. Those who identified as preto, the darkest group in the official categories used systematically and by IBGE, revealed more pride in their racial identity and believed that race affected their lives in different ways, both positively and negatively. In comparison to those who identified as white and brown, blacks also affirmed their attachment to black identification, compared to national identification, even though the great majority still chose national over racial identification.

These differences are probably related to the stronger perception of racial discrimination within the group that identified as black/preto. These respondents more frequently recognized racial discrimination. They also perceived racial discrimination more frequently than class discrimination, which whites and browns perceived more often. If the use of racial self-identification makes it harder to assess a causal direction (is it from black identification to perception of discrimination, or vice versa?), categorizing persons as dark, according to interviewer assessments on the basis of the color palette, partly confirmed the centrality of race or color in shaping perceptions of discrimination and also the correlation of racial identification and acknowledgment of discrimination, beyond skin color. Therefore, those who identified as black, regardless of their skin color, are also the ones who identified racial discrimination more often. Nevertheless, racial discrimination was just as frequent among those who were rated as medium and dark according to the palette, evidencing once more the advantages of whiteness or light skin.

As Pager and Shepherd (2008) discussed, perceptions of discrimination are not a completely reliable measure of discrimination since they can underestimate or overestimate discrimination. Evidence from more qualitative studies matched with the consistent and persistence statistical evidence of racial inequalities points to the former: discrimination is probably much higher in Brazil than what respondents reported.

Statistical visibility is also probably the reason why policies targeting racial inequalities are much more developed in Brazil than in other countries of the region. More visibility of racial discrimination and a better understanding of how racial inequalities recur will help to develop mechanisms to fight them.

Our analysis of the Brazilian PERLA data helps us to understand better the puzzle of Brazil's strong socioeconomic and weak symbolic racial boundaries by opening the black box of racial identification and categorization and contrasting different measure of inequality, discrimination, and cultural distance.

In contrast to the other Latin American countries where racial mixture ideologies became synonymous with the widespread denial of racial identification, Brazilians' strong perception that "race matters" joined with their elastic perception of racial differences to create a particular racial mixture ideology, one in which "races" still exist.