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Racial Inequality in Brazil and the United States, 1990-2010

Abstract

This essay compares statistical indicators of black/white racial inequality in Brazil and the United States from 1990 to 2010. Those indicators include racial differences in fertility, life expectancy, infant mortality, regional distribution, educational enrollment and achievement, labor force distribution, income and earnings, and poverty. From 1994 to 2010, Brazilians elected a series of presidential administrations committed to reducing the country's very high levels of class and regional inequality. The programs enacted by those governments did reduce poverty and inequality and enabled some 30 million Brazilians to move from the poor and working class into a greatly expanded middle class. The article finds that policies intended to combat class inequality worked to reduce racial inequality as well. On most indicators, Brazil made greater progress in lowering racial disparities during those twenty years than did the United States. By 2010 the United States was still the more racially egalitarian country, in statistical terms; but Brazil's experiments in social democracy and in class- and race-based affirmative action are producing outcomes that merit close attention from citizens and policymakers interested in reducing class and racial inequality in the United States.

Over the last one hundred years, observers of race in Brazil and the United States have drawn frequent comparisons between the two countries. The two largest multiracial societies in the Americas, both nations had intensive experiences first with African slavery and then, in the 1900s, with the challenges posed by deeply entrenched racial inequality and exclusion. In thinking about those challenges, writers and intellectuals in each country have paid attention to the other and sought insights in cross-national comparisons.[1]

One of the recurring questions in that comparison has been, which country has offered greater equality of conditions, opportunities, and outcomes to its black, brown, and white citizens? Proponents of Brazilian racial democracy—the belief that Brazil was, or was well advanced toward becoming, a society characterized by high levels of racial harmony and equality—argued that Brazil ranked well ahead of the United States on that score. But beginning in the 1950s and 1960s, and even more conclusively in the 1970s and 1980s, critics of racial democracy used Brazilian census and national household survey data to demonstrate wide

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racial disparities in income, vocational achievement, education, life expectancy, and other social indicators.[2]

Seeking to contribute to that comparative discussion, some twenty years ago I published in this journal an analysis of statistical indicators of racial inequality in both countries. The period covered was the hundred years between 1890 and 1990, and the indicators measured black/white differences in life expectancy, education, earnings, vocational achievement—almost any dimension of social or economic life for which racial data were available in the two countries.[3]

The article's main finding was that during the first 60–70 years of the comparison, from 1890 through the 1950s, on most indicators for which statistical data were available, Brazil displayed lower levels of black-white inequality than the United States. During the second half of the century, however, the comparison shifted. While in Brazil measures of racial inequality tended to remain stable or in some cases increased, in the United States measures of black/white racial difference in education, earnings, life expectancy, etc., tended to fall. I posited several explanations for that decline: the ending of state-imposed segregation in the South; equal-opportunity and affirmative-action policies enacted during the 1960s and 1970s; and a period of strong economic growth (1945–1973) in which wealth was more equally distributed, in class terms, than during the first half of the century. Each of these factors contributed to reductions in black-white differences, with the result that by 1990 the United States had displaced Brazil as the more racially equal, at least in statistical terms, of the two countries.

That article predicted that for the foreseeable future the United States was likely to remain the more racially equal of the two countries. It did, however, offer one caveat.

> A contrarian view would note that Brazil has yet to experience the positive effects of reductions in regional, class, and urban/rural inequality. Should future governments succeed in reducing some of the severe disparities between Northeast and Southeast, between city and countryside, between rich and poor, the indirect impacts on racial inequality would be substantial. And should future governments undertake as well to confront racial discrimination in employment and education, Brazil would almost certainly resume its pre-1950 position as the more racially equal—or perhaps better put, the less unequal—of the two societies.[4]

Those lines were written more in the spirit of a thought experiment, as a hypothetical counter-factual, than as a serious prediction of Brazil's future. And yet, something very close to that imagined scenario actually came to pass. From 1995 to the present, Brazil has been governed by a succession of presidential administrations—Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1995–2002), Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2003–10), Dilma Rousseff (2011-)—and multi-party coalitions firmly committed to a social-democratic vision of the country's future. Those governments have enacted a series of policy initiatives that have had remarkable impacts on the country's longstanding structures of social inequality and privilege.[5]

The last twenty years thus offer an unusual opportunity to test the effects of socially progressive policies on racial inequality. This is a question of more than purely theoretical importance. After a century or more of resolutely ignoring the yawning disparities separating white and non-white racial groups in the region, during the last two decades Latin American societies and policymakers have

begun to acknowledge the depth of those disparities and to discuss how best to address them. Black movements in Brazil, Colombia, Uruguay and other countries have argued vigorously the need for race-based affirmative action in education and hiring.[6] Their proposals have triggered lively debates, with opponents of affirmative action arguing that social-democratic (or socialist) policies aimed at redistributing wealth and opportunity to the poor and working classes are the most effective means to combat racial inequality.[7] Support for their position can be found in the experience of post-revolutionary Cuba, where between 1960 and 1980 socialist policies in health, housing, education, and employment aimed at benefiting the country's rural and urban workers did indeed come very close to eliminating black/white racial differentials in life expectancy, education and vocational achievement.[8] On the other hand, counter-evidence is provided by Uruguay, the earliest and most extensive case of social provision in Latin America and one of two Latin American democracies—Costa Rica is the other—with the lowest measures of class inequality in the region. However, despite relatively high levels of class equality, on every social indicator—health, education, earnings, employment—Afro-Uruguayans suffer major disadvantages in comparison with their white compatriots.[9]

What, then, have been the consequences for Afro-Brazilians of recent social-democratic policy in Brazil? And, to revisit the comparative dimension of my 1992 study, how do Brazil's current racial indicators compare to those in the United States? During the same period in which Brazil embraced social democracy, the United States implemented social and economic policies that redistributed wealth and income upwards, toward the most privileged social groups. If socially progressive policies tend to reduce measures of racial inequality, do socially regressive policies have the opposite effect? Comparing recent racial indicators for the two countries can throw light on this intriguing and important question.

Recent Social Policy

Perhaps the principal economic and social challenge facing Brazilian policy makers at the beginning of the 1990s was the hyper-inflation that had scourged the Brazilian economy since the 1950s. Inflation rates approaching 100 percent per year had been one of the motives for the fall of the Second Republic and the military seizure of power in 1964; but the military regime of 1964–85 proved no more effective than the civilians at taming inflation, which topped 200 percent in 1984 and continued to accelerate into the 1990s. After the annual inflation rate reached 2500 percent in 1993, the government implemented the innovative and extraordinarily successful Real Plan of 1994. Inflation fell to 22 percent in 1995 and 2 percent in 1998.[10] This benefited the entire society but especially poor and working-class Brazilians, whose wages now retained their purchasing power and were no longer rendered worthless by hyper-inflation. The national poverty rate fell immediately from 42 percent in 1993 to 34 percent in 1995 (figure 1). Real wages increased at all levels of the society but most rapidly of all among the poorest 10 percent, whose real earnings doubled during that two-year period.[11]

Working-class incomes were then further strengthened by increases in the federally mandated minimum wage. Once the value of the Brazilian currency had

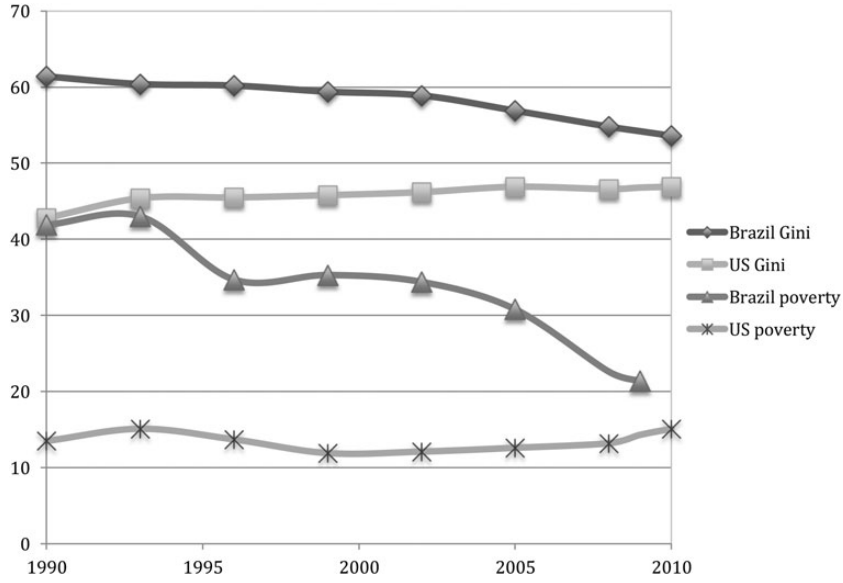

Figure 1. Gini Indices and Poverty Rates, Brazil and United States, 1990–2010. Sources: United States: United States Census Bureau (hereafter USCB), Current Population Reports, P60–239, *Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2010* (Washington, D.C., 2011), tables A-3, B-1. Brazil: 1990–2009, www.ipeadata.gov.br; 2010, Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (hereafter IBGE), *Censo demográfico 2010: Características da população e dos domicílios* (Brasília, 2011), table 1.8.16.

been stabilized, the Cardoso and Lula administrations implemented substantial increases in the minimum wage, doubling its real value between 1994 and 2009. This directly benefited low-wage workers employed in formal-sector enterprises and exercised upward pressure on informal-sector wages as well.[12]

Equally consequential for families in the bottom half of the country's income distribution were the conditional-cash-transfer and income-maintenance programs enacted by the Cardoso administration and subsequently expanded by the Lula administration. These programs were pioneered by the municipal administrations of Campinas and Brasília and offered cash payments to families falling below the poverty level, conditional on those families ensuring that their children attended school regularly. Encouraged by the success of those initial experiments, the Cardoso administration extended them to the nation as a whole, creating Bolsa Escola, Bolsa Alimentação, and PETI (Program to Eradicate Child Labor). In 2003 the Lula administration combined Bolsa Escola and Bolsa Alimentação into Bolsa Família, which by 2012 was providing assistance to 13.4 million families, approximately one-quarter of the country's total, with payments of up to US $170 per month. The program has received international attention for its success in reducing poverty and substantially improving health and education outcomes for poor children.[13]

Between 1990 and 2010, Brazil experienced alternating periods of slow-to-moderate economic growth: 4.8 percent per year during 1993–95, 1.9

percent during 1996–2003, and 4.5 percent during 2004–10. Growth at these levels would normally have had very limited impact on reducing poverty or inequality; yet during those two decades Brazil's poverty rate fell by half, from 42 percent to 21 percent, and its Gini index of income concentration, which during the 1970s and 1980s was one of the highest in the world, fell from 61 to 54 (figure 1).[14] Most observers concur in assigning the social programs enacted during those years with a large share of the credit for those declines.[15]

Declines in Brazilian poverty and inequality stand in marked contrast to developments in the United States, where poverty rates fell from 13.5 percent in 1990 to 11.3 percent in 2000 before then rebounding to 15.1 percent in 2010. During those same years the Gini index of income inequality increased from 43 to 47 (having already risen in the 1980s from 40 to 43) (figure 1).[16]

The causes of rising poverty and inequality in the United States are complex and have been much discussed. Contributing factors include the restructuring of the American labor market and declining opportunities for low-skill workers; the declining power of organized labor; declines in the value of the federally mandated minimum wage; the relaxation of regulation of the country's financial sector; and tax cuts disproportionately benefiting the country's wealthiest sectors.[17] Whatever the relative weight of those causes, the comparative picture that emerges is clear: while Brazil was making striking progress in the reduction of social and economic inequality, the US was standing still or, on the dimension of income inequality and poverty, losing ground. Which brings us to the central question of this essay: what have been the impacts of these two models of social policy and political economy on measures of racial inequality in the two countries? Has the United States retained its 1990 position as the more racially egalitarian of the two countries, or have reductions in class inequality in Brazil produced comparable reductions in racial inequality? We will consider indicators in three areas: demography, education, and employment and earnings.

Demography

Before examining those indicators, we must first consider the two countries' racial composition and the changes in that composition over the last seventy years (figure 2). In both countries, the white population peaked as a percentage of the national total in 1940 and has been falling ever since. The United States remains a majority-white nation but has become increasingly racially diverse. The greatest growth in non-white groups has been among "some other race" (usually Hispanics who do not choose to classify themselves as black or white), Asians, and, since 2000, individuals who claim multiracial (two or more races) status. Those "other" groups combined now account for 15.0 percent of the US population, slightly more than the African-American population (12.6 percent). The country's total population as of 2010 was 308.7 million.[18]

In Brazil, too, the white population has declined (in relative terms) since 1940, to the point where whites now constitute a minority (47.7 percent) of the national population. (Total population in 2010 was 190.8 million.) In counting non-whites, Brazilians distinguish between dark-skinned *pretos* (blacks) and racially mixed *pardos* (browns).[19] In practice the boundaries between the brown and black color categories are fairly vague and porous, and research suggests that brown and black Brazilians cross-identify (i.e., sometimes describe themselves as

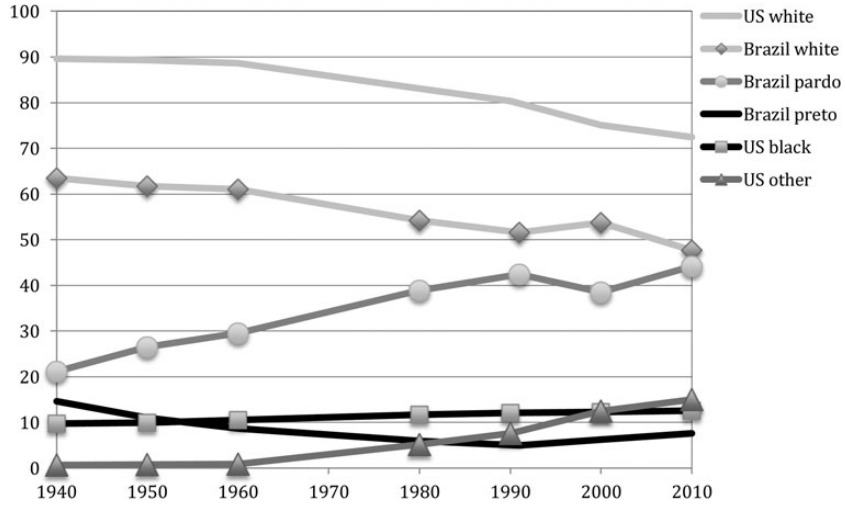

Figure 2. Racial Composition of Brazil and United States, in Percentages, 1940–2010. Sources: United States: 1940–1980, Andrews, "Racial Inequality," table 1; 1990, USBC, *1990 Census of Population: General Population Characteristics, United States* (Washington, D. C., 1992), table 3; 2000, USCB, "Overview of Race and Hispanic Origin" (Washington, D.C., 2001), table 1; 2010, USCB, "Overview of Race and Hispanic Origin" (Washington, D.C., 2011), table 1. Brazil: 1940–1980, Andrews, "Racial Inequality," table 1; 1991, IBGE, *Censo demográfico 1991: Características gerais da população e instrução* (Rio de Janeiro, 1996), table 1.2; 2000, IBGE, *Censo demográfico 2000: Características gerais da população* (Rio de Janeiro, 2003), table 1.2.1; 2010, IBGE, *Censo demográfico 2010*, table 1.3.1.

brown, and sometimes as black) in fairly large numbers, producing sizable population shifts over time.[20] During the last twenty years a growing number of Afro-Brazilians have chosen to identify as *preto*, perhaps in response to consciousness-raising efforts by black organizations. The great majority of non-whites, however, continue to identify themselves (for census purposes; the term is not commonly used in day-to-day social interaction) as *pardo*.[21]

One factor contributing to the permeability of boundaries between the black and brown groups is that, on most social dimensions, the differences between the two groups are relatively small. In terms of education, earnings, life expectancy, etc., brown and black indicators are quite similar. For that reason, and also because *pretos* constitute a small proportion—as of 2010, less than 15 percent—of the Afro-Brazilian population, since the late 1970s the Brazilian census agency, IBGE (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística), has often combined the two groups in its published reports into a single *negro* (black) category. I will follow that convention in the following graphs and tables, except in cases in which there are significant differences between the black and brown groups. In such instances I will present separate figures for *pardos* and *pretos*.

One area in which there is significant difference between the black and brown racial groups in Brazil is their regional distribution. As indicated in table 1, *pardos* and *pretos* are more likely than whites to live in the Northeast, historically

Table 1. Regional Distribution by Race, in Percentages, Brazil and United States, 1980–2010

	Brazil				United States	
	White	Pardo	Preto		White	Black
1980				*1980*		
Northeast	14.5	49.6	33.2	South	31.1	52.2
Southeast	53.2	28.3	51.5	Northeast	22.4	18.6
South	24.8	5.0	8.5	Midwest	27.1	20.5
Rest of Brazil	7.5	17.1	6.7	West	19.4	8.6
Index of White/Nonwhite Dissimilarity	–	44.7	18.8	Index of White/Nonwhite Dissimilarity	–	21.2
2009				*2010*		
Northeast	16.8	40.0	33.1	South	35.9	56.5
Southeast	49.3	32.9	46.8	Northeast	18.4	16.8
South	23.6	5.7	7.6	Midwest	24.3	17.9
Rest of Brazil	10.3	21.5	12.6	West	21.4	8.8
Index of White/Nonwhite Dissimilarity	–	34.4	18.6	Index of White/Nonwhite Dissimilarity	–	20.6

Sources: United States: 1980, USCB, *The Black Population in the United States: March 1988* (Washington, D.C., 1989), table B; 2010, USCB, *The Black Population: 2010* (Washington, D.C., 2011), figure 2; USCB, *The White Population: 2010* (Washington, D.C., 2011), figure 4. Brazil: 1980, IBGE, *Recenseamento geral do Brasil, 1980* (Rio de Janeiro, 1983), table 1.1; 2009, IBGE, *Síntese de indicadores sociais: Uma análise das condições de vida da população brasileira, 2010* (Rio de Janeiro, 2010), table 8.1.

the country's poorest region. Conversely, whites are more likely than blacks or browns to live in the southern states, the country's most economically dynamic region. And *pardos* are less likely than whites or *pretos* to live in the Southeast and are more concentrated in the country's central and western regions ("rest of Brazil"). The result of these patterns, as summarized by the Index of Dissimilarity, is that *preto* regional settlement patterns more closely approximate those of whites, while *pardos* are clearly differentiated from both groups (though less so than in 1980, when white/*pardo* differences were even greater than they are today).

Regional settlement patterns differ for blacks and whites in the United States as well, though less so than in Brazil. As measured by the Index of Dissimilarity, those differences have remained more or less constant over the last thirty years; while slightly higher than *preto*/white differences in Brazil, they are well below *pardo*/white differences in regional distribution. Racial differences in regional distribution are thus greater in Brazil than in the United States; and though regional differences in earnings, education, and other opportunities have declined in Brazil in recent years, they remain larger than such differences in the United States. Differences in racial distribution among Brazil's regions thus set the stage for other racial disparities as well.[22]

As we have seen, Brazil's white population has declined, as a percentage of the total population, from 1940 to the present. The principal cause of that decline is the differential between white and black birthrates (figure 3). Historically very high for both racial groups, between 1960 and 1980 fertility rates

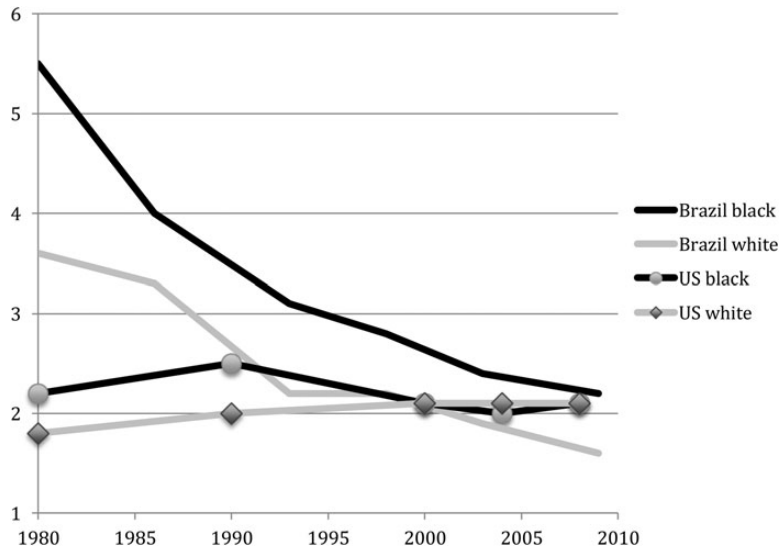

Figure 3. Total Fertility Rates, Women Age 15–44, by Race, Brazil and United States, 1980–2009. Sources: United States: USCB, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2012* (hereafter *SAUS 2012*) (Washington, D.C., 2011), table 83. Brazil: 1980–2004, Marcelo Paixão et al., eds., *Relatório anual das desigualdades raciais no Brasil, 2009–2010* (Rio de Janeiro, 2010), figure 3.1; 2009, IBGE, *Síntese de indicadores sociais, 2010*, table 1.5.

for white women fell precipitously, from 6.2 children per woman to 3.6. Fertility fell for black women as well, but not as rapidly as for whites. Declines in fertility continued through the end of the 1900s and into the early 2000s. By 2009, white fertility rates had fallen to 1.6 children per woman, well below the level required to maintain the white population at current levels. Black fertility rates fell to 2.2 children per woman in 2009, and racial differentials fell as well. In 1980, black women bore on average 1.9 more children over their lifetimes than white women; by 2009 that differential had fallen to 0.6 children. That differential was still greater, however, than black/white disparities in the United States, which were relatively low in the 1980s and 1990s and by 2000 had disappeared. In the first decade of the 2000s, white and African-American birthrates were essentially the same, at 2.0–2.1 children per woman. On this indicator, the United States ranks as the more racially equal of the two societies.[23]

The comparative picture shifts, however, when we turn to perhaps the most basic indicator of wellbeing for any population: average life expectancy (table 2). Here both countries experienced significant improvements over the last twenty years. In Brazil, life expectancy increased from 66.3 to 73.1; and in the United States, from 75.2 to 78.2. As table 2 suggests, those increases were distributed in more racially equitable ways in Brazil than in the United States. Throughout the 1990–2005 period, racial differentials were consistently lower in Brazil than in the United States; and while those differentials fell in both countries (in table 2, see the W-B columns), they did so more rapidly in Brazil, where by 2005 racial differentials in life expectancy were less than half what they had been in 1991.[24]

These improvements in life expectancy, and the reduction of racial disparities in life expectancy, can be traced directly to the reductions in infant mortality that took place during the Cardoso-Lula years (figure 4). As a result of the Saúde da Família and Bolsa Alimentação programs, between 1995 and 2005 infant mortality for the country as a whole fell from 37.6 per thousand to 23.7 per thousand, a decline of more than one-third. Reductions in infant mortality were particularly dramatic among the black population, for whom rates fell by almost half, from 47.3 per thousand to 24.4. White infant mortality fell from 27.1 to 19.4. In 1995, infant mortality rates had been 75 percent higher among black families than among white; by 2005, that racial differential had fallen to 25 percent, or in absolute terms a difference of 5.0 deaths per 1000 births. Whether in relative or absolute terms, that racial differential was much lower than its counterpart in the United States, where black infant mortality rates were two-and-a-half times those of white rates.[25]

Education

Education is universally recognized as a fundamentally important area of social provision and as one of the most powerful determinants of social inequality and hierarchy. One of the clearest expressions of class and racial inequality in Brazil has been the country's low levels of educational achievement. As of 1950, only 5 percent of white Brazilians, and 0.5 percent of Afro-Brazilians, had graduated from high school.[26] The military dictatorship of 1964–85 made education a priority area of government investment but focused that investment at the university level, greatly expanding the system of federal and state universities. Those institutions offer higher education of good-to-excellent quality but only to a small

Table 2. Life Expectancy by Race, Brazil and United States, 1990–2008

	United States				Brazil		
	White	Black	W-B		White	Black	W-B
1990	76.1	69.1	7.0	1991	66.1	59.5	6.6
1995	76.5	69.6	6.9	1995	71.5	65.9	5.6
2000	77.3	71.8	5.5	2000	71.5	66.2	5.3
2005	77.9	72.8	5.1	2005	74.9	71.7	3.2
2008	78.4	74.3	4.1				

Sources: United States: USCB, *SAUS 2012*, table 104. Brazil: 1991, 2000, www.ipeadata.gov.br; 1995, 2005, Marcelo Paixão and Luiz Carvano, eds., *Relatório anual das desigualdades raciais no Brasil, 2007–2008* (Rio de Janeiro, 2008), figure 2.18.

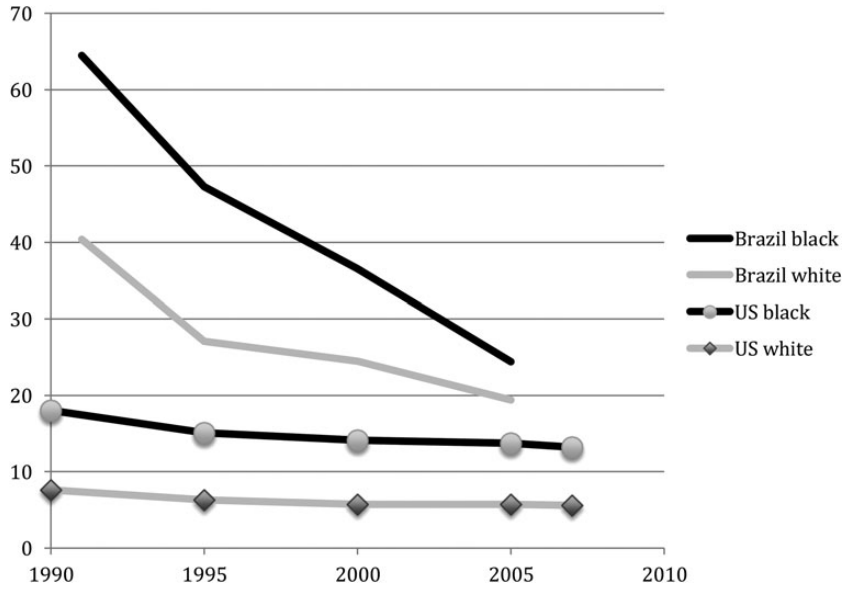

Figure 4. Infant Mortality Rates, by Race, Brazil and United States, 1990–2007. Sources: United States: USCB, *SAUS 2012*, table 115. Brazil: Paixão and Carvano, *Relatório anual, 2007–2008*, table 2.8.

minority of the population; and until quite recently that small minority has been almost exclusively white. In 1987, after more than twenty years of military rule, only one percent of *pretos* and 2 percent of *pardos* held a college degree, as compared to 9 percent of whites. The average adult white Brazilian received less than four years of schooling at that time, and the average Afro-Brazilian less than two years.[27]

Recognizing the impossibility of entering the twenty-first century with a national educational profile this low, the Cardoso and Lula administrations invested heavily to raise levels of academic achievement. While the FUNDEF

(Fundo de Manutenção e Desenvolvimento do Ensino Fundamental, 1996–2006) and FUNDEB (Fundo de Manutenção e Desenvolvimento da Educação Básica, 2007–) programs channeled federal investment to primary schools, Bolsa Escola (and later Bolsa Família) provided cash incentives for poor families to keep their children in school rather than send them out to work.[28] Those programs achieved at least part of their goals, elevating rates of enrollment for children aged 7–14 from 80 percent in 1988 to 95 percent in 2008 and eliminating racial differentials at that level of the educational system (figure 5).

Racial differentials in enrollment were more persistent at the high-school and college levels; indeed, at both levels racial differentials actually increased between 1988 and 2008, from 14 percentage points to 19 at the high-school level, and from five percentage points to 13 at the college level. While racial differentials in enrollment were disappearing in elementary and middle school, in high school and college they were increasing as whites pursued opportunities for secondary and post-secondary education in larger numbers than Afro-Brazilians.

Enrollment data from the United States show much higher levels of enrollment, and smaller racial differentials, than in Brazil (figure 6). From 1990 to the present, racial differentials have been very close to 0 through age 17. Racial disparities then increase at the college level and in 2009 were at eight percentage points for 20–21-year-olds. By that year enrollment for 22–24-year-olds was actually higher for African-Americans than for white students, reflecting longer times to completion of college degrees.

Figure 7 compares rates of high school and college completion in the two countries over time. Each column represents the percentage of adults age 25 and over who completed high school; the upper-most portion of the column

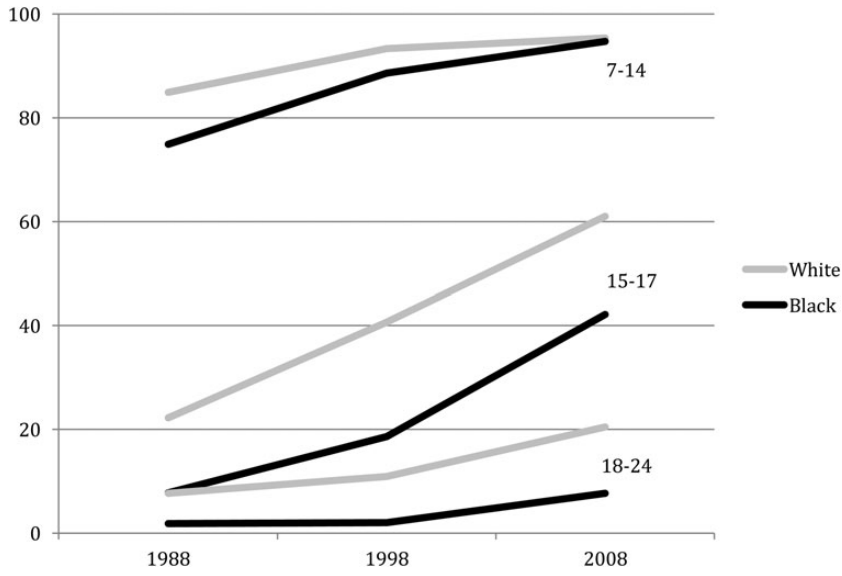

Figure 5. Percentage Rates of Enrollment in School, by Age and Race, Brazil, 1988–2008. Source: Paixão et al., *Relatório anual, 2009–2010*, tables 6.15, 6.16, 6.19.

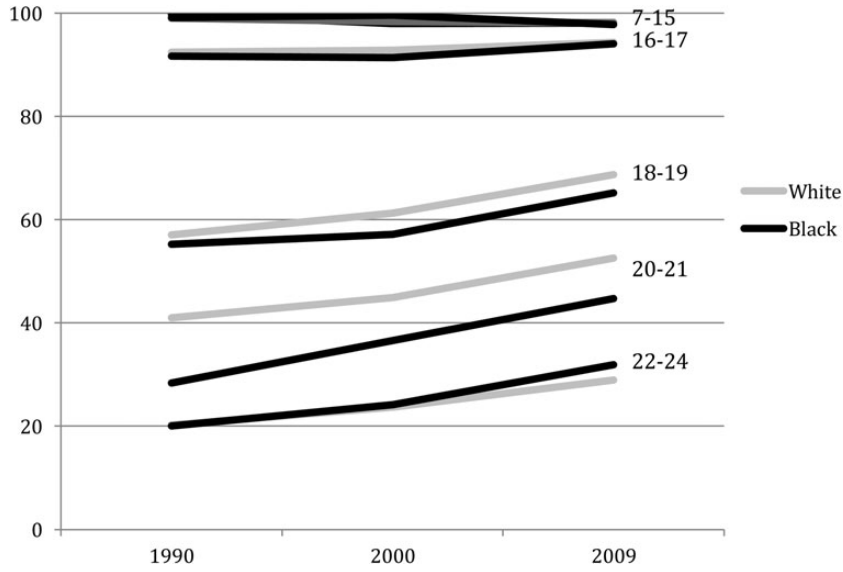

Figure 6. Percentage Rates of Enrollment in School, by Age and Race, United States, 1990–2009. Sources: USCB, *SAUS 2002*, table 203; USCB, *SAUS 2012*, table 224.

represents the number of high-school graduates who continued on to complete a college degree. In both countries we note substantial improvement over time. In the United States, black high-school graduation rates rose from 66.2 percent in 1990 to 84.1 percent in 2009, very close to the white graduation rate of 87.1 percent. In Brazil during the same period, black high-school graduation rates tripled, from less than 10 percent in 1987 (10.0 percent for pardos, 6.1 percent for pretos) to almost 30 percent in 2009 (28.7 percent for pardos, 29.9 percent for pretos). Racial differentials remained very high, however, with whites more than 50 percent more likely than Afro-Brazilians to have graduated from high school, and three times more likely to have graduated from college.

Racial differentials in college graduation remained large in the United States as well, and unexpectedly consistent over time. While whites and blacks both increased their rates of college graduation from 1990 to 2009, a racial gap of 10–11 percentage points persisted throughout that period. By 2009, 29.9 percent of whites were college graduates, as compared to 19.3 percent of African-Americans.[29]

A final indicator of Brazilian educational achievement is the median number of years of schooling completed (figure 8). (This measure is not widely used in the United States.) As indicated earlier, in 1987 that number was less than four years of schooling for white Brazilians and less than two years for brown and black Brazilians. Over the next twenty years, absolute levels of educational achievement improved considerably and racial disparities fell. By 2009, average years of schooling completed had more than doubled for whites, to 8.4 years, and more than tripled for Afro-Brazilians, to 6.7 years. This reduced the difference between black and white educational achievement from 2.1 years in the 1990s to 1.7 years in 2009.

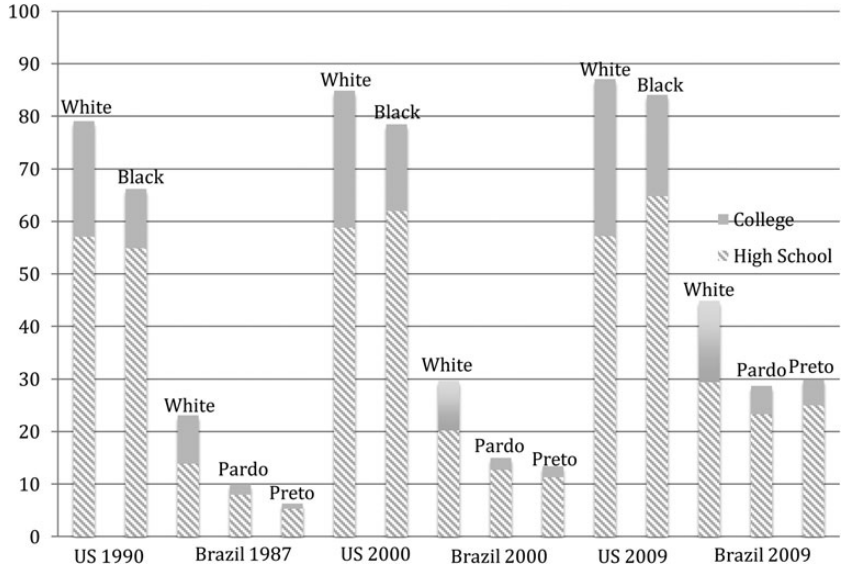

Figure 7. Percentage Rates of High School and College Completion, Adults Age 25 and Over, by Race, Brazil and United States, 1987–2009. Sources: United States: USBC, *SAUS 2011*, table 229. Brazil: 1987, Andrews, "Racial Inequality," table 10; 2000, Fichário das Desigualdades Raciais, LAESER-UFRJ, http://www.laeser.ie.ufrj.br/PT/Paginas/fichario.aspx; 2009, Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios (hereafter PNAD) 2009, Microdados.

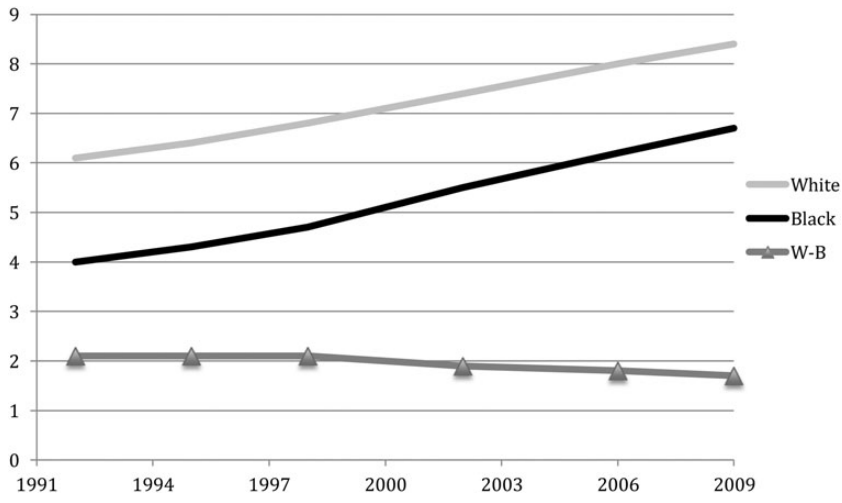

Figure 8. Median Years of Education, Population Age 15 and Over, Brazil, 1992–2009. Sources: IPEA, *Políticas Sociais—Acompanhamento e Análise* 20 (2012), supplementary table 3.1.

Despite these improvements, by 2009 the average Brazilian was receiving a junior-high-school education (or less). And these statistics do not reflect other aspects of racial inequality in Brazilian education: serious disparities in the quality of schools that blacks and whites attend, in grade-repetition (students not being approved to enter the next grade and therefore having to repeat the one they are in), in standardized test scores, and so on.[30] And while Brazil has succeeded in closing racial gaps in enrollment at the elementary and middle-school levels, gaps in enrollment have widened at the level of high school and college; differentials in high-school and college graduation rates have fallen but remain large.

Racial differentials in the quality of schools attended, grade repetition, test scores, and college graduation rates persist in the United States as well but at lower levels than in Brazil.[31] While neither country has been able to fully resolve longstanding racial differentials in educational achievement, as of 2010 the United States was providing much higher levels of education to its citizens than was Brazil and was doing so in a more racially egalitarian way.

Employment and Earnings

Given the larger racial disparities in education in Brazil (than in the United States), we would expect to find greater racial differences in earnings in that country, and indeed that is the case. Further contributing to racial disparities in earnings are differences in the labor markets of the two countries. One of the findings of my 1992 article was that between 1950 and 1980 the United States made striking progress in equalizing the distribution of blacks and whites across different sectors of the economy. Between 1950 and 1980, the index of occupational dissimilarity between the black and white populations fell by almost half, from 30.1 to 16.3.[32] That progress continued between 1980 and 2009, as the index of occupational dissimilarity again fell by almost half, from 16.3 to 8.7 (table 3, column 4).

During those same years, racial differentials in the labor market fell in Brazil as well, but not to the same degree as in the United States (table 4). Especially for *pardos*, racial differentials (as measured by the index of dissimilarity) in 2009 were not greatly improved from those in 1980. *Pretos* made greater progress, and especially *preta* women. But racial disparities remained quite high, approximately double those in the United States.

Because of those disparities in employment patterns, and white Brazilians' greater access to more highly-paid employment in professional/technical and administrative positions, Afro-Brazilian earnings lagged well behind those of white Brazilians. However, government-mandated increases in the minimum wage, combined with relatively strong economic growth between 2004 and 2010, did produce significant increases in Afro-Brazilian earnings, and indeed greater increases than in white incomes (figure 9). While in 1991 Afro-Brazilian workers earned on average 54 percent of white median earnings, by 2010 that proportion had increased to 64 percent. Meanwhile, while median African-American earnings did and do represent a higher proportion of median white earnings than in Brazil, that proportion remained essentially unchanged during the two decades between 1990 and 2010. At the beginning of that period, and at the end, African-American males earned on average 74 percent of white male earnings, and African-American females earned on average 87 percent of white female earnings (figure 9). During a period in which Afro-Brazilian wage-earners made

Table 3. Percentage Distribution, Civilian Labor Force by Race and Sex, United States, 1980, 2010

	White			Black		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
1980						
Administrative	27.9	19.6	39.9	22.3	14.6	30.4
Professional/ technical	15.5	14.1	17.6	11.2	7.6	15.0
Sales	10.5	9.5	11.9	5.0	3.9	6.2
Non-agricultural manual	31.7	44.3	13.7	37.1	53.9	19.5
Service	11.4	8.1	16.1	22.3	16.5	28.3
Agriculture	2.8	4.2	0.9	2.0	3.3	0.6
Other/unknown	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0
Index of Dissimiliarity	-	-	-	16.3	18.0	18.1
2010						
Administrative	28.7	23.2	35.0	25.3	19.7	30.1
Professional/ technical	22.1	17.6	27.3	18.8	13.7	23.1
Sales	11.2	10.7	11.7	10.0	8.4	11.4
Non-agricultural manual	20.7	33.8	5.5	21.2	36.5	6.9
Service	16.6	13.6	20.1	25.1	21.2	28.3
Agriculture	0.8	1.1	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.2
Index of Dissimiliarity	-	-	-	8.7	10.3	9.1

Sources: 1980, Andrews, "Racial Inequality," table 12; 2010, United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Labor Force Characteristics by Race and Ethnicity, 2010," Report 1032 (Washington, D.C., 2011), table 5.

measurable progress in relation to their white counterparts, African-Americans' relative position did not improve.

The story is the same when we look at median household income (figure 10). Here again African-American households receive on average a higher percentage of white median income than is the case in Brazil. But that percentage, after rising from 60 percent in 1990 to 69 percent in 2000, then drifted downward to finish the decade at 59 percent, slightly lower than in 1990. After making progress during the 1990s, African-American families lost ground in the early 2000s and ended the 20-year period slightly worse off, in relation to white families, than in 1990.[33]

Afro-Brazilian families receive on average an even lower percentage of white family income than do African-American families. But while African-American families lost ground during the last decade, Afro-Brazilian households saw their incomes rise in relation to white incomes. Again, this is partly the result of increases in the minimum wage, partly the economic growth of 2004–10, and partly the conditional cash transfer programs that have disproportionately benefited nonwhite families, especially those living in the poorest regions of the country. Between 1999 and 2009, black median household earnings rose from 42 percent of white household earnings to 52 percent.[34]

As we have previously seen (figure 1), Brazil's social and economic policies produced dramatic declines in the country's poverty rates, cutting them in half (from 42 percent to 21 percent) between 1990 and 2009. Rates of poverty in the

Table 4. Percentage Distribution, Civilian Labor Force by Race and Sex, Brazil, 1980, 2009

	White			Pardo			Preto		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
1980									
Administrative	16.7	15.3	20.1	6.7	6.1	8.5	4.2	4.3	4.0
Professional/ technical	9.0	5.6	17.3	3.8	1.8	9.6	2.5	1.3	5.1
Sales	9.0	9.0	9.0	6.5	6.3	7.1	4.0	4.2	3.6
Non-agricultural manual	26.0	30.5	14.6	25.6	29.6	13.8	27.9	36.1	10.3
Service	10.7	5.0	24.9	13.0	4.9	37.0	22.6	6.3	57.9
Agriculture	22.7	27.8	9.8	38.6	44.8	20.3	31.5	38.9	15.7
Other/unknown	6.0	6.7	4.2	5.8	6.5	3.8	7.2	8.9	3.4
Index of Dissimilarity	–	–	–	18.3	17.0	22.5	23.9	20.2	38.9
2009									
Administrative	18.2	15.5	21.3	10.5	8.6	13.1	11.0	9.3	13.2
Professional/technical	19.1	16.6	22.1	9.9	8.1	12.4	10.3	8.8	12.2
Sales	10.0	8.4	11.9	9.7	7.8	12.3	8.0	6.8	9.5
Non-agricultural manual	22.4	33.3	9.5	24.9	37.1	8.4	26.6	41.4	7.4
Service	17.5	10.4	26.0	23.5	12.8	38.1	30.1	16.8	47.4
Agriculture	12.8	15.8	9.3	21.5	25.7	15.7	14.0	16.9	10.3
Index of Dissimilarity	–	–	–	17.7	16.1	19.5	18.0	15.5	22.5

Sources: 1980: Andrews, "Racial Inequality, " table 13; 2009: PNAD 2009, Microdados.

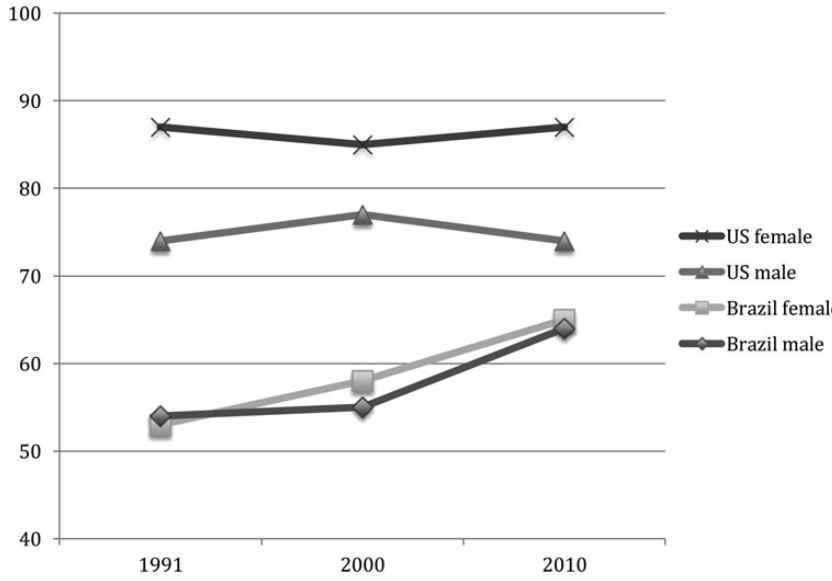

Figure 9. Black Median Earnings as a Percentage of White Median Earnings, by Sex, Brazil and United States, 1991–2010. Sources: United States: United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Labor Force Characteristics by Race and Ethnicity, 2010," Report 1032 (Washington, D.C. 2011), table 14. Brazil: 1991, IBGE, *Censo demográfico 1991: Mão de obra*, table 5.1; 2000, IBGE, *Censo demográfico 2000*, table 1.2.10; 2010, IBGE, *Censo demográfico 2010*, table 1.3.5.

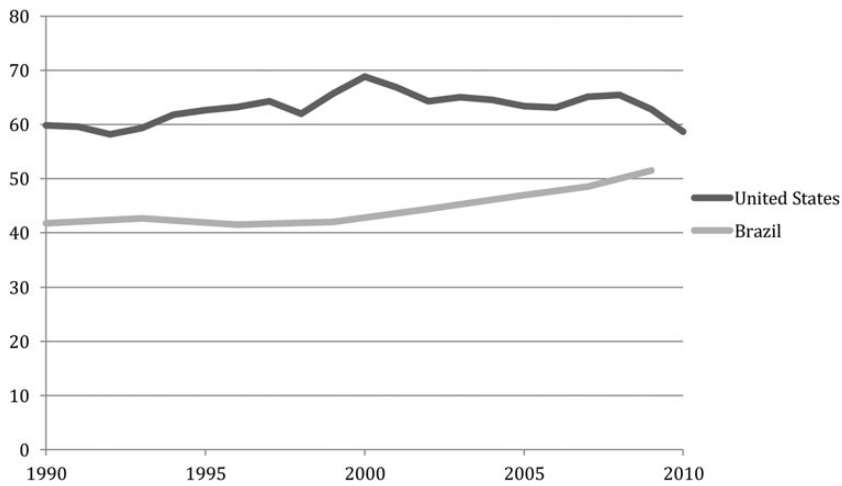

Figure 10. Black Median Household Income as a Percentage of White Median Household Income, Brazil and United States, 1990–2010 Sources: USBC, *Income, Poverty, 2010*, table A-2. Brazil: 1990–2007, Sergei Soares, "A trajetória da desigualdade: A evolução da renda relativa dos negros no Brasil," in Mário Theodoro, ed., *As políticas públicas e a desigualdade racial no Brasil 120 anos após a abolição* (Brasília, 2008), figure 1; 2009, PNAD 2009, Microdados.

United States, after falling from 1990 to 2000, then rose and by 2010 were higher than they had been in 1990. Somewhat surprisingly, while black poverty rates were lower in 2010 (27 percent) than they had been in 1990 (32 percent), among white families the reverse was true, with poverty rates rising from 11 percent in 1990 to 13 percent in 2010. Even so, black poverty rates in 2010 were twice as high as white poverty rates, as more than a quarter of the African-American population lived below the poverty line (figure 11).

In Brazil, economic growth and cash-transfer programs benefited both racial groups: between 1995 and 2009 poverty rates dropped by 20 percentage points (from 54 percent to 34 percent) among Afro-Brazilians and 11 points among whites (28 percent to 17 percent). In both years black poverty rates were approximately double those of whites, and both groups suffered from rates higher than those in the United States; but as racially differentiated poverty data become available for the period 2010–12, I suspect that they will show those differentials continuing to fall in Brazil.

Social Democracy, Racial Democracy

The indicators of racial inequality examined in this essay suggest both the achievements and the limits of Brazil's experiment with social democracy. In the areas of health, education, and earnings, the social and economic policies of the last twenty years have produced dramatic improvements in wellbeing for most Brazilians and on a number of indicators—fertility, infant mortality, life expectancy, primary- and middle-school enrollment, median years of schooling, individual earnings, household income, and poverty—even greater improvements for

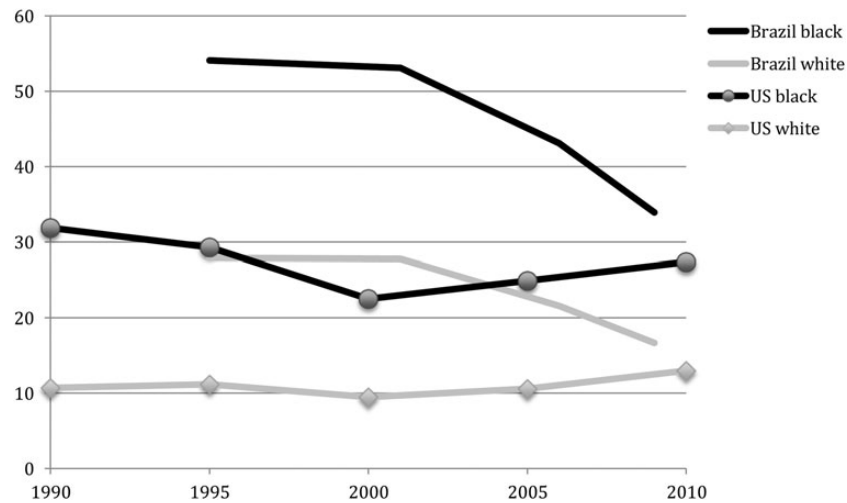

Figure 11. Poverty Rates by Race, Brazil and United States, 1990–2010. Sources: United States: USCB, *Income, Poverty, 2010*, table B-1. Brazil: 1995–2006, Paixão and Carvano, *Relatório anual, 2007–2008*, table 6.7; 2009, special tabulation by LAESER-UFRJ.

black and brown Brazilians than for whites. Those advances produced visible reductions in racial disparities, lending support to those who invoke social democracy as the most effective way to achieve racial equality.

Despite those improvements, levels of racial inequality remain higher in Brazil than in the United States. On only two indicators—infant mortality and life expectancy—does Brazil currently rank as the more racially equal society. On one other indicator, poverty rates, the two countries are tied, with black/white differentials of approximately 2:1. On all other indicators—regional distribution, academic enrollment, high-school and college graduation rates, occupational distribution, individual earnings, household income—the United States continues to show greater evidence of racial equality than does Brazil.

This is in part a reflection of the very large statistical gaps that separated black, brown, and white Brazilians in 1990 and that will require more than just twenty years to overcome.[35] It is also important to note that while government social policies did reduce racial disparities in some areas, they left such disparities largely unchanged in others—occupational distribution—and actually increased in others—high-school and college enrollment. These somewhat contradictory results are owing to the complexities of racial hierarchy in Brazil and the different ways in which racial exclusion operates at different levels of the class structure. Beginning in the 1970s and 80s and continuing to the present, statistical research has demonstrated that barriers of discrimination and prejudice operate much more powerfully among Brazil's middle and upper classes than among the poor and working class. Poor whites and Afro-Brazilians are more likely than their middle- and upper-class counterparts to live in integrated neighborhoods, to go to school together, to form friendships and romantic relationships, and to marry. Employment and earnings discrimination is also much less in evidence in working-class occupations but asserts itself with increasing strength as one moves up the vocational and educational ladder.[36]

One of the most striking successes of the social democratic experiment of the last twenty years has been the movement of some 30 million Brazilians from the working class to what some observers have described as "the new middle class."[37] As suggested by the data on declining racial differentials in employment and wages, Afro-Brazilians were fully involved in that process of upward mobility, taking part in it in numbers comparable to, or even higher than, those of whites. Within that new middle class, however, sharp racial differentials in income do persist.[38] And it is at those middle-to-upper levels of the social pyramid—professional and white-collar employment, and high-school and college enrollment—that our data show stable or even increasing racial differentials.

It is precisely in order to resolve barriers of racial exclusion at those levels, Afro-Brazilian activists have long argued, that racial affirmative action policies are necessary. In response to those arguments, the Cardoso administration included proposals for "compensatory" affirmative action policies as part of its 1996 Human Rights Program. Proposals for racial quotas in university admissions, public-sector hiring, and print and media advertising were included as part of Congressman (now Senator) Paulo Paim's Statute of Racial Equality, first introduced into Congress in 2000. Those proposals were never approved by the Brazilian Congress but, beginning in 2003, were adopted by over forty federal and state universities, several government ministries and agencies, and a number of private firms.[39]

That piece-meal adoption of quotas set off intense debates in Brazil over the concept and practice of affirmative action, and several legal challenges to the constitutionality of racial quotas. In two decisions rendered in April 2012, Brazil's Supreme Court decided unanimously that racial set-asides do meet the test of constitutionality as a necessary means to achieve the equality of conditions and opportunity guaranteed by the Brazilian Constitution of 1988.[40] Several months later, in August 2012, the Brazilian Senate approved, by a vote of 80–1, the Law of Social Quotas, which requires the country's federal universities to reserve one-half of their entering places for graduates of the country's public schools. Within that 50 percent quota, black, brown, and indigenous students must be included in numbers equivalent to their representation in the local population; at the same time, 50 percent of the quota students—25 percent of all entering students—are required to have per capita family incomes equal to or less than 150 percent of the federally mandated minimum wage. Those quotas are to be phased in gradually over 2013–17 and their results to be evaluated by a Congressional commission in 2022.[41]

With this new legislation and the recent Supreme Court decisions, Brazil is now fully embarked on an innovative public policy experiment that combines race- and class-based affirmative action with full-bore social democracy. That two- (or three-) pronged approach offers the possibility—indeed, the likelihood—of further advances in the reduction of racial inequality beyond what has been achieved over the last twenty years. Brazil's experiment should also prompt some serious thinking in the United States about our own continuing racial divides and our national ambivalence concerning both class-based social provision and racial affirmative action.

The last ten-year period in which the United States saw reductions in poverty comparable to those that have taken place recently in Brazil was 1964–1973, when poverty rates fell from 19 percent to 11 percent. This was the period of the federally mandated War on Poverty, a set of government programs that left a deeply controversial political legacy but that did succeed in reducing poverty rates to their lowest levels in American history.[42] It was also the period (extending through the late 1970s) of most intense national commitment to racial affirmative-action programs, which by 1980 had helped expand the size of the African-American middle class to some 40 percent of the black population.[43]

It was those policies, plus the relatively equitable economic growth of the 1945–73 period, that produced the declining racial differentials documented in my 1992 article.

The reduction of anti-poverty efforts in the 1970s, the backlash against racial affirmative action in the 1980s and 1990s, declining industrial employment, and falling real wages for low-skill jobs, all combined to slow the pace of further reductions in racial differentials in the 1990s and early 2000s.[44] The rising class inequality of those years consigned much of the black population, and a growing proportion of the white population, to the margins of American society, with severely reduced access to opportunities for education, employment, and advancement.[45] Writing in the 1980s and 1990s, sociologist William Julius Wilson proposed the principles and some of the practices of European social democracy as possible policy responses to the deepening crisis of what he called the American underclass.[46] But might the recent achievements of Brazilian social democracy be

just as relevant to the conditions and prospects of the United States' multiracial poor and to the larger context of rising inequality in American life?

Not all of the recent programs enacted in Brazil are directly applicable or relevant to the United States. At least under current conditions, few American parents require cash incentives to enroll their children in elementary school or to seek medical care for them. And levels of poverty and overall inequality were so high in Brazil in the early 1990s that relatively modest transfers of national income had much greater impacts in that country than comparable outlays would have in the United States.[47] But as class inequality has increased in the United States while declining in Brazil, and as class-based barriers to social mobility in this country have become increasingly visible, the two countries seem to face a number of surprisingly (in light of their very different levels of economic development) comparable challenges. American workers and their families are in great need of precisely the forms of support at the heart of Brazil's social programs: access to health care and education of acceptable (or better) quality, and an adequate federally-guaranteed minimum wage.[48] And Brazil's decision to combine class- and race-based affirmative action in university admissions should be of great interest to a country—the United States—in which students from poor and working-class families are severely disadvantaged in their pursuit of higher education.[49] For all these reasons, American citizens and policymakers could profit from paying close attention to the evolving course of Brazilian social and racial democracy during this current decade and beyond.

Endnotes

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comparison, see Seigel, *Uneven Encounters*, xi-xii, 179–80, 294–96; Micol Seigel, "Beyond Compare: Historical Method after the Transnational Turn," *Radical History Review* 91 (2005), 62–90; George Reid Andrews, "Workers, Soldiers, Activists: Black Mobilization in Brazil and Spanish America, 1800–2000," *Estudios Interdisciplinarios de América Latina y el Caribe* 19, 1 (2008), 11–12.

2. Roger Bastide and Florestan Fernandes, *Relações raciais entre negros e brancos em São Paulo* (São Paulo, 1955); Florestan Fernandes, *A integração do negro na sociedade de classes* (São Paulo, 1965); Nelson do Valle Silva, "White-Nonwhite Income Differentials: Brazil, 1960" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1978); Carlos Hasenbalg, *Discriminação e desigualdades raciais no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro, 1979); Pierre-Michel Fontaine, ed., *Race, Class and Power in Brazil* (Los Angeles, 1984); Lúcia Elena Garcia de Oliveira et al., *O lugar do negro na força de trabalho* (Rio de Janeiro, 1985); Peggy A. Lovell, "Racial Inequality and the Brazilian Labor Market" (Ph.D. diss., University of Florida, 1989).

3. George Reid Andrews, "Racial Inequality in Brazil and the United States: A Statistical Comparison," *Journal of Social History* 26, 2 (1992), 229–63.

4. Andrews, "Racial Inequality," 257–58.

5. For overviews of those policies, see Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada (hereafter IPEA), *Perspectivas da política social no Brasil* (Brasília, 2010), 13–131; Albert Fishlow, *Starting Over: Brazil since 1985* (Washington, D.C., 2011), 87–139.

6. On those movements and their proposals, see Tanya Katerí Hernández, *Racial Subordination in Latin America: The Role of the State, Customary Law, and the New Civil Rights Response* (New York, 2013), 102–70; Cottrol, *Long, Lingering Shadow*, chapters 8–9.

7. See for example Peter Fry et al., eds., *Divisões perigosas: Políticas raciais no Brasil contemporâneo* (Rio de Janeiro, 2007); Ali Kamel, *Não somos racistas: Uma reação aos que nos querem transformar em uma nação bicolor* (Rio de Janeiro, 2007); "O grande erro das cotas," *Veja* (Aug. 29, 2012), 70–72.

8. Alejandro de la Fuente, "Race and Inequality in Cuba, 1899–1981," *Journal of Contemporary History* 30 (1995), 131–68. In the years during and since the "special period" of the 1990s, racial differentials appear to have widened in the island. Alejandro de la Fuente, *A Nation for All: Race, Inequality and Politics in Twentieth-Century Cuba* (Chapel Hill, 2001), 317–39; Mark Q. Sawyer, *Racial Politics in Post-Revolutionary Cuba* (New York, 2006), 102–53.

9. Instituto Nacional de Estadística, *Encuesta continua de hogares: Módulo de raza* (Montevideo, 1998); Marisa Bucheli and Wanda Cabela, *Perfil demográfico y socioeconómico de la población uruguaya según su ascendencia racial* (Montevideo, 2007); Scuro Somma, Lucía, ed., *Población afrodescendiente y desigualdades étnico-raciales en Uruguay* (Montevideo, 2008); George Reid Andrews, *Blackness in the White Nation: A History of Afro-Uruguay* (Chapel Hill, 2010).

10. For inflation rates, see www.ipeadata.gov.br, Base de dados macroeconômicos, "Inflação—IPCA." On the Real Plan, see Werner Baer, *The Brazilian Economy: Growth and Development* (Boulder, 2008), 129–50.

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12. Timothy Power, "Brazilian Democracy as Late Bloomer: Reevaluating the Regime in the Cardoso-Lula Era," *Latin American Research Review* 45 (2010), special issue, *Living in*

Actually Existing Democracies, 225. By mid-2012 the value of the monthly minimum wage was approximately US$300. See http://www.portalbrasil.net/salariominimo.htm#sileiro.

13. Fábio Veras Soares et al., "Evaluating the Impact of Brazil's Bolsa Família: Cash Transfer Programs in Comparative Perspective," *Latin American Research Review* 45, 2 (2010), 173–90; "The World's Second Most Powerful Mother Introduces 'Caring Brazil'," *Latin American Regional Report: Brazil and Southern Cone* (May 2012), 1–2. See also Jorge Abrahão de Castro and Lúcia Modesto, eds., *Bolsa Família 2003–2010: Avanços e desafios* (Brasília, 2010); Ariel Fiszbein and Norbert Schady, *Conditional Cash Transfers: Reducing Present and Future Poverty* (Washington, D.C., 2009).

14. All these data are available at www.ipeadata.gov.br. On the economic growth of the Cardoso and Lula years, see Fishlow, *Starting Over*, 33–86; Jocildo Bezerra and Tiago V. de V. Cavalacanti, "Brazil's Lack of Growth," in Love and Baer, *Brazil under Lula*, 67–89.

15. Barros et al. credit reductions in poverty and income inequality to "three main factors: an increase in contributory and noncontributory government transfers; a decline in wage differentials by educational level and reductions in the inequality in education . . .; and an improvement in spatial and sectoral integration of labor markets . . . The greater generosity of government transfers and the fast expansion of education were certainly a direct consequence of public policies implemented over the last 15 years." Ricardo Barros et al., "Markets, the State, and the Dynamics of Inequality in Brazil," in Luis F. López-Calva and Nora Lustig, eds., *Declining Inequality in Latin America: A Decade of Progress?* (Washington, D.C., 2010), 169. See also Ricardo Paes de Barros et al., "Sobre a evolução recente da pobreza a da desigualdade no Brasil," in Jorge Abrahão de Castro and Fábio Monteiro Vaz, eds., *Situação social brasileira: Monitoramento das condições de vida* (Brasília, 2011), vol. 1, 41–63; Sérgio Soares, "Desigualdade de renda," in Castro and Vaz, *Situação social brasileira*, vol. 1, 65–73.

16. U.S. Census Bureau (hereafter USCB), Current Population Reports, P60–239, *Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2010* (Washington, DC, 2011), tables A.3, B.1.

17. Martina Morris and Bruce Western, "Inequality in Earnings at the Close of the Twentieth Century," *Annual Review of Sociology* 25 (1999), 623–657; Sheldon Danziger and Peter Gottschalk, "Diverging Fortunes: Trends in Poverty and Inequality," in Reynolds Farley and John Haaga, eds., *The American People: Census 2000* (New York, 2005), 49–75; Kathryn M. Neckerman and Florencia Torche, "Inequality: Causes and Consequences," *Annual Review of Sociology* 33 (2007), 335–57; Kevin Leicht, "Broken Down by Race and Gender? Sociological Explanations of New Sources of Earnings Inequality," *Annual Review of Sociology* 34 (2008), 237–55; Douglas S. Massey, *Categorically Unequal: The American Stratification System* (New York, 2007).

18. USCB, *Overview of Race and Hispanic Origin: 2010* (Washington, D.C., 2011); Nancy McArdle, "Color Lines in a Multiracial Nation: An Institutional Demographic Overview of the United States in the Twenty-First Century," in Andrew Grant-Thomas and Gary Orfield, eds., *Twenty-First Century Color Lines: Multiracial Change in Contemporary America* (New Brunswick, NJ, 2009), 25–93; Rebecca M. Blank, "An Overview of Trends in Social and Economic Well-Being, by Race," in Neil Smelser et al., eds., *America Becoming: Racial Trends and Their Consequences* (Washington, D.C., 2001), vol. 1, 21–39; Gary D. Sandefur et al., "An Overview of Racial and Ethnic Demographic Trends," in Smelser et al., *America Becoming*, vol. 1, 40–102.

19. The Brazilian census also includes a "yellow" (Asian) color category and, since 1991, an "indigenous" category. Those two categories combined accounted for 0.9 percent of the national population in 2000 and 1.5 percent in 2010.

20. Such cross-identification almost certainly contributed to the relative decline in the *preto* population between 1940 and 1990. Peggy Lovell and Charles Wood, "Skin Color, Racial Identity, and Life Chances in Brazil," *Latin American Perspectives* 25, 2 (1998), 90–109.

21. On racial categorization in Brazil, see Telles, *Race in Another America*, 78–106; Stanley R. Bailey, *Legacies of Race: Identities, Attitudes, and Politics in Brazil* (Stanford, 2009), 39–65; IBGE, *Características étnico-raciais da população: Um estudo das categorias da classificação de cor ou raça, 2008* (Rio de Janeiro, 2011).

22. Rafael Guerreiro Osório and Pedro Herculano Guimarães Ferreira de Souza, "O efeito da desigualdade regional na desigualdade racial," in Castro and Vaz, *Situação social brasileira*, vol. 1, 75–90.

23. On Brazil's fertility decline, see José Alberto Magno de Carvalho and Laura Rodriguez Wong, "The Fertility Transition in Brazil: Causes and Consequences," in José Miguel Guzmán et al., eds., *The Fertility Transition in Latin America* (Oxford, UK, 1996), 397–413; Francisco Vidal Luna and Herbert Klein, *Brazil since 1980* (New York, 2006), 162–70.

24. Marcelo Paixão et al., *Relatório anual das desigualdades raciais no Brasil; 2009–2010* (Rio de Janeiro, 2010), offers lower estimates of life expectancy for 2008, with much greater racial differentials than for previous years: 73.1 for whites, 67.0 for blacks. Tables 5.19, 5.22. Since whites and blacks each constituted about half of the Brazilian population at that time, these numbers do not seem to gibe with the study's estimated life expectancy of 70.9 for the population as a whole, which in turn was well below the IBGE life-expectancy estimate for 2008 of 72.9; see http://www.ibge.gov.br/home/estatistica/populacao/tabuadevida/2008/ambossexos.pdf). Because of these inconsistencies, I decided not to include the Paixão 2008 figures in table 2.

25. On the recent reduction of infant mortality in Brazil, see Ricardo Paes de Barros et al., "Determinantes do desenvolvimento na primeira infância no Brasil," IPEA Texto para Discussão 1478 (Brasília, 2010); IPEA, *Perspectivas da política social*, 313–44.

26. Andrews, "Racial Inequality," table 10.

27. Figures from Andrews, "Racial Inequality," 245–46. On educational policy during the dictatorship and after, see Luna and Klein, *Brazil since 1980*, 182–91.

28. On educational policy, see Nely Caixeta, "Educação," in Lamounier and Figueiredo, *A era FHC*, 537–68; Mary Arends-Kuenning, "A Report Card for Lula: Progress in Education," in Love and Baer, *Brazil under Lula*, 205–20; Fishlow, *Starting Over*, 88–105; IPEA, *Perspectivas da política social*, 163–90.

29. On continuing racial differentials in college graduation rates, see Michael Stoll, "African Americans and the Color Line," in Farley and Haaga, *The American People*, 383–85.

30. Paixão et al., *Relatório anual, 2009–2010*, 205–48.

31. Susan Aud et al., *Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Groups* (Washington, D.C., 2010).

32. Andrews, "Racial Inequality," table 12.

33. Stoll, "African Americans," 391–94.

34. The census of 2010 shows further increases in black median household earnings, to 56 percent of white earnings. It is not clear, however, that the 2010 census table is constructed in the same way as the Soares data series, so I did not include the 2010 figure in figure 10.

IBGE, *Censo demográfico 2010: Característicos da população e dos domicílios* (Brasília, 2011), table 1.8.12.

35. Soares calculates that if the trends of the early 2000s continue, median black and white household income in Brazil could attain parity by 2029. Sergei Soares, "A trajetória da desigualdade: A evolução da renda relativa dos negros no Brasil," in Mário Theodoro, ed., *As políticas públicas e a desigualdade racial no Brasil 120 anos após a abolição* (Brasília, 2008), 120.

36. For the clearest explanation of the class dimensions of race in Brazil, see Telles, *Race in Another America*. Also useful is Robin Sheriff, *Dreaming Equality: Color, Race, and Racism in Urban Brazil* (New Brunswick, 2001). On the challenges facing middle-class Afro-Brazilians, see Graziella Moraes da Silva and Elisa P. Reis, "Perception of Racial Discrimination among Black Professionals in Rio de Janeiro," *Latin American Research Review* 46, 2 (2011), 55–78; Angela Figueiredo, "Out of Place: The Experience of the Black Middle Class," in Bernd Reiter and Gladys L. Mitchell, eds., *Brazil's New Racial Politics* (Boulder, CO, 2010), 89–122.

37. Marcelo Côrtes Neri, ed., *A nova classe média: O lado brilhante dos pobres* (Rio de Janeiro, 2010), 12–13.

38. Elisa Monçores et al., "Os pretos e pardos e a ascensão da classe média—Parte 1: Análise da descomposição da população por decis de renda," *Tempo em Curso* 4, 11 (2012), 1–12.

39. Mala Htun, "From 'Racial Democracy' to Affirmative Action: Changing State Policy on Race in Brazil," *Latin American Research Review* 39, 1 (2004), 60–89.

40. On those debates and the Supreme Court decisions, see Hernández, *Racial Subordination*, 151–70. A third Supreme Court decision in May 2012, with one dissenting vote, confirmed the first two. "Supremo valida cotas adotadas pela federal do RS," *Folha de S. Paulo* (May 10, 2012), C6.

41. The text of the law is available at http://www.senado.gov.br/atividade/materia/getPDF.asp?t=112667&tp=1. For media commentary on the law, see "O grande erro"; "Federais terão 50% das vagas para cotas," *Folha de S. Paulo* (August 1, 2012), C1.

42. Maria Cancian and Sheldon Danziger, "Changing Poverty and Changing Antipoverty Policies," in Maria Cancian and Sheldon Danziger, eds., *Changing Poverty, Changing Policies* (New York, 2009), 1–31; Annelise Orleck, "Introduction: The War on Poverty from the Grass Roots Up," in Annelise Orleck and Lisa Gayle Hazirjian, eds., *The War on Poverty: A New Grassroots History, 1964–1980* (Athens, GA, 2011), 1–28. For US poverty rates from 1960 to 2010, see USCB, *Income, Poverty, 2010*, table A-1.

43. Terry H. Anderson, *The Pursuit of Fairness: A History of Affirmative Action* (New York, 2004), 111–70. On the size of the black middle class, see Reynolds Farley, *The New American Reality: Who We Are, How We Got Here, Where We Are Going* (New York, 1996), 255.

44. On the "demise of affirmative action" in the 1990s, see Anderson, *Pursuit of Fairness*, 217–73; Carol M. Swain, "Affirmative Action: Legislative History, Judicial Interpretations, Public Consensus," in Smelser et al., *America Becoming*, vol. 2, 316–47; Dennis Deslippe, *Protesting Affirmative Action: The Struggle over Equality after the Civil Rights Revolution* (Baltimore, 2012), 209–20.

45. William Julius Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy* (Chicago, 1987); William Julius Wilson, *When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor* (New York, 1996); Rebecca M. Blank et al., eds., *Working and Poor: How Economic and Policy Changes Are Affecting Low-Wage Workers* (New York, 2006).

Murray estimates that as of 2010, at least 20 percent of the white population fell into this "new lower class." Charles Murray, *Coming Apart: The State of White America, 1960–2010* (New York, 2012), 231.

46. Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged*, 152–57; Wilson, *When Work Disappears*, 207–17. Adamantly opposing European social democracy is Murray, *Coming Apart*, 279–85.

47. "High inequality means that only a small income transfer from the rich would be needed to eliminate poverty [in Brazil]. The World Bank found that a transfer of 1.6 percent of total income in 1995 would be sufficient to accomplish the task." Fishlow, *Starting Over*, 130.

48. Cancian and Danziger, "Changing Poverty."

49. Martha J. Bailey and Susan M. Dynarski, "Inequality in Postsecondary Education," in Greg J. Duncan and Russell J. Murnane, eds., *Whither Opportunity? Rising Inequality, Schools, and Children's Life Chances* (New York, 2011), 117–32.