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**BRAZILI(AMERIC)AN: PERCEPTION, PRESERVATION, AND
TRANSMISSION OF IDENTITY AMONG 1ST GENERATION
BRAZILIANS LIVING IN UTAH AND SALT LAKE VALLEYS**

Elisabeth Morris

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Honors Thesis

BRAZILI(AMERIC)AN: PERCEPTION, PRESERVATION, AND TRANSMISSION OF
IDENTITY AMONG 1ST GENERATION BRAZILIANS LIVING IN UTAH AND SALT
LAKE VALLEYS

By

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Submitted to Brigham Young University in partial fulfillment of graduation requirements for
University Honors

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ABSTRACT

BRAZILI(AMERIC)AN: PERCEPTION, PRESERVATION, AND TRANSMISSION OF
IDENTITY AMONG 1ST GENERATION BRAZILIANS LIVING IN UTAH AND SALT
LAKE VALLEYS

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Bachelor of Arts

The purpose of this study is to better understand how first-generation Brazilian immigrants to Utah's Salt Lake and Utah Valleys perceive, preserve, and transmit their identity. With this purpose in mind, I hope to add to the previous studies and discussion of identity in the Brazilian diaspora in the United States. The study focuses on the question: How do first-generation Brazilians living in Utah and Salt Lake Valleys perceive their own identities? Additionally, it seeks to answer the following subquestions: How is identity preserved among first-generation Brazilian immigrants to Utah and Salt Lake Valleys and where and how is identity transmitted from first-generation Brazilians to second-generation Brazilians in Utah and Salt Lake Valleys? Working with local Brazilian businesses, cultural groups, families, and

individuals, I collected data through a variety of ethnographic methods including participant observation, semi-structured interviews, mapping, sonic recordings, photo, video, and media usage. I then used thematic qualitative data analysis methods, finding that first-generation Brazilian immigrants to Utah and Salt Lake Valleys see themselves as Brazilian and not Brazilian. The results show how identity is fluid and complex, add to previous studies of Brazilian identity, and discuss the role of host communities and surrogate identities.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title.....	i
Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
List of Tables and Figures.....	vi
I. Introduction.....	1
II. Literature Review.....	8
III. Methodology.....	13
IV. Results and Discussion.....	22
V. Conclusion.....	42
References.....	44

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

TABLE 1: Interview Guide.....	14
TABLE 2: Participant Demographics.....	22
TABLE 3: Main Themes.....	24
FIGURE 1: Screenshot of churrasco from Ronaldo’s Social Media.....	28
FIGURE 2: Ronaldo’s Social Media Profile Picture.....	28
FIGURE 3: Invitation to Festa Junina.....	34
FIGURE 4: Mestre Giving Instructions From Underneath the Tree.....	38
FIGURE 5: Mestre and Lagartixa Playing Capoeira Music.....	38

I. INTRODUCTION

For Brazilian immigrants to the United States, the process of identity construction is complicated. This complication is the result of a number of factors, two of the main factors being the ambiguity of the defining terms “American” and “Brazilian” and the American tendency to categorize groups and individuals into ethnic categories.

Oftentimes these categories are based on seriously misconstrued ethnic identities such as Hispanic and Latino (Reis, 2022; Tosta, 2016). In response to these categorizing tendencies and wary of the prejudice and marginalization Hispanic and Latino groups receive, Brazilians separate themselves from American culture and from other immigrant groups and form pockets of communities in places such as Massachusetts, Florida, California, New Jersey, New York, Georgia, and Utah. Yet, despite these complications, Brazilian immigrants in the Utah and Salt Lake Valleys find ways to navigate both Brazilianess and Americanness, creating communities of Brazilians and Brazilian-Americans.

Positionality

My interest in this topic stems from a realization that Brazilian identity is little recognized, represented or understood in Utah Valley and Salt Lake Valley where there is a significant growing population of Brazilian immigrants. According to the Brazilian-American Chamber of Commerce of Utah, Brazilians represent 8,000 to 10,000 individuals in Utah and according to The Brazil Honorary Consulate of the Utah Governor’s Office, they represent 16,000 individuals (Lindberg, 2010; Jorgensen, 2017). This discrepancy suggests that there are at least 6,000 Brazilians in Utah that are not

acknowledged or represented. Furthermore, Brazilians living in Utah are unrepresented in other studies examining Brazilian identity.

Background of the Problem

The term “American” is one of increasing ambiguity. In a study conducted by Bonikowski and DiMaggio (2016), they found that few participants regarded “being ‘born in America’ or having ‘lived in America for most of one’s life’” enough to make one American; that identity is not fixed, being influenced by relevant events; and that there are multiple forms of national self-understanding coming from different sources (pp. 951, 971-972). Furthermore, immigrants to the United States from Latin American countries find inconsistencies in the term, identifying as American because they come from countries in the Americas (Reis, 2022).

This confusion is amplified by a variety of factors. One pivotal factor is the aforementioned tendency of Americans, as individuals and on a governmental level, to categorize Brazilians as Hispanics. Tendencies in the United States to categorize Brazilians as Hispanics cause Brazilian immigrant groups to separate themselves from “American culture” and from other immigrant groups and to form conglomerate communities. These separations exist because of language differences between Portuguese and Spanish, because of the marginalization other immigrant groups receive, and because Brazilian-Americans often see themselves as sojourners and not settlers (Tosta, 2016, p.80-82).

These distinctions are important and influential on the formation of Brazilian immigrant identities. When immigrants arrive in the United States, they quickly perceive and react to pre-existing American conceptions of race and ethnicity, learning how

Americans see them and others. At the same time, they seek to maintain their original identities. The conjunction of these two identities, external and internal, causes notions of ethnicity, race, and national and ethnic identity to be reorganized (Marrow, 2003, p.428). In a country like the United States, where race heavily influences both national and ethnic identity, the differences in understanding of race between Americans and Brazilians cause difficulties as Brazilian immigrants navigate internal and external identities. Historically, the United States has operated under a one-drop rule, so that anyone with descendancy other than white descendancy is not white, while Brazil operates on a continuum with whiteness as a much more inclusive category. In addition, to many Americans, the terms Hispanic and Latino mean peoples that are “mixed” or “brown” and refers to individuals from all of Latin America (Harris, 1993). However, many Brazilians do not identify as Latino and if they do identify as Latino, they still see themselves separate from Hispanic Latinos.

Consequently, many Brazilians are seen as Hispanic or Latino in the United States, while per instructions given in the most current census, Brazilians are neither Hispanic or Latino. Individual Brazilians are seen by Americans much differently than they see themselves (Marrow, 2003). This concept of betweenness leads them to feel alienated (Irish, 2016, p.5). Bessa (2013) writes, “For the Brazilian immigrant there is often a question of how to position oneself within an already existent racial and ethnic system which does not neatly fit them, and to what extent that agency is even possible” (p.28).

The appearance and rise of transnationalism is another factor that creates difficulties for Brazilian immigrants as they attempt to establish their identity in the

United States. Transnationalism, as defined by Margolis (2007), is when international immigrants maintain ties to their country of origin while still living in the country of settlement. Globalization and technological innovations allow people to maintain contact with people living on the other side of the world (Reis, 2022). Brazilians and other immigrants are able to remain connected to their social circles in their homelands while living in the United States, thereby continuing to identify ethnically with their country of origin.

Statement of the problem

Through a series of state surveys, the United States determined that there were 280, 000 Brazilian immigrants living in the United States while Brazil's Ministry of Foreign affairs reports 1,334,000 (Margolis, 2013, p.77). This discrepancy is attributed to illegal immigration, but also to census errors from the lack of clarity in defining terms. Brazilians do not see themselves fitting in any of the categories recognized by the census or United States in general. The inbetweeness that is felt by Brazilian immigrants to the United States also exists among first-generation Brazilians living in Utah and Salt Lake Valley and inhibits their ability to navigate external and internal identities and to create an identity in the context of their life in the United States.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to bring light to the experience of first-generation Brazilians living in Utah Valley and Salt Lake Valley and to examine the formation and preservation of their identity after immigrating to Utah. This study will also add to the discussion of the Brazilian diaspora in the United States and also to the discussion of identity formation, preservation, and transmission.

Research Questions

How do first-generation Brazilians living in Utah Valley and Salt Lake Valley perceive their own identity? Within this question, I will seek to answer the following subquestions:

1. How is identity preserved among first-generation Brazilians in Utah and Salt Lake Valleys?
2. Where and how is identity transmitted from first-generation Brazilians to second-generation Brazilians in Utah and Salt Lake Valleys?

Significance of the Study

The Brazilian diaspora to locations such as New York, New Jersey, Florida, Georgia, Massachusetts, and California has been heavily researched (Bergad, 2010; Cruz, Falcao & Barreto, 2018; Reis, 2021; Margolis, 2013; Marcus, 2010; Serrão & Chaves, 2020; Margolis, 1990; Margolis, 2008; Marrow, 2003; Chaves, 2017; Margolis, 1994; White et al., 2010). However, the Brazilian diaspora to Utah, particularly Utah's Salt Lake Valley and Utah Valley, has received little attention. As far as I could ascertain, this study is the first to not only explore the Brazilian Diaspora in Utah, but also to examine perceptions, tools of preservation, and methods of transmission of identity among first-generation Brazilians in Utah, adding to the discussion of the Brazilian diaspora in the United States as a whole.

Definition of terms:

These terms are used repeatedly throughout the paper. Their definitions are included to provide clarity to the reader and to make clear my position and use of the word.

Brasilidade: a Portuguese word used to describe Brazilianess or Brazilian identity

Axé: a Portuguese word used in capoeira clubs used to describe a feeling or sentiment that individuals can bring and take from the group

Capoeira: A Brazilian martial arts form of African influence, historically practiced as a self-defense and identity preservation technique by escaped and freed enslaved peoples in the Northeast part of Brazil.

Brazuca: a term that describes a Brazilian living in the United States or outside of Brazil

Gaúcho: a Brazilian from the state of Rio Grande do Sul

Throughout the paper, I also use the terms Brazilian, American, and Brazilian-American. I use Brazilian to refer to first-generation Brazilians that identify as Brazilian. I use American to refer to people born in or having lived in the United States for a significant portion of their life and that do not identify with another ethnic group. I use the term Brazilian-American to refer to those who identify as Brazilian-American ethnically.

Limitations, Delimitations, and Assumptions

The main limitations to this study were that the study was only composed of sixteen main interlocutors and only lasted a duration of seven weeks. Additional limitations would include recruitment for participation in the student was limited to individuals already accessible to the researcher and that I am an outsider to the community, not an insider. The delimitations of this study are that I chose to enroll adults only in my study. I did not choose to include or exclude individuals from my study on a basis of residency status or gender. As the researcher, I assumed that even though my data came from a smaller sample size only examined for a limited amount of time, it

would be enough to propose a response to the research questions and invite further study. I also assumed that first-generation Brazilian immigrants would have already assigned themselves an identity in relation to the United States as Brazil.

Another limitation and acknowledgement that should be made is that concerning race. During the course of this study, due to the differing understandings of race between the United States and Brazil and insufficient representation of individuals of varying races in my data, I do not take race into account when considering the perception, preservation, and transmission of identity

Ethical Consideration

Before starting this study and conducting research with participants, I acquired approval from the Internal Review Board (IRB) of the university. The study was deemed non-invasive; however, I still adhered to ethical data collection practices as outlined in the IRB forms. This was of the utmost importance as I conducted interviews and participated in the lives of immigrant groups. I avoided questioning about residency status and religion to protect participants from legal repercussions and to not be coercive or exercise unintentional influence, respectively. Before taking recordings, capturing images, interviewing, and conducting research in any manner I received consent from the participants and notified them of their rights as participants.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Since the 1980's, the United States has experienced a growing surge of Brazilian immigrants, increasing from a population of 56,000 in 1980 to 454,000 in 2007 (Bergad, 2010, pg. 4; Cruz et al., 2018). This surge was mostly composed of Brazil's white, middle-class who left Brazil and became immigrant, low-skilled workers in countries such as the US and Japan. In the 1980's, the states of California and New York had the highest populations of Brazilians with over one-third of the total population living in these states. By 2007, five states accounted for two-thirds of the Brazilian population in the United States: Florida (22%), Massachusetts (18.1%), New Jersey (10.4%), California (9.5%), and New York (7.5%) (Bergad, 2010, p.8). The state of Utah, according to the Brazilian American Chamber of Commerce of Utah, is the home of 8,000 to 10,000 Brazilian immigrants (Lindberg, 2010). Other than these statistics, there is a significant lack of qualitative and quantitative data on Brazilian immigrants in Utah. Additionally, census data cannot be entirely accurate as Brazilians who immigrated illegally are hesitant to participate in census data collection and because the census itself is difficult for them to navigate as it often instructs them to identify as Hispanic, when they do not see themselves as Hispanic. Furthermore, Margine Margolis, leading anthropological researcher of the Brazilian diaspora, explains that sixty-four percent of Brazilian immigrants to the United States are undocumented. Lack of documentation accounts for the discrepancies between the 280,080 Brazilian immigrants to the US counted in state surveys and 1,334,000 counted by Brazil's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Itamaraty (Margolis, 2013, p.77).

The reasons that many Brazilians immigrated to the United States are complex and varying, yet the majority of reasons could be placed in one of three categories: family ties, difficulty for those with higher education to find employment in Brazil, and disillusionment with Brazil's government. During the 1980's, when the United States first started experiencing a surge of immigration from Brazil, Brazil was undergoing a period of economic and political instability. A military dictatorship, resulting from a military coup in 1964, lasted until 1984, during which Brazil experienced loss of free speech and expression, a financial crisis, and an increase in violent crime. Brazilian Anthropologist Rosa Resende claimed, "if the United States was the land of Manifest Destiny, Brazil was the land of un-manifest[ed] destiny" (Reis, 2022, pp.41-42). Former President of Brazil, Fernando Collor de Melo, famously stated in the late 1980's that, "In the last two years, 200,000 young people abandoned the country. They didn't leave for travel, tourism or education—they literally gave up on Brazil" (Margolis, 1990).

During the first waves of Brazilian immigration to the United States, the majority of individuals came from the Governador Valadares, Minas Gerais region of Brazil. Since World War II, this region has had a notable relationship with the United States. During the war, Americans went to this area to mine mica, flooded the economy with American dollars, and hired Brazilians as domestic workers whom they brought back with them to the United States (Reis, 2022). Although today Brazilian immigrants come from various regions of Brazil, a majority still come from the southern regions.

Along with these individuals and the hotspots they create, also come Brazilian marketplaces, festivals, and other ethnic occurrences. These events help Brazilian immigrants to the United States find home and practice their culture (Kraieski, 2019,

p.111). Studies have shown that churches are focal points of Brazilian immigrant communities and cultural anchors (Margolis, 2013). They are existing webs of help and resources, social spaces, and spaces for the collective affirmation of identity (Vasquez & Ribeiro, 2007).

Outside of these studies, the role of religion and ethnic churches along with religious identity have been understudied (Chaudhury & Miller, 2008; Sirin & Fine, 2008). Verkuyten and Martinovic (2012) argue that “this is unfortunate because religion is often of profound importance to people’s lives and religious groups are among the more salient buttresses of identity” (p.1165). They explain that religious group identification is essential in understanding identity as it “offers a distinctive ‘sacred’ and unfalsifiable worldview, moral guidance for practices and behavioral choices, and ‘eternal’ group membership” (p. 1165).

Beattie (1998) argues that social functions play a role that is secondary to the spiritual functions of the role of the church. Though published a significant number of years ago, the social functions of the church identified by Moberg (1962) still exist today. Beattie (1998) references these social functions. She explains how ethnic churches act as agents of socialization, teaching individuals how to interpret the traditions, customs, and conventions of a society. Another social function of ethnic churches discussed was fellowship. Ethnic churches fulfill “the needs for primary group relations, particularly for immigrants who often have few if any family members in close proximity” (p. 83). They also serve to provide social solidarity, increasing awareness of shared interests and solidifying around common past and present experiences and ethnicity. These churches also act as agents of social stability and social control, assisting in the direction of

behaviors of members of congregations and also in the conservation of values and practices.

As ethnic churches serve social functions they also function as tools in the creation, preservation, and transmission of identity and culture. Without social institutions and structures such as churches, culture and identity would not exist as “Culture is not something that exists naturally, it should be educated and developed step by step. Thus, the internal environment between the members through sharing of ideas, beliefs, and values for each other” (Alzayed, 2015, p. 215)

Identity is also taught in spaces outside of churches and cultural and ethnic gathering places. Schools and homes also play an essential role in the transmission of identity from first-generation immigrants to second-generation immigrants.

A key contributor to identity is the cultural socialization that happens in the family home. Through the examination of cultural literature, discussion of the country of origin, the use of cultural objects, and the participation in and consumption of culture Familial ethnic socialization occurs. This cultural exposure and teaching promotes knowledge and positive attitudes about their home culture in children. Yet, the family alone can only do so much (Gonzalez et al., 2014, p.105).

For second-generation immigrant children or for children that are raised in the United States, adults working at their schools play a crucial role in the process of cultural socialization (Gonzalez et al., 2014, p.110). School staff members can influence identity development as they help immigrant students improve their personal and social skills and simultaneously explore their home context and identity (Gonzalez et al., 2014, p.105).

The diasporic Brazilian community is diverse and complicated. Much like how a prototypical Brazilian does not exist, a prototypical Brazilian immigrant is also nonexistent (Reis, 2022). In addition to the lack of a prototypical Brazilian, the fluidity of identity and the number of factors that influence identity create difficulties for Brazilian immigrants as they attempt to define their identities in the United States.

III. METHODOLOGY

Ethnographic Research

Identity is self-determined, unique to each person, and consequently difficult to define. By using qualitative research methods, specifically ethnographic methods, the researcher is able to have a richer understanding of how individuals experience the world. It allows the researcher to listen to, interpret, and weave together the stories of persons in order to create a quilt of the world and come to a closer understanding of how the person views and experiences it. Ethnography is proven to be one of the best tools in making sense of the world and understanding diverse social phenomena (O'Reilly, 2011). Furthermore, it allows for individuals to be studied more naturally and with less observer bias, and requires the researcher to acknowledge their "role in the construction of social life" (O'Reilly, 2011, p.28).

Semi-structured Interviews

In my initial meetings with participants, before using any other qualitative research method, I conducted semi-structured interviews. The intention behind this approach was to gain repertoire with the participants, help them feel comfortable, and gain a better understanding of them as individuals to help guide the rest of their participation in the study. Following Kirner and Mills (2020), interviewing is essential for the ethnographic researcher as it permits them to understand the ideal culture of the participant or what the participant deems as normal, showing how the participant understands their own life. Interviews also serve to help researchers understand what the informant is thinking, feeling, and seeing. Semi-structured interviews are beneficial to the researcher as they allow "for a wide range of responses and [are] designed more to open

up a deep and complex conversation” (Kirner & Mills, 2020, pp. 113-114). For both the interlocutors and I, these interviews were more personal and created trust between us, allowing me as an outsider to become an insider and to have a better vision of their experiences as Brazilians living in Salt Lake and Utah Valley. For this study, semi-structured interviews were a necessity as they highlighted, more than structured interviews would, the personal experiences and thoughts of the interlocutors and focused on them as individuals. I also recognized they would be useful in identifying patterns or themes common among the participant sample (Schensul & LeCompte, 2012).

An interview guide (Table 1) with questions including general icebreakers, demographic information, and others focused specifically on the research was used during the interview. The rest of the interview built off these questions, allowing the participants the opportunity to expand or detail experiences as they wished. The majority of these interviews were conducted in Portuguese depending on the preference of the interlocutor.

Table 1
Interview Guide

Questions	Anticipated Responses
Tell me about your everyday routine?	I expect to hear about getting kids ready, going grocery shopping, working, making dinner, just everyday things. I would ask questions such as: Who did you see or contact today? What did you buy at the grocery store? What store did you go to?
What does it mean to be an American? What does it mean to be a Brazilian?	I would expect to hear about values they deem American and values they deem Brazilian.

What is similar about Americans and Brazilians? Differences?	<p>I would ask questions such as: Where do you see these values? Can you give me an example of how you have seen this? Do you think that an American would agree with you? Do you think other Brazilians would agree with you?</p>
How would you describe yourself? Why?	<p>I would expect to hear about actions and habits that are different between Brazilians and Americans.</p> <p>I would ask questions such as: Can you give me an example of how you have seen this recently?</p> <p>I would expect to hear whether they identify themselves as Brazilian or American.</p> <p>I would ask probing questions such as: Have you always felt this way? If not, what changed? What do you do to show this? Do others see you this way? How would you describe me?</p>

Participant Observation

If interviews are necessary to ethnographic research because they reveal the ideal of the participant, then participant observation is equally as essential because it provides data on real culture. Participant observation increases the validity of findings while decreasing occurrences of reactivity among interlocutors. It also helps the researcher to become more accustomed to the field and to the people that they are studying and allows them to refine language that they may use in interviews and in other methods. Participant observation also provides the researcher with access to information that could be

inaccessible without being present (Kirner & Mills, 2020). Furthermore, the role of the researcher is legitimized in the community through participant observation (Schensul & LeCompte, 2012, p.84).

I conducted research as a participant observer with all the participants in my study in a variety of spaces including: their homes, family members' homes, workplaces, outdoor and indoor recreational spaces, and places of worship and reverence.

The primary workspace I acted as a participant observer in was restaurants. In four Brazilian restaurants located in the Salt Lake and Utah Valleys, I participated as a customer. I purchased food and made observations based on customer-employee and employee-owner relationships. In one Brazilian restaurant, I was invited to regularly make observations in the back kitchen. In this space, I participated as a kitchen helper, never working directly with food, but washing dishes and helping maintain cleanliness.

During the course of the study, I acted as a visitor in the homes of four families with individuals identifying with varying degrees of Brazilianess. I attended family dinners, celebrated birthdays and commemorable events, went grocery shopping, and was present regularly in the daily lives of these four families.

At the capoeira club—operating as an indoor and outdoor recreational space, workplace, and in some senses a place of reverence—I first participated as a student. I paid student fees and participated in the advanced adult class. However, at the end of the study, the owner of the club and a participant in the study, asked if I would attend a few more classes and events as a club photographer, not as a student. I acted as a photographer for two classes, their Juneteenth event, and a local Afro-arts event.

Mapping

Cultural mapping allows the researcher to physically represent cultural beliefs and values. It also helps the researcher to record and collect social, historical, and ecological data in the situation itself and oftentimes with the direct help of the participant (Strang, 2010, p.132).

The process is simple, but yet both systematic and comprehensive as it collects both visual and textual material. Through already existing maps or sketches and those created by the researcher, social spaces and relationships are literally “mapped”. On these maps, a variety of information can be documented, including topographical and ecological information, local histories, socio-spatial information, ownership, and resource use. This method is key for understanding ethnic identity formation and identification because it focuses on human environment interactions, explains how people inhabit and make sense of places, and how they experience material environments that they encounter (Strang, 2010, p.133).

In this study specifically, mapping assisted in more fully describing the environment studied and in gaining a greater understanding of the context. It also helped me to better understand the mind of participants as we engaged in mapping exercises together (Roberts, 2016, p.3). Though what I describe and what I learn from what participants say is useful to my study, what they do not say is of equal importance. Mapping helped create an image of the spaces in which identity exists and different identities mix and how they mixed, and filled in the spaces that interviewing and participant observation could not fill.

I used mapping in three main ways to visually represent data given to me by participants. The first was spatial mapping. I created a map of the locality indicating the

locations of the Brazilian restaurants and their proximity to each other. I also created maps of the inside of the restaurants, notating how the spaces were used by participants and customers. I also attempted to use journey mapping as a means to document and visualize the process that interlocutors experience as they navigate their identity (Gibbons, 2018). As I conducted some of the informal interviews, I recorded the information in the form of a journey map. The third method of mapping I used was instructional maps. A variation of journey maps, instructional maps allowed me to record how a participant completed a certain ritual and gave me instruction on how to recreate it.

Sonic

Ferrarini and Scaldaferrri (2020) acknowledge that sound plays a role in creating community beyond that created by music and the spoken language (p.53).

Acoustemology and the ethnography of sound are more than just listening. Part of the study of acoustemology is studying the rhythm and bodily movement that is encouraged by sound. In combination with sound, rhythm and bodily movement are responsible for the creation of material culture (Feld, 2015; Feld, 2004). By collecting sonic data, I hoped to capture how rhythm and acoustics influence identity in its creation and preservation.

Using two audio recording devices, my personal cell phone and an audio recorder, I collected sonic data from two sources primarily: local Brazilian restaurants and the capoeira club. In the restaurants, I at first focused my audio recordings on the ambience of the space; however, as my study progressed I centered on the music played and the languages spoken within the public dining space as well as verbal descriptions of cultural food made by participants.

In the capoeira club, using the same two devices, I made recordings of three whole classes: one inside the theater-turned-studio, one outside of said space, and another at a public park. I took shorter recordings of the music played and sang during the class and during the moments that the Mestre took to educate the class on Brazilian culture and his experiences living in the United States. During the capoeira class the recorders remained in different locations, either the front near the Mestre, on my person, or to the left of the Mestre more to the middle of the room in the space where the other students and I left our personal belongings.

Digital Media Usage

In the context of today's world, one space that is often neglected from study and one of the most consequential is digital space. Virtual spaces themselves serve as the primary sites of many cultural practices and interactions. Technologies and social media serve as a means for communication. They also help children become socialized into family social circles and practices (Perrino & Pritzker, 2021, pp. 299-301). Through video and webcam chats families are able to stay connected over large distances.

Social media is particularly powerful in forming cultural identity and in its expression. Through social media, previously silenced groups are able to become vocal (Perrino & Pritzker, 2021, p.300). Technology and social media also preserve histories and oral storytelling (Perrino & Pritzker, 2021, p.303). Through social media, researchers are able to collect data on digital discourse and on the social construction of identity.

During the study, interlocutors showed and explained to me how they used social media and technology to engage with their social circles in Brazil, but also how they used it to find and become familiar with social circles of Brazilians in the Utah and Salt Lake

Valleys. Using Facebook groups, individual pages, and profiles of individuals, I was able to gain a more clear picture of ethnic groups that individuals interacted and identified with, but also to see how they identify and present themselves to these groups.

Photo and Video

Using my personal cell phone and a DSLR camera, I captured images of the restaurants, the capoeira club, and the material items given to me by various interlocutors. My photos focused on the context of the locations, the interlocutors involved, and the actions that were occurring. Using my personal cell phone I captured videos of the capoeira club meetings in order to better record the cultural exchanges as they occurred. In some videos I am a participant and in others I am an outsider filming the videos. The majority of the videos are taken from the front of the class from the perspective of Mestre who directed the cultural exchange. A few videos captured the class from the side.

Material

Long (2015), in an examination of food voice, points out how food, as material culture, is an expression of meaning and identity. Along similar lines, Weller and Turkon (2015) argue that food defines the human experience and food can be a tool in determining the degree to which immigrants are maintaining their cultural identity and connectedness with their community (p.58). During the course of the study, as much data was collected inside of restaurant kitchens, food played a significant role in the telling of stories and of defining identity. Due to the perishability of food items, I was unable to collect them permanently. However, I captured images and obtained recipes for the majority of these food items so that they could be recreated or at least visualized.

From the capoeira club, the items of material culture I perceived as being most important were the drum and berimbau. These items are of great monetary and sentimental value so I only captured in depth images of these items and videos of their use.

Thematic Qualitative Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using the following methods outlined by Van Manen (2003). Field notes made from jottings taken in the field or shortly after leaving the field are read over. Then they are read over again, this time notating the most important occurrences in relation to the research questions. Inductive coding or grounded theory allows the researcher to gather theories based off of the data collected (Kirner and Mills, 2020). The field notes are then reviewed a third time and separated into thematic categories. I chose to use thematic qualitative analysis as it would allow for patterns to be drawn from the data and interpreted, helping to paint a picture of Brazilian immigrants experiences as they navigate their identities.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In examining my data, I sought to answer my proposed research question:

How do first-generation Brazilians living in Utah Valley and Salt Lake Valley perceive their own identity? Within this question, I will seek to answer the following sub-questions:

1. How is identity preserved among first-generation Brazilians in Utah and Salt Lake Valleys?
2. Where and how is identity transmitted from first-generation Brazilians to second-generation Brazilians in Utah and Salt Lake Valleys?

The participant group included fifteen individuals from different parts of Brazil, of varying races, and different statuses in life in the US. Each participant volunteered initially to participate in a one time, 30+ minute, semi-structured interview, and then agreed to participate in other methods as time permitted over the course of the study. The generous amount of time given by each of these participants and their commitment to the study allowed me to more comprehensively come to know them and to produce authentic representations of their perception of identity. In the table below (Table 2) the names and demographics of the participants are listed. The names of the participants have been altered in order to protect their identities.

Table 2

Participant Demographics

Participant Name	Gender	Profession	Home Region of Brazil	Self-Declared Identity
Mestre	male	Capoeira instructor	Bahia	Brazilian

Ronaldo	male	Construction worker/ Restaurant owner	Rio Grande do Sul	Brazilian
Sueli	female	Restaurant owner	Rio Grande do Sul	Brazilian
Elisabete	female	Speech pathologist	Rio de Janeiro	Brazilian
Cristina	female	student/ teacher/ translator	São Paulo	Brazilian
Racheal	female	School office worker	São Paulo	Brazilian
Simone	female	student	São Paulo/Amazônia	Brazilian
Tiago	male	student	São Paulo	Italian-Brazilian
Irene	female	English student	Bahia	Brazilian
Jessica	female	English student	Santa Catarina	Brazilian
Mario	male	student	US	Brazilian-American
Mauro	male	student	US	Brazilian-American
Selene	female	homemaker	São Paulo	Brazilian
Rafael	male	student	Brasília	Brazilian
Taynara	female	homemaker/ Home manager	Rio Grande do Sul	Brazilian

Thematic Analysis

The participants from the study can be divided into three categories: families and individuals, business owners, and *capoeiristas*. Each of these data categories can then be

split into two categories, first-generation Brazilians and second-generation Brazilians. Though interesting and valuable, I chose to limit my data usage to only the data originating from first-generation Brazilians in order to more precisely address the research question and to prevent the scope of the study from being too large. Within the category of first-generation Brazilians, I identified an overwhelming theme that dictates how first-generation Brazilians self-identify, and how they identify second-generation Brazilians. Within the data, I also identified the themes of how identity is maintained and taught and the role of non-Brazilians in these processes. I have entitled these themes: *We Are Brazilian and Our Children are Brazilian-American*, *Tools of Identity Preservation and Transmission*, and *The Capoeira Club and Surrogate Brazilians*, respectively (Table 3).

Table 3

Main Themes From Data

Themes/Sub-Themes	# of Participants Addressing Themes
<i>We Are Brazilian and Our Children are Brazilian-American</i>	16
<i>Tools of Identity Preservation and Transmission</i>	16
<i>The Capoeira Club and Surrogate Brazilians</i>	4

We Are Brazilian and Our Children Are Brazilian-American

Consistently, throughout the course of the study, first-generation Brazilians self-identified as Brazilian and generally not as American. In some cases, participants claimed American as a second identity, but generally only in the sense that they lived in the United States, seeing themselves as different from Americans.

Racheal often invited me to join family social gatherings during the course of my research. She and her husband, who is American, live in Utah Valley with their three sons, two of whom, Mario and Mauro, also participated in the study. One evening at the end of May, she invited me to a birthday dinner, celebrating the birthday of her second-oldest son, Mario. After dinner the family gathered in the living room. The two oldest sons and the youngest sat on the other side of the room from me with their partners playing video games, while I interviewed Racheal. I asked her how she saw herself, as Brazilian, American, or Brazilian-American? Surprised, she responded,

“Of course I consider myself Brazilian. I live here now, but I was born in Brazil.”

Continuing her thoughts, she explained that sometimes she feels bad for having a job because in her mind it is taking jobs from Americans. I asked her why she felt that way. She acknowledged to me that she still feels like an outsider. She shared with me how she loves American holidays, especially Thanksgiving and the Fourth of July, with feasts and fireworks. Yet, she feels like a tourist, and that because she was born in Brazil and only lives in the United States now, these are not her holidays to celebrate. I asked her how she shows that she is Brazilian. Again shocked, she replied,

“I look Brazilian..I don’t look American because I look Latina, but I’m a different kind of Latina, I’m not Hispanic.”

Her responses reveal the ambiguity in determining identity. They also show how even after living in the United States for twenty-five years, which is longer than she lived in Brazil, she still identifies as Brazilian first and not as an American. It appears that Rachael believes that identity is something that is acquired at birth or as a child and can be seen in physical characteristics.

It is notable that Racheal's opinions about Brazilian phenotypes are not shared by other interlocutors, but some would agree that style, clothing, and overall appearance would help a Brazilian identify whether or not someone is Brazilian. For example, during an interview, Rafael pointed out that he can tell that I am American because of the brand and style of shoes I was wearing and the type of bag I had.

Some, like Ronaldo, still identify strongly with their home states in Brazil. Ronaldo is from the state of Rio Grando do Sul. He is gaúcho first and Brazilian second, but American because he lives in the United States. Ronaldo is the co-owner of a Brazilian cuisine restaurant in Utah Valley. At lunchtime during the week, the majority of the customers that come in are Brazilians. Speaking in Portuguese and addressing Ronaldo in familiar ways, they order feijoada and estrogonofe and enjoy a break from their work day.

However, during the weekends, adventurous American families, couples looking for a new date night spot, and individuals who served religious proselytizing missions in Brazil, fill the restaurant. Ronaldo works the evening shift, so he is the one to work with these customers. Standing in the back of the kitchen washing serving trays, over the soft MPB and bossa nova playing over the speakers, I often overheard Ronaldo explaining the menu to customers, breaking down each dish so that one not familiar with the culture of Brazil would understand. *Polenta* is fried corn batter, *pão de queijo* is cheese bread, and *feijoada* is a meat and bean stew served over rice.

Sometimes a customer would ask him if he was Brazilian and he would respond that he is. Yet this performance that he gave to Americans visiting his restaurant differed from the one that he presented to me, other Brazilians, and individuals familiar with

Brazil. From our very first interview, he asserted that he was gaúcho and then Brazilian. In his explanation, he stated that it was easier for Americans to grasp Brazilian than gaúcho; that they did not have the understanding to perceive the subtle, but deeply rooted differences between being gaúcho and being only Brazilian. They would not know that he is president of Utah's sect of an international gaúcho cultural group. They would not notice how careful he is to ensure that his accent lacks the palatalized [t] that is characteristic of most Brazilian accents, but absent in gaúcho accents. While popular Brazilian music always plays in the background of the restaurant, he prefers to fill the acoustic space around him with Brazilian gaúcho music, which he characterizes as being thematically like American country music. Ronaldo's instagram, which he directed me to look at to help me come to know him, is not filled with pictures and videos of the food sold in the restaurant, but of churrasco, for which Brazilians from Rio Grande do Sul are known.

Ronaldo presents himself differently to those with Brazilian cultural knowledge and to those without. His restaurant and social media function as a tool for him to display his brasilidade to Americans and to preserve it through cultural products, such as food. Pictured below (Figure 1) is Ronaldo in a social media profile photo and a screenshot of a video he shared of him and his children cooking together. These images are included with the permission of Ronaldo. His profile (Figure 2) is of importance as it shows a physical representation of the symbolic betweenness he feels as a Brazilian living in the United States.

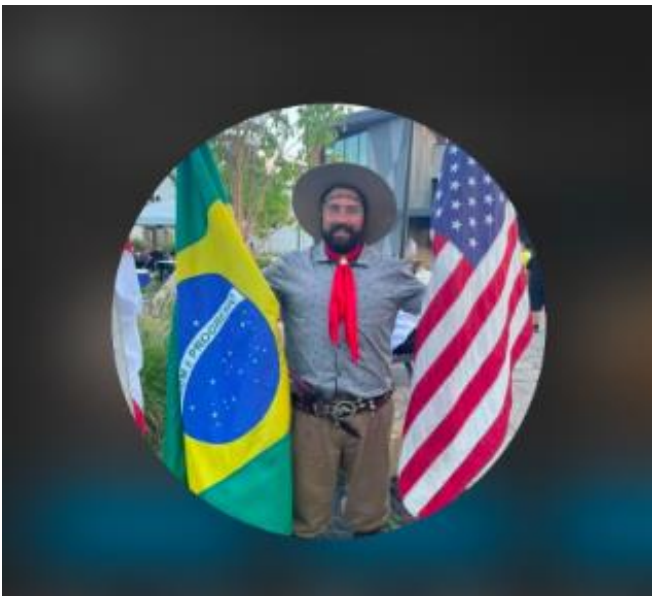
Figure 1

Screenshot of churrasco from Ronaldo's Social Media



Figure 2

Ronaldo's Social Media Profile Picture



Participants such as Rachael and Ronaldo echo the assertions of other Brazilians living in the United States. Reis (2022) records one participant saying, 'There is no way for someone to beat their chest and say, 'no, I am Brazilian, but I feel American.' They cannot say that, there is no way. This is pride, if I say that, it is pride, because a Brazilian is Brazilian (even though) he may have grown up here, or he may be living here (in the US). (p. 161)

Additional participants in the study of Reis share similar opinions. They identify Brazil as "home" and struggle to separate their identity from Brazil. Even with the US as their country of residence they still feel stronger ties to Brazil.

First-generation Brazilian participants in my study, whether they lived in the United States for eight months like Jessica or twenty-five years like Rachael, still identify and maintain strong ties with Brazil and to their Brazilian identity.

However, they see their children differently. First-generation Brazilian participants in the study with children raised or born in the United States identified their children as both Brazilian and American. Yet, each participant had a different understanding of the factors that determined the Brazilianess of their children and other second-generation Brazilians.

Rafael and Selene are a first-generation Brazilian couple living in Utah Valley with a one-year old daughter. Rafael moved from São Paulo, Brazil with his wife to study at a university in Utah Valley in August of 2021. In 2023, their daughter was born. Sitting in their living room eating estrogonofe, I interviewed Selene and Rafael. I asked them whether they felt their daughter was Brazilian or American. Rafael animatedly stated that their dog, Simba, is American because she was born in the United States and

that likewise their daughter is American because she too was born in the United States. They also still deem their daughter as Brazilian, and they plan to maintain that identity by teaching her about her Brazilian culture in their home and in their social gathering spaces. For them, identity is both a characteristic that an individual is born with and that is created.

Rafael feels similarly about his children. One day while experimenting with a new gnocchi dish in the restaurant he told me about them. Speaking in strained tones, he shared that his children are the reason that he came here. In Brazil he was a highly successful business owner and engineer. He received a scholarship to study in Germany, but needed to learn English first and came to the U.S. to do so. After bringing his family here he sacrificed his scholarship and took multiple jobs in construction and in the restaurant business to support his family because he felt he could give them a better life here than he could in Brazil, even after the education he would have received in Germany. Though he started his new life here with very little, he now owns a restaurant and loves bringing in his children to work with him.

Occasionally, his children would help in the restaurant at the same time I was. One particular day, Ronaldo introduced me to his third child and then told me about how this son loved coming to the restaurant the most. Showing me videos and pictures from his phone, he explained to me the importance of churrasco and how he learned to be gaúcho in Rio Grande do Sul by learning how to cook churrasco and that this, from the moment they can walk, is how he teaches his children to be gaúcho and Brazilian.

As I continued to ask questions about what makes him Brazilian and he continued to instruct me in the art of making a perfect feijoada, the trick being smoked meat, he

shared a story with me that emphasized the distinction between his identity as a Brazilian and how he saw his children's identity as Brazilian-American. On a holiday earlier in the year, one of his youngest sons, who was born in the United States, saw his father displaying a gaúcho flag. His son pointed at it and said, "Look, it's Daddy's flag!" and then the American flag also displayed, "Look, there's my flag!". For Ronaldo, this demonstrated that his children were American, but their cultural knowledge and involvement made them gaúcho and Brazilian. In his eyes, they are Brazilian-American and their Brazilianess depends on their cultural knowledge.

For Racheal, the brasilidade of her children as second-generation Brazilian Americans is far more dependent on cultural knowledge than on heritage. After asking her about how she sees her own identity, I asked her how she saw her sons. Very quickly she informed me that she saw them as more American than Brazilian. She stated that she would not leave them alone in Brazil because they do not know where not to go and what not to do. In her eyes, they lack the necessary cultural knowledge for them to be considered completely Brazilian. Two of her three sons speak Portuguese, but neither of them learned at home. They learned Portuguese in Portugal and Cape Verde serving religious proselytizing missions. She even stated that it has been so long since she lived in Brazil that she worries that she would not know where not to go and what not to do.

In the eyes of first-generation Brazilian participants in my study, second-generation Brazilians were Brazilian-Americans. Their opinions align with those of Alzayed (2015) and Gonzalez et al. (2014) that argue that culture and identity do not exist naturally and are developed and that the cultural socialization that happens in the home is essential to the identity development of second-generation immigrants. Participants from

my study and from Reis (2022) asserted that place of birth or homeland are consequential to the determination of identity. Following this, being born in Brazil or being of Brazilian descent plays a role in identity. Second-generation Brazilians can be of Brazilian descent and born in the United States making them both Brazilian and American. However, because identity and culture are also learned, identity for second-generation Brazilians becomes increasingly complicated and ambiguous. As American identity is transmitted to second-generation Brazilians in everyday life, how is Brazilian identity taught to them? Speaking of native language Alzayed (2015) explains that the lack of native language usage in the home often results in the loss of the native language and the destruction of family connections and relationships. Language and family relationships are significant cultural ties and tools in the formation of identity and were recognized by participants in my study as indicators of Brazilianess and a means by which Brazilianess is taught. If Brazilianess is not taught, there is a risk of it being lost among second-generation Brazilians.

Tools of Identity Preservation and Transmission

How is it then that first-generation Brazilians retain their Brazilianess without becoming American and how second-generation Brazilians acquire a Brazilian identity?

Racheal's Brazilianess and the limited Brazilianess of her sons are maintained through regular visits to Brazil to visit her family and contact with her family through social media, technology, and other modes of communication. Her sons have a familial and a language connection to Brazil, and the physical characteristics she deems as Brazilian, but lack in the cultural knowledge that she sees as important, make them more American and less Brazilian, but still Brazilian-American in her eyes.

Similar to cases discussed by Margolis (2007), Rachael and her sons are able to transnationalistically maintain their identity through globalization and the technological innovations provided in modernity. Rachael remains closely connected to her parents, siblings, and extended family through these regular visits and also through the online connections she is able to build with her family. As she retains this connection to her family, she retains the connection to Brazil and her Brazilian identity.

Ronaldo teaches them about their Brazilian culture through food. His children know the recipes by heart. The most important recipes are the gaúcho recipes, as he teaches his children to be Brazilian by teaching them to be gaúcho. Similar to how he expresses his gaúcho identity to other Brazilians, he teaches his children through the expression of this identity. When they ride with him in his car, they listen to gaúcho music. At home they cook gaúcho food and they participate in the gaúcho cultural group with him. Ronaldo recognizes the need for identity to be taught as addressed in Alzayed (2015) and acts on it. He intentionally examines cultural literature, uses cultural objects, and discusses Brazil with his children as recommended for cultural exposure by Gonzalez et al. (2014).

Selene and Rafael reflect the actions of Ronaldo and Rachael. They only speak Portuguese in the home because Selene does not yet speak English and so that their daughter will learn Portuguese. They regularly visit Brazil and maintain contact with their family living there through online and social media spaces.

Selene and Rafael attend an ethnic church, a Portuguese-speaking congregation of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. One Sunday they invited me to accompany them. I met them at a chapel located about ten minutes from their home,

which in comparison to the distance that individuals normally drive to chapels in Utah and Salt Lake Valleys, was quite a distance. Greeted at the door with an *olá* and a hug and then again with a hug and two kisses on the cheek as I went to sit down, it was clear why Rafael informed me that they felt more at home in a Brazilian congregation than they did at the English-speaking congregation closer to their home. The behavior of members of the congregation, the music and sounds of Brazilian Portuguese filling the space, and the manner that the service was conducted, reverent and warm, closely resemble the services of Latter-Day Saints that I attended in several cities in Brazil.

When I attended with Selene and Rafael it was early June, when Brazil celebrates its harvest festival, Festa Junina. In the main meeting, the festival dinner was excitedly announced and during the womens' meeting, sign-up sheets for traditional dishes were passed around along with invitations (Figure 3), and plans for decorations.

Figure 3

Invitation to Festa Junina



A few weeks previously, while attending a congregation in São Luis, Brazil, I observed the same excitement and planning for their celebration of the same festival, showing how ethnic churches help to continue cultural practices and maintain identity.

Ronaldo and his family also demonstrate that for them, cultural identity relies on a combination of cultural knowledge and place of birth, but more on cultural knowledge. Sitting in the kitchen of his restaurant washing trays while he cut and seasoned meat in preparation for the next day, he told me about how he teaches his children to be Brazilian. Like Selene and Rafael, his family attends a Portuguese-speaking congregation of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. However, unlike them, the ethnic church only serves as a language preservation tool for him and his wife Taynara, not for his children. Their intention behind attending a Portuguese-speaking congregation is cultural education for their children. Some of his children were born in the United States and have significant educational challenges that would make it difficult for them to learn Portuguese and English at the same time, which is required to attend school, so they only speak English. His older children speak Portuguese at home and with him in the restaurant, but his younger children speak English.

For Renaldo and his wife and for Selene and Rafael these Portuguese-speaking congregations of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are ethnic churches and serve the same purposes. The congregations, or wards as they are referred to, play both a spiritual and a social role in the lives of first and second-generation Brazilian immigrants and in the development of their identities. The wards act as agents of socialization, helping first-generation Brazilian immigrants navigate Brazilianess in an American

context (Beattie, 1998). Portuguese-speaking wards in the Utah and Salt Lake Valleys provide social solidarity, as the majority of the members of these groups are first-generation Brazilians and are also agents of social stability and social control. These wards provide the structure necessary for the teaching of identity in the form of cultural events, such as the Festa Junina and immersion in Portuguese. Similar to how simply speaking a language at home is not enough to maintain, simply practicing a culture is not enough. Proper resources are required (Kondo, 1998; Gonzalez et al., 2014). These resources can be provided by ethnic churches.

In discussion with Ronaldo one afternoon in his restaurant, I learned that he knows all the Brazilian business owners in the valley and works with them extensively. He was not the only business owner to suggest that the Brazilian businesses in the area were part of a close-knit network. One store had shelves near the register filled with the business cards of numerous local Brazilian businesses. These included doctors, lawyers, lawn care specialists, and even missionaries from the Portuguese-speaking congregations. Ronaldo told me that not only do a majority of the business owners come from a similar spot in Brazil, but that they also are all members of the various portuguese-speaking congregations of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in the valleys and that they often interacted with each other.

As stated by another participant from the study of Reis (2022), "From the moment you walk inside the Brazilian church, it is like you were in Brazil" (p.183). For members of portuguese-speaking congregations there is little reason to leave their social circles and the vast network created by their church. Through this network they have access to doctors, lawyers, restaurants, stores, and any other need that they would have. Ethnic

churches are essential in helping first-generation Brazilian immigrants to preserve their identities and to pass on Brazilianess to second-generation Brazilians living in the Utah and Salt Lake Valleys.

The Capoeira Club and Surrogate Brazilians

Instead of rooting themselves in already existing connections as a means to preserve Brazilian identity and culture, Mestre and Brazilian participants in his capoeira group use capoeira to teach history, culture, and Brazilian values to American participants. In this sense, Mestre and Brazilian capoeiristas are the first-generation Brazilians and the American participants acting as surrogate Brazilians that help give space to the first-generation to participate in cultural practices which preserve their identity, and helps second-generation Brazilians to form their identity.

The core function of the class is to teach capoeira. Mestre leads a group of usually about twenty to twenty-five students, Brazilian and American, through stretches, drills, sequences, and then ends with a roda and a motivational discussion.

Along with instructing students in the movements of capoeira, Mestre also incorporates Portuguese language instruction into his classes, which has been identified by first-generation Brazilian participants as essential to teaching their kids about being Brazilian. During class, Mestre gives instruction in Portuguese to Portuguese speakers and in English to English speakers. However, he always gives the names of the capoeira moves in Portuguese and explains meanings behind them. Some of the American members of his group who have participated for many years can hold basic conversations in Portuguese and regularly use Portuguese on their social media posts and as they teach capoeira.

One of the key elements of capoeira is the music. The music communicates everything and instructs the capoeiristas. Standing in the shade of a large, aging tree in Sugar House Park in Salt Lake City, Largentixa, an American who has trained as a capoeira for the last twenty years, would give berimbau lessons to advanced students

Figure 4

Mestre giving instructions from underneath the tree



Figure 5

Mestre and Largaritixa playing capoeira music



while Mestre ran flexibility drills with the other students (Figure 4). Here they are pictured above (Figure 5) with their consent. As I stood listening and recording on my audio recorder, he explained to them how the rhythm and the intensity of the music tells the capoeiristas how fast the capoeiristas need to be moving and whether the fight is contact or no contact. Each rhythm used by the capoeiristas has a name and an origin story and carries parts of Brazil's history, in particular the history of Brazil for Afro-Brazilians. My recordings capture his explanations of the different rhythms followed by the distinct springy sound of the berimbau string and rattle of the *caxixi*.

Aside from berimbau rhythms, the lyrics of capoeira music are also tools that Mestre uses to preserve his Brazilian culture as he teaches Brazilian history and the Portuguese language through these lyrics. As he teaches the words to the songs, he teaches the meaning of the words in English and explains the contexts behind the lyrics to the song. As part of Afro-arts celebration, the capoeira group gave a special Juneteenth

roda. During the recording of the roda, he can be heard inviting students to share songs that they had learned with the group. One student shared,

*Santo Antônio eu quero água
 Santo Antônio eu quero água
 Quero água pra beber
 Quero água pra lavar
 Quero água pra benzer
 Quero água
 Quero água pra beber
 Quero água pra lavar
 Quero água pra benzer
 Quero água*

Mestre used this opportunity to explain that this song originated during a time where slavery still existed in Brazil and that this specific song was an invocation to Saint Anthony, asking for blessing of water to drink, to wash their clothes, and to bless their children.

Like ethnic churches, the capoeira club serves as a tool by which Mestre and his Brazilian students maintain their Brazilian identity. The movements and sequences, the dance, the language, and the historical and cultural lessons are ritualistic and help the practitioner remember and practice their identity. Beyond assisting in the preservation of identity, the capoeira club helps to teach about Brazilian identity. This is witnessed as American participants become familiar with not only capoeira, but the Portuguese language and Brazilian culture, history, and experience. Several long time participants have become fluent in Portuguese purely from the classes and contact with first-generation Brazilians that participate. These Americans become so familiar that they are able to help teach childrens' capoeira classes at the studio, passing on capoeira movements, the Portuguese language, Brazilian culture and history, and play a part in the

teaching of Brazilian identity to second-generation Brazilian students, children of the first-generation Brazilians, who come to the studio to connect with their Brazilian identity. These Americans are in some senses surrogate Brazilians, acting as repositories of cultural knowledge and as conduits in the transmission of identity.

On a larger scale, it could be said that the 24,000-32,000 Americans of non-Brazilian descent living in Utah that participate in ethnic churches also act as surrogates. The capoeira club, like the Portuguese-speaking congregations, are spiritual gathering places where first-generation Brazilians find a means to meet their spiritual and social needs. In both institutions similar language is used. Referring to a peaceful, spiritual feeling, signifying unity and the presence of God, the wards used the term “the spirit”. This is something that every member of the group could contribute to by conforming to certain behaviors or that could be taken away from by lack of compliance to these standards. Likewise, the capoeira club references a similar feeling called *axé*, which is good vibes or feelings coming from human beings or coming from the *orixás*. Like the American members of the capoeira club help to strengthen the network and community of Brazilians in the capoeira club, Americans that speak Portuguese do the same in Portuguese-speaking congregations and the networks created by them. As teachers and instructors and members of these congregations with assignments and responsibilities they too act as surrogates and support the preservation of identity for first-generation Brazilians and the transmission of identity to second-generation Brazilians.

This goes beyond what is discussed by Gonzalez et al. (2014) when they addressed the role of school staff members in the development of second-generation immigrant childrens’ identity. The Americans of non-Brazilian descent that act as

surrogates do not only need to be familiar with Brazilian culture, traditions, and behaviors, but become part of it, placing themselves in the context of the Brazilian experience. They do not gain a Brazilian identity, but instead perform culturally with first-generation Brazilians to assist in the preservation and transmission of identity.

V. CONCLUSION

The data collected from the ethnographic methods of participant observation, semi-structured interviews, audio, video, photo, social media usage, and mapping and then analyzed using thematic analysis suggest that first-generation Brazilians identify themselves as Brazilian with some degree of self-identification as American and that they see second generation Brazilians as Brazilian-American. The data also shows that first-generation Brazilians preserve their Brazilian identity and pass it on to second-generation Brazilians through participation in cultural practices at gathering spaces such as churches, cultural groups, and Brazilian businesses in the Utah and Salt Lake Valleys. These results echo those of studies done in Brazilian populations in Florida, Boston, New Jersey, California, and New York (Reis, 2022; Serrão & Chaves, 2020; Chaves, 2017; Bessa, 2013; White et al., 2010).

This study contributes to the discussion of the Brazilian diaspora in the United States in the field of anthropology. As far as I can tell from my research in online archives, this is the first study that examines Brazilian immigrants and perceptions of identity in Utah, particularly in the Utah and Salt Lake Valleys, where a high density but unrecognized population of first and second-generation Brazilians reside.

This study also correlates with and furthers the findings of previous studies conducted examining identity and how immigrant populations form and maintain identity

(Gonzalez et al., 2014; Alzayed, 2015). Additionally, this study calls for more attention to the role of the host community in the formation of immigrants' identity and in the discussion of surrogate identities.

Some limitations of the study include the limited sample size of sixteen individuals and the shorter length of the study. Additional research, with more participants and a longer duration of study would help to make the data more comprehensive. Furthermore, a deeper examination of surrogate identity in other Brazilian immigrant groups and other immigrant groups in general would assist in this endeavor as well. Finally, another study with a focus on race and regional origin and how those factors influence the perception, preservation, and transmission of identity among first-generation Brazilians and second-generation Brazilians would also increase the comprehensiveness of the study.

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