Immigrants in the Heartland:

Columbus as a New Settlement Destination City for Brazilians

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ABSTRACT

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Immigrant communities have been developing in a diverse array of new settlement destinations across the US. This research focuses on a group of Brazilian immigrants in Columbus, to better understand the city as a settlement destination, as well as the changing profile of the Brazilian immigrant community. Using a semi-ethnographic approach that uses qualitative methods, this research presents several new findings. First, it portrays a diverse community of Brazilian immigrants, including Brazilians from Rondonia. Second, it offers insight on Brazilians and their manner to self-identify, as well as the importance of their feelings of fear. Third, it highlights the importance of the internet as a vital space for immigrant communities. Finally, it supports findings on the importance of the five new settlement destination factors.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Latino immigrants, who make up 58% of all immigrants (Center for Immigration Studies 2008), are now settling in alternative destination areas besides the “gateway” or “traditional” states, which include California, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, and Texas. Rather, immigrant communities have been developing in a diverse array of new settlement destinations across the US. Small towns like Marshalltown, Iowa now boast of a large Latino community (Woodrick 2006), and likewise, larger cities such as Charlotte, North Carolina or Atlanta, Georgia have been identified as areas of fast-immigrant growth among the Latino foreign-born (Weeks et.al 2006-2007). Scholarship on new settlement destinations continues to emerge, analyzing immigrant communities in Oregon, South Dakota, Virginia, and other formerly unlikely states. Ohio is considered by scholars a moderate growth state with a 40.3% increase in its foreign-born population between 2000 and 2007 (Center for Immigration Studies 2008).

Brazilian immigrants are part of this trend of locating in new and unlikely destinations such as Atlanta, Georgia or Goose Creek, South Carolina (Margolis 2008). Their migratory patterns are not only changing on the receiving side of this transnational process, but also on the sending side, as their origins within Brazil are diversifying. Traditionally, most Brazilian immigrants came from the province of Minas Gerais, followed by São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro (Margolis 1994, Goza, 1994, Sales 2004). Many come specifically from the city of Governador Valadares, MG, on account of well-embedded social networks that were established there during World War II. However, Brazilians are now migrating from other states, such as Mato Grosso, Roraima, and
Rondonia, demonstrating the changing profile of this immigrant group (Margolis 2008). This thesis explores a case study of Brazilian immigrants in Columbus, Ohio, exploring the changing profile of Brazilians immigrants, as well as Columbus as a new settlement destination.

Despite Ohio’s immigrant growth, there is very little literature analyzing Columbus as a new area for immigrant settlement. Columbus experienced a 12,625 population increase between 2000 and 2007, which includes a large influx of foreign born (American Community Survey 2007). It is clear that Columbus is a very attractive new settlement area for several immigrant communities. Immigrants from Ghana, India, Mexico, China, Philippines, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and other East African countries have all chosen to settle in Columbus, as was highlighted in an article in the Columbus Dispatch entitled “Columbus Becoming a Mini-Melting Pot” (Pyle 2006).

Specifically, this thesis seeks to answer two main questions. First, why is Columbus, Ohio a destination for Brazilian immigrants? To answer this question, Brazilian immigrant’s reasons for migrating along with the existence of structural institutions within the city, will be compared to the new settlement destination factors, which include social networks, economic factors, public policy, immigrant space, demographic factors, and contexts of reception. In the analysis of Columbus as a settlement destination for Brazilians, this thesis fits the city into the framework of a new settlement destination for other immigrant groups as well. The second question this thesis will answer is, why are there unique Brazilian immigrant origins, other than the common Brazilian sending states of Minas Gerais, São Paulo, and Rio de Janeiro and
how did these migratory patterns begin? The community there boasts a diverse range of immigrant origins from throughout Brazil, with many being from Rondonia, a state in the Amazon region. This thesis will explore this new migration trend, as well as offer insight into the socio-cultural dynamics within the community.

This thesis is organized as follows. Chapter 2 will provide an overview of how scholars are understanding and contextualizing new settlement destinations in the US, providing a framework for understanding Brazilians in Columbus, while Chapter 3 will review the scholarship on Brazilian immigrants in the US to provide an overall depiction of their demographics. The fourth chapter presents the methods employed to analyze this immigrant group. Qualitative methods were used to analyze and organize the data to understand why Brazilians migrated to Columbus, and to provide insight into the dynamic lives these immigrants lead in their day-to-day experiences in the city.

Although a mixed variation sampling was employed among 39 informants, the findings do not claim to be representative of all Brazilians in Columbus, therefore generalizations are not permitted. For example, Brazilian students in Columbus attending Ohio State University were not included in the sample. Chapter 5 provides an account of Brazilians in Columbus, offering insight into who this immigrant group is, why they chose Columbus as destination of settlement, and how their community dynamics play out within the city. Chapter 6 provides an analysis for understanding how this immigrant group fits into the context of the literature on new settlement destinations as well as Brazilians in the US, offering several new directions scholars may consider for future research avenues. A final concluding chapter will summarize this study’s main findings,
offering several significant points to the study of migration, of new settlement
destinations, and of Brazilian immigrants in the US.
CHAPTER 2: UNDERSTANDING NEW IMMIGRANT SETTLEMENT DESTINATIONS

The immigrant population of the US, both documented and undocumented, reached a record of 37.9 million in 2007 (Center for Immigration Studies 2008). Prior to the 1990s, these immigrants primarily settled in “traditional,” or “gateway” states; however, more recently immigrant communities have been developing in places that were not formerly immigrant destinations. Cities such as Charlotte, Dallas, and Atlanta, along with many others across the US, now boast a diverse immigrant community. Scholars have identified nineteen states that are included in the category of “new settlement” states, and twenty-six that have been labeled “moderate-growth states” (Bump et al. 2005: 22-23).

A broad array of factors must be considered to understand the spatial adjustments made by immigrants and the conditions that motivated these adjustments. Six explanatory factors consistently appear in the literature: social networks, the economy, demographic changes, public policy, immigrant space, and contexts of reception. These factors work together to explain and create the new settlement patterns taking place in the US today. This literature review will analyze these six different reasons. It will then apply these factors to Columbus, an area of new settlement for immigrants from over 27 different countries. Finally, it will conclude that there is essential information that needs to be included in the literature if scholars are to have a deeper analysis of how migrant communities are organizing within the new settlement destinations. This literature review proposes several new areas of analysis.
2.1 Social Networks

Social networks have been identified as an important factor to understand and explain new settlement patterns (Furuseth and Smith 2008, Odem 2008, Price and Singer 2008, Weeks 2006-2007, Zarrugh 2008) because immigrants often migrate based on their network ties (Boyd 1989, Kyle 2000, Massey 1987, Portes and R.L. 1985). A social network is a social structure made up of relationships among people who are tied by kinship, friendship, class, gender, place of origin, or any varying condition of interdependency (Knoke and Yang 2008). They are usually initiated by a pioneer migrant, who is a migrant with no previous ties to a particular destination and is commonly the first to arrive. He/She then will inform his/her kin and friends in other areas of the economic benefits and motivate them to join him/her. In turn, his/her kin and friends will inform their social network ties, eventually perpetuating chain migration, which is when the social ties between migrants reinforce migration patterns regardless of the existence of the structural factors that initially attracted them, like trade routes or labor recruitment (Kyle 2000, Poros 2001). As more immigrants arrive, the number of establishments to support them, like churches or stores, grows, as do small communities of support that function as a cushion within particular destinations to protect immigrants against difficulty to assimilate, prejudice, and economic problems. This contributes to the idea of “context of reception” (Portes and Böröcz 1989: 618), which refers to the importance of reception within destination areas and will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.
Depending on a particular migrant’s identity, two social networks can have completely different compositions, since they reflect the different kinds of social relations that create them (Gurak and Caces 1992). Therefore, social networks often reflect relationships based on gender (Boyd 1989, Brettel 2008, Davis/Winters 2001, Entwisle et al. 2005, Margolis 1998, Menjivar 2000, Wilson 1998), class (Heike 2005, Kyle 2000, Messias 2001), immigrant legal status (Gurak and Caces 1992), and many other variables. The result is that they often have different migration networks that link them to different destination areas or jobs (Boyd 1989, Gurak and Caces 1992, Kyle 2000, Margolis 1998, Menjivar 2000, Wilson 1998).

Social networks can also be viewed through a historical lens, allowing scholars to understand them as historical processes that are shaped across time and throughout spaces. Kearney’s (1986: 353) “articulatory migrant network” is one such model. The articulatory migrant network is understood as a series of chronological occurrences, which contextualize social network linkages between unlikely locations. Since migrants and their social network contacts, which both inform and respond to migration patterns, are dynamic and changing, understanding these networks within this model can aid in making sense of what may otherwise seem like a very irregular migration connection.

2.2 Economic Factors: The Labor Market and Cost of Living

A robust labor market is a powerful force attracting immigrant newcomers to new destinations. In many of the new settlement destinations, economic growth has been substantial, creating new employment opportunities. A large number of fast-growth
cities, such as Charlotte, Dallas-Forth-Worth, Washington DC, and Sacramento have experienced or continue to experience a technology boom attracting immigrants with higher education and income to work in these professional high skill jobs (Brettell 2008, Datel and Dingemans 2008, Price and Singer 2008, Weeks, Weeks, and Weeks 2006-2007). This growth in the formal labor market fosters growth in service jobs as well as the informal sector, drawing many unskilled workers to a region (Barcus 2007, Singer 2008).

A large and varied job market means that the low skill jobs, especially the physically demanding ones, are the last to be filled, since native-born inhabitants often do not want them. Therefore, employers, eager to find non-union cheap wage labor, will actively recruit immigrants. Companies in the sectors of agricultural work, construction, as well as beef, pork, chicken, and fish processing industries have all recruited workers from California, Texas, Mexico, and Central America (Bailey 2005, Binford 2005, Godziak 2005, Zarrugh 2008). In most of these industries, after several recruited pioneer migrants were established, they would tell their friends of the opportunities and help them migrate, developing a social network linkage to an area of labor. In many cases, the social network ties became so strong, that the recruiters no longer needed to look for workers, because they would be provided by the migrants already there (Bailey 2005, Binford 2005, Zarrugh 2008) often giving migrants domination in a particular job sector.

The promise of jobs in a new settlement destination is often accompanied by a greater compensation for labor by offering affordable housing and therefore an overall lower cost of living (Buentello and Skop 2008, Datel and Dingemans 2008, Furuseth and
Smith 2008, Price and Singer 2008). In Sacramento, Washington DC, Austin, and Charlotte, immigrants named affordable housing as the foremost reason they immigrated to that region (Buentello and Skop 2008, Datel and Dingemans 2008, Furuseth and Smith 2008, Price and Singer 2008). In some cities immigrant demand for cheap housing has led to the construction of more apartment complexes, further lowering the rental prices. Immigrants not only rent, but also become home-owners, as Skop and Buentello (2008) noted in reference to immigrants in Austin, their high ownership rates were surprising given the lower-than-average poverty rates among their immigrant cohort, demonstrating just how important this settlement destination factor is.

Cheap housing options, employment opportunities, and employee recruitment all explain how economic concerns are a pull factor, bringing immigrants to a new settlement destination. However, the economy can also act as a push factor that drives immigrants away from traditional gateway destinations. When too many migrants from the same social network arrive in an area where all the jobs have been taken, in a phenomenon known as saturation, they eventually put too much stress on labor and housing markets. When this stress becomes evident in the form of houses that violate housing regulations, or working conditions that violate health and safety codes, police will destroy signs of a slum or shantytown, take possession of immigrant belongings, and force them out of an area (Light 2004). Immigrants are also pushed out of a city when industries that had initially attracted immigrants close, the workers are forced to find new options or return home. The “daughter communities,” or offspring locations of traditional gateway immigrant areas, that emerged in California in the 1940s through the
180s are a good example of this. Most of the workers who lived in these communities were former mine workers, who had to look for new options of employment as the US mining industry drastically slowed down in the decades of the 1940s-80s (Alvarez 1989).

2.3 Demographic Changes

Another reason why immigrant settlement in new destination areas has been so successful is that many of these areas are losing a native-born population (Donato et. al 2007, Hansen 2005, Shoenholtz 2005). In rural areas or suburbs immigrants may sustain a shrinking city’s economy, and in larger cities, they fill important job positions and live in spaces that may otherwise be abandoned. For example, the city of Atlanta had a large movement of predominantly white people that left the metro area of the city, known as “white flight,” in the 1970s. As a result, both international and domestic immigrant newcomers have filled the gap of population in inner-city Atlanta (Hansen 2005, Odem 2008). Other cities that follow this pattern are Dallas (Brettell 2008), Minneapolis-St. Paul (Fennelly and Orfield 2008), Charlotte (Weeks et al. 2006-2007), and Phoenix (Li and Oberle 2008). Often these cities and/or communities welcome migrants because they reinvigorate social and economic institutions that are failing on account of population loss within the city limits. These immigrants are also filling important service sector employment positions that may otherwise not be filled as these cities’ economies grow. As a result, many of these towns and cities have attempted to welcome immigrants through successful local government planning and pro-immigration policies (Bailey 2005, Bump et. al 2005, Donato et. al 2007, Godziak 2005, Hansen 2005, Solórzano

2.4 Public Policy

Public policy at the national, state, and local levels can shape the spatial patterns of new settlement destinations (Brettell, Singer, and Hardwick 2008, Godziak 2005). At the national level, the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) passed in 1986 was one such policy. The idea behind IRCA was to restrict illegal immigration, first by making illegal the hiring or recruiting of illegal immigrants, and second, by granting amnesty to the millions of illegal immigrants already living in the US since 1982. Many formerly illegal immigrants that became legal under IRCA took advantage of their status to move freely to different geographic locations across the US, pushing them out of traditional gateway destinations and pulling them in the direction of cities with fast growing economies (Charvet, Durand, and Massey 2000, Weeks et. al 2006-2007). One special program under IRCA was the Special Agricultural Workers Program (SAW), which gave permanent resident status to over 350,000 illegal agricultural workers (Bailey 2005). This gave them more mobility within the agricultural labor market, stimulating them to go to new settlement areas with a distinct agricultural economy, an example being the Shenandoah Valley. At the same time, IRCA empowered female migration (Margolis 1998). By insisting that employers require legal documentation in the formal sector of the job market, the informal jobs that did not require papers, like live-in nannies, housekeepers, day maids and babysitters, all jobs traditionally held by women, sometimes
became an immigrant family’s main income. Women, relying on their social networks with other women, went to destinations where these jobs were in demand or where there wasn’t as much competition (Menjivar 2000).

Another nationally sponsored government program that shapes migrant geographies is the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), which provides grants to resettlement agencies that will place migrants in an area that has a history of low welfare usage and favorable income potential in relation to cost of living. Many of the areas that fall under this category are also the fast growth new settlement cities like Atlanta, Washington DC, Sacramento, Portland, Minneapolis-St. Paul, suggesting that refugee resettlement arguably plays a major role in creating new settlement patterns (Brown, Mott and Malecki 2007, Bump et. al 2005). Once refugees arrive, they often utilize their social networks to form chain migration, which has a multiplier effect, causing other immigrant nationalities to migrate to that area as well (Brown, Mott, and Malecki 2007), either through cross-cultural network contacts or by preparing a city for foreign-born newcomers. Generally, once a city is prepared to sponsor refugees, it becomes ready to host more immigrants through establishing immigrant-focused institutions and programs, and immigrants recognize this receptivity in the form of more immigrant friendly public policy.

Although immigration policy is traditionally the domain of the federal government, the actual fiscal responsibility of immigrants falls into the hands of cities and towns. Public policies can have the power to either create and foster a strong immigrant presence, or diminish and discourage more newcomers to an area (Godziak
Since there is no larger plan or specific set of resources for an area to utilize from the federal government, immigration policy has been described as “schizophrenic” (Weeks et. al 2006-2007: 65) since local, state, and national policies may diverge. Many new areas of settlement that are receiving large numbers of immigrants have had hardly any experience with them in the past, therefore almost all new settlement destinations have been forced to create some sort of local immigration policy. Cities and towns react in one of three ways. Some municipalities, seeing an opportunity for diversity and economic growth, embrace immigrants by creating supportive public policies. Other areas, seeing the newcomers as disrupting their traditional way of life and stealing jobs from native born people react with hostility. This is reflected in anti-immigrant programs. Finally, some new destinations have mixed reactions, implementing a combination of the pro- and anti- immigration policies. It has been suggested that income differences among new settlement areas affect the tax base to provide support for public programs, delineating how an area will respond to immigrants (Brettell 2008).

The obvious benefit of creating a pro-immigration policy is that it allows for a diverse environment, where immigrants and natives can learn from each other, while at the same time stimulating the economy. Plano, Texas, under the administration of Mayor Pat Evans, now boasts of its “gorgeous diversity” and draws on this as a tourist attraction (Brettell 2008: 54). Other cities, like Chamblee, Georgia, have focused on immigrant commerce. Chamblee created a multi-ethnic shopping center, which now functions as a tourist hot-spot bringing economic gains to the area (Odem 2008, Hansen 2005).
Locally, the programs that different communities apply vary. Cities have instituted multi-cultural committees, where immigrants and natives can gather to discuss their concerns, as well as plan to projects to integrate immigrants (Hansen 2005, Woodrick 2006, Zarrugh 2008). Public schools have broadened their curriculums, offering ESOL (English for speakers of Other Languages) classes, as well as creating councils to ensure that immigrants are engaged in the learning process, and integrating into the school system (Hansen 2005, Zarrugh 2008). Bilingual police forces have been hired to help with immigrant legal concerns, such as explaining US traffic laws, and other rules and regulations (Bailey 2005). In some instances, police have attempted to halt constant contact with the INS, currently known as ICE, so that the immigrants do not associate the police with deportation, and in turn run from them. Many commerce chambers and human relations commissions have begun to focus more of their concerns on immigrant integration into the society. Other pro-immigrant policies include investing in public transport to serve immigrants that do not have cars or drivers licenses (Hansen 2005, Odem 2008), providing and fostering public spaces and meeting places for immigrant communities (Hansen 2005, Oberle and Wei 2008), promoting newspapers in other languages (Oberle and Wei 2008), and finally providing free health care (Bump 2005, Godziak and Melia 2005) to those in need.

Some cities, overwhelmed with the sudden appearance of new nationalities, as well as lacking the economic means to support public programs for immigrants, have responded with anti-immigration policies. One such policy that has appeared in towns in Texas and Georgia is an English-language ordinance, which forces the content of signs to
be at least 75 percent in English (Brettell 2008, Odem 2008). Its implementation means that store owners cannot have signs in Spanish, causing some to feel that they cannot properly advertise to their clients. City officials justify this policy, stating it is a safety measure since police, firefighters, and ambulance drivers need to be able to read signs to know the address of a particular locale. This law was contested by the ACLU in a community in Georgia when a pastor of a Hispanic Church was given citations for putting a small sign on the sidewalk of his church in Spanish, however the case was dismissed and a decision on the constitutionality of this law was never made (Odem 2008). Another anti-immigrant policy, named the Criminal Alien Program in Irving, Texas (Brettell 2008), gives police the right to deport anyone without proper documentation if they are pulled over for a traffic violation or public intoxication. There have been protests against this type of policy as immigrants insist that police target Hispanics. The passage of anti-loitering laws to prevent day laborers from gathering at a common pick up point (Hansen 2005), or working more closely with INS officials to encourage deportation of illegal immigrants (Hansen 2005, Odem 2008), are other examples of anti-immigrant policies. At the local level, these policies can have the effect of removing an immigrant population from an area (Brettell 2008, Hansen 2005).

State policies, like prohibiting immigrants to obtain a driver’s license or cracking down on illegal immigrant deportation, do not significantly affect new settlement cities within state borders. For example, the passage of Georgia’s Security and Immigration Compliance Act, which speeds up deportations, criminalizes undocumented migrants, and supports the national initiative of the construction of a wall at the US/Mexico border,
has not hindered large numbers of illegal immigrants to Atlanta. Its only tangible effect on the immigrants, is that it has fostered and promoted fear of mainstream society within migrant communities (Odem 2008).

2.5 Immigrant Space

Successful new settlement destinations all tend to have or to be fostering immigrant space, where immigrants have their own institutions or events. One such institution of great importance is that of the church, and its affiliated religious organizations (Bailey 2005, Bump et. al 2005, Godziak 2005, Hansen 2005, Shoenholtz 2005, Solórzano 2005, Woodrick 2006, Zarrugh 2008). Churches not only help immigrants with their spiritual needs, but also help them obtain legal papers, learn English, help family members migrate, and connect immigrants with the local native-born community. Religious institutions vary, depending on the area of settlement, but almost all new settlement destinations have had some form of a religious support network to help immigrants, as well as aid an area in adapting to newcomers.

Ethnic stores can also serve as an important area of gathering and a leading center for social and cultural activities (Datel and Dingemans 2008, Hanson 2005, Hardwick and Meacham 2008, Li and Oberle 2008). Many stores offer ethnically traditional lunches or snacks where community members can sit and talk, and they also post flyers or advertisements that inform local residents about events or services in the area. They also serve as places where immigrants can send remittances home, purchase phone cards, or find transportation back to their home country. These stores are places of comfort to
many immigrants, offering a décor and a taste of home in an otherwise strange environment. Similarly, ethnic festivals, traditional sporting events, or entertainment venues give immigrants a sense of belonging in a place (Brettell 2008, Datel and Dingman’s 2008, Zarrugh 2008). Besides being important events for gathering, these occasions give immigrants a chance to remember and share their culture in their host country.

Also included within the category of “immigrant space” are both immigrant organizations and NGOs, which provide support to the community. These organizations often assist in providing healthcare, legal advocacy, proper housing, and aid in adapting to new rules and customs of a place. In many cases they are linked to churches, and sometimes they are groups that have been started by the Latino community itself. New settlement destinations tend to have at least one supportive NGO group present (Bailey 2005, Bump 2005, Furuseth and Smith 2008, Godziak and Melia 2005, Price and Singer 2008, Schoenholtz 2005, Woodrick 2008, Zarrugh 2008).

2.6 Contexts of Reception

“Context of Reception” (Portes and Böröcz 1989: 618) is the reaction of a host society to newcomers. Contexts of reception can include economic, political, and legal responses to immigrants, but it is generally referred to in reference to the stance of host governments, employers, the existing population of an area, as well as the pre-existing ethnic newcomer community or communities. The calm atmosphere of an area has also been referred to as one context of reception (Zarrugh 2008).
For immigrant newcomers in new settlement destinations, the chance to live and raise children outside a stressed and busy urban environment was a large pull factor to these cities and towns (Hernandez-Leon and Zuniga 2001, Woodrick 2006, Zarrugh 2008). The busy and fast-paced lifestyle of large cities can be difficult for immigrants that come from smaller cities or rural areas to adapt. New settlement destinations, even those that are large cities, generally offer more tranquility and less competition than the large immigrant gateways.

2.7 Columbus as an New Immigrant Destination

Based on existing literature of the area, Columbus as a new immigrant settlement destination parallels several of the factors mentioned in the above review. First, unlike deindustrializing Ohio cities such as Cleveland or Toledo, Columbus continues to enjoy growing employment in the service and information economy (Otiso and Smith 2005). Second, Columbus has been influenced by refugee resettlement programs, specifically the ORR, which established the city as a destination for Somalis. According to Brown, Mott, and Malecki (2007), once the Somali community was established in the city, they utilized their social network ties to broaden their population in the area, causing a multiplier effect that paved the way for other immigrant communities to migrate there to. Third, Columbus has a thriving mix of institutions, such as churches, which offer services to immigrants in their own languages (Ohio Latin Masses). Fourth, the city has continuously grown since 1940, and since 2000 it is the largest city in Ohio (Otiso and
Smith 2005), and having also experienced “white flight” to the suburbs, it mimics the demographics of other new settlement cities.

Although existing literature provides a base from which to form some hypotheses about Columbus as a new settlement destination, there is much that remains unexplored. First, there is no mention of local public policy and it remains unclear if Columbus has implemented any programs locally to manage their growing number of foreign born immigrants. Second, there is no research of any particular immigrant group, only data from the American Community Survey. Somali immigrants have been studied in relation to social networks, but there are many other immigrant communities that remain unstudied, both in relation to social networks and other areas of migration studies. For example, Columbus estimates there to be 2000 Brazilian immigrants in the area, making the city a host to the largest community of Brazilians in the state, yet there is no mention of them within any academic context. How these immigrants have been influenced by, and influence, the new settlement destination factors remains unknown. In order to more fully understand Columbus as a new settlement area, more research needs to be done that includes this immigrant group, as well as other existing groups.

2.8 Conclusion

This review has synthesized the various reasons for new settlement destinations. Social networks, the economy, public policies, immigrant spaces, contexts of reception, and demographic changes have all been explored as factors influencing and allowing for immigrant resettlement. These factors provide a broader structural understanding of new
settlement destinations, while at the same time offering an understanding of individual migrant choices. There are areas, however, that could be further explored to add to the literature.

One such area is the importance of internet among migrant communities. As the research will show, migrant social networks can be virtual, linking immigrants to destinations via the world wide web, especially through social network sites, which have been an important topic for analysis in other areas of social network study not focused on immigration. The internet also contributes to virtual immigrant space within new settlement areas, as immigrants produce websites and on-line communities as spaces for organizing events and contacts. If scholars are to fully understand the changing profile of new immigrant communities, the importance of the virtual medium of the internet needs to be taken into consideration.

A second area that could be further explored in reference to the new settlement destination factor of public policy, is the effect these policies have on the emotions of the immigrants themselves. In other words, how is the link between a policy and the result it causes, shaped? Do harsh public policies have the power to instill fear in a community? And if they do, what are the consequences of fear on the migrants, as well as the community? Awareness of immigrant fear could have implications for how institutions and public policy deal with migrant communities in the future.
CHAPTER 3: BRAZILIAN IMMIGRANTS IN THE US

Brazilian immigration to the United States has been increasing since the 1980s, and between 2000 and 2005, they were cited in two newspaper articles as the fastest growing group of immigrants to the US (Coleman 2005, Reel 2006). Surprisingly, this new ethnic community is largely ignored and understudied to the extent that scholars have coined them as an “invisible minority” (Margolis 1998: 8), and even their official population numbers within the US are disputed among government organs. This chapter will profile this growing immigrant minority according to 1) a population profile of Brazilians in the US, 2) reasons for migrating, 3) immigrant identity, 4) methods of migration, 5) origins in Brazil, 6) destinations in the US, 7) consequences of migration, and 8) return migration.

3.1 A Population Profile of Brazilians in the US

The 2000 US Census counted 212,636 foreign-born Brazilians living in the US. There is, however, a significant amount of literature that disagrees with this number. At the forefront of this debate is the Brazilian government, who in 2007 arranged a meeting for each of the Brazilian Consulates to bring an estimated population count of the number of Brazilians living in their jurisdictions. They concluded that the total number was 1.288 million, with Boston, New York, and Miami each having more than 300,000 members within their communities. Although some scholars consider this number to be exaggerated, they do agree that the US Census also reflects an inaccurate number. Alvaro Lima and Eduardo Siqueira, in their study “Brazilians in the U.S. and Massachusetts:
Demographic and Economic Profile” state three reasons for the inaccuracy of the US Census from 2000 in relation to Brazilian immigrants. First, there has been a flood of Brazilians immigrating to the US between 2003 and 2004 and they were not counted on the 2000 Census. Second, many Brazilians may have been working at the time that the Census was done, since many Brazilians work two jobs and are not at home until late at night. Third, the fact that many Brazilians are illegal makes them suspicious of the US Census and its purpose; therefore, they may not fill out their survey. In a study done on Brazilian immigrants in New York, most reported that their constant fear of being located by the *Tia Mimi*, a slang Portuguese term for the INS, causes them avoid filling out any type of forms or notifying the Brazilians Consulates of their presence in the US (Margolis 1998).

3.2 Reasons for Migration

The force that ignited Brazilian migration was the debt crisis of the 1980s, a financial disaster for Brazil. Like other Latin American countries prior to 1980, Brazil borrowed money with floating interest-rate tags, meaning that interest changed according to prevailing market prices. The interest rates were reasonable until the international economic downturn in the 1980s, when international market interest rates skyrocketed as an aftershock from the OPEC oil crisis. As the international market asked for higher interest, Brazil had to pay more money on their fluctuating interest rates. The result was an economic calamity in Brazil as was exemplified by an article from *Time* magazine in 1984, which reported a $750 million interest rate on a $96 billion dollar debt. For Brazil
to pay such high prices, they had to raise their own interest rates at the national scale and the result was out of control inflation, reaching as high as 230% (Time 1983).

To pay the debt, Brazil had to borrow money from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, under the conditions that they would implement austerity measures adhering to neoliberal economic ideals, as were defined in the Washington Consensus. This economic restructuring forced Brazil to adjust its export prices, allowing for the volume to increase, but the value to decrease, and between 1983 and 1998 exports grew by 16% as the value decreased by 2.1%. Consequently, Brazilians had to work harder for a lesser wage. Other economic adjustments required that Brazil privatize and make openings for transnational finance capital, which stimulated inequality by benefitting few and ignoring the needs of local citizens. The debt continued to skyrocket in the 1990s, and during this crisis, the payment on the debt’s interest alone was 26.7% of the total debt (Robinson 2004).

The overall consequences on Brazil’s economy were devastating. Between 1980 and 1994, the country had four currencies, five wage and price freezes, nine economic stabilization programs, and an inflation index of 146 billion percent. The citizens often lost lifelong savings in a price freeze or being unable to afford outrageous inflation rates, which is represented by the price of a small espresso, which sold for 15 cruzeiros in 1980, and 22 billion cruzeiros in 1993 (Margolis 1998). Inflation rates of at least 60% affected domestic service, hairdressers, restaurant meals, medical care, and school fees. Many Brazilians could not find jobs in the areas for which they were trained, and fewer jobs required university degrees causing many qualified people to enter into
unemployment (Margolis 1998). Not surprisingly, it was during this period of the eighties and nineties that the major Brazilian immigration exodus to the United States occurred.

This period is referred to as the “death of the middle class” (Margolis, 1998: 12). There were several reasons for this. First, almost all service work had an inflation rate of at least 56% (Margolis 1998), which most affected middle-income clients since the poor did not use these services and the rich, with a surplus of money, continued to afford them. Second, the tax impositions from the neoliberal economic restructuring impinged primarily upon middle class incomes because they had to pay both fiscal year taxes as well as taxes included in product prices. In other words, they were richer than the poor and poorer than the rich, so they were included in all the tax brackets. Third, unemployment was widespread, particularly in service work for positions like teachers, lawyers, or social workers, the employment domain of the middle class. The result was that the middle class, who had enough money to immigrate, chose this as an option.

3.3 Identity: Economic Class Status and Racial Profiles

Presently, the middle class are the most known and studied Brazilian immigrants in the US. Immigrating for economic purposes, most of them are “target earners,” meaning they plan to earn a specific amount of dollars and then return to Brazil. They state that in the US, they can get higher wages, which allow for savings (Margolis 1998).
In spite of the financial benefits, many middle class educated Brazilians express dissatisfaction from working lower status jobs in the United States. The educational attainment for Brazilian immigrants is high (see Table 1).

Table 1: Distribution of Brazilian Population by Educational Attainment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Attainment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate/Professional Degree or Higher</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Degree</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Diploma</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some High School</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than High School</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Census Bureau 2000, BRA Research Division Analysis (as taken from Lima and Siquiera 2007)

At least one-third have attained a bachelor’s degree, and 18,895 reported to have a graduate degree. Prior to migration, many had been social workers, lawyers, engineers, teachers, registered nurses, students, school administrators, clerical workers, and clerks. Tereza, an informant from Messias’ (2001) study, was a successful business campaign producer in Brazil, while in the US she works as a waitress because she cannot speak English. She is an example of the many highly qualified Brazilian immigrants that are forced to work unskilled jobs in the US because of immigrant status and English skills. Although they are earning more money in the US, their drop in occupation results in a drop in class status, especially when compared to their former social standing in Brazil (Margolis 1998, Messais 2001, Hilfinger 2001).

Illegal Brazilian migration within the US has blurred class divisions common to Brazilian culture, and this puts lower class and middle class on the same level to compete
for jobs and financial success. Adelia, another informant from Messias’ study (2001:18), and a lower class Brazilian, reported as feeling “more accepted in the United States” since she did not have class to constrain her upward mobility. In a conversation between Adelia and Antonia, a middle class Brazilian, the tension between classes is evident as Antonia longs for “the good life in Brazil, with maids (14),” as Adelia responds that she only had the good life in Brazil because she “had cheap labor (14)."

The tension among classes is uncomfortable for Brazilians, and they complain of a lack of solidarity in the Brazilian community within the US. They feel that cohesion is needed when being far from the comforts of Brazil, but they have difficulty letting go of the social mentalities of their culture and a feeling of mistrust continues between them. Rosana Resende in her article *Fragile Threads* (2005) interviewed several Brazilians, one of whom was a middle class woman named Vera. In the interview she stated how she longs for a Brazilian community to feel more at home in the United States because she feels that Americans are mostly distant and cold people. Nevertheless, Vera will have nothing to do with the lower class Brazilian immigrants stating that they are too uneducated and only have the ambition of making money. Like Vera, other middle-class Brazilians in other ethnographic studies complain about their lower-class compatriots (Hilfinger 2001, Margolis 1998, Resende 2005), stating that they live in crowded apartments and they do not do anything but work and “make money, and they don’t even know English” (Margolis 1998: 32). Most middle class Brazilians are embarrassed to introduce them to anyone stating, “we come from good families and we are well educated – not like those Brazilians” (Margolis 1998: 33).
Margolis (1998: 32) referred to these lower-class Brazilians as “the phantom lower class” because they are difficult to find and there is little known about them. Although she did encounter some Brazilians from the lower class, it was very few, and she attributes their widely discussed presence as being a psychological invention, created by middle-class Brazilians as a strategy to feel better about their drop in class status. She explains that by complaining about the lower classes and their hardships, they feel better about themselves, rationalizing that at least there is someone worse off than they are.

Teresa Sales (2004: 98), in her study on Brazilians in Boston, expanded on this idea in, what she defines as, “the myth of the country hick.” The imaginary identity of the country hick is a poor and illiterate rural person who migrated directly to the city in the US with no experience in the urban environment. Brazilian middle class immigrants, both coming from a hierarchical society which undervalues service jobs and having experienced a drop in class status in the US, compare themselves to this imaginary person to feel socially superior to someone. Therefore, according to Sales (2004), the myth of the country hick is a psychological coping strategy, which allows for Brazilians to feel superior.

While most Brazilians who have come to the US have experienced a drop in their class status, there are some, although proportionately low, who have succeeded as successful entrepreneurs. Brazilian business owners account for 14,940 of the total number of Brazilian immigrants in the US (US Census 2000). These immigrants own 3,700 businesses in retail trade, accommodations and food services, and other miscellaneous services (US Census 2000). Massachusetts, Florida, and New Jersey
account for 71% of all Brazilian immigrant businesses, which boast annual sales of $1 billion, employ 10,400 people, and consequently create 14,000 indirect jobs (Lima and Siqueira 2007). The Brazilian community in Boston and Miami have successful ethnic enclaves, where Brazilian employers hire mostly Brazilian employees.

In spite of class divisions, one thing Brazilians all seem to agree on is their identity as “Brazilian” (Marcus 2003, Marrow 2003, Margolis 1995). Difficult to classify within US society, they are commonly categorized as Hispanic (Marcus 2003, Marrow 2003, Margolis 1995), but since Brazilians are actually from Portuguese culture origin, they do not fit in to this category. Brazilians, when asked how they should be classified, unanimously affirm that they prefer to be considered “Brazilian”, not “Hispanic” or “Latino” (Marrow 2003, Margolis 1995), and in the US 2000 Census 195,015 answered that they are not “Latino” or “Hispanic.” Their distinction as not being Hispanic has tended to racialize them in into the US “black” or “white” binary (Marrow 2003), with 144,345 considering themselves as “white,” 4,495 as “black,” 34,455 as “some other race,” and 25,635 as “two or more races.” Yet most Brazilians report on feeling confused as to how they should fill out the Census, which is mostly attributed to different cultural and political perceptions of race within Brazil (Marcus 2003, Marrow 2003, Margolis 1995).

3.4 How Brazilians Immigrated to the US

The beginning of the Debt Crisis, in the 1980s, was when 59% of the current Brazilian immigrant population arrived. Being far from any US border, the main method
of entry was through nonimmigrant US visas. Before the 1980s it was easy for Brazilians to get US tourist visas because most of them came here on vacation, and then returned home. Between 1986 and 1987 over 10,000 Brazilians flew to North America as tourists holding round-trip tickets, but not returning with their flight’s departure (Goza 1994). In 1987, suspicions began to rise about Brazilian “tourists” and they became subject to severe questioning upon entry into the country, being sent back to Brazil if they could not demonstrate they had adequate funding (Goza 1994). The result was that in the 1990s, policy changed to subject Brazilians to long lines and rigorous interviews in Brazil to obtain the US visa (Margolis 1998). Despite these difficult bureaucratic obstacles, obtaining the tourist visa and overstaying its legal duration continues to be the main route of entry Brazilian immigrants to enter the US.

Unable to get the US visa, some Brazilians have opted to get a tourist visa to Mexico, and then cross to the US at the US/Mexican border, where customs officials indicate that Brazilians are the fastest growing number of immigrants to cross (Coleman 2005). In 2005, Brazil ranked only behind Mexico, Honduras, and El Salvador as a sender of undocumented immigrants who cross the border by hiring a coyote. Approximately 750,000 Brazilian immigrants, that were formerly illegal but are now documented, have arrived in the US either by one of the above-mentioned modes of entry, but since many Brazilian immigrants are still illegal their mode of entry remains unknown.
3.5 Origins in Brazil

Large numbers of Brazilian immigrants come from the town of Governador Valadares in the state of Minas Gerais. The city has 45,000 of its citizens living in the US and most young people in this community grow up with the expectation that they will immigrate too. Most immigrants left Governador Valadares in the 1980s, however its ties to the United States can be traced back to World War II. The city was one of the US’s main suppliers of mica, an important mineral used for insulation. The city set up major mining and processing centers where Americans would visit to purchase the mica. Because the city was considered a major center for materials needed in the war effort, there was a public health center built to combat malaria that was run by Americans. The city also received many American engineers to help with infrastructure for the mica industry. After the war, these Americans returned to the states and invited many of their Brazilian employees and colleagues to go with them. Most of them, although few in number at the time, accepted the invitation to go to the US, and this established the initial contact between Governador Valadares and the US (Margolis 1998).

As a result of immigration from Governador Valadares, almost 64% of all Brazilian immigrants abroad are from the state of Minas Gerais. Rio de Janeiro accounts for 19% of immigrants, while São Paulo accounts for 14% (Goza 1994). How social networks were set up from Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo remains unstudied, beyond the fact that there is significant transnational communication as a result of their status as global metropolitan cities with many connections to US cities. Additionally, immigrants
from the states of Rondonia, Roraima, and Mato Grosso have been mentioned (Margolis 2008), but there is currently no research on this immigrant group (see Figure 1).

3.6 Destinations

There are scattered Brazilian enclaves across the United States. According to data from both the US census and the Brazilian government New York, New Jersey,
Massachusetts, Florida, and California receive most of the Brazilian immigrants (see table 2).

Table 2: Brazilian Population in U.S Metropolitan Areas with Major Concentrations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>230,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami</td>
<td>130,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington D.C.</td>
<td>47,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>13,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>600,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Brazilian Ministry of External Affairs, 1996 in (Margolis 1998)

These states are the home of two-thirds of all immigrant populations. The metropolitan area of New York houses the largest Brazilian population, although there is no distinct Brazilian residential neighborhood. The Manhattan street called “Little Brazil” is actually just a commercial area that caters to Brazilians. Most of the inhabitants of the city live in Queens and Astoria, mixed in with other immigrants from India, China, and Southeast Asia (Margolis 1998). South Florida is one of the other large Brazilian enclaves that is home to between 20,000 to 200,000 Brazilian immigrants, although the exact number is unknown. The counties of Miami-Dade and Delray Beach are the main areas of concentration. Brazilian immigration to this area is constantly growing with diverse numbers of immigrants from both Brazil’s middle and lower classes (Resende 2005). Smaller Brazilian communities are found in the cities of Chicago, Washington DC, Austin (Margolis 1998), and recently have even been mentioned in new settlement
destination areas like Atlanta, GA, or Goose Creek, South Carolina (Margolis 2008), although research has yet to address these smaller populations. This thesis will address a community of approximately 2,000 Brazilians, located in Columbus, Ohio.

3.7 Consequences of Migration

Brazilians living abroad claim an overwhelming sense of longing for their country of origin. They admit that they never fully adapt to the American way of life. Forced into immigration for economic reasons, many Brazilians would rather be in Brazil, but do not want to deal with the poor economic conditions. In an effort to feel closer to home while they are living so far away, many Brazilians live transnationally, stating that they are “here in body, but not in soul” (Margolis 1995: 32). Phone calls to home are the most common method of maintaining contact, and 95% of immigrants state that they make regular calls home (Margolis 1995). Many Brazilian stores in Little Brazil sell videotapes and DVDs of the latest TV Globo soap opera. The largest satellite TV company in the US, Dish TV, now offers the Globo International channel for a fixed monthly price. TV Record, a major Brazilian television network produces a weekly program with Brazilian singers, dancers, sports clips, and interviews with Brazilian politicians. Many buy the weekly Brazilian magazine Veja to keep up with the latest news from back home and a number of local Brazilian magazines and newspapers have developed in the US (Margolis 1995). Brazilian immigrants maintain politically active in Brazilian politics as well. Fernando Collor de Mello, the first democratically elected President under direct vote after the Brazilian military dictatorship’s regime, was
impeached in 1992. Upon his visit to New York City, hundreds of Brazilians took to the streets protesting his continued presence in office. This protest made headlines in Brazil, and soon after Collor was impeached (Margolis 1995).

In 2005, the Summit of Brazilian Leaders in the US met in 2005 to discuss the organization of community based organizations. Brazilian activists, policy makers, scholars, and friends of the Brazilian immigrant communities gathered to create a larger community based organizations to represent and help Brazilian immigrants living abroad. Eight prominent Brazilian organizations were represented (Coleman 2005). Since 2005, the summit runs a successful website to help Brazilians with their many different concerns as immigrants. Some of the services include helping Brazilians buy real estate in Brazil from the US, helping immigrants understand how to decipher over-the-counter US medicines, recommending legal services if needed, and helping with financial planning while in the US.

Remittances are another reason that Brazilians maintain contact with their home country. Sixty percent send their money to their parents, twenty percent send it to their spouse and other relatives. Migrants from the town of Governador Valadares alone send home a total of 12 million dollars per month (Margolis 1994). Nevertheless, the majority of Brazilian immigrants, as middle class target earners, typically save money for their own return to Brazil.
3.8 Return Migration or Permanent Resident?

Dissatisfied with their lives as immigrants and feelings of disillusionment as to how much money they could really make is a common dialogue among Brazilian immigrants (Margolis 1998). Many would like to return but do not because of the social embarrassment they may face by returning without a lot of money (Goza 2004). There are some immigrants who actually do return with a lot of money and stories of success, which puts pressure on all of the migrants to live and succeed at the American Dream. Those who do not return with such success stories are often ostracized by their communities, making many immigrants transform from target earners to permanent residents of the US. Others, aware that they may never earn enough money to buy a small bed and breakfast on a beach in Rio de Janeiro or their own business in the countryside of Minas Gerais, begin to accept the reality of life in the US and decide to spend their wages on a Friday night dinner or concert (Margolis 1998). In contrast, there are also accounts of immigrants having made great entrepreneurial advancements and decide to stay because they have been able to improve their social and financial position (Goza 2004).

On the other hand, a recent phenomenon of return migration is occurring that has been mentioned briefly in both the US news, and more profoundly in the Brazilian news. Globo news, the main source of news for most Brazilians living in Brazil, did a report on the return of thousands of migrants from the US. In New York and New Jersey travel agents reported that one-way flights to Brazil have more than doubled in comparison to 2006, and for the 2007/08 year, one-way flights to Brazil were sold out through the end
of February (Bernstein and Dwoskin 2007). The reasons for their return vary. Many state the main reason is the slumping American economy in comparison to the Brazilian economy, which has improved. Amidst the economic crisis, many Brazilians have lost their homes in the mortgage crisis along with the thousands of dollars they invested. Also, many who are illegal can no longer renew their driver’s license, and public transit in many of the cities where Brazilians live is poor or inexistent. In addition, without a driver’s license, each time they drive they fear getting pulled-over, discovered, and then deported. Many immigrants reported that the money they make here is not worth living in a constant state of fear. This is exemplary of the connection between fear and public policy decisions, briefly discussed in the conclusion in Chapter 2.

Others immigrants are tired of living illegally and feel that it is futile to continue the struggle. One Brazilian couple living in Boston said that they spent $26,000 to secure a Green Card, but it was not approved. They had lived in the US for 12 years and raised their children here, as well as owned a successful construction company in the informal market, but they felt they could not wait forever to become legal.

Return migration to Brazil, if it remains a permanent phenomenon, will be problematic for many. Governador Valadares’ economy is completely dependent on immigrant remittances from the US. In addition, many Brazilian entrepreneurs who own Brazilian travel agencies, restaurants, and clubs will lose their main source of income (Galang 2007). Scholars report that it is too early to know if this trend is permanent or only temporary (Agencia BR News 2007). Afterall, Maxine L. Margolis (1995: 32) explained that Brazilians bounce back and forth between Brazil and the US in a constant
effort to earn enough money, while having the comforts of their country. She termed this “yo-yo migration” and characterized it as a phenomenon exhibited especially by Brazilians. The main reason for this yo-yo migration is that money earned in the US does not go as far as planned upon return to Brazil and often Brazilians save money in the US to buy their home in Brazil, and upon return either cannot find work, or cannot survive to sustain their newly bought home, thus they bounce back and forth between Brazil and the US. This brings them into contact with their home country and allows them to obtain their financial goals.

3.9 Conclusion: What Remains Unknown

Although there has been significant research on Brazilians, particularly those in the traditional gateway cities, there is no mention of Brazilians in new settlement destination cities, which is surprising since the literature on Hispanics in these areas is extensive. Are Brazilians also moving to new settlement areas? Furthermore, if there are new communities of Brazilians in other cities, has their origin changed? What other sending areas have emerged, and what started this new migratory pattern? Finally, do Brazilians in new areas of settlement have a similar profile as existing immigrants, or are their identities different from the majority of their compatriots in traditional gateway cities? In the gateways, Brazilians are middle class workers, arriving mostly as a result of the debt crisis, and being better educated and skilled when compared to the average Latin American immigrant. Does this generalized profile hold true for new and emerging
Brazilian communities? Each of these questions will be further explored in the context of this thesis.
CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

To conduct this study, I employed the qualitative research method, which allowed me to gain access to the community. The qualitative ethnographic method gave me the opportunity to take an active role as a researcher to better experience the life and knowledge of the participants in my study. Utilizing this method, I was able to conduct a sampling of 29 interviews with members of the Brazilian community in Columbus, take part in informal ethnographic observation and interaction with at least 100 members, and conduct interviews with 10 other non-members, including the Brazilian Consulate. I went into the field 13 times and spent at least 70 hours with the Brazilians in the community to yield approximately 120 pages of single spaced field note data. This does not include the time I spent on an internet social networking site called the Orkut, a virtual space of this immigrant community. My data analysis consisted of open and focused coding of interviews, field notes, and documents.

4.1 Gaining Access

I initially gained access to the Brazilian community in Columbus by contacting five Brazilian businesses in area, as well as visiting a local church, where mass is held in Portuguese. I met a Catholic Priest, who became an informant, and a Brazilian woman, who became one of my gatekeepers, which has been defined as someone who guards the boundaries of private settings (Morrell et. al 1999) that can also decide if someone is in or out (Berkowitz 1997) of a community or group. The Priest gave me other contact information, and the woman, Bruna, who was well connected within the community,
invited me to many Brazilian events and functions happening throughout the summer season, which allowed me to meet other contacts for my study. Through each of these contacts, I then used the snowball method to make new contacts, who I interviewed in person, by phone, or through the internet.

I also made new contacts through a social networking website called Orkut, where membership is primarily Brazilian. Having had contacts in Brazil aside from my study, I already had a profile on this site, and I was able to join three of its virtual communities pertaining to my research. Besides using these on-line virtual spaces as a document for analysis, I was also able to retrieve qualitative data from on-line conversations among community members. Having had success on this site, I started a community of my own within the Orkut called “Do Brasil pra Columbus” (From Brazil to Columbus) (see Appendix A), both explaining who I was and what was the purpose of my study. This community also had a link to my actual profile, which contained information about me as well as pictures since 2003, so participants could know more about me personally, which allowed me to build trust. This community had twelve members as of 4-8-2009. The internet was also useful in establishing a relationship with the Brazilian Consulate. Through various e-mails with the chief consular, I was able to explain my research, as well as ask her several pertinent questions about the community. Luckily, when the Consulate came to Columbus on Saturday August 24, 2008 and March 22, 2009, I was asked by the Consulate to be one of the volunteers as they assisted the immigrants with their legal concerns. I accepted both in August and in March and spent both days making photocopies, placing people in lines, or helping watch people’s children as they took care
of their documentation. While working I was also able to engage in observation of community members, as well as make several contacts. I utilized the time to talk as much as I could with the Consular about the community, and in this research I consider her to be a key-informant.

I gained access to the upper-middle-class and middle-class members of the community with relative ease, which allowed me to make several phone interviews as well as make many contacts at parties and events. At such social gatherings, it was important for me to have a gatekeeper, first, because she would introduce me to people who she thought would be helpful, and second, because her confidence in me meant that her contacts had more trust in me.

Gaining access to the upper and middle-class members of the community was easy, although I had more difficulty meeting with the working-class members of the Brazilian community in Columbus, who were mostly undocumented. After making several attempts to gain access to this group, I met one of them who allowed me to interview him, and this was primarily because of his close relationship to the middle-class Brazilians. I soon learned from my other Brazilian contacts that I was only making this working-class group fearful of me, especially since most of them were without papers. My outsider status, both from the community in Columbus, as well as my nationality as American and not Brazilian, startled these members, and I discovered that bringing my husband, also a Brazilian, into the field with me put them more at ease and allowed them to better relate to me. As Brazilian, my husband could talk and relate on the same level, and he became my gatekeeper to gain access and interact with this part of the community.
The first time he joined me in the field was during a visit to the Adventist Church, and this was my first successful encounter with these members.

Field work with this group seemed to get easier as time progressed, and people grew to know me better through internet, phone, and community hearsay. My last experience in the field was easy and even friendly, as I already had several contacts, who trusted me as a researcher and knew me as an acquaintance. As of March 22, 2009, the day I volunteered with the Consulate, I was finally able to make contact with the most elusive group of the Brazilians in Columbus, the people from the state of Rondonia, who were primarily undocumented. By helping one Rondonian family and their friend while they were in line to get forms, I was able to strike up a friendly conversation with them. While they waited to be attended, during a time span of three hours, I was able to converse with them about their migration experience. Up until this point, most of my contacts, even those without papers who worked with this group, had limited contact with them outside of their jobs. According to some, because of their origins in the state of Rondonia, a poorer and isolated state in the Amazon region, they felt they had little in common culturally with the other Brazilians and remained distant.

Although I cannot claim that my 29 Brazilian informants for this study are representative of the entire Brazilian community in Columbus, I did deliberately try to look for networks not interconnected so as to get what is known as “a maximum variation sampling.” In other words, I searched for the broadest possible range of informants that I could find within my research time line. Although I used the snowball method, I did not rely solely on this technique to get new informants. Rather, I went to different churches,
activities, and various other spaces where I heard the immigrants were, so as to actively search for different people. I met people from each of Brazil’s five different regions, and among my informants eight were from São Paulo, four from Rondonia, four from Goias, four from Rio de Janeiro, three from Minas Gerais, three from Para, three from Rio Grande do Sul, and two from Bahia. They were from a range of economic class statuses, religions, and professions. One group, however, which was deliberately not included in my research sampling were the Brazilian students from Ohio State University. Since the United States Census defines, immigrants as aliens who come for permanent residence in the United States (www.census.gov), I did not include the students in the sampling on account of their impermanent status in the US.

4.2 The Interview Process

I conducted a total of 29 member interviews, and 10 non-member interviews varying among structured, semi-structured, and unstructured styles, in person, by phone, and by internet (see Appendix B). I recorded only one of these interviews because people either felt uncomfortable and said no, or because the recorder caused strained conversations, since the person being interviewed was extra careful about what he or she said. I did have several live chat sessions over the internet, as well as exchanges of e-mails, and from these experiences, I was able to record people’s exact words. I realized that insisting on recording could cost me valuable information that the person might have otherwise shared with me. Even in this first interview, the interviewee asked for me to turn it off when he talked about certain topics. Instead of recording the interviews, I
returned home and recorded all of the information I remembered from the interviews in field notes. The structured and semi-structured interviews were most successful by phone and through e-mail, while the unstructured interviews worked best for person to person contact (see Appendix C). When speaking to people in person, I found the interview questions rather difficult to use, and I realized that the questions tended to cause my informants to be confused, to give me short answers, and by using them I got much less information compared to moments when I did not and let the conversation flow naturally.

Site location for all of the interviews was wherever my contacts felt most comfortable, and was a “safe space,” which is defined by Fine, Weis, and Wong (2003: 122) as “not just a set of geographic spatial arrangements...but imaginary borders where community intrusion and state surveillance are not permitted. These are spaces where trite social stereotypes are not permitted.” I felt it was important, particularly for my working class informants, to be in a place where they were themselves, and not feeling judged by outsiders. I had several interviews conducted within their respective homes, both in intimate gatherings and at parties. Several were also conducted at the church of my informants, being a neutral area, and a place where my informants felt relaxed.

Although my informants all knew of my position as a graduate student researcher, analyzing their community for a research project, I felt like I always got more information and had better communication when they forgot that I was researching them and considered me more as an American sincerely interested in Brazilian culture. I did not have a single successful interview when I approached them with interview questions
and talked of little else other than my research, however, when I acted as myself, chatted, and disclosed personal information I had successful encounters. This strategy took me at least a month to learn, and I attribute many of my unsuccessful first attempts with the community to be due to my insistence on maintaining a researcher identity. The downside of this strategy was that ethically, I sometimes had a personal sensation of guilt, and a feeling that I should have reminded them of who I was and the nature of our relationship more regularly. However, as I matured in my research with this particular community, I learned that my identity as both a researcher and a friend of Brazilians in Columbus could go hand in hand.

4.3 Data Analysis

I used the interpretive technique of open and focused coding of field notes, interviews, e-mails, and other documents and materials. From this process, I began to compile emerging themes on why Brazilians were coming to Columbus. Through focused coding, I was able to use the themes to create categories, which were then broken down into sub-categories, explaining why a person came to Columbus. The four main categories that emerged were “economic reasons,” “social networks,” “context of reception,” and “immigrant spaces.” “Economic factors” were broken down into the subcategories of “employment”, “robust labor market”, and “good cost of living/cheap housing”. For example, if a person told me they migrated to the region with their construction company, or through an IT business, I would mark them under the sub-category of “employment reasons.” Likewise, if a person said they came to join their
husband, wife, or child I would mark their explanation for migrating under the category “social networks.”

Through this process of open and focused coding, other patterns emerged reflecting other unexpected findings. For example, through focused coding it became apparent that there were distinct groups among my data set, each with separate sets of characteristics, while open coding revealed repeated conversation topics, which allowed me to make integrative memos, connecting my field work to themes that emerged in the literature.

4.4 Role as a Researcher

Although a challenging group to research, I felt that I was successful in understanding the community, answering my research questions, and interpreting unexpected data. As an ethnographer, I am not merely an objective observer, so it is important that I highlight my identity, particularly the aspects that affected my research. I felt that my foremost limitation was my position as an ‘outsider’ to the community, or in other words, not being Brazilian. There were several ways in which this affected my research. In some situations, my informants, when trying to explain something to me would say, “oh, you are not Brazilian so you wouldn’t understand what I’m saying,” automatically assuming I would not understand them. In certain cases they were right, as I occasionally felt that I had some cultural barriers to overcome. One woman refused to speak with me, instead directing all her questions about me to my gatekeeper, even when I was the one responding to her in Portuguese. My identity as American inhibited me
from gaining insider status, and before I met my gatekeepers, from gaining access to the community altogether. In other instances, I felt that my informants would try to justify to me their presence in the United States, often emphatically explaining to me why they came, and what their intentions were, almost as if they felt guilty, or were responding to what they thought an American would think of them. I noticed in some cases that among themselves they would complain about life in the US, but when they noticed my presence they would explain why they were complaining and then focus their conversation on the things they like in the US so as not to offend me.

My American identity was also used to my advantage too, as my informants felt curious about me. Many of my working class informants did not know any other North American that was familiar with Brazilian culture, and this made them very excited to converse with me. I was especially successful when I used specific expressions in Portuguese, such as “puxa saco,” “bosta,” or other slangs and swear words that foreigners do not commonly use. My informants would laugh at my proper usage of improper Portuguese, and this enabled them to feel more comfortable opening up to me in their own language. Also, the fact that I lived three years in São Paulo Brazil, working solely among Brazilians, gave me an advantage in understanding how to broach topics in a culturally sensitive manner. As someone familiar with Brazil’s everyday life, I was able to understand the pressures of the Brazilian economy, the demands of a hard 10-12 hour work day, a typical Brazilian meal, or even the importance of a soccer game between Vasco and Corinthians, two competing soccer teams. By relating to them as an American
who knows Brazil, I was able to understand them, and I think this made them feel I was more sincere.

On the other hand, my familiarity with Brazilian culture inhibited me in some situations. Occasionally at parties, as I conversed among people, they would say “oh, your Portuguese is so good” or “you’re so Brazilian.” The problem with this is that when I did end up making a cultural mistake, people, expecting me to know the ins and outs of their culture, might have felt offended. This happened on several occasions, one instance being when I left in the middle of a group conversation to get some food, without inviting the females I was talking with to go with me. When I returned, they ignored me, and when I later inquired to my husband as to what I did wrong, he explained this was the case. Later on in the research, when people would comment on how Brazilianized I was, I would respond, “yes, but don’t forget, I’m an American.”
CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS ON BRAZILIANS IN COLUMBUS

In this chapter I present the results from the data analysis, as well as from the interviews and informal fieldwork observations and contacts. First, I give a descriptive analysis of Brazilians in Columbus to place them within the national context of Brazilians in the US. This section will describe where Brazilians came from, why they migrated, their goals in Columbus, and how they see themselves and each other within American society. Second, I present the results of my findings on the new settlement destination factors as discussed in my literature review, focusing primarily on social networks, economic factors such as employment reasons or low cost of living, and context of reception. Third, I give a description of community dynamics of Brazilians in Columbus, discussing what kinds of immigrant spaces they have formed, how public policies have tried to help them, and how they define themselves within Columbus.

5.1 Who Are the Brazilians in Columbus?

The total number of Brazilians in Columbus is disputed. There is no official number of Brazilians according to the Public Use Microdata Survey (PUMS) or the American Community Survey, but the city estimates the population at 2,000. The Brazilian Consulate estimates there are between 4,000 and 5,000, but they have 1,000 officially registered with the Consulate from Washington DC.

One obvious discrepancy of Brazilian immigrants in Columbus in comparison to the overall patterns of Brazilians in the US is their area of origin in Brazil. As stated in the literature, most Brazilians in the US are from Minas Gerais, the number one Brazilian
sending state, followed by Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, however, as stated by the Head of the Consular Sector in Washington DC, the majority of the Brazilians in Columbus are from Rondonia, a state in the Amazon region. The community in Columbus contains a diverse group from all over Brazil.

Economic class status varied among my informants. Five out of twenty-nine self-identified as “upper middle class,” while seven out of twenty-nine self-identified as “middle class.” Four did not divulge their status, and ten identified themselves as having worked manual labor in Brazil, although they did not specify their economic class status. Seventeen were documented and twelve were undocumented. A separation can be made between the undocumented and documented members of the community within my sampling, who lived very different lives. Besides the fact that they did not mingle socially, the other most obvious differences that distinguished them were 1) having worked in the formal or informal market of the local economy of Columbus, 2) knowledge or skills of English, 3) their contact with the American community, 4) their educational attainment levels, 5) their stories of life in Brazil, and 6) their reasons for staying in the US.

The undocumented Brazilians recalled stories of difficult times that they and their families experienced in Brazil, which mostly took place during the “debt crisis” of the 1980s. In this respect, they mirror other Brazilian communities in the US, who came as economic migrants, fleeing Brazil in times of financial adversity. Ma, recounting one episode from that time period of her life, narrated how she and her children had to steal several cotton banners that hung in the central area of the city. These banners served as
political propaganda, advertising different candidates running for Mayor. Ma stole the banners when no one was looking so she could sew sheets for herself and her children. She stated that in Brazil, she knew hardship, but it taught her how to survive. Now her and her family remember those times as good memories. Sergio, who had been unemployed, stated that in Brazil he could not even find a job to sustain his family. The importance of caring for the families’ needs, particularly those of the children, was a discourse that I heard from many undocumented Brazilians. They stated how good it is to be able to provide their children with new toys or new clothes, when they requested such things, instead of just providing basic necessities. They also stated that here they can afford a good education for their children, something they may not be able to do in Brazil. Several parents told me very proudly that their children could speak English perfectly, as Americans do, and indeed, when I spoke with their children, they were right, their English was almost native.

How to speak English was something that all of my undocumented informants wanted to learn, however felt that they lacked the resources of time, money, and contacts with which to be properly trained. This was a major frustration for some of them, and several felt that this factor prevented them from participating in American mainstream society. One woman, in the US for four years, has never left Columbus because she does not speak English and is afraid she may encounter situations where she can’t communicate. However, she told me that within the Brazilian community in Columbus, she does not need English. In my fieldwork I found this to be the case with the undocumented members. They speak with other Brazilians, eat Brazilian food, watch
Brazilian TV, and talk about subjects concerning Brazil. I was the first American that many had talked with more intimately. Some expressed a strong desire to know Americans and more about American culture, while others adhered to a stereotype that Americans were cold and distant people, and preferred to stay only amongst other Brazilians. Bruna, a member of the documented community, felt frustrated that undocumented Brazilians did not learn English or try to learn more about the mainstream American culture.

They don’t want to learn English. I don’t understand it, they just stay among themselves and speak Portuguese. They insist that American are cold people and don’t make friends because that’s the stereotype, but they don’t try to know anyone. How can they know if they don’t learn English? If I invite them out, they won’t come. I guess they figure that if we wouldn’t spend time together in Brazil, than why should we in Columbus?

Undocumented community members stated several reasons for why they rarely spent time with the documented community. One reason I heard from several informants was lack of time. Undocumented members spent a larger portion of the day working, often in 12 hour shifts, and they frequently worked weekends. They had little free time, and when they did spare a day or a few hours, they preferred to spend it with close friends and family.

The documented members, on the other hand, lived with more apparent ease in the city. They spoke English fluently, had American friends, and went to public parties, musical gatherings, and cultural activities. Unlike the undocumented community, they gathered freely in public spaces, going to local concerts or a local bar. Most were from middle or upper middle class neighborhoods in Brazil, having had a better financial situation and having studied in good universities in their country. For example, Meredita
had a house near the border of a golf course. All of them had a higher education besides high school, and all of them worked in the formal sector of the economy.

Because of their placement within American society, most dealt with Americans on a day to day basis, and were successfully acculturated into American mainstream customs. The undocumented community, on the other hand, had a stronger connection with Hispanic Latinos, perhaps because of their undocumented status. The two communities, both undocumented Brazilians and Hispanics, worked together in both construction and cleaning, and often spent time together on the weekends. Tomás joked that “we come to the US and instead of learning English, we end up learning Spanish.”

While inside of the Brazilian community, I met several Latin Americans from Puerto Rico, Honduras, and one from Haiti. They unified according to a common Latin American identity, although most of my informants considered themselves Brazilians first and Latinos second, feeling that despite cultural similarities, there were also many differences. Exemplary of this is a story Roberto told me about when he went to a local swimming pool with some Hispanics from his church. As is custom in Brazil, he wore a speedo to swim in, and several of his Hispanic friends came up to him and whispered, “do you think God would approve of your speedo?” Roberto couldn’t understand and asked “what does God have to do with my speedo, it’s easier to swim in," they told him that God didn’t approve of speedos in heaven. Roberto reiterated other stories, explaining that he found certain morals and beliefs of the Hispanics to be far from the Brazilian reality.
Nevertheless, four of my informants, Roberto included, told me that the Latino minority is more comfortable for Brazilians to identify with than that of American blacks. Four of my informants discussed how they viewed race in the US, often feeling uncomfortable with our racial perceptions of a black and white dichotomy. The notion of race is socially constructed differently in Brazil than in the US, due to different historical factors that cannot be discussed within the context of this research. However, the myth of racial democracy, purported during the Vargas era to unite Brazilians under one common Brazilian identity, has tended to strengthen the mobilization of minorities according to economic reasons more so than for racial ones (Butler 1998). Therefore, issues of race are often translated into issues of social class, as is evident from my conversation with Roberto when he told me that in Brazil, it doesn’t matter if a person is black or white because there discrimination is based on how you act and if you appear like you have money or not. Eric, a black man, occasionally felt uncomfortable in Ohio, when he walked down the street with his wife, who is white. According to him, his discomfort was more due to black people than white. He felt that here, he experienced more judgment from black people on the basis of his race than from whites. He had been called “white” before by blacks because of the clothes he wore and the way he spoke, and he would respond perplexed, “I’m not white, I’m Brazilian.” He couldn’t understand what blacks expected of him.

Besides Eric, Roberto was the only other informant who recounted experiences of when he was the victim of blatant racism. Roberto, because of his mix of native and Moorish Portuguese, looks Arabic, with dark hair, thick and dark eyebrows, and olive
toned skin. On account of his Arabic appearance, he feels he was unfairly treated upon entry into the US. He had a student visa of nine months for a class he was going to take, which was reduced to 19 days upon arrival at the Texas airport. After he went through customs, he was detained by an officer for questioning. The entire session, which lasted hours, was done through a phone translator since he did not speak any English. The officer who detained him “was shaking with anger” and would not even look at him. Ultimately, his visa was withheld and he was given 19 days in the country. He wanted to contest his situation with a lawyer, but he did not know how, and since he was coming to stay undocumented, he did not try. Despite such a difficult experience, Roberto desires to stay in the US, and hopes to learn English and American perceptions of race. He states that instead of feeling angry about discrimination, he wants to understand it according to an American viewpoint.

One thing both the documented and undocumented status members of the community had in common was their tendency to discuss or compare themselves to the Rondonians. Eighteen of my informants, ten undocumented and eight documented, explained they were more educated and in a better social standing than the Rondonians. Although the Rondonians are mostly undocumented immigrants, I found that they did not spend time with members of the undocumented Brazilians from the other states. Therefore, I make a distinction between undocumented non-Rondonians, and undocumented Rondonians. Within my field notes and interviews the discussion of Rondonians was a theme that emerged during my coding analysis, and there are many
examples of opinions on them and their presence. Below is a quote from Roberto, an undocumented non-Rondonian, in his description of them.

They don’t put any emphasis on education. They just want to come to the US, save money to return to Rondonia and buy their parcel of land. You don’t see them out and they don’t go to church because they work non-stop. They don’t even enjoy summer but they use it instead to work extra. It’s hard to have contact with them because they don’t mix with the others. They just want to earn money and go. All they ever do is work. All they think of is money. They are countryside people, who care for land and some cattle and that’s what they want, money to buy their own land and cattle.

The following is from Getulio, a documented member.

Yes, we tried to help them, with English classes, but nobody would come. It’s hard for us from São Paulo to understand them, the Rondonians. They don’t care about education.

Gloria, a documented middle class member, was harsher, stating:

There are too many Brazilians here and they give us a bad reputation and put themselves in danger. Most of them are from Rondonia. People are very worried because they don’t have health insurance and they have to always be on the look out for the police. I get frustrated because I make $2,000 per month, but some of the women who work for a cleaning business, or have their own businesses can clean up to 20 houses per week and make $4,000 to $5,000 per month. The problem is that if they have a problem with their health and go to the hospital, they call me to help them. Translate for them, pay for their bills til they can pay me back. But I don’t have the time or the money to do that.

From the perspective of people from outside of Brazil’s north region, people from the Amazon are stereotypically known to be direct and say what they think, while often acting in a contradictory manner between what they say and do. I was told that they have to be tough, adapting to the rule of law in Brazil and as Timote told me “in the Amazon there is no law. People go to church with guns in their car in order to survive.”

However, I also heard them described as “simple farm people," who simply need guidance on the norms of another culture, while others described them as common people, only here to better their lives.

Leticia and João, both Rondonians, were very cordial to me during our first encounter, and Leticia even insisted I call her to meet again so she could make me a
typical Brazilian pudding. They were from small towns outside of the cities of Ouro Preto and Ji-Parana (see Figure 2), and they told me that most Rondonians in Columbus were from either these cities or the surrounding areas. However, Leticia self-identified as Baiano, which is a person from the Brazilian state of Bahia, stating that most Rondonians were immigrants from other states in Brazil, while Joao and Jessica, my other two Rondonian informants considered themselves Rondonians.

Figure 2. Map of Rondonia State
Source: Governo do Estado do Rondônia 2006 (as taken from www.ub.es)
Leticia owned a small farm with her entire family, and she was saving up money to open her own store. João had worked on a farm in Rondonia and was saving money for a farm of his own. To me, they did not seem as I had heard them described, and the principal difference between them and my other informants, was their love of farm life, sertanejo music, which is like country music in the US, and cowboy hats. However, Jessica, who I had contact with on the Orkut, was a bit rougher in her use of swear words, and grammatically incorrect Portuguese. As I browsed different profiles on the Orkut of the Rondonians in Columbus, I found many different descriptions under the “about me” category, where the user is supposed to describe himself or herself. For example, the heading of one profile states “we are a normal family, happy to have two beautiful daughters, who give us so much happiness,” while other profiles have very abrupt headings like “your jealousy strengthens me” or “I don’t care what you think of me.” As an outside observer of the Rondonians within their virtual social network on Orkut, their community within Columbus appeared diverse and varied, containing families, single men and women, as well as teenagers, very different in their interests, activities, and education. According to Jessica, they rarely mix with the other Brazilians in Columbus, and only respond to social events when they receive a direct invitation, while Leticia did not have a problem mixing with other Brazilians as long as they were from the church.

According to the Consular, most Rondonians are “target earners”, meaning they are there to earn a certain amount of money and then return to Brazil. Their state, Rondonia, is particularly marked by land violence, with some regions experiencing 30-165 deaths for every 100,000 people (see Figure 3). Land in the region is a precious
commodity, and, according to stories I heard from my informants, most Rondonians in Columbus hope to earn sufficient funds to return to Brazil and buy their own farm with some cattle.

Figure 3. Map of Violence in Brazil
Source: OEI and Ministério da Saúde 2004

Besides the Rondonians, ten of my non-Rondonian informants said they came to the US for a better life, especially financially, because here, they earn more than they could in Brazil and can afford more than just basic necessities (see Appendix D). On the contrary, others came to pursue a professional career dream. For example, Raquel hopes
to become an architect, and she feels her chances to achieve her dreams are better here. Others migrate to join family. In the case of Bruna, she did not want to come to the US, but did so to join her husband. A final reason for migrating to the US was on account of a professional opportunity, as in the case of all of the pastors/priests I met, who were needed by their denominations to serve the Latino communities. For example, Timote received a scholarship to study in the US, with the expectation that he would in turn serve the Brazilian communities in the country. There was a strong correlation between undocumented status of the immigrants, and the desire to migrate in order to prosper financially. Of my eleven informants who did not have valid US documents, all of them except for one came to the US to improve their financial situation.

Most Brazilian immigrants migrating to Columbus are now coming directly from Brazil, in order to reunite with their families in the city; sixteen of my informants had come directly from their city in Brazil. However, five of my informants came from Boston MA, two from New York NY, one from Las Angeles CA, one from Phoenix AZ, and one from Ann Arbor MI. As Brazilians arrive in Columbus from Brazil or other US cities, they continue to help their friends and family migrate directly to the region, making the city a direct destination from Brazil, which can eventually lead to network embeddedness.

Brazilians migrate to Columbus through a variety of ways. Five of my informants were granted entry to the US under a tourist visa, which they obtained in order to visit family, and later overstayed its validation. Eight arrived through a work visa, three through a student visa, two through a religious visa, two because of marriage, one
received amnesty, and one crossed at the US-Mexico border. According to Karen, Gloria and Timote most Brazilians in Columbus came by crossing at the border or by obtaining a tourist visa.

Eighteen informants stated they would like to stay in Columbus, while one stated he would like to remain in the US, but not in Columbus. Six out of twenty-nine desire to return to Brazil, while one stated that it depended on where he was sent for his profession. Of the nineteen informants that said they desired to stay, sixteen had planned on being in Columbus temporarily, either as target earners, or for a job, but ended up deciding to make the city their home. The number one reason these sixteen informants gave for staying was because of their children, and answers varied between, “my child was born here and this city is their home, so this is my home now too,” or “I can provide better for my child here.” Of the six informants that would like to return to Brazil, their number one reason was that they missed their family and their culture (see Appendix E).

Whether Brazilians in Columbus stay or leave, they have temporarily made a home and a small Brazilian community within the city. Their presence within Columbus is unique, especially in comparison to the literature on Brazilians in the US, of which does not address any other place of origin apart from Minas Gerais, São Paulo, and Rio de Janeiro. The community in Columbus is diverse, and has immigrants from many different origins. Also absent from the literature is why Brazilians are beginning to arrive in non-traditional settlement cities, like Columbus. The next section will address this gap and provide an explanation for why Brazilians have settled specifically in Columbus as their destination within the US.
5.2 Why Have Brazilians Migrated Specifically to Columbus?

Columbus is growing significantly in population because of its budding Information Technology sector. In 2000, Columbus had a total population of 711,470 with 47,713 foreign born (ACS 2000), while in 2007, the total population is estimated to be 724,095 with 67,078 foreign born (ACS 2007). IT is attracting new jobs, more money, and more foreigners to the city, and this has attracted many new service jobs, which Latino immigrants are filling. Between 2000 and 2007, the city’s foreign born population grew by 19,365, of which 11,707 of those newcomers were of Latino origin (ACS 2007). Brazilians, although only a small percent of the total Latino population, are a visible presence within the city. Brazilian newcomers have migrated to Columbus for a variety of reasons. Sixteen came for employment reasons, fourteen came because of their social networks ties, four because of a robust labor market, seven because of the cheap cost of living, and seven because of a good context of reception in the city. Some people named more than one reason for their arrival to the city. Demographic factors and public policy, two settlement destination factors as discussed in the literature review as attracting immigrants, were not named by any informant as playing a role in immigrant settlement.

Sixteen of twenty-nine informants stated that they came to Columbus for employment reasons, making this the primary new settlement destination factor attracting Brazilians to Columbus. The main source of employment was construction. Since the 1990s, up until 2007, construction projects flourished as the city grew. The Arena District, Polaris, and Easton all required extensive amounts of building to create the
shopping and strip malls, outlet and department stores, and fast food chain establishments that are there today. Columbus suburbs such as Pickerington, Canal Winchester, and Worthington have all had widespread development, providing new neighborhoods and homes for middle class families, which serve as a consumer base for the small outcroppings of corporate chain establishments. Several construction companies were contracted, from New York, the Boston area, Northern New Jersey, and even Philadelphia, to do these projects, bringing with them crews made up of Latinos, Brazilians included. Some of the Brazilian workers, like Edgar, made negotiations at the construction sites with local companies, and upon being offered a better wage, stayed in the city instead of returning to Boston, New York, or their city in Northern New Jersey. Many of the Brazilians who now live in Columbus migrated like Edgar did, and many continued working in construction, while others, enjoying the calm of the city, its good cost of living, and lack of competition, found work in other areas, mostly in the informal sector.

The women accompanied their husbands to Columbus, and found work as domestic cleaners. Many of my female contacts work for either a cleaning company, or they have formed their own personal clientele to clean houses, which they refer to as “schedules.” They develop their own cleaning business through a particular slang specific to Brazilians in Columbus, which is “soltar cartao,” or “drop a card.” By going from mailbox to mailbox, dropping business cards in upper and middle class mailboxes, they eventually get sufficient clients to develop their own cleaning business.

In the last year, construction projects throughout the city have come to a halt, and there were and continue to be few construction jobs available. The housing market crisis
of 2007/08 made the situation worse, since there were no houses being built in the city or its suburbs. A few immigrants returned to Brazil and others continue to return little by little, while others moved to other cities, where they have social network connections. João has recently returned to Columbus from Miami, where he went to work on a construction project he had heard of from a friend. He said he knows of people like him, who use Columbus as a home base, but travel to other cities when they hear of a construction work opportunity. However, after the housing market collapse, the majority of undocumented Brazilian men in my study found themselves unemployed, while their wives continued to do domestic work. One of my informants told me the women became frustrated because they would work hard all day while the men would be home relaxing on the couch. Finally, the women got tired, angry, and forced them to work so many of the men now work with the women cleaning houses. Roberto, Sergio, and Felix, three of my male contacts who were formerly construction workers, are now working in the domestic service with their wives. They, like many other couples, have made business cards that offer multi-services, such as painting, fix-its, and landscaping that extend past simply cleaning the house.
Several of these couples have been able to build up a sufficient clientele in their “schedules,” and they are able to make a decent salary. According to Gloria, those with schedules can earn up to $5,000 per month, which explains why some have Honda CR-Vs, SUVs and wide screen TVs. Such a lucrative business has transformed the “schedules” into a commodity with a fluctuating value, which can be sold to incoming Brazilians at a negotiated price. The value of “schedules” drops when there is a financial scare, while going up in price when demand is high.
The schedules are part of the informal sector of the economy, but I also had informants who came to Columbus because of their jobs in the formal market. One came with her husband, who was contracted to work as a program manager for a transnational corporation, while another was recruited to work as a Business Systems Manager for the Latin American Sector of his company. Through these two informants, I met other IT professionals, like Vitor, who had recently started his own IT service technician business, and Pedro, also a service technician in IT at a local company. Another profession that recruited several of my contacts to Columbus was that of a preacher or priest. Getulio, Timote, Eric, and José were all in the area to serve as pastors to their congregations. Timote and Getulio were both recruited to serve the Brazilian community, while Pastor Eric, although a Brazilian, was recruited to serve a Latino community, and José, to serve an American community (see Appendix F).

Whether in Columbus to work in the formal or informal sectors, one thing all of my informants agreed upon was the extensive work opportunities as well as the cheap cost of living in the area. As several people commented, “here, it is easy to buy a car, and even a house.” Meredita, in the US for 25 years, moved from Las Angeles to Columbus in the 1980s because of the excellent housing prices and comparatively calmer style of life. She currently lives in a large home, something she “could never afford in L.A.” Others commented on the fact that here they can buy their children a toy or new clothes, things they may want but not necessarily need, but that “as parents, we feel good to not always have to say no to our child’s wants.” One husband expressed his happiness over the fact that in Columbus, his wife could be a stay at home mom. Ronaldo explained that in New York or Boston, life is more expensive and work is more stressful
because there are too many Brazilians and too much competition for the same jobs, or in other words, the market is saturated, but that in Columbus this was not a worry for anyone. Although Meredita was the only one of my informants to list the good-cost of living and calmer lifestyle as her primary reason for coming to the city, eleven of my informants named this as one of their reasons for moving to the area, while all of my informants explained this as a benefit to staying in the city.

Fourteen of my twenty-nine informants came to Columbus because of their social network contacts, demonstrating the importance of this new settlement destination factor. Of these fourteen informants, eight came through familial social networks, while six came through friend networks. Julia came to Columbus to meet her brother, who had formerly worked in construction, but met an American woman, married, and opened his own cleaning business. After arriving, Julia sent for her husband and daughter to join her, and her husband later sent for his mother, who is now trying to find a strategy to bring over her two daughters, who would than bring over their husbands and children. This was one of two familial social network chains I met, who intended for the entire family to migrate, in a process known as chain migration. Pedro, who came to Columbus from New York through family, later helped his brother migrate, but he did not intend to help anyone else explaining that “it was too much of a headache.” The group that most utilize their social networks are the Rondonians, who came to the US through their contacts from Minas Gerais, the number one Brazilian sending state of immigrants to the US. In order to understand the apparent oddity of Rondonians in Columbus, it is important to understand the internal migration Brazil experienced in the 1970s and 80s.
During Brazil’s dictatorship from 1964-1986, government officials, viewing the region as “strategically vulnerable and economically under utilized” developed national policies aimed at developing the Amazon frontier (Carvalho et al. 2002: 36). In Rondonia, for example, to attract newcomers, the government gave away good quality land for free or at very cheap prices (Goza 1994), attracting families and migrants in search of better opportunities. Table 8 illustrates the population increase to Rondonia.

Table 3: Population Increase to Rondonia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Migrants</th>
<th>Principal States of Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>3,140</td>
<td>Parana, Mato Grosso, Mato Grosso do Sul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>12,658</td>
<td>Parana, Mato Grosso, Mato Grosso do Sul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>36,791</td>
<td>Parana, Mato Grosso, Mato Grosso do Sul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>49,205</td>
<td>Parana, Mato Grosso, Mato Grosso do Sul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>60,218</td>
<td>Parana, Mato Grosso, Amazonas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>58,025</td>
<td>Parana, Mato Grosso, Minas Gerais</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>92,723</td>
<td>Parana, Mato Grosso, São Paulo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>153,327</td>
<td>Parana, Mato Grosso, São Paulo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>151,621</td>
<td>Parana, Mato Grosso, Minas Gerais</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>165,899</td>
<td>Parana, Mato Grosso, Minas Gerais</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>103,654</td>
<td>Parana, Mato Grosso, Espirito Santo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>51,590</td>
<td>Parana, Minas Gerais, São Paulo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Migrants 1977-1988</td>
<td>582,169</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to my informants, some migrants to Rondonia had family from Minas Gerais, São Paulo, or other areas in southeast Brazil, who migrated to the US, and those in Rondonia used these social network contacts to migrate to the US from Rondonia. Through these initial contacts, others from Rondonia also desired to migrate, creating a new origin for migration, and explaining the presence of Rondonians in Columbus.

Leticia told me, when I asked her about her origins, that she was from Bahia, and she had friends in Rondonia from regions all over Brazil that migrated with their families. Many have helped their family to migrate, including their grandparents, and children of all ages. As Bruna told me, “when I visited their apartment complex, I felt like I was in Brazil. They all have TV Globo and only watch Brazilian TV. All I heard was Portuguese, and there was Brazilian music playing too. I saw Brazilian flags everywhere. They leave their doors open to each other and the complex is full of people, from their old grandparents to their young children, and everyone in between. They bring over everyone, the entire family!” According to my non-Rodnonian informants, as well as my own experiences in my field work, they rarely mix with the other Brazilians, forming their own social network group in Columbus, connected to other social network groups, the documented and undocumented non-Rondonian communities, by fragile ties.

Although weak, there is overlap among networks, particularly in the churches and online communities. But overall, the networks rarely mingle with each other. Bruna was frustrated she could never organize the entire community to gather. She tried to form a website where people posted phone numbers and professions, so they could exchange services, but none of the undocumented members posted information. My undocumented
informants admitted they liked to keep small groups of friends because life was too hectic to make time for everyone. Gloria informed me that the only time everyone gathers is during the World Cup to cheer for the Brazilian soccer team.

Having other Brazilians present within Columbus, whether friends or not, is important for Brazilian newcomers. Six out of twenty-nine informants explained “context of reception” as an important factor for their choosing Columbus as an area of settlement. The foremost important aspect of “context of reception” for them was having a Brazilian community present to offer support. Utilizing their social network contacts, friends could help friends find a job, manage the city, make connections, and offer a community away from home. When I asked Patricia about the Brazilian community in Columbus, she responded, “for Brazilians abroad, having a Brazilian community is fundamental. It’s like we’re in contact with someone from our family. I have to maintain contact with the community here.” Others, like Roberto and Julia, valorize the help they had finding work and getting started financially, although they explain that when you ask for a favor from the Brazilians “you are in handcuffs” til it is repaid.

The calm atmosphere of Columbus is something valued too. Brazilians, especially those from larger cities, find Columbus to be a safe-haven, particularly for their children. As Meredita explained that the pace of life is calm like the countryside, but it still has the amenities of a city. This calm atmosphere extends to the work environment, which Brazilians say lacks the competitive atmosphere of other cities, like Boston or New York, but still holds them in high esteem as workers in their professions. Sergio and Roberto agreed that here they are not treated as low-class citizens because
they clean houses, but rather, Americans value their work and truly appreciate their services. Roberto explained how he and Julia completely restored one house that had been filthy and run-down since the owners of the house both had prominent jobs, and had no time for cleaning. The couple praised Roberto and Julia for their work on the house, and wanted to introduce them to friends. My informant laughed when he explained, “I couldn’t believe it, they introduced me as if I was their equal, even though I was only their house cleaner.” He explains that “here, people want and need my work, and here, I am truly valued as a worker, not as anything lower because I clean houses.” Edgar stated he did not feel this same sensation in New York because they have too much competition among countrymen and Americans there are used to Brazilian style services with Brazilian quality work.

Understanding Columbus as a destination for Brazilians is easy when one contextualizes Columbus’ lower cost of living, work opportunities, lack of competition, calmer lifestyle, and presence of a Brazilian community in the region. These are all reasons why Brazilians stay in the area. The two most important factors attracting Brazilians to the area initially however, are labor recruitment and social networks. Employment reasons explain why the city was initially discovered, while social networks perpetuated the migration flow. Furthermore, for this study, it is important to contextualize the social networks historically, across time and space, in order to understand their role in making connections between Rondonia and Columbus, while at the same time understanding the role they play to perpetuate migration to Columbus, from cities in Brazil and in the US.
5.3 Community Dynamics

Although immigrant space and public policy were not seen as being specific pull factors for migration to Columbus, they are part of the community dynamics of Brazilians. Immigrant space is a clear consequence of the Brazilian presence in the city. During my fieldwork, I identified several different Brazilian spaces, which included churches, a store, soccer teams, a coffee group, band concerts, a bar, an NGO, and an online community.

The largest and most unifying source of immigrant space in Columbus is the virtual community called Orkut, which acts as a communication forum for community members to organize themselves. Besides creating virtual social network connections by “adding someone as a friend,” there are open community forums where members can gather to learn about events that are happening in the area, and dialogue about them. For example, one virtual Orkut community, as of 1-26-08, had 240 members, with several posted forums addressing a Samba Party on the 31st, a party for Carnival, a question about jobs, an exchange of skype phone numbers, and newcomers arriving in December. People respond openly in the community forums. One example written below is a dialogue about people going to the city.

Raimundo comments: Good afternoon everyone…I’m going to Columbus on December 2 and I’d like to know about the city…is it good there????? I’m going to look for a job and when I arrive there I won’t know anyone. Does anyone have any hints?

Elsio comments: 2 of December in Columbus. It’s freakin’ cold…. almost snowing…, people on the streets exactly like ants, buying things for Christmas…Your gonna love it!!!! Ha ha ha…

Deise comments: I’m also going to Columbus in December! Kisses!
Roger comments: Are you guys coming to do an exchange program? Write me through e-mail and we can exchange ideas.

Antonia comments: Hi Everyone! The eleventh of December I’ll be in Columbus for some seasonal work, and with this economic crisis, you know it won’t be easy to find. Does anyone know stores that are hiring: Starbucks, coldstone, and part time job?! And besides the obvious I’d like to know how the night life is in Columbus, even with snow on the ground! 😊

Fernando Comments: Hi How are you? Do you have work experience? Try here: (gives an address). I’m staying here with a friend and I perceived there is a big turnover of security guards. A hug!

Another example is a post about a party for Carnival.

TropicalCleveland.com presents Cleveland's Brazilian Carnaval 2009!! "An Odyssey in Music, Dance, Costumes, Glitter, Beads and Masks" From Brazil "Sambahia" Playing: SAMBA, MARCHA, AXE, FORRO, MARACATU, SAMBA-REGGAE, and CARNIVAL ELECTRICO Featuring Group & Individual Costume Contest Samba Dance Contest Authentic Sambistas Performances Big Batucada (Brazilian Drum Line) "Samba Joia" Samba Lessons Various "Performance Artist" throughout the evening Caipirinhas & other Tropical Drinks A La Cart Menu offered by "Sarava" Brazilian restaurant $15 General Admission, $25 VIP Offers privileged view of the event and access to entire club

Sometimes events such as these are delivered to a person’s e-mail address through Orkut to ensure that each member receives the message. Through this method of communication, people can learn about what is going on and when. Brazilians find it to be a highly effective community organizing tool, especially since the community is organized heterolocally (Zelinsky and Lee 1998), or in other words, it is spatially dispersed throughout the city. Although there is one main node of Brazilian settlement in
Columbus, it is not shared by the entire community. For example, twelve of my informants lived separated from the main node of Brazilian settlement in the city, and three came from outside the city limits altogether, with two being from Marion, and one being from Cincinnati. Furthermore, although not exemplary of heterolocalism, when I went to Brazilian parties or when I volunteered with the Consulate, I met people from Dayton, Toledo, and Cleveland, who, having heard of the event through the Orkut, came to Columbus. All of my informants had or currently have, a profile on the Orkut. And although networks do not mingle, they may be able to check out each other’s profile through the Orkut if they have the desire to do so, as long as profiles are set to public view. Orkut, like other social networking sites, allows members to set their profiles to “private” if the user wishes to have more control over their profile’s privacy.

The second most unifying of the immigrant spaces are the churches, which consist of various denominations. The largest and most successful is the Catholic Church, which has a community of at least 200 congregates. Getulio says he cannot keep track of how many members the church has since attendance is inconsistent. This church hosts parties on important Catholic holidays, one of which is a Festa Junina Party (see photo 2) that Brazilians celebrate in honor of São Joao.
Getulio explains that “the church gives the Brazilians a community in the city and provides for their spiritual needs.” It also tries to provide them with the tools they need to live better lives in Columbus, one example being English classes. Additionally, the Catholic Church hosts the Brazilian Consulate every four months to give Brazilians help with their questions regarding visa questions or concerns.

The second largest Brazilian church is Pentecostal, with at least 100 congregates. It is evangelical and attends mainly the working-class members of the Brazilian community. It also has parties and hosts events. There is a second evangelical church which has a small community of Brazilians. Many undocumented immigrants, searching for a church of their own, met several documented middle class Brazilians, which brought them to this smaller church. However, the services were only in English so they
stopped attending. This church does missionary work in Brazil occasionally, although
the pastor refused to speak with me.

There is an Adventist Church, which has a small community of about 15-20
Brazilians. They do not have their own service in Portuguese, but attend service in
Spanish, a language they have facility to understand and speak. The Brazilian Consulate,
when they come to Columbus, utilizes this church along with the Catholic Church, to
extend service to the Brazilian community. This church does community activities, and
provides for its members in every way possible, especially in matters of education. It has
its own school and if a member cannot pay for his or her child to attend, than the church
pays for the education, including all materials needed. Similarly, if there is a camping
trip or church community activity and a member would like to participate but cannot
afford to, the church will pay for them to go. It hosts birthday parties for its children
members, and every Saturday it offers a communal lunch to the congregation. As Melia
told me, “the church is the best thing in our life, and it is the only reason we stayed in
Columbus. My son and I were very depressed our first year here and we nearly returned
to Brazil, but when we found the church everything changed. This church offers us
community and family.” The church has attempted to reach out to the entire Brazilian
community by offering Portuguese classes for Brazilian children, in partnership with the
Brazilian Consulate. However, these classes were discontinued since attendance was too
low.

The Methodist Church is still forming and currently has a small community of
Brazilian members. The Pastor, Timote, is in Columbus for only a year, therefore his
congregation is still a work in progress. As a newcomer and outsider of the community, he encountered fear, mistrust, and resistance from the Brazilian immigrants, although he hoped to expand his congregation to form a community, “a place that organizes a bowling event on Friday night, a soccer game on Saturday afternoon, and a safe place where immigrants can gather to be together in a trusting environment.” Timote worries about the immigrants, especially those in Columbus illegally, and hopes to give them spiritual guidance. He has also hosted events at his church, where he brought in a policeman to speak to the immigrants about laws in Columbus, to help prevent them from breaking any rules. Lately, however, because of the fear and mistrust he has encountered from Brazilians, he is working more with Mexican, Indian, and Arabic newcomers, and his congregation is growing among these ethnic groups.

Another successful category of immigrant space is the Brazilian store in Columbus. Besides offering Brazilians a place to go where they can find products from home as well as cheap calling cards and flight information, it also acts as an organizational conduit for the community. When there is a party, gathering, or any information that the community wants to extend among members, they put up a flyer or sign posting information on the bulletin board so other Brazilians, when they enter to go shopping, are informed about the event. The Catholic Church posts all of its information about church events at the store, and several independent Brazilian businesses display their business cards there too. A second store opened, which was large and had many products from Brazil as well as other countries in Latin America. It hosted a feijoada
every Sunday for the Brazilian community. However, it went out of business because it was too large to be sustained by the small community of Brazilians.

A successful leisure event that gathers the community is music performances by Brazilian musicians. There are three Brazilian bands in the city, along with several solo singers of Bossa Nova, who are all Americans that sing in Portuguese. Brazilians attend all of these music festivities. The most popular of the bands sings popular songs from the different Brazilian musical genres of MPB, axé, forró, and samba. Brazilians from all backgrounds gather at the various shows to see this band.

Figure 6. Brazilian Music Concert in Columbus
There are two other bands that blend bossa nova, funk, pop, jazz and reggae. All three bands recently gathered and played together at the Latino Columbus Festival in 2008.

There are several other important unofficially organized events for community members. Men sometimes take part in soccer teams, which are unofficially organized among Latinos and Americans, and gather on the weekends to play games. As my American informant told me, “we are all fans of The Crew, which has recently hired three Brazilian players!” The women have a large group that meets once a month for breakfast and coffee. They are made up of married, documented and undocumented, women, and they have an e-mail list, which they call “as esposas brasileiras” (the Brazilian wives), which is how they organize their meetings. I asked why they are called the Brazilian Wives, and I was told that there are a lot of Brazilian women in Columbus who met their American husbands through an internet and dating website. It was these women, longing for the friendship of women from Brazil, who started this “coffee klatch,” as they call it in English. Besides these informal gatherings, there is one bar in the area that is dominated by Brazilian clientele.

There is one NGO that was named by one of my informants as having worked with Brazilians and it is called the Latino Empowerment Outreach Network (LEON), established in 2000, which reaches out to the Latino community in Columbus and central Ohio to empower and educate. LEON is organized according to six different committees in the areas of health, education, communication, finance, advocacy, with an executive branch to organize its affairs. The advocacy group attempts to bridge communication and
cultural gaps between city officials, community residents, and the immigrant community. Its most recent success was to win access for non-English speakers to 911, since Franklin county, prior to 2008 had no system to address non-English calls. After the tragic death of a four-year old immigrant, the advocacy lawyers convinced the city to order a multi-lingual language phone system. The Health committee is currently involved in a training program with Latinos with limited English ability, so they can access healthcare in the US. The education committee attempts to promote cultural awareness in schools, and has held several meetings promoting ESL in the South-Western City School District. The Communications Committee promotes information about LEON and organizes events. The Financial Committee works with the LEON treasurer to direct accounting and budget issues. Lastly the executive committee functions to coordinate meetings and projects.

Columbus’ local government also has a public policy program to assist in the needs of the immigrants, not only Brazilians, but the growing community of migrants to the region, as one Community Relations Commission member informed me in an e-mail. Seeing the growing trend of migration, Columbus saw the need to change its policy to better incorporate newcomers. The city of Columbus has become a sanctuary for immigrants, especially after it accepted Somali refugees during the Somali Civil War. The result is that the city has developed large immigrant communities that need help integrating into the customs of the city. The Community Relations Commission, under Mayor Michael B. Coleman, recognized the need to help immigrants adapt and they developed the New American Community Initiative in 2006. The idea behind the Initiative is to give all immigrants in Columbus access to city services and programs to
help improve their lives, and aid their adjustment to become responsible and productive citizens of the area. As of now, the immigrants face many challenges such as language barriers, lack of education, affordable housing, healthcare, and even employment. However, the city recognizes that if challenges are met, these immigrants will contribute to the economy and development of Columbus, adding to its cultural richness.

In an effort to gain the immigrants’ trust and make them feel comfortable, they have hired “culturally sensitive” coordinators, one being Hispanic and the other Somali. I briefly spoke to the Hispanic coordinator, and she gave me the explanation of her work and what the Initiative tries to accomplish. The coordinators along with their teams operate a 311 Call Center, which takes non-emergency requests regarding water, electricity, and sewage services. The program offers adult literacy classes, and explains to parents the steps they must take to enroll their children in school. There is a mobile health care bilingual team that travels to Latino and Somali communities to provide health services to residents. This team also offers a public health sanitarian, who teaches food safety courses according to US norms for new businesses. The program also sends police officers to immigrant churches and communities to explain to them the law in their own language.

It is unclear how the immigrants feel about the Initiative. Three of my documented informants, Timote, Getulio, and Gloria, were pleased, explaining that it is important to have Initiative officials, like its coordinator and other police officers, come to their church to explain important rules and regulations of the city. Timote says of the Hispanic coordinator “she’s so Brazilian that we think of her as another one of us.” They
feel that some undocumented immigrants, specifically the Rondonians, need guidance on specific cultural rules and norms, and the Initiative helps by coming to their churches to provide immigrants with support in these areas.

Besides the New Americans Initiative, Columbus has an unofficial policy to help the immigrants integrate. The police treat immigrants in a friendly manner to build trust as protectors of safety in the community. The police often spend time around immigrant communities to build a trusting relationship and keep them safe from crime. As one apartment manager said, “the police here are like cats, they always come around because they like the home-cooked food we give them when they visit. We’re all on real good terms with the police here.” The Police will, or course, apprehend immigrants if they are caught doing something illegal. Several Brazilians have been deported for crimes such as drunk driving or car racing at night down empty Columbus roads.

Another support system immigrants can utilize is their own Consulate. In order to help Brazilians living abroad as well as encourage their ties to Brazil, the Brazilian government has developed a program entitled *Apoio no Exterior* or "Help Abroad" (see photo 4). Through this program, Brazilian Consulates have made an effort to find and extend support to Brazilian communities all across the United States. Each Consulate concentrates on its own jurisdiction to find Brazilian communities. In the case of Columbus, the Washington DC Consulate comes every three months to help Brazilians solve problems with their documents, examples include registering a newborn baby as Brazilian, or renewing passports. In order to remain politically neutral in an already
divided community of Brazilians, they attempt to go to all the different churches in the area to extend their services, not just one.

In one conversation with the Consulate, they informed me that their sector has had such a high demand from the growing numbers of Brazilians in the US, that they are now getting their own building, entirely separated from the Brazilian Embassy in DC, with a larger staff.

*Apoio no Exterior* offers several benefits to Brazilians. It hopes to soon offer the *Carteira de Matrícula Consular* (Consulate Matriculation Card), which will allow
Brazilians in the US to open a bank account in the principal Brazilian public bank, Banco do Brasil. This will help them by lowering the taxes they would otherwise have to pay when sending money home through money ordering services. However, the American government has not yet recognized this card. Also, through Apoio no Exterior, Portuguese classes are offered to second generation Brazilians in order to facilitate and strengthen ties with their home country and culture, with the hope they will someday decide to return.

In Columbus, the Brazilian Consulate hired teachers and bought materials to give classes of Portuguese. The Seventh Day Adventist Church provided the classroom, and a time was decided that was most convenient for the larger Brazilian community. However, the Portuguese classes were unsuccessful and were discontinued because few families brought their children, despite its flexible hours on a late Sunday afternoon. Roberto and Julia told me that some families work 12-15 hour days, leaving no time for the children, explaining that “here, TV does more parenting because of hectic lifestyles.” Others are afraid of the government, because as Vitor told me, “if the Brazilian government finds out there are undocumented Brazilians here, they will turn them in to the American government to be deported.” At the Festa Junina, Rosie and Tomás chose a table far away from the Consulate representatives, stating they felt uncomfortable sitting too close.

The immigrant’s fear of their government can be a subconscious expression of unhealed wounds from the decades of the 1960s and 1970s, when Brazil was ruled by a harsh military dictatorship. Many of the government cruelties have not been forgotten. Some scholars have even suggested that fear and insecurity in Brazilian society has
worsened since Brazil’s transition to democracy because of increased accounts of organized crime being linked to politicians, and also because of political corruption in the rural backlands (Koonings and Kruijt 1999).

However, within Columbus, I discovered that fear pertained to the government, but was a prevalent part of the community conscience, often being the topic of conversation at gatherings and parties. The primary source of fear was of deportation. I was told from several people the same story of deportation, which exemplifies how fear has consequences on the community. Apparently, a married couple, both Brazilians, were caught for speeding, and subsequently arrested and jailed when the officer learned of their illegal status. They were scheduled for deportation. However, the woman was pregnant and because of her delicate situation, the police allowed her to go free under the pretext that she would not leave Columbus. They would deport her only after the pregnancy. Fearful of eventual arrest and deportation, she fled to California, where she had social network contacts. This situation started the rumor that if someone did not notify the police of her whereabouts, the entire Brazilian community would be arrested and deported. As this rumor spread, the community entered in a panic. As Karen explained:

Many people were thinking of leaving Columbus and possibly moving to Philadelphia or New Jersey, where we have friends from other construction work contacts. It was a big scare and a horrible couple of months to be in Columbus. For one week, no one went to work and no one drove. I was scared of being deported but I think it was all rumors. It can be horrible sometimes, constantly living in fear.

The immigrants were also fearful of being taken advantage of. I heard a story of a family who spent a lot of money paying for a house, which they later learned was a scam. According to my informants Bruna and Timote, there is a person who is currently in jail for robbing several immigrant families of thousands of dollars. Scams such as this have
caused immigrants to be fearful even of fellow compatriots because as Jessica stated “here whoever has a green card robs us.” Roberto told me how his own brother-in-law exploited his wife, until he was able to arrive in Columbus, paying her only 25% of her earnings and keeping the rest for himself. They explained to me that here, “you are in handcuffs” until you can pay back your debts. This is another reason why they like to keep their social networks in Columbus small, staying only amongst those they trust. Although suspicion and fear are positive in some respects, it can be detrimental in others. Timote informed me that in February of 2009 several Rondonians were offered an opportunity to work on a construction project in Columbus, but they were so suspicious, that they refused to show up on the hiring day. The result is that the project is being completed by Mexican immigrants instead.

Fear is a way of life for the undocumented immigrants, and even their documented counterparts feel suspicious of outsiders. Within the first month of my field work, I had a difficult time meeting anyone from the undocumented community. Ronaldo lied to me, stating that everyone had returned to Brazil already, and that the communities I had heard at several apartment complexes no longer existed. Vitor, very upset, told me that I could cause severe problems for the immigrants if my study was to be read by the wrong person, particularly someone from the government. Meredita was blunt about the fact that she did not feel comfortable introducing me to any of her undocumented contacts, stating that since my work would be published, it could cause the Brazilian community problems. I even felt that I encountered suspicions from the Consulate on our first encounter, when they told me that there was no need to study Brazilians in Columbus since they are not permanent.
Whether permanent or not, the community dynamics of Brazilians in Columbus are contradictory. On one hand, they have planted firm and supportive roots, as they enhance and supplement Columbus’ cultural richness with new Brazilian music, a store full of all things Brazilians, and churches, where they can practice their faith and form community. Furthermore, they have supporting organizations like the American Community Initiative, the Brazilian Consulate, and an NGO, to provide them with a cushion as they make a community for themselves in the region. On the other hand, they harbor fear and mistrust, both of each other, outsiders, and even those that try to help them. And although this fear is understandable, it nonetheless has a negative impact too, particularly when they lose the support of other Brazilian community members. The online community, Orkut, seems to be a conduit which stimulates both reactions, the formation of community by enhancing communication for event organization, and the perpetuation of fear to allow for a faster spread of rumors and gossip, often causing unnecessary reactions in the immigrants.

5.4 Conclusion

Brazilians in Columbus exhibit a large range of distinctive characteristics. For the context of this research, there are five prevalent themes of to be further analyzed to offer insight to better understand Brazilian immigrants as well as Columbus as a new settlement destination.

1. The existence of the Rondonians is something uncommon. The fact that 18 other members of my sampling that were non-Rondonian either discussed or compared
themselves to this group, offers an opportunity to observe socio-cultural with the addition of Brazilians from a new origin.

2. The self-identification of undocumented Brazilians with other Latinos is uncommon, as most Brazilians prefer not to be identified as Latino. Although this is situational and perhaps specific to these Brazilians, it is a divergence from the literature on Brazilian immigrants, offering new insight into how this group self-identifies as immigrants in the US.

3. The significance of "Employment" and "Social Networks" as the two most prevalent new settlement destination factors among Brazilians ultimately calls for some exploration and re-evaluation of the literature of new settlement areas.

4. "Public Policies" and "Immigrant Spaces" add to Columbus’s "Context of Reception," offering insight to why immigrants remain in the city, despite the fact that they do not explain Columbus as a new settlement destination factor. Furthermore, the virtual immigrant space of the social networking site Orkut, offers insight into theoretical considerations concerning the importance of the internet as a public space for immigrants.

5. The effects of fear on the community were detrimental. The existence of fear in the community prevented some immigrants from utilizing services, such as the Consulate, as well as other opportunities offered through churches, which might help them improve their situation, financially or professionally. In other cases, it kept the undocumented community isolated amongst themselves, preventing them
from assimilating into mainstream culture. Therefore, the exploration of this finding could have important implications for how institutions deal with this immigrant group.
CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

For Brazilians who stay and make roots in Columbus, their presence is an example of the changing profile of Brazilian immigrants in the US as their diverse origins demonstrate. They also provide evidence of how fear can be detrimental to a community, something important to be aware of, especially for those who make policy changes in respect to immigrant welfare, most notably the Brazilian Consulate, although other organs as well. This group also portrays how Brazilians are beginning to settle into diverse new destinations, something recognized in the literature (Margolis 2008), yet not studied within the scholarship on this immigrant group. Divided into the five subtopics highlighted at the end of the findings chapter, the next section will first explore Columbus as a new settlement destination for Brazilian immigrants, and will then explore the social dynamics among this particular community of Brazilians.

6.1 Significance of Labor Recruitment and Social Networks

Columbus seems to mirror other new settlement cities for immigrants, particularly when the city is analyzed in terms of its demographic and economic conditions. Like Charlotte, Sacramento, and Dallas-Fort Worth, Columbus is experiencing a technology boom, which has attracted high skill jobs to the area, which consequently, has created a thriving service sector. All of the six new settlement destination factors as discussed in the literature are present in Columbus, yet the two factors that best explain the presence of Brazilians are “employment reasons” and “social networks.” As illustrated in the findings section, the majority of Brazilians in the area came from New York, Boston, and
northern New Jersey, and they came to Columbus with a construction company to work on a variety of projects being built in the city since the early 1990s. Polaris, Easton, the Arena District as well as corporate chain establishments in the outlying suburb areas were constructed by Latinos, Brazilians included. As this data highlights, the springboard initiating migration to the area were the companies brought the immigrants. As Krissman (2005) argued, all too often an emphasis is placed on the supply side of migration, focusing on Massey’s “migrant network” model to explain why migration has occurred to an area. However, too much emphasis placed on the supply side of migration can ignore important structural factors attracting migrants, like labor or employment reasons, “a major stimulus to international migration” (Krissman 2005: 34). Employment, bringing migrants to Columbus from other American cities has initiated an internal migration pattern within the US, yet the occurrence of Brazilians coming directly from Brazil to Columbus demonstrates how this structural factor ultimately led to create a change in international migration.

As Krissman (2005) argues, focusing too much on the supply side can have detrimental outcomes, such as misguided national and local policies. For example, the construction of the wall accompanied by increased border patrol at the US-Mexico border, assumes that illegal immigration is a result of migrant social networks. Proponents of such a border policy ignore or are ignorant of the fact that migrants cross at the border because there is a demand for jobs, in which companies actively recruit immigrants. Focusing on migrant social networks is equally detrimental for public policy at the local level, when the mainstream public, who are often overwhelmed and unsure of
how to deal with immigrant newcomers, react angrily to such a large influx of foreigners, feeling that they are “taking over,” as in the case of a small town in Georgia and another in Texas (Brettell 2008, Odem 2008). Focusing frustrations on immigrants can lead to problematic local policies, like an English-only language law, which divide community and can have an economic backlash for these cities when immigrants, potentially important economic groups decide to leave. For reasons such as this, it is important to remember that often the demand side of the labor continuum is what springboards initial migration, and in the case of Columbus, it is clear after talking with the community, that “employment reasons” was the initiating factor bringing the majority of Brazilians to the city.

Social networks did play a principal role, however, in perpetuating migration to Columbus once some pioneer immigrants were established. After migrants made roots in the city, migration became a trend, when families and friends, hearing of new opportunities, decided to migrate as well. Many migrants came from cities such as Boston, New York, and areas of New Jersey, which were regions already experiencing migrant saturation. Competition in these cities was tough, life was not so calm, and the cost of living was too high. Columbus, a smaller and calmer Midwestern city, seemed like a good option, where migrants could find plentiful and well-paying jobs, allowing them to save more money to either return to Brazil with a nest egg, or make money to buy a nice car, or eventually a house. The existence of a growing community of Brazilians in the area was an added benefit, allowing for the city to have an ever improving “context of reception” as migration continued. Although this scenario
primarily pertains to the undocumented community, the documented community, who were mostly middle class, also felt that they could achieve their goals as a result of Columbus' low cost of living.

Social networks also play a prevalent role in understanding Rondonian migration to Columbus. The apparent oddity of Rondonian migration, understood within the historical context of migratory patterns, is not so anomalous. This particular network best fits into the model of an “articulatory migrant network” (Kearney 1986), which allows for the contextualization of migration networks as a historical process shaped by congruent factors that work together across time and space.

There are three important historical trends that allowed for the Rondonian-Columbus network, which take into account both larger structural changes and immigrant agency. This process began in post-World War II, when US workers, who had been living in Minas Gerais on account of the war effort to help with the mica factory, invited several Brazilian colleagues to return with them to the US. These Brazilians invited their friends and families, starting a migratory link between Minas Gerais and the US, which explains the presence of the majority of Brazilians in the US today. The second important historical migratory trend began with Brazil’s policy of development, during the “Brazilian Miracle” in the 1970s, which allowed for many migrants from other regions, including Minas Gerais, to receive incentives for moving to the Amazon region. Migrants from Minas Gerais, Bahia, São Paulo, and other states from around Brazil went to the Amazon in search of a better life. The children of these migrants, now Rondonians, in the third phase of this process, used their social network contacts from
their parent’s original state to migrate to the US. They initially went to areas with many Brazilians like Boston and New York, but they are ultimately ending up in a diverse array of locations, as Columbus demonstrates. Philadelphia and Riverside NJ are two other destinations where they are migrating. Such a complex migratory pattern represents how it can be difficult to foresee long-term trends in migration, since networks are often dynamic and flexible as they respond to larger structural changes across time and space.

6.2 Columbus’s Context of Reception

Although “public policy” and “immigrant space” do not provide an explanation for understanding what initiated Brazilian migration to Columbus, these factors offer clarification for why Columbus has a successful “context of reception,” offering insight as to why migrants remain in the area. There are three types of important public policy institutions in Columbus, The Office of Refugee and Resettlement (ORR), the American Community Initiative, and the Brazilian Consulate, and five significant “immigrants spaces,” which include churches, an on-line community, a store, musical gatherings, a bar, and recreational clubs. A final important aspect of Columbus’ reception of place for Brazilians is the existence of their compatriots, who are important in providing a social cushion, while offering support to find jobs and learn of new opportunities.

Columbus was chosen as a destination for Somali refugees by the ORR in the late 1980s, and since then, Somali migration to the region has skyrocketed because of the extensive Somali social networks (Brown, Mott, and Malecki 2007). At least six other new settlement destination cities hosted refugees from the ORR, suggesting a clear
correlation between this public policy and increased migration to an area. Some scholars even pinpoint institutions like the ORR to be a primary factor to understanding increased migration to an area, stating that such institutions create a multiplier effect, which lead to other immigrant nationalities to migrate as well. Additionally, they argue that the placement of immigrants in a city by an institution like the ORR is a sign that a city is ready to host immigrants and provide immigrant friendly policies (Brown, Mott, and Malecki 2007).

Indeed, the existence of Somali immigrants was crucial to the creation of the American Community Initiative, as is exemplified by the necessity of having a Somali coordinator. According to one informant, a local apartment manager, the Somali refugee cohort is also essential to the creation of the immigrant-friendly stance that the police purport and encourage. Certainly, Somali placement in Columbus by the ORR was a springboard for migration to the area. However, the ORR chooses destinations based on a history of low welfare usage and favorable income potential in relation to cost of living, both attractive new settlement destination factors independent of public policy and institution creation. In the case of Brazilians, a favorable income and a diverse labor market were more important to their arrival to Columbus than an immigrant-friendly policy. In fact, the New American Community Initiative, although providing social assistance to undocumented Brazilians, was not recognized by any of them, ultimately suggesting that placing too much emphasis on the ORR or other institutional organs to explain the creation of a migration settlement destination would be misleading without considering other factors as well.
One public policy that has been advantageous to immigrants in Columbus is *Apoio no Exterior*, which brings the Consulate to Brazilians in Columbus every three months. The presence of the Consulate in Columbus allows for Brazilians to register a birth, a marriage, or vote in national, state, or local election, services which support the maintenance of contact with their home country. It also provides an opportunity to renew passports and visas, or ask any documentation question immigrants may have. The existence of a large undocumented community in Columbus means that they would otherwise not actively seek these Consular services in Washington DC, ultimately suggesting that *Apoio no Exterior* is successful in accomplishing its goal of reaching out to the Brazilian people. The Consulate, by allying with multiple churches in the area, attempts to provide services in a trusting environment. Additionally, by not favoring any church over another, it remains a neutral institution. It fails however, to create trust with many undocumented members, which at least in Columbus, was especially evident in the unsuccessful Portuguese classes for second generation Brazilians. This is quite negative considering that these second generation Brazilians are in need of this language assistance.

The most trustworthy of institutions for the Brazilians in Columbus are their churches, an essential immigrant space, making Columbus, for them, a receptive place. Churches are listed in the literature as being essential spaces, which aid in spiritual matters and provide important social services (Bailey 2005, Bump et. al 2005, Godziak 2005, Hansen 2005, Shoenholtz 2005, Solórzano 2005, Woodrick 2006, Zarrugh 2008). The churches in Columbus provide social support through English classes or by posting
new job opportunities. However, according to the immigrants, the most important function of the church is to provide a spiritual community in an otherwise foreign city and culture. Of my seventeen informants who regularly attended church, they asserted their church community as being essential to their emotional well-being. Melia even named the church as the principal reason her family stayed in Columbus, since before they found it, they were so depressed and overwhelmed with life in the US that they thought of returning to Brazil. The church provides immigrants with stability in an otherwise unstable situation.

Other important spaces that improve Columbus’s “context of reception” for Brazilians are the Brazilian store, where they can buy familiar foods and products from home, the Brazilian music bands, which offer traditional Brazilian music reminiscent of recognizable rhythms, and the clubs, including the wives who drink coffee together, and the men who engage in weekend soccer games. Each of these immigrant spaces allow Brazilians to have contact with their culture, form important friendships amongst the community, while providing a social outlet amongst compatriots. These spaces are proof of the culturally rich community the immigrants are forming as they carve a place for themselves in the city.

The heterolocal socio-spatial pattern of Brazilians in Columbus means that they need a community organizing tool to meet-up in a physical place, and the internet functions as an immigrant space providing this function. Zelinsky and Lee (1998) characterize their heterolocal model community to be dependent upon twentieth century technology, since it is sustained by telecommunications. In the case of Brazilians in
Columbus, the Orkut, the on-line social networking site, acts as this organizing device. For example, the Brazilian Consulate last dispersed the news that it was coming to Columbus through this virtual medium, and likewise, other events, like parties, concerts, or dinner gatherings are broadcasted in this fashion. The Orkut also acts as an important virtual space, allowing for people to chat, debate, communicate with family or friends, or see the latest pictures posted of a party that happened over the weekend. Through this site, immigrants communicate transnationally with their families in Brazil, bridging physical spatial separation.

Surprisingly, scholarship on immigrant communities makes no mention of the importance of social networking sites, and much less the internet, as an important immigrant space or community organizing tool. Datel and Dingeman (2008), who researched the new settlement city of Sacramento, focusing specifically on immigrant spaces, mentioned the importance of radio and television. Zelinsky and Lee (1998: 284) also mention “modern technology…ethnic radio and television programmes, and the newer modes of electronic communication” in organizing hetero local communities. With the key role the internet currently plays in immigrant communities, by allowing them to communicate with each other in the host country and the home country, this immigrant space needs to be taken into consideration if scholars want to fully understand immigrant communities.
6.4 Existence of Three Groups of Brazilians in Columbus

The existence of three distinct social network groups within my sampling of Brazilians in Columbus, the documented, the undocumented non-Rondonians, and the undocumented Rondonians, provides an opportunity to observe the socio-cultural dynamics among compatriots, especially within the context of previous literature. Sales’ “the myth of the country hick” (2003) and Margolis’ “the phantom lower class” (1994) both describe a fabled figure as mentioned by their informants. He or she is best described by Sales (2003:102) as “a rustic type born and bred in the backwoods…, who had never seen an airplane in his entire life and whose first journey away from his home village was to the United States.” In the course of their year of fieldwork, Sales in Boston and Margolis in New York, both actively searched for this imaginary figure. His or her apparent inexistence led them to conclude that Brazilians were telling stories of this person to cope with their drop in class status in the US. Many had arrived in the country with a college education, but were obliged to work lower status positions such as housekeepers or busboys. This meant that they needed to compare themselves to someone worse off than they were to feel better about their own situation, ultimately allowing them to feel socially superior.

Within the context of Columbus, the Rondonians could fit the description of the “country hick.” First, they live on farms in Rondonia, and in the case of Leticia, a Rondonian informant, her first time outside of Rondonia, apart from her move there as a child, was when she migrated to the US. Second, they listen to sertenejo music and wear cowboy hats, both stereotypical norms of a Brazilian “hick,” according to my non-
Rondonian informants. Below is a photo of a farm taken from a public internet profile of one of the Rondonians on Orkut.

Figure 8. A Farm in Rondonia

Do Rondonians fit into the stereotype of Sales’ “country hick” or Margolis’ “phantom lower class”? In comparing the stories of my informants of the Rondonians to the stories of Sales’ and Margolis’ informants of the “country hick,” the exact same descriptive words and phrases are used. The following are examples of the most repeated:
“cowhand,” “simple,” “uneducated,” “country-side people,” “only want to make money,” and “don’t care for education.”

Many of my informants clearly used the Rondonians as a basis for comparison, perhaps to feel superior. This was especially evident in the dialogue with one informant, who described herself as shocked and frustrated that these “uneducated” people could earn more money cleaning houses each month than she could in her job, and that they were giving Brazilians “a bad reputation.” Her attitude was reminiscent of several middle class Brazilian informants from Messias’s (2001) research, who missed the clear cut divides of social class in Brazil. However, many of my informants were also perplexed about the arrival and existence of Rondonians as a large immigrant group in the city. Many explained how the Amazon region was very different from the rest of Brazil culturally, and how the Rondonians reflected this difference. For most Brazilians, both documented and undocument non-Rondonians, Columbus was the only place they had contact with their compatriots from this region, and some expressed that they were shocked at how different the culture was. One informant told me, “it was as if they were from another Brazil…I have to learn to be like them culturally to earn their trust.”

Curiously, when I talked with Leticia, she told me that “no one from Rondónia is actually Rondonian” to explain to me that most people she knew in the state were migrants from other regions in Brazil. However, Jessica, another Rondonian informant, self-identified as Rondonian. Clearly, there are discrepancies in how Rondonians self-identify, which could be further explored in future research, however, for the confines of this study, the fact that the majority of non-Rondonians, both documented and
undocumented, discussed the Rondonians in a similar manner to “the country hick” (Sales 2004) or the “phantom lower class” (Margolis 1994) suggests that they serve the same socio-cultural function.

Boston and New York are the cities where Sales and Margolis did their research on Brazilians. Boston and New York are also the cities that brought Rondonians to Columbus. The fact that this group was not mentioned in these cities by these researchers has several possible explanations. First, Rondonian migration to the US appears to be a recent phenomenon. Leticia and her family have been in Columbus for 7 years, and she stated they were in the first wave on Rondonian migration to Columbus. In contrast, João, also from Rondônia, has only been in the city for three years. Second, it could be that in comparison to Brazilian immigrants as a whole, the demographic from Rondônia is small in number. Whatever the reasons of their absence from the literature on Brazilian immigrants, their presence raises an important question: does the “country hick” exist? No matter the answer, the presence of Rondonians suggests a much more diverse Brazilian immigrant cohort in the United States than researchers initially realized.

6.5 Proximity of Undocumented Brazilians to other Latinos

Another aspect in which the Brazilian community diverged from the literature on Brazilian immigrants, particularly the undocumented Brazilians, was in their identification to other Latin Americans. As was discussed in the chapter on Brazilians in the US, most Brazilians do not consider themselves as “Latinos,” but prefer to be considered “Brazilian” (Marcus 2003, Margolis 1994, Marrow 2003). Marrow’s study
(2003) even concluded that Brazilians prefer to be categorized racially into the black/white binary, instead of being considered “Latino.” Brazilians in Columbus did not emphasize this distinction. In fact, one Brazilian even explained that he did identify as Latino because of the geography of Brazil in relation to other South American countries, and because of the similarity of Portuguese to Spanish. Although they recognized small cultural differences, Brazilians from the undocumented community considered other Latinos to be a part of their social circles, both at work and during leisure time, and in the case of the Seventh Day Adventists, at church. In contrast however, the documented members of the community had a closer proximity to Northern born Americans. They had American friends, dated Americans, went to American parties, and lived their lives predominantly in English. I did not ask them if they self-identified as Latino, however, from my informal observations of them, I would characterize them as having a high level of comfort and proximity to North American culture. All of my informants are clearly proud to be Brazilian, often emphasizing their Brazilian identity by observing their Brazilian characteristics and behaviors, or reflecting on what it means to be Brazilian in their conversations. However, as a group too small to stand alone on a census, how they identify could be dependent upon their documented or undocumented status, as well as their class status, demonstrating the ambiguity of what it means to be a Brazilian in the US.

Of my seventeen informants who had children, all of them, both documented and undocumented, considered their children to be Brazilian, while at the same time naming Columbus as their child’s home. They admitted that their children, attending American
schools, were more comfortable speaking in English, despite the fact that they only spoke Portuguese in their house. I met six couples who could not speak any English, while their children dominated the language in a native-like fashion. Although they felt proud of their children’s English capabilities, I did sense tension, particularly when their children refused to speak in Portuguese, and they would have to remind them that they could not understand the English. As Brazilians make their homes in the US, the second generation is assimilating into American culture, often losing their linguistic connections to their home country. This has been recognized by the Brazilian government, as is demonstrated by the Portuguese classes offered through the Consulate. However, the failure of these classes in Columbus, reflected by the lack of attendance among the Brazilian community, also exemplifies a need that more must be done for children and families of second generation Brazilians if they are to maintain their Portuguese language skills.

6.6 The Effects of Fear

According to my informants, the failure of the Portuguese classes in Columbus can be explained by fear and lack of time. However, the fact that the Consulate and the Seventh Day Adventist Church carefully chose late Sunday afternoon, a free-time as explained by the majority of the immigrants, suggests that lack of time is not a sufficient explanation, leaving fear as a primary factor to be explored. As was illustrated in the findings chapter, fear in the community manifests in three ways. First, immigrants avoid institutions, not only the Brazilian Consulate, but other social programs offered through
institutions, as was the case when they lost a work opportunity through the Methodist Church. The second is by creating a social bubble, exclusive to Brazilians, mostly undocumented, where they speak Portuguese, eat Brazilian foods, and talk of Brazilian affairs. This “bubble” prevents them from having more contact with the mainstream culture, often acting as an obstacle that holds immigrants back from knowing anything outside of their social circles. The third way this manifests is through socially constructed fear, often created by the immigrants themselves through rumors or gossip, both which act as vehicles to perpetuate constructed fears into real fears, which have real consequences. Such was the case when a deportation rumor spread, or when there was a prevalent gossip of an economic collapse.

The short-term consequences of fear are that immigrants are psychologically affected. Every time there is a rumor of deportation or of an economic collapse, the community becomes uprooted, either leaving Columbus, or seriously considering the idea. With such fragile roots, it is difficult for the Brazilians to carve out a home and create a sense of community. This is especially detrimental when we consider that fear also manifests as mistrust among the community itself, causing strained relationships, a lack of solidarity, and a “commodification of relationships” (Mahler 1995: 79). Long-term, this could lead to eventual downward assimilation for Brazilians, should immigrants decide to stay in the city.

It is difficult to foresee if Brazilians in Columbus will stay or return to Brazil. The Head Consular states that their migration is temporary, and members will return when they have saved up the money, however nineteen said the desired to stay, seeing a
better future for their children in the region. I’ve heard rumors that at least half of the community has already migrated back to Brazil with as much as $200,000 of nest egg, however, I only know one person, my informant Karen, who I know for certain actually returned home. Should large numbers of the community decide to stay, fear is something that could be addressed by institutions seeking to help this immigrant group.

6.7 Conclusion

Orozco (2008: vi) quoted the famous anthropologist Clyde Kluckhohn (1949) as having stated “every immigrant is like all other immigrants, like some other immigrants, and like no other immigrants.” This quote, in reference to Brazilian immigrants in Columbus, is a perfect descriptive phrase. They are similar to other immigrant groups in that they are moving to new cities across the landscape of the US, utilizing their social networks and taking advantage of labor recruitment opportunities. Their activities, like forming important immigrant spaces or creating music specific to their culture, are also typical of a diasporic group. They are similar to other Brazilians in the US in that they are an ambiguous group in their manner to self-identify, in their longing for their home country, in their lack of solidarity among the community, and in their love of their Brazilianness. Yet Brazilians in Columbus have a diverse community with members being from a diverse array of states from all over Brazil, giving them a unique community dynamic within the city of Columbus.

Columbus, as a new settlement destination, is not diverging from the literature on other new settlement destinations, except due to the fact that it has Brazilians, an
immigrant group hardly mentioned in the literature on these emerging places across the
US. Its demographic and economic patterns mimic other new settlement destination
cities, and although not all new settlement destination factors act as a pull factor for
migration, they do help understand why Columbus has a good “context of reception.”
The city does, however, portray some interesting immigrant dynamics, at least in
reference to its Brazilian residents, which include the importance of virtual space and the
internet to form and create community, something not yet mentioned in the literature on
new settlement destinations.
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION: NEW CONTRIBUTIONS AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

This research on Brazilians in Columbus offers insight to 1) empirical data on Brazilian immigrants in the US, 2) the theoretical understanding of new settlement destinations, as well as to 3) qualitative methodological considerations that future researchers may find useful. It also demonstrates other implications, such as 4) the existence of new settlement destination factors in Columbus, 5) the ambiguity of self-identification for Brazilian immigrants in the US, and 6) the implications of fear for an immigrant community.

1. Empirically, this thesis has offered data on Brazilians from different immigrant origins not yet studied, particularly, although certainly not limited to, Rondonia. So far, existing literature on Brazilian immigrants pertains to Brazilians from the three main sending states, Minas Gerais, São Paulo, and Rio de Janeiro. This thesis has demonstrated that there are Brazilians from Rondonia, as well as several other sending states. This finding presented the opportunity to explore two new dynamics. The first is the discovery of a new migratory pattern, specifically the explanation of the Rondonia-Columbus social network connection, which best fits into the model of the “articulatory migrant network”, allowing this network linkage to be seen as a historical process with three phases. The first phase is the Post WWII migrant connections between Brazil and the US, while the second phase consists of domestic migration to the Amazon within Brazil during the 1970s on account of the government project to develop the region. In the third phase, the Rondonians, who
had migrated from other states in Brazil during the 1970s, using social network connections established during WWII, migrated to the US, eventually arriving to Columbus through labor recruitment and social networks.

The presence of Brazilians from different origins also highlights distinctive socio-cultural dynamics, not mentioned in the literature between the three social network groups in Columbus that were a part of my study: the documented, the undocumented non-Rondonians, and the undocumented Rondonians. Although the three groups remained separate, both the documented and the undocumented non-Rondonians used the undocumented Rondonians as a basis for comparison. This is partially because they found them to be very different culturally, since they are from the Amazon region, but this finding is also reminiscent of previous research, which found that Brazilians compared themselves to a mythical “country hick” type of person to feel superior about their drop in social standing in the US (Margolis 1994, Sales 2003). In the context of this research, the Rondonians, who fit the stereotype of the country hick, are real people, whom the documented and undocumented community members used to discuss or to compare themselves with. By comparing themselves to the Rondonians as "the other", they could feel superior.

2. Theoretically, this thesis has found that virtual space and virtual network connections are important in the study of new settlement destinations and migrant communities. There is an absence of virtual space and virtual social networks within the literature on immigrant communities and this case study on Brazilians fills this gap. The internet, or more specifically a social networking site on the internet called the Orkut,
offers immigrants with a space that facilitates communication and allows for people to share information. Within this site, important community information is disseminated, whether it be about jobs, a gathering, contact info, or just a party. In this manner, it functions as a medium to organize community, which can be characterized as hetero-local (Zelinsky and Lee 1998), not only because it connects people virtually, but also because it acts as a vehicle to distribute information so people can connect in physical space. Also, as a virtual community, it functions as a space where immigrants can convene to talk, relax, or share the latest community gossip and/or rumors in real time.

3. This virtual space also offers a new methodological tool for researchers on migrant communities. Within the context of this research, the site not only helped me gain contacts, but it also provided me with a virtual space where I could conduct research by creating my virtual research community. This community allowed possible interested informants to have a better idea of the research I was conducting, as well as who I was as a person. This allowed me to build trust, and my virtual presence also gave me a certain degree of insider status in the community. Additionally, the publicly displayed profiles on the social networking site offered an opportunity to collect qualitative ethnographic data on the community. Researchers on migrants may find such virtual spaces useful for future data collection.

4. Employment reasons were found to be the most evident pull factor to Columbus, bringing migrants from other states in the US to the region, demonstrating the importance of structural factors to create new settlement areas for migrants. Once
they established themselves in Columbus economically, their social network connections acted to perpetuate migration to the city, eventually creating a direct connection between Brazil and Columbus, exhibiting also the importance of individual migrant choices to create a new settlement area. Public policy and immigrant spaces, most notably the churches, added to the city’s contexts of reception, which was a reason for staying in the city. Although these factors did not influence migration directly, the certainly influenced it.

5. Brazilian immigrants remain ambiguous in their manner of self-identification, when they cannot claim to be “Brazilian.” Contrary to much of the literature, undocumented working class Brazilians in Columbus identified as Latino, not only because of their social affinity with other Latin Americans, but also because of the geographical location of Brazil, as well as their facility to understand Spanish. On the other hand, the middle or upper middle class documented community members assimilated easily into the culture. For the context of Brazilians in Columbus, this discrepancy demonstrates the ambiguousness of Brazilians in their manner to self-identify.

6. This community harbored a lot of fear and mistrust of outsiders or anyone that actively sought them out. This fear has implications for both the immigrants and institutions that seek to have more contact with them. In the case of the immigrants, this fear had detrimental psychological effects on undocumented members, even those who often felt uprooted and had difficulty making a home in Columbus. Fear could also lead to downward assimilation as a long-term consequence, especially
since the immigrants are very mistrustful of people who want to help them improve their lives as immigrants. For institutions, like the Brazilian Consulate or other social services, which actively seek to help immigrants, fear may sometimes stand in the way of their ultimate goals. When their initiatives to provide support fail, they may contextualize the failure as a consequence of fear. By being aware of fear, institutions have more understanding as to how deal with immigrant needs. Such awareness may be helpful for future projects that deal with these immigrants.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A: PHOTO OF ON-LINE COMMUNITY
APPENDIX B: STRUCTURED, SEMI-STRUCTURED, AND UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH INFORMANTS

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<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antonio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedro</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helena</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatima</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felix</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ma</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leticia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>João</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ApMan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realtor 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realtor 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lena</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Consulate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. George</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Jenny</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. George's Dad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Singer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. Bete (wife)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C: STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Where are you from in Brazil?
2. Has your family lived in that region of Brazil for a long time? Or a short time?
3. How was life in Brazil?
4. Why did you decide to immigrate to the U.S?
5. When did you immigrate?
6. Had you ever migrated before? If so, where?
7. Did you migrate directly to Columbus? If not, from where did you migrate?
8. How did you first hear about Columbus as a destination for migration?
9. Did you know anyone already living here in Columbus?
10. How did you find a place to live? Through a friend, family member, or traditional Methods?
11. Overall, how are you treated in Columbus? By people? Law-enforcement?
12. Do you feel that the city is welcoming to Brazilians? To other foreigners?
13. Does the city provide you with any assistance through the Immigrant Resource Center or something similar when you need help?
14. Are there any institutions of which you are a member? Ex. Churches, societies, clubs, sports teams?
15. What do you most like about Columbus?
16. What do you least like about Columbus?
17. What are differences between Columbus and your area of origin in Brazil?
18. What are your goals while here in Columbus?
19. What do you do here in Columbus?
20. Why do you think Brazilians have chosen Columbus as a destination for immigration?
21. Do you plan to return to Brazil?
22. Do you have family here in Columbus?
23. Did they help you to immigrate? Or did you help them?
24. If so, how long has your family lived here in Columbus?
25. If the family moved here, why?
26. Did you have close friends here in Columbus before arriving?
27. Did you help them to migrate or did they help you in any way?
28. Do you keep in contact with family and friends in Brazil? If so, do you or would you ever help to migrate?
29. Are there other people here from your region of Brazil?
30. Do you maintain in contact with the Brazilian community here in Columbus?
## APPENDIX D: REASONS FOR MIGRATING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immigrant</th>
<th>Reason for Migrating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Patricia</td>
<td>Learn English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Getulio</td>
<td>Professional Opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Rosie and Tomás</td>
<td>Prosper Financially</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ronaldo</td>
<td>Prosper Financially</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sergio</td>
<td>Prosper Financially</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Maria</td>
<td>Prosper Financially</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Gloria</td>
<td>Join Family (husband)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Edgar</td>
<td>Prosper Financially</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Timote</td>
<td>Professional Opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Karen</td>
<td>Join Family (Husband)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Jessica</td>
<td>Prosper Financially</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Meredita</td>
<td>Pursued for political reasons under the dictatorship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Roberto</td>
<td>Prosper Financially</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Julia</td>
<td>Prosper Financially</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Mateo</td>
<td>Professional Opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Bruna</td>
<td>Joined Family (Husband)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Eric</td>
<td>Professional Opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. José</td>
<td>Professional Opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Raquel</td>
<td>Pursue a career goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Vitor</td>
<td>Pursue a career goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Antonio</td>
<td>Study at OSU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Melia</td>
<td>Prosper Financially</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Pedro</td>
<td>Prosper Financially</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Helena</td>
<td>Joined family husband)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Fatima</td>
<td>Prosper Financially</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Felix</td>
<td>Prosper Financially</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Ma</td>
<td>Joined family (son)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Leticia</td>
<td>Prosper Financially</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. João</td>
<td>Prosper Financially</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX E: STAY IN COLUMBUS OR RETURN TO BRAZIL?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immigrant</th>
<th>Return Migration or Permanent Resident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Patricia</td>
<td>Return to Brazil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Getulio</td>
<td>Depends on the church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Rosie and Tomás</td>
<td>Desire to stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ronaldo</td>
<td>Desire to stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sergio</td>
<td>Desire to stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Maria</td>
<td>Desire to stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Gloria</td>
<td>Desire to stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Edgar</td>
<td>Return to Brazil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Timote</td>
<td>Desire to stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Sylvana</td>
<td>Return to Brazil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Jessica</td>
<td>Return to Brazil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Meredita</td>
<td>Desire to stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Roberto</td>
<td>Desire to stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Julia</td>
<td>Desire to stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Mateo</td>
<td>Return to Brazil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Bruna</td>
<td>Desire to stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Eric</td>
<td>Desire to stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. José</td>
<td>Desire to stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Raquel</td>
<td>Desire to stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Vitor</td>
<td>Desire to stay (not in Columbus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Antonio</td>
<td>Return to Brazil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Melia</td>
<td>Desire to stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Pedro</td>
<td>Desire to stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Helena</td>
<td>Desire to stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Fatima</td>
<td>Desire to stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Felix</td>
<td>Desire to stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Ma</td>
<td>Desire to stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Leticia</td>
<td>Return to Brazil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. João</td>
<td>Doesn’t know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX F: OCCUPATION IN COLUMBUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immigrant</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Patricia</td>
<td>Au Pair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Getulio</td>
<td>Priest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Rosie and Tomás</td>
<td>Rosie – house mom / Tomás – construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ronaldo</td>
<td>(cannot disclose for reasons of anonymity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sergio</td>
<td>Cleans houses - has schedule (formerly worked in construction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Maria</td>
<td>Cleanse houses – has schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Gloria</td>
<td>(cannot disclose for reasons of anonymity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Edgar</td>
<td>Construction worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Timote</td>
<td>Pastor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Karen</td>
<td>Cleans houses – has schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Jessica</td>
<td>Cleans houses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Meredita</td>
<td>(cannot disclose for reasons of anonymity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Roberto</td>
<td>Cleans houses – has schedule (formerly worked in construction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Julia</td>
<td>Cleans houses – has schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Mateo</td>
<td>Systems Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Bruna</td>
<td>(cannot disclose for reasons of anonymity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Eric</td>
<td>Pastor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. José</td>
<td>Pastor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Raquel</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Vitor</td>
<td>Service Technician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Antonio</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Melia</td>
<td>Cleans houses – has schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Pedro</td>
<td>IT Service Technician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Helena</td>
<td>Cleans houses – has Schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Fatima</td>
<td>Cleans houses – has Schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Felix</td>
<td>Cleans houses – has schedule (formerly worked in construction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Ma</td>
<td>Sales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Leticia</td>
<td>Cleans houses – has schedule -5 houses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. João</td>
<td>Construction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>