



The color of beauty
Race and it's representation in contemporary Brazil.

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Abstract

Brazil's population is born out of *mestiçagem*, racial mixture, but in not one other Latin American country is this *mestiçagem* culture so frequently considered object of debate. The representation of different racial groups in the media still doesn't nearly approximate reality and therefore doesn't use its range of possibilities to reach the public and represent contemporary Brazilian society. Girls in the magazines are represented similarly to the ones in European and Northern American magazines, even though this is not the beauty Brazilian girls want to obtain. How does this unequal representation affect the racial identity of young Brazilian females? The majority of my informants don't feel affected by this unequal representation. Nonetheless *mulata*, *morena* and *negra* informants would want change their physical appearance to a more European or Northern American archetype, keeping in mind a lighter appearance opens a pathway to more socio economic progress.

- Young Brazilian females
- Media
- Racial identity

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1.1 Framing the question.

Brazil, a beautiful exotic country and home to the most beautiful fashion models known to the public. However this image does not show us the downside of the glitter and glamour portraying the beauty industry, an everyday reality of racism and segregation. This is in no way similar to Brazil portrayed as a racially democratic nation. Just as in other Latin American countries Brazils population is born out of *mestiçagem*, racial mixture, but in not one other Latin American country is this *mestiçagem* culture so frequently considered object of debate. Ethnic minorities as pure indigenous or Afro-descendent are not perceived in a similar way as in Europe and the United States because they do not form part of Brazilian society as a result of for instance recent immigration with the main goal to obtain job opportunities and or safety. They form the principles of the Brazilian race, characterized by mixed blood and thence resulting in various phenotypes. These individuals of various descent have formed part of Brazilian population since time immemorial, with as first inhabitants the indigenous, followed by the arrival of the Portuguese overseas colonizers. Since halfway 16th century the first wave of Afro-descendent slaves from all over the African continent were imported into Brazil which nowadays has the largest black population outside of Africa. Afro-Brazilians form 44 percent of the entire Brazilian population, but still the Afro-descendents are being portrayed as The Other, devious to a certain norm.

Not only a norm stating social class but even so beauty and body norms interfere with the racial hybridism in Brazil. The fact that the majority of the models deriving from Brazil are lighter-skinned like Gisele Bündchen and Alessandra Ambrosio shows us Brazil still deals with racism in this contemporary period and forms of visual media do not represent Brazils population and its wide variety of esthetics. Since recently several quotas have been introduced to break with this uneven representation in the media, the policy introducing these quotas has frequently been addressed as affirmative action. District attorney Déborah Affonso has introduced a catwalk quota agreement for black models which states that the minimum of two percent of black participants in fashion shows should be raised to 10 percent. In addition, during Lula's presidency, Senator Paulo Paim, of the Partido dos Trabalhadores (the Worker's Party) wrote the Estatuto da Igualdade Racial (Racial Equality Statute) which established that the number of Afro-Brazilians on TV could not be less than twenty percent. (Joyce, 2010, 57)

After five centuries of living side by side of whites, blacks, Indians and every racial mixture deriving from this multiracialism you can think of, a quota to achieve a more lifelike representation in the media would seem unnecessary. But the propagated racial democracy results in being a myth, or at least not a standalone concept. Contemporary reality is woven out of a side by side existence of racial democracy, racism and negative ideas towards *mestiçagem* deriving from the Black power movement.

The representation of different racial groups in the media still doesn't nearly approximate reality and therefore doesn't use its range of possibilities to reach the public and represent contemporary Brazilian society. Because of this unequal racial representation, the media find itself in the position to influence the sense of pride of one's racial descent in a negative way. This research will investigate how the contemporary Brazilian beauty ideals affect the racial identity of female Brazilians of different racial descent. Hopefully this study can form part of the contemporary debate on ethnic stigmatization in Brazil. I've chosen to approach females from several social

classes and of different racial descent to avoid obtaining a unilateral view on Brazilian beauty ideals and how these interact with color and racial descent. Because of the existing wide variety on the *cor* scale, *brancas*, *mulatas*, *pardas*, *morenas* and *negras* will be represented, and lower, middle and higher class females' voices are heard in this study.

1.2 Research population and setting.

In the field the main fear that rules is that the investigator doesn't want to be seen as an intrusion. How can I make my informants feel at ease? By means of addressing the girls via their friends and acquaintances my informants felt no hesitation when talking to me, they knew what my main goal was and by introducing them to my central research question they were prepared for the course of our conversations.

The central research question this research revolves around is; How do contemporary Brazilian beauty ideals and body norms influence the racial identity of young Brazilian females? To be able to solve this question several aspects of contemporary Brazilian society had to be exposed by my informants. To create a bigger approachability I let my informants reflect on the contemporary Brazilian beauty ideals as a whole and their own individual ideals in terms of beauty. Informing on the opinion of their family members, girlfriends and partners a clearer view was created on whether these beauty ideals and body norms were shared in bigger groups or even with the entire Brazilian population. By asking them how these beauty ideals and body norms were appropriated and achieved the subjects whitening, hair straightening and plastic surgery came to light. An easy pathway towards the influence of the media, both printed as broadcasted, was created. By means of the question whether the media represented the Brazilian society on a racial scale it was easy to let the girls reflect on race relations. These race relations depend on whether they felt forming part of a specific racial group and if their circle of friends consisted out of individuals with different skin tones. Because the subject of beauty was already introduced there was no boundary to ask the girls whether they had a skin tone of preference and how they felt about their own skin tone.

Frequently the girls asked me to tell them more about beauty ideals in Holland which made them look at me with disbelief and afterwards resulted in loud giggles which gave our conversations a more informal setting in which they felt they could respond more freely. Even so I consider my age as a great advantage practicing this field research, the girls made me feel like one of them and introduced me to their friends, family and classmates at every occasion, therefore the gap between researcher and informant seemed small for them, or even non-existing.

After several informal conversations, started off by deliberate sampling the snowball effect has enabled me to address more females. Beauty resulted in being a subject these girls loved to talk about, immediately I was introduced to their circle of friends which led me to more informants. Because these friend circles overall consist of girls from different racial descent pathways to interesting informants were created.

Other key informants I have contacted were mostly working in the beauty enhancing sector like for instance the manager of a plastic surgery clinic, a manager of a gym and several employees of hairdresser's salons. I was welcome in their working sphere and therefore could experience the interaction with their customers.

Also I have chosen to interview three male *cariocas* to see if they have a different view on female beauty and the role race plays in that. Even so I have chosen to let the male view be represented by both a light skinned as dark

skinned informant. Ronaldo Mendez de Lima, a 35 year old dark skinned male from the middle class neighbourhood and E. Da Silva Costa, a 34 year old dark-skinned male from the middle class neighbourhood of Botafogo have provided me with interesting information on body and beauty norms males set out for Brazilian girls. Their point of view is compared to Gabriel Passos Kafuri's, a 22 year old light skinned male from the middle class neighbourhood, Grajaú.

This research focuses on three main groups of individual informants based on skin color, and social class in the age group 14 – 30. I have chosen to limit the age range of my individual informants between 14 and 30 because the informants coming on my path and resulting in having specific opinions on beauty formed part of this specific age group. Pictures of some of my female informants (those who approved of using their images) are integrated in the thesis for the reader both to obtain a global view on their genetic mixture as to make this field research more personal.

I have chosen to approach three specific *grupos do cor*; light skinned, mulatta and dark skinned women because I think it is important to view this subject from several different perspectives and according to the statistics of IBGE added in appendix 1 we can subdivide the vast majority of Brazilian inhabitants in these overall groups. In reality it turned out some of these girls classified themselves differently and therefore *brancas, mulatas, pardas, morenas* and *negras* are represented. Another aspect which influenced the choice of my informants was their socio-economic background. Girls from three different social classes were approached, the lower, middle and upper middle class. Bearing these aspects in mind deliberate sampling led me to my informants. I have chosen to address informants in Rio de Janeiro, with a population of 6,2 million and its worldwide status as the capital of body and beauty culture the perfect location to know more about beauty, media and race. The majority were inhabitants of this city, so called *cariocas*, with the exception of two. An overview of my female informants, their age, social background and aut-classification in terms of skin tone is shown in table 1 (p.10).

My research locations were all situated in the Zona Sul, which has the international image of capital of the body enhancing culture. Rio de Janeiro as figurehead of Carnaval and the female beauty represented during this festivity is the exquisite locality to execute this research. The geographic structure of the city, the literally living side by side of the poorest and the wealthiest of society, with lower class regions called *comunidades* surrounding upper and middle class neighborhoods this location provides the opportunity to access several social classes and see the interaction between these in terms of prejudice and value judgments. Not only class wise is Rio de Janeiro diverse, even so in terms of phenotype of its inhabitants. In contrary to the Southern region populated by mainly fair skinned individuals and the Northeastern state of Bahia inhabited by mainly dark skinned people, Rio de Janeiro provided me with a diverse, racially mixed citizenry.

Table 1: Key data on primary female informants:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Colour</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Residence</i>	<i>Social class</i>
Jaína Macedo	Caucasian (branca)	21	Santa Marta	Lower class, comunidade inhabitant
Flávia Cristina da Silva Schmidt	Caucasian (branca)	18	Belford Roxo	Lower class
Luciane Nascimento de Souza	Mulatta	30	Santa Marta	Lower class, comunidade inhabitant
Taiara Rejane	Parda	18	Belford Roxo	Lower class.
Cris Bella Ferreira	Parda	24	Belford Roxo	Lower class.
Edvânia Souza de Trajfo	Parda	21	Vila Isabel	Lower class, comunidade inhabitant
Tainá de Souza Cristino	Morena	14	Mangueira	Lower class, comunidade inhabitant.
Brida Beatriz Rezende Silva	Morena	17	Mangueira	Lower class, comunidade inhabitant.
Camilla Nascimento Rodriguez	Black (negra)	23	Leblon.	Lower class part of middle class area.
Anna Greice Soares da Silva	Black (negra)	16	Jacarepaguá	Lower class area.
Paula Oliveira dos Santos	Black (negra)	17	São Cristovão	Lower class.
Nathalia Oliveira da Silva	Caucasian (branca)	23	Candavil	Middle class.
Elenir (Lenny) Mello	Caucasian (branca)	24	Lapa	Middle class.
Fernanda Escarlate	Caucasian (branca)	20	Barra da Tijuca	Upper class.
Liliane	Caucasian (branca brasiliada)	30	Copacabana	Upper middle class.
Bruna	Mulatta	mid 20s	Botafogo	Middle class
Rayana Miccolis	Mulatta	19	Jacarepaguá	Middle class area.
Juliana Barreto	Mulatta	20	Unknown	Middle class.
Margarida Maria Mesquita Sousa	Mulatta	18	Ipanema	Upper middle class.
Simone dos Santos	Mulatta	20	Braga, Rio grande do Sul.	Uppermiddle class
Aline Vilhena Santiago	Mulatta	22	Olaria	Middle class
Thaíza da Silva Helena Lopes	Black (negra)	18	Jardim Olavo Bilac	Middle class
Cristiane (Kiu) Santos	Black (negra)	25	Brotas, Salvador	Middle class

1.3 Methodology.

With second to none experience as a field researcher but with a huge fascination for Brazilian culture and it's racial make-up this field research started off at February the 1st. Armed with writing gear and a brand new voice recorder I walked up towards females matching my informant profile. Visits to the beach, local upper class shopping mall Rio Sul and clubbing area Lapa resulted in informal conversations with girls whom willingly wanted to cooperate in open interviews.

For the location of these informal conversations even so the beach, the gym and hairdressers or manicurists were chosen, where hours of participant observation has taken place. When visiting the hairdresser's salon immediately the opportunity arose to form part of the informal conversations between the employees concerning beauty and body norms. These locations were chosen being sources of specific information about my research subject, the young females who are preoccupied with their physical appearance frequent these research locations and this resulted in more adequate findings on the beauty industry and the influence of the media. The most important participant observation for me was when Rayana Miccolis introduced me to her friends during the 1st day of hazing at her introduction at UniRio, a university situated in Botafogo. A frequent subject of conversation for the girls whom had just met the same day, for this introduction day, was beauty and make up. Perfect opportunity for me to observe Brazilian beauty and body norms from the inside out. A self created focus group was the result. The most important method I have chosen to work with is the open interview. Because of the short period of field research I chose to both integrate in racially and socially heterogeneous groups of Brazilian females, combined with searching for specific informants based on ethnicity, age and social class outside of the circles of friends to provide me with the widest range of interesting data. Because Rio de Janeiro is so diverse in terms of social class and geographic make up I aimed at visiting several *comunidades* (lower class areas with a near vicinity to upper class areas) as well, with as result Santa Marta and Mangueira.

Because race and social class is a very delicate subject I have chosen to ask my informants whether or not they had friends who belonged to a lower social class or were darker skinned and if they would feel comfortable being interviewed by me.

Participant observation and open interviews were supplemented with the constant analysis of the Brazilian media consisting of magazines, television, telenovelas, movies, billboards, internet blogs and columns in newspapers directed towards young females.

1.4 Chapter structure.

I have chosen in this study for a chapter structure similar to the order in which my questions were presented to the informants, a slow build up from general ideas on beauty to a more individual, intimate portrait of the females and their ideas on beauty with the more delicate subject, racial identity, as a final wrapping up element.

First of all theory on the physical and social body will be discussed, followed by a magnifying view at Brazil's social body and its interaction with the physical body. The final chapter has the in depth focus laid upon the subject of race or *cor* (skin tone). A subject analysed and discussed by my informants.

2. A theoretical approach on body, beauty and 'racial' identity.

In this chapter the main focus is laid upon the anthropology of the body, a scientific approach on beauty, body norms and representation. In this chapter beauty and body norms are approached from this scientific field. How does physical appearance reflect ones identity and are we as individuals influenced by a constant interaction with the outer world? Does this depend on direct, individual contact with the outer world or are we influenced by mass media in a similar manner? Beauty can result in a more prosperous career and by this means, an amplified form of agency. All in all reason enough to invest generously in ones physical appearance, whether ones economic prosperity allows this or not.

Beauty is a subjective manner and the idea of individuals on what is considered esthetic can depend on several factors; gender, ethnicity, age, sexual preference, social class and participation in subcultures. How do these esthetic norms differ then, influenced by these factors. Because Brazilian society is created out of several decades of *mestiçagem*, racial descent affects ideas on body norms intensely. This chapter will therefore give an elaborate insight on how race forms part of Brazilian society and it's speech in contrast to how race is approached in northern America. By means of an introduction to race in the Brazilian past, the lapse resulting in the (myth of) racial democracy nowadays is elaborated.

This thesis concerning Brazilian beauty and race will commence with an introduction to the anthropology of the body, in the following paragraph. In The physical body in relation to the social body is portrayed how different cultures can construct symbolic systems deriving from ones physical appearance. The paragraph The social body as a whole analyses different elements which can affect beauty ideals and body norms. It offers a description and analysis of how the body can be placed in the contemporary consumer culture followed by setting forth to what extent contemporary beauty ideals and body norms are affected by both; race and social class as *habitus*. Beauty based on race and color; race in the Brazilian past gives an introduction into the colonial times and the effect whitening ideals had on society. And the final paragraph of this chapter; Conceptualizations of race and ethnicity in Brazil clarifies the difference between race and ethnicity.

2.1 The physical body in relation to the social body

While analyzing the influence of a beauty ideal, and inherent to this being specific body norms, on racial identity formation the anthropology of the body comes to mind. Durkheim states that "man is double"; in his theory he makes a distinction between a physical body and a morally-imbued socialized body (cited in Lock, 1993, 135). These two are often seen as two distinct elements but can rather be seen as constant in interaction. The physical body comes in contact with the outer world since birth and from then on the individual owner of this physical body becomes subject to social influence.

According to Douglas (in Blacking, 1977, 4) the social body putting constrains on the physical body can be defined as influence of a particular view of society on the general norms of beauty. The physical body is restricted in its expressions by society's opinion. Tiemersma even so states the body image shows a "continuous dynamic process of destruction and construction in relation to other people" (in Sault, 1994, 18) Even when the individual is not in direct contact with the society surrounding him or her, this process does not only affect the

image of the other but also of the self. According to Tiemersma representation is an individual expression of a universal norm, herewith agreeing with Bourdieu we focus on the outer world, the habitus, to create an individual identity, which seems aberrant and unique but actually forms part of a preset norm, inherent to certain social classes. "We may identify parts of our own image with those of others. We may take parts of the bodies of others and incorporate them in our body image (appersonization) and we may force our own body images into others. It's a continuous interplay of parts and wholes." (Schilder in Sault, 1994, 18). This social body can be compared to a prism through which beauty ideals are being created and propagated. One social body we come directly in contact with, are people in our surroundings. The norms set out by them are not constant but can be influenced by various factors, including the following; gender, ethnicity, race, age, sexual preference, wealth and participation in subcultures.

Because of this diversity of beauty ideals depending on gender and different social groups their opinions or rather *social body* can judge the physical body and the identity of this particular person on these terms. Goffman (1959, 52) states that individuals intentionally hide or accentuate specific information about themselves in order to influence the impression others have of them, manipulation of the appearance. If we apply this idea to the appearance of individuals we see that it is common in Brazil to hide one's racial descent by adjusting different aspects of the appearance, like for instance, hair color and texture, skin color and body shapes. This being a result of propaganda of light skinned and mulatta women being the paragon of beauty, femininity and wealth and a possible rejection of negro physical features based on Brazil's colonial past, which will be explored in the paragraph Beauty based on race and color; race in the Brazilian past. "The body is potentially no longer subject to the constraints and limitations that once characterized its existence." (Shilling, 1993, 3). Modernity is ruled by individualism, human beings want to be considered unique, non-conform. Progress and enhancement are key words in modernity, when something can be improved it's instantly done, including subjects not created by mankind, physical features are adjusted to one's needs and goals.

The overarching social body in modern society is reined by television, internet, magazines and music, the mediums through which a very specific, univocal beauty ideal is propagated to the masses. This is not necessarily a representation of the ideals of the crowd, but will be perceived as being so because the hyper influential media opposes this certain specific ideal to others as being the only existing one. Visual media consistently exposes western society and countries aiming to form part of this, with images of socially acceptable behavior, speech and appearance. This confrontation with those (body)norms which are considered universal and widespread, because the media presents them as such, has as result a majority of the people in general will depart from the mindset they have to adjust themselves to these norms so they will fit better into society and will achieve more in life in terms of acceptance and respect.

According to Shilling (1993, 35) the body has taken a more central place over the various decades and a culture of 'promoting the self' through one's appearance has evolved. Physical exercise, tanning, dieting, hair straightening or curling, can reconstruct one's appearance. In a consumer culture, dominated by the media and in which every one of these adjusting processes are accessible at any time as long as you can afford it, withholding from it does not seem an option. As Balsamo notes, "The body becomes the site at which women, consciously or not, accept the meanings that circulate in popular culture about ideal beauty. The female body comes to serve as a site of inscription, a billboard for the dominant cultural meanings that the female body is to have in post modernity" (in Reischer, 2004, 300). Individualism has been starting to set the tone over the past decades. By

adjusting the individual body to the dominant norms on this concept through consumption of beauty treatment an “idealized version of the self” (Shilling, 1993, 6) is created. With this idealized version of the self also come changes in ones identity, one can become more self-confident.

2.2 The social body as a whole.

When analyzing esthetics and body norms several characteristics of the social body influence the conception of these norms, like gender, social class, race and membership of certain subcultures of the individual partakers in this social body. The first influential aspect discussed is gender.

Judith Rodin states that physically attractive women are perceived as more feminine (in Reischer, 2004, 313). Biology has shown over the years that feminine women are more attractive to heterosexual men because they seem more vulnerable which increases the sense of masculinity of the man. In a Latin American *machista* country such as Brazil this interaction between males and females is already created by the power structure, the males want their female partner to be subordinate so they can provide for her. We can state her role is to sit still and be pretty. But females do not strive for just this femininity, they strive for perfection. By adjusting their physical appearance to norms set out by society, which are portrayed by the media these women obtain a bigger agency, because of their looks there exists the ability to obtain a job more easily. Even though nowadays the masculine part of society still is favored when in terms of job recruitment, a global everyday situation, women can create a bigger agency in terms of competition with other females. By adjusting their looks they will stand out more in the crowd, when looking physically attractive and neatly dressed these women can be seen as the business card of the company.

Social class even so affect ideas of individuals and therefore of society as a whole on esthetics. If we take a closer look at Pierre Bourdieu’s theory on the habitus we can conclude this is the mindset an individual creates by interaction with society. Individuals with a similar social background will not only observe this specific imposed mindset but will consider it self-evident, by which means they will internalize and reproduce it. This habitus consists out of certain opinions and norms on every aspect of life and therefore also on beauty and body norms, therefore we can state social class influences the opinion on what is considered esthetic. Because the prosperous economic situation of members of the higher social class allows more money to be spent on every aspect of life, there is the ability to spend it on ones physical appearance as well. With this partaking in the higher social class even so come specific standards on how to be dressed, because of the social body which influence the habitus of members of this class there is a tendency of these members to reproduce a certain look to be sure this is generally accepted in their social class. The less prosperous economic situation of lower class girls could result in a division between the girls of both social classes at first glance, but clothing lines nowadays account for this division and try to diminish this line of demarcation by producing similar clothing as belonging to the style of the higher social class. Therefore the gap between the two, at first glance, results in seeming smaller, nearly non-existing. With a more sophisticated look the social body is less likely to comment, which creates a bigger range of possibilities in society because of an advantageous position in competition with other females, setting aside class division. This is an example of mass material consumption, a development forming part of modernity in which taste and distinction come to the fore, a great range of possibilities and products offer

the public the ability to distinct themselves from others and display their personal taste through means of physical appearance. Ones identity is given form in a physical manner to represent oneself to the outer world. Dunn (1998, 3) draws our attention to the less frequently used definition of identity as meaning sameness, an interesting theory in the contemporary day and age in which everyone claims wanting to be unique, but he is right viewing it from this point. He opposes identity to difference. Overall difference in terms of identity and beauty has a negative connotation.

Larrain (2000, 24) introduces the reader to a different definition of identity; “[...] from Marx onwards many sociologists and social psychologists have developed a conception whereby the social expectations of others play a crucial role in identification.” “[...], the construction of the self necessarily involves the existence of ‘others’ in a double sense. The others are those whose opinion about us we internalize. But they are also those against whom the self acquires its distinctiveness and specificity.” (Larrain, 2000, 26). Here we see how the influence of the social body can affect ones identity which could result in modification of the body in order to adjust to social norms. Racial identity is an extra layer we can add to identity, how is ones identity shaped by their racial background and more importantly how does the social body respond to this individual’s racial background? This (individual) racial identity finds itself constantly under pressure of society in forms of (positive) discrimination based on phenotypes and the beauty ideals deriving from these. According to Peter Wade, people are constantly thinking in terms of roots and (racial) origins, inclusive spaces for these origins are created within ones bodily appearance. (2005, 257) Individuals are judged only on what is seen on the outside, whether their appearance actually coincides with their racial background is not of importance, as opposed to the ‘one drop rule’.

2.3 Conceptualizations of race and ethnicity in Brazil.

Race can easily be defined as a classification scale based on phenotypic characteristics which are hereditary and can be traced back to a certain demographic background. In Brazil the term race is not frequently used, adversely Brazilians prefer to use the term *cor*, this term covers almost entirely the same definition but here the focus lays more on the phenotypic characteristics, the observable, the skin tone.

Ethnicity on the other hand is a characteristic by which means people identify themselves and others based on a demonstrable or presumable corresponding genealogy or ancestry, culturally embedded and constructed.

Today racial classification is no longer discussed in biological terms, but as a social construction coming forth out of a sense of collective identity based on the notion that this collective identity is established through the existence of a common heritage with a particular racial group. (Helms in Chavéz, 1999, 40). Racial identity therefore plays a significant role in the ongoing development of one’s identity as a whole. In Brazilian terminology race is still exclusively based on skin tone, the different racial categorizations applied by the Brazilians cover a wide variety as we can see in appendix 1 and these categorizations are still considered as an emotive subject. Color is the characteristic according to which these individuals could distance themselves from others because they appear different from themselves. And difference between several racial groups often results in discrimination and stigmatization.

Harry Hoetink’s somatic norm hypothesis explains the contradictory racial classification system between the

United States and Brazil in the following manner; “One and the same person may be considered white in the Dominican Republic or Puerto Rico, and “colored” in Jamaica, Martinique, or Curaçao; this difference must be explained in terms of socially determined somatic norms. The same person may be called a “negro” in Georgia; this must be explained by the historical evolution of social structure in the Southern United States.” (Hoetink, 1971, 12)

Similarly social status is of influence in the racial classification by the outside world. One can be seen by an outsider as mulatto but can be considered in the community as several tones lighter because of his/her wealth or intellect. “In Brazil, one can be white in one realm but ‘not quite’ in another. And one can be considered white while having black ancestry. This is certainly not to say, however, that Brazilians are untouched by the idea of ‘purity’, since an individual’s ‘black features’ interfere directly in ‘how white’ she or he will be considered.” (de Santana Pinho, 2009, 44) Joyce states that in Brazil, *cor* (skin tone) is a matter of economic position. “For example, a very poor white, a poor *mulato* and a black person are all considered ‘black’. On the other hand, a well off white and a wealthy black are considered ‘white’”(Joyce, 2010, 43) One aspect she doesn’t pay attention to but what this quote clearly implies is that social class is a heavy-handed factor in the racial classification and therefore valorization.

De Santana Pinho states that several degrees of whiteness do exist, even though the Brazilian nation has been considered for a long period as a racial democracy, some “types of mixture” are clearly preferred to others, depending on the darkness of one’s color. (2009, 40) “The representations of mestiço bodies, faces, and hair have created ‘regime[s] of truth’ about mestiçagem in which some mestiço types have been preferred as ‘the most beautiful’ (e.g., cinnamon-colored morenas), others as ‘the most sexualized’ (e.g., samba-dancing mulatas), other mestiço types as ‘the most treacherous’ (e.g., socially ascending mulatos), and yet others as ‘the most ugly’ and undesirable (e.g., those with very dark skin or light-skinned mestiços with ‘black features’).”(de Santana Pinho, 2009, 48) In other Latin American countries the term *moreno* is used to define blackness while in Brazil it stand for a great variety of skin colors, comprising the darkest black to light-skinned mulattos. Gilberto Freyre (in de Santana Pinho, 2009, 46) states that by using the term *moreno* in such a loose way it became clear that Brazilians are proud of their culture of *mestiçagem*. This same pride can be seen in the tanning culture the Brazilians are famous for, especially in the southeastern regions tanning is a daily occupation. The lighter skinned females, *branca* until *morena* and everyone in between adjust their skin tone through tanning on the beach because this is the cheapest way to achieve a more sensual and healthy skin tone.

In Brazilian fashion shows on the other hand light skinned women are portrayed as the prominent beauty icons. Xuxa, a light skinned former television show-host nowadays manages a model agency and is the embodiment of whiteness as a beauty ideal. Because of her German ancestors and the combination of blue eyes with blond hair this results in an inaccessible beauty ideal for the majority of Brazilians. Also Gisele Bündchen and Alessandra Ambrosio are known for their big role in the fashion industry but they both have European parents. Brown skin on the other hand is considered beautiful as well, but not in the fashion industry. With actresses Sonia Braga and Camila Pitanga as representatives of mulatta beauty, but mulatta already defines the given clearly, tanned skin is accepted but not considered beautiful when it’s too dark. (de Santana Pinho, 2009, 47) This can be explained by the fact that afro descendents are still considered as ‘the other’ in Brazil, even though the country claims to be a racial democracy. Collins describes the ideas on the contemporary whitening ideal clearly but bluntly at the same time. “Blue-eyed, blonde, thin white women could not be considered beautiful without the Other – Black women with classical African features of dark skin, broad noses, full lips,

and kinky hair.”(Collins in Davis, 51) I do have to agree with her and by not stating it this roughly I would argue that in the action of claiming one race, because that is what is happening when praising the Aryan blondes with blue eyes, you at the same time (whether unwillingly or not) look at other races as inferior in the concept of beauty because they do not meet with the just named beauty norms. On the contrary, blackness is considered as attractive in a sexual manner. “Race is embodied in everyday valuations of sexual attractiveness, and this attractiveness is gendered, racialized, and class-oriented in ways that commodify black female bodies and white male economic, racial and class privilege.” (Goldstein, 2003, 106) According to Goldstein racial democracy does not exist but in the shantytowns of Rio de Janeiro there does exist an idea of an erotic hierarchy. “The generally accepted equation is that a particular combination of white and black characteristics creates mulata beauty, but white characteristics alone can also qualify in another (higher) category of beauty. Purely African characteristics with no mixture of white characteristics are considered ugly. These categories defining beauty and ugliness turn sexual attractiveness into a racial matter.” (Goldstein, 2003, 121) On the one hand these colored females feel sensual and exotic because of their blackness and on the other hand they get the feeling they are seen as inferior and ugly in a society valorizing whiteness. (Goldstein, 2003, 123)

In the following chapters this theoretic approach will be intertwined with my findings out in the research field. Hoetinks somatic norm will be addressed in chapter 4 when the female informants classify themselves on the *cor* scale. Goffman’s ideas on the intentionally hiding or accentuating of physical aspects can be traced back to the paragraph on the manufacturability of the body, an idealized version of the self is presented to the outer world according to Shilling, this is linked to several forms of beauty treatment. Larrain’s social body is described in the analysis of the several forms of contemporary visual and printed media, representation in this media can result in a sense of collectivity but on the other hand in division as well, in the final chapter my female informants discuss their personal experience of identity formation based on this representation in the media. Helm’s description of collective identity eventually leads us to the formation of racial identity.

2.4 Beauty based on race and color; race in the Brazilian past

To obtain a clearer view on the contemporary beauty ideals aligned with race it is important to focus on the past Brazil has known. After several decades of slave migration from the African continent to Brazil new ideas evolving race entered the Latin American country since 1889. According to the Brazilian elite one drop of ‘white’ blood added to ‘black’ or ‘slave’ blood would determine ones race in a positive manner. Therefore new Brazilian racial politics were introduced in which white individuals were transferred to Brazil to whiten the country through miscegenation, also known as the whitening ideal. “Among the 4.5 million immigrants who entered Brazil between 1882 and 1934, more than two-thirds were white.” (de Santana Pinho, 2009, 42) The government preferred the immigration of white Europeans to other migrants because through their bonds with Portugal, they were aware of the modernity that ruled Europe in those days. (de Santana Pinho, 2009, 42)

The Brazilian elite perceived whiteness equal to progress. Several other sociologists besides Gilberto Freyre agreed on whitening as a project to modernize the country. They based these notions on determinist

theories which explain why Brazil could be seen as more backwards than for instance European countries on terms of culture, politics and economy. Consequently they determined the course of the Brazilian racial politics and in fact legitimized the ideas on whitening. (Dos Santos & Hallewell, 2002, 73) The idea of white superiority was opposed to a by them presumed inferiority of blacks. Dos Santos and Hallewell (2002, 75) speak of a “racial purification to secure liberation from the ‘black stain’”. I consider the term ‘black stain’ justly chosen by Dos Santos and Hallewell considering the fact that whiteness has always been seen as the norm in the Brazilian past. As a transnational force, whiteness has, throughout the Americas, been established as the ‘norm’, the ‘standard’ against which the identities of ‘others’ have been produced. (de Santana Pinho, 2009, 44) These new Brazilian racial politics were introduced forming part of a project of grandeur to convert Brazil into a modernized country. With the slow disappearance of the black and *mestiço* (individual of mixed European and Indigenous descent) the backward status with which Brazil coped, would disappear at the same pace. (de Santana Pinho, 2009, 49)

An ambiguity can be seen in the ideas of slavery abolitionists like for instance Joaquim Nabuco, the respected leader of the abolitionist movement. He fought for the abolition of slavery but on the other hand let his ideas be dominated by prejudice and racism. He claimed the existence of a distinction between a superior white race and the inferior black and yellow races. (Dos Santos & Hallewell, 2002, 66) “Nabuco was explicit in his desire for Brazil to become white someday, arguing for the tendency of the blacks to vanish through miscegenation because of their inferiority and savagery.” (Dos Santos & Hallewell, 2002, 66).

A misinterpretation in biology determined these ideas, Skidmore states; “Marriage to whites was believed to whiten the population because white genes were thought to be dominant” (In Telles, 2001, 418) The French diplomat and politician Gobineau thought that miscegenation would resolve the existence of a “non-defined” half-caste (in Dos Santos & Hallewell, 2002, 73). The Brazilian sociologist, anthropologist and writer Gilberto Freyre knew very well how to capture the ideas of some in those days in the following phrase; “Branca para casar, mulata para foder, negra para trabalhar. (White women for marrying, mulatta women for having sex, black women for working)” (In Parker, 1991, 153) Since birth of these mulatta women, even with the whitening ideals ruling politics, they have been perceived as being the Brazilian erotic ideal. (Parker, 1991, 153) They embody the perfect Brazilian woman, sensual, tropical and the perfect image for tourist advertisements that want to draw attention to the overall beauty of Brazil. But this erotic ideal doesn’t capture beauty; beauty is based on facial features whilst eroticism derives from ones bodily aspects. Light skinned, pretty girls were the appropriate partners to marry and flaunt with whilst the mulatta women knew how to satisfy the males bodily needs but weren’t presentable as a light skinned males partner. Gilberto Freyre also introduced the racial democracy ideology to the public with the *brasileiro verdadeiro* presented as racially mixed. Influenced by his mentor, anthropologist Franz Boas, the idea arose of miscegenation as a solution to discrimination and prejudice based on racial dissimilarity and therefore creating equal access for both blacks and whites to the Brazilian economy. (Joyce, 2010, 41) *Mestiçagem* (the mixture of races) became more appreciated in the late 50’s with the publishing of Jorge Amado’s novel *Gabriela, cravo e canela* in 1958 and the premiere of the movie *Orpheu Negro* by Marcel Camus in 1959. Both works revolve around the incomparable beauty of the mulatta women in relation to those of other racial descent.

But Telles states that even in this day and age there still exist whitening tactics similar to those in the 19th century. A large group of darker skinned individuals, who tend to poor, still strongly believes in upward mobility through marrying a lighter partner and in the long run producing lighter children who can increase their

chances in life. (Telles, 1995, 1610) Reischer (2004, 315) speaks of the role of the body in society as “artifact” and “agent”, the quotation by Telles shows us that this agency tends to grow by specific body modifications, namely those before conception of the individual. Body modifications are a result of an unsatisfactory feeling towards one’s own (racial) identity and an idea ruling society of what is beauty.

Joyce states in her work *Race matters* that the percentage of interracial marriages is slowly increasing “[...] according to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), the marriages between whites and blacks represented 1,3% of the total marriages in 1991 and, in 2000, 2,6%. Although this is a small increase, it is significant and seems to indicate an “extra-official racial apartheid” (Joyce, 2010, 11)

2.5 Race in contemporary Brazilian media.

Nowadays the percentage of representation of dark skinned individuals in the media is increasing. A positive development in Brazilian media was the adding of a new magazine to the market since 1996, *Raça Brasil*, a magazine aiming at the darker skinned individuals of Brazilian society, a striking fact was that the majority of my dark skinned informants knew of the existence of the magazine but didn’t buy nor read it. “In many ways the visual representations in *Raça* have a greater impact on the tone and message of the magazine than do the articles and the journalistic content.” (Caldwell, 2007, 95) I definitely agree on this with Caldwell, analyzing the magazine covers of the last three years the dark skinned females on the cover are not portrayed as beauties without content, when is stated the girls are beautiful, words like *poderosa* and *talentosa* are added. The main goal of the magazine is not only to show that black beauty is part of Brazilian society but also that dark skinned people are climbing the social ladder, breaking with the past by using their own talent and power. “Color is often preferred because it captures the continuous aspects of Brazilian racial concepts in which groups shade into one another, whereas race in Brazilian Portuguese (*raça*) is mostly understood to mean ‘will power’ or ‘desire’.” (Telles, 2004, 79) This quotation makes clear why is chosen for the term ‘raça’ to represent the magazine instead of the overall used term ‘cor’. It breaks with the given of perceiving and judging dark skinned people by their appearance but rather by their interior, dark skinned people can just as good be powerful and talented. Sadly this first has to be exposed in written form before people accept this slowly as a given.

Therefore introducing afro descendent actors in telenovelas, which happened for the first time in the in 1970 aired telenovela, *Irmãos Coragem*, and increases nowadays, is of a bigger influence than focusing more on dark skinned models in magazines. An important aspect we have to take in account is that telenovelas are being produced in Brazil itself and racial representation which closely represents Brazilian daily reality can have great influence on the social and racial inequality. Lidiane Lisboa is a great example of a dark skinned actress ruling the telenovela scene, playing a leading role as the character Aline Coimbra in the fairly overall white telenovela *Malhação*, aired on Globo since 1995, and *Paraíso Tropical*. Dandara de Moarais a more recently known actress who as well forms part of the *Malhação* cast played the role of Júlia, a very eloquent girl and object of affection to two light skinned guys. Sommer describes these scripted interracial relationships as ‘passionate patriotism’.

As Bourdieu has stated “It is only when a category has been named in society that it comes into social existence.” (in Vink, 1988, 216) This idea is without doubt applicable to the positive affect the showing of dark skinned, attractive and eloquent character in a non-subordinate role. “In 2001, a survey showed that in the four telenovelas that were aired that year - *Estrela-Guia*, *Um Anjo Caiu do Céu*, *Porto dos Milagres* and *Roda da Vida*

- the total of Afro-Brazilians or mestiços present in those telenovelas did not sum up to 10% of the cast, while in Brazilian society, they made up 44% of the population. Based on this alarming racial disparity, politician Paulo Paim from the Worker's Party brought before the Brazilian Congress a Law that, among other things, creates a quota of 25% of the total actors for Afro-Brazilians in the networks and in 2004 a system of quotas was implemented for Brazilian television. (Joyce, 2010, 54) These quotas form part of the affirmative action policies which positively discriminates on base of gender, class, color, religion and every other aspect that normally could lead to discrimination in a negative sense.

3. The body and the concept of beauty; immersion in Brazilian female society.

The aim of this chapter is to introduce the contemporary Brazilian beauty ideals appropriated and achieved by my informants. Do these ideals differ when deriving from different perspectives as gender, age or social class? The media can be seen as a billboard on which beauty ideals are portrayed but do they coincide with the ideals of my informants or for Brazilians in general? Mainly information from my open interviews with the girls has been used but also key informants as plastic surgeon Alexandre Charão and beauty salon owner Antonia ventilate their opinion in this chapter.

It gives in depth insight in both overarching beauty ideals ruling Brazilian society as a variety in beauty ideals and body norms based on the social body. The third paragraph analyses the representation of these ideals in various forms of media; magazines and telenovelas, and how this representation is perceived by my informants. This chapter concludes with a closer view at how bodily aspects can be adjusted by both self representation as body engineering, how can the outer world be seduced to accept an individual by means of hiding aspects of their natural, congenital physical appearance.

3.1 Overarching beauty ideals ruling Brazilian society.

Beauty ideals are subjective matters, they derive from ones opinion but overall there can be seen a red thread in these different ideals. The beauty ideals concerning clothing and make up in Brazil vary from one person to another but a universal standard for female beauty is a well shaped bum and muscular legs. This beauty ideal derives from the genetic mixture which forms Brazilians, the majority of Brazilian women are not well endowed in the chest area but do have a bum they can show off. Therefore more attention is paid to that. Brazilian genetics are not always in their favor according to Luciane Nascimento de Souza, a 30 year old whom I constantly came across when visiting the hairdresser's salon of Monica at Praça Cantão in Santa Marta;

“The ideal body type the majority of Brazilian females want to achieve is slender, but this is really difficult because of our genetics. The women are round-shaped, therefore it is difficult to achieve this body type.”¹

A slender body type is presented in the media but not easily to achieve for the racially mixed Brazilian females, they exercise to maintain their weight or even lose pounds but slenderness as exposed in the media is unachievable for the majority as a result of their bone structure and voluptuous curves. When the female informants would have the possibility to change something about their physical appearance the majority of the upper class girls choose for liposuction or lymphatic drainage whilst a chest enhancing surgery is preferred by the lower class girls together with adjustments to facial aspects like the nose or the mouth.

Make up is discussed as one of the beauty treatments the girls practice but participant observation showed me it is not used in the same amount as in European countries or the US. A visit to several drugstores makes slowly clear that it is quite a hard task to purchase mascara, lipstick or foundation. Nail polish on the other hand fills entire shelves in every thinkable color. This huge variety represents the purchasing power of some *brasileiras*. Mass consumer culture gets a whole new ring to it, the more shades of nail polish girls are able to purchase the bigger their purchasing power. Instead of investing in for instance designer clothes or fancy watches to show off ones wealthy position the nails are a physical aspect much attention is paid to, it can

represent the narrowing down of the distance between the lower and upper class. Above all this, when a female individual is able to show off well taken care for nails it shows she doesn't practice hard manual labor, therefore she can represent herself, whether or not intentionally, as a member of a higher social class.

Not one day has passed in which Brazilian women have not surprised me in terms of beauty and body norms.

Unthinkable beauty treatments are being executed to achieve a more sexy as beautiful appearance. Hair bleaching products are applied on the body hair.

A sunny day at Ipanema beach, a woman entirely covered in some white, thick crème started stirring a combination of what turned out to be peroxide and another chemical, in a Tupperware box. A to her also unknown man walked up to hear to ask whether he could use some of this mixture to apply on his facial here, similarly to someone asking for a lighter.

Latina women in general bleach the hair on their legs, this combined with muscular legs and a toned bum implies beauty according to Nathalia.² It's a rather cheap treatment which can be done by themselves at home and on the beach, where it results more effective.

12 o'clock on a Saturday afternoon, summer in Rio de Janeiro. *Posto 9*, the place to be for the 'it' people at Ipanema beach could not have been more crowded. A group of girls attract my attention, 5 of them are giggling and chattering, in tiny thong bikinis they try to absorb every beam of sun. While in western countries visiting the beach is for some a hard task because of insecurities, here the girls do not seem to be bothered by that. Their cameras keep on flashing to take as many pictures in this beach setting as possible. Buckets and bottles of water are being collected from the showers to keep on moisten the skin; the reflection of the water on the skin will accelerate the process of bronzing. Once every 15 minutes a beach vendor passes with sun screen, only available in SPF 30 or 50. Tanning on the beach is always done with sun block of a very high factor so the risk of cancer and wrinkles can be reduced. The beach front is used as a beauty enhancing site, girls get tanned, paint their nails, bleach their hair, exercise and when having the economic resources enjoying a massage given on a convertible bed under the watching eye of passersby.

It is a given that Brazilians in general are in no way bothered when other people are aware of their body treatments. Tanning is done outdoors as a social activity, together with friends and family the beaches of Ipanema and Copacabana are visited. Hair bleaching and both do it yourself manicures and pedicures occur in this same outdoor and therefore non-private setting. Massages are even so given out in the open and even exercising, a physical activity the majority of people wouldn't want others to see them practice because it can result in being not flattering, red cheeks and sweaty faces, but Brazilians don't seem to have a problem with this non-private setting.

3.2 Variety in beauty ideals and body norms based on social class.

As stated beauty ideals can depend on several variables like age, gender, social class and race. Both gender and social class turned out to be of a big influence in the body norms people set out for others and themselves. In Brazil women focus more on facial beauty, well cared for skin, make-up, hairstyle and clothing while from a masculine perspective the ideal woman should have a well toned body and the facial features matter less.

Aline Vilhena Santiago;

“Yes, there clearly exists a difference between the masculine and feminine perspective, we girls observe female beauty as a whole, the guys are more focused on the bums and chests haha.”³

The reason for males to focus more on bodily aspects and in particular the bum is the erotic connotation they link to this bodily aspect, in African culture a voluptuous bum indicates fertility and is therefore considered as sexually attractive, this fascination is even so vast in Brazil. It is not considered pretty, the main goal of light skinned upper middleclass girls but more physically attractive, sexy. According to the 23 year old office worker Nathalia Oliveira da Silva;

“Rich females do have more means to achieve beauty but poorer females adjust their ways in obtaining body modification to their economic means, mainly by tanning at the beach. It doesn't depend on the money, opportunities can be found everywhere. Besides on clothes like in the lower classes money is also spent on massages, exercising and skin cleansing.”⁴

Shortly after I came across these opportunities Nathalia mentioned which can be found anywhere. In Rio de Janeiro the possibility exists for economically challenged girls to work as a real life model for a hairdressers salon as manicurists so beauty treatments are done for free. Beauty salons in general are not that expensive like for instance Wall Mello's hairdresser and manicurists, it's the cheapest salon in Copacabana I came across. Clothing on the other hand are in general expensive goods. According to the 18 year old Margarida Maria Mesquita Sousa, employee at Wall Mello's hairdresser's salon in Copacabana, beauty ideals don't differ in between social classes:

“No, they have the same beauty ideals; the only difference is the way in which they obtain it. Plastic surgery is only available for the *clase alto*, and a great part of this social class uses this to improve their looks.”⁵

The ruling ideas on lower class beauty is that it consists of revealing clothes, make up and bodily beauty opposed to the facial beauty upper-class girls try to expose.

23 year old student Camilla Nascimento Rodriguez confirms this by stating;

“In the upper class society women want to be slender, skinny even, pretty and they focus a lot on their hairdo. They want to stand out in the crowd. In the lower class women want a physically attractive body, a well sculptured body.”⁶

Speaking about beauty of upper-class females my primary informants of various social backgrounds tell me they “cuidam mais”, they take better care of themselves. The 24 year old student, Elenir (Lenny) Mello, even speaks of them as “são bem arrumados”⁷, they are considered neater. From this statement we can derive that the girls consider beauty as something achievable through treatments instead of natural beauty. Therefore some of them consider upper class women prettier as lower class. But Luciane protests this in a clear manner by stating the girls are better looking, when asked to define her statement she said;

“Girls from the *comunidade* take better care of themselves, they are the best looking, but they don’t have access to all the possibilities [in terms of beauty] because of their economic situation. They have a natural beauty.”⁸

Thaíza da Silva Helena Lopes, an 18 year old student even so states there does exist a great difference between females from different social classes. She points out a social interaction which was first determined by Bourdieu’s taste and distinction discussion. Class fractions inflict their next generations with aesthetic norms and preference. This is done to create distinction between social classes, by which means they can secrete themselves from lower social classes. “[...] differences in cultural capital mark the differences between the classes.”(Bourdieu, 1984, 69).

“Yes, in a more wealthy class people are vainer, they are more elegant. In the lower class people show off the body, not being withheld by insecurity about any imperfections, which makes them more vulgar.”⁹

Important here is to focus on the fact that these comments are very subjective, upper and middle class girls portray their equals as neat and elegant but the girl from the *comunidade* obviously wants to make clear she and her friends are not in any way inferior to the more wealthy in society, but even exceed them in physical care. Whilst bearing in mind the historical view on body norms and beauty we can take a closer look at the contemporary beauty ideals and norms of the body. Not only skin color plays a big role in the formation of beauty ideals, hair texture and body curves are of great importance as well. A universal standard for the lighter skinned females is a tanned skin on which tan lines are showed off to display the difference between their natural skin tone and their tanned body parts, this is considered sexy by both male and female Brazilians. Simone dos Santos, a 20 year old student knew how to describe the contemporary Brazilian body norms in one sentence, her focus in this lies only on the sexual attractiveness, a more male point of view in contrast to girls which mainly spoke about facial beauty, preferably naturally looking :

“Here in Brazil the bum, hips and thighs are considered the most interesting body parts.”¹⁰

Cristiane Santos, or abbreviated Kiu, a 25 year old student, on the other hand doesn’t believe in a universal Brazilian beauty ideal which idealizes the mulatta with muscular legs and a round shaped bum.

“I don’t believe in a ruling Brazilian beauty norm. The women looking like this is an ancient idea which is still in use today, meanwhile the body and beauty norms change but this is not enough exposed.”¹¹

The main aspect of the ruling Brazilian beauty ideals are the female curves. “Particularly for males there is a kind of fetishization of the *bunda* (butt) as a sexual object [...]” (Parker, 1991, 119) This fascination with the butt derives from African cultures in which a bigger sized butt defines ones wealth and is considered attractive to male individuals. The fact that in Brazil a similar fascination exists shows us that some parts of African body norms form part of the Brazilian ones, therefore appreciation of African influences can be derived from the Brazilian beauty ideals.

3.3 Representation in the media

The contemporary media plays a significant role in the distribution of the western beauty ideal of the light skinned girl, frequently with blond hair and skinny but not muscular.

Liliane describes the models in the media as “very light, milk colored girls”¹².

Cris Bella Ferreira, a 24 year old *parda* woman from the lower class neighborhood Belford Roxo gets all worked up when talking about these girls;

“Those who appear in the media are mounted, and the *brasileira* in general, who isn’t portrayed in the media and doesn’t earn her money that way, in general doesn’t find herself in the economic condition to have a perfect body.”¹³



Because these girls are the face of advertisements for beauty and luxurious products they are considered as being more attractive and having a higher social status. According to the light skinned, 20 year old employee of the luxurious shoe store Arrezzo, Fernanda the amount of dark skinned girls in magazines is growing which she considers positive progress.

“Only a small percentage of the girls in the magazines are black but this percentage is growing”¹⁴

The ruling Brazilian beauty ideals of the round shaped mulatta therefore are not frequently shown on the magazine covers, but do receive special attention in the period revolving around Carnival.

One important question which comes to mind then is; “how is the in the outer world spread Brazilian beauty ideal of the muscular and sensual mulatta then produced when not produced through the media?” Gabriel, one of my male friends tells me he got introduced to the sensual mulatta girl as body and beauty norm early in his youth and 18 year old student Taiara Rejane states that the preference for this body type is in the Brazilian blood,

“I believe this ideal is in our blood!”¹⁵

Camilla is able to tell me more on where this, in Europe and the United States known as Brazilian, ideal is established.



Camilla Nascimento
Rodrigues

“This norm is established in the gyms, at the beach and at *baile funk* parties and situated in the western world through sophisticated marketing. Brazil during the Carnaval period portrays this general Brazilian beauty ideal. Gisele Bündchen does not represent the Brazilian beauty ideal.”¹⁶

Seventeen year old, dark skinned Paula from the lower class neighborhood São Cristóvão, doesn't feel affected by the pictures portrayed in magazines, but feels insecure about her bum because of comparison with her friends.

“I would like a bigger bum, I feel insecure when I compare myself with my friends, not because of influence of the media.”¹⁷

According to plastic surgeon Alexandre Charão, the Brazilian magazine editorial offices use pictures from other regions like for instance Europe and the United States to keep down the costs for photography. In practice the women who read these magazines don't become influenced by the skinniness of the models or by their light skin, they focus more on a bigger chest and bum.

“I believe the reason for beauty industry to use international commercials is to keep down the costs. In fact, if we think of Brazil the regional differences in appearance are so big local commercials would suit better. But because of economic reasons this doesn't happen. In practice, we see that women only observe what they consider interesting, bigger breasts and a prancing bum. Other characteristics, like being skinny and having flawless skin are being put aside.”¹⁸

Simone, a beautiful mulatta girl whom doesn't fit the size 6 luckily doesn't feel affected by the ideal portrayed in the media.

“Because I'm a bit chubby, i sometimes feel pressured to change my physical appearance. Even so because it's a trend to be skinny, but I don't suffer from this fashion ideal.”¹⁹

My focal point in the questions about the role of the media was on the influence of darker skinned girls in magazines, but in the conversation with my informants they spoke mainly about the influence of a bigger percentage of darker skinned actors in the telenovelas. Every magazine published in Rio and aiming at female readers discussing beauty and fashion is published by the media magnet Abril, one-sided reports and images are the result of this media monopoly. These magazines didn't influence their lives in the manner telenovelas do and therefore it is of a bigger importance if racial groups are represented in the telenovelas with which they are confronted on a daily basis because they are shown in both the public and private sphere, then in the magazines. Telenovelas are not comparable to Western soap series, they are more than that. It has a high talk show level because this is where taboos are being discussed. It clears the way to discuss difficult subjects around the dining room table. Therefore they attribute to discussions and have a huge say in the opinion formation of individual spectators, introduction of a more equal representation of the heretofore non-represented groups based on race or social class can therefore have a positive outcome.

Economic wealth is extremely unequally divided in Brazil but purchasing a television seems of a bigger

importance than primary provisions. Inhabitants of the *comunidades* have a similar culture of watching telenovelas as the Zona Sul inhabitants. Magazines are more seen as luxury products. More than 50 percent of the Brazilian population watch these telenovelas daily and feel closely involved with the characters in these shows. “Watching the tall, dark-skinned women on screen for an indication of cultural similarities gave a hint to what she may look like when she grew up. At least they looked more like she did than the blond fair-skinned women in English language soap operas.” (Barrera & Bielby, 2001, 2).

Because visual media bombs society with information on the ability to change ones physical appearance through both minor changes as through drastic treatments attention is drawn to both body engineering and how girls represent themselves in terms of aesthetics.

3.4 Body engineering and self representation.

The body has become a canvas painting with society as its ruling art stream and individuals as artists who give shape to the norms society poses, we can speak of manufacturability of the body. Luciane, a beautiful mulata inhabitant of Santa Marta immediately erases the idea I had, people in her social and economic position aren't able to pay for a plastic surgery treatment, she and her sister and cousins have had plastic surgery done. She has had a breast enhancement 2 years ago which resulted in being less expensive than I thought at a price of 1000 reais.

“The vast majority of Brazilian women are flat chested; because of this the demand for plastic surgery grows.”²⁰

But the more options of manufacturability to which access is obtained the more women want to achieve. It's not specifically beauty we can describe as Brazilian women's main goal, they strive for perfection.

“I feel more satisfied since the plastic surgery, but still not entirely. I feel insecure, for instance I would like a bigger bum, more [muscular] leg and a treatment for my teeth.”²¹

As stated beauty ideals and the access to achieving these beauty ideals have everything to do with social class and economic wealth. Would people make different choices on behalf of beauty and appearance whether they would be wealthier? When asked in which physical aspect the females would invest if they would have a big sum of money the girls resulted in already entirely having thought through their plan of approach. Lymphatic drainage, facial cleansing, liposuction and breast enhancing surgery ruled the top 5, with the first three most often chosen by the upper and middle class girls again showing they focus more on a aesthetic representative look whilst the lower class girls would choose the breast enhancing surgery focusing more on bodily attractiveness.

Alexandre Charão, independent plastic surgeon and owner of 2 clinics in Rio de Janeiro and one in São Paulo describes his customers as:

“Almost always women, ninety five percent, between the age of 40 and 60 of the middle and upper middle class, being fair skinned.”²²

No darker skinned females attend his clinic, or lower class females. According to Alexandre Charão plastic surgery takes place in the abdomen and chest part, this derives from the American body norms. Also liposuction is of great importance in the beauty enhancement industry.²³

The easiest way to achieve this famous ‘bunda’ is exercising but the amount of people choosing for plastic surgery grows every day even though this is clearly not the most economic way. Data from the Brazilian Society of Plastic Surgery shows us 370 000 plastic surgery procedures were done in 2002, with an annual increase of 10 to 20% in volume during the past 10 years. The age range of the women acquisitioning these procedures has dropped massively over the years. In 2003 already 10 to 15 percent of the Brazilian surgery patients are under the age of 18. (Finger, 2003, 1560) “The role of aesthetic surgery, then, is twofold: In curing the ills of the body, it can also cure the ‘unhappy’ psyche.” (in Reischer, 2004, 305). Alexandre Charão believes in the mental healing of plastic surgery;

“If I think plastic surgery can result in more self-esteem? Definitely, different scientific questionnaires have shown there is an increase in self-esteem after surgery.”²⁴

Nathalia hasn’t had any plastic surgery treatments done but she tells me the majority of the plastic surgery procedures obtained by the women are breast enhancements and liposuction, the bunda is trained by exercising and voluptuous by genetics so plastic surgery to enhance it results being unnecessary.²⁵ A more unwelcome effect of aesthetic surgery is that solving one bodily ill the attention is attracted to another ‘flaw’ and a vicious circle is created which is in the case of Luciane, who doesn’t feel satisfied with her physical appearance despite her long wanted breast enhancement.

Stating that exercising, a beauty enhancing activity less radical, sculpts the female body gym manager Sara Requeira of Academia Pergus in the middle class neighborhood Botafogo, is able to inform me on their customer’s goals.

“Here women and men of every age and social class work out. The women participate in gym classes to obtain a toned body, and a muscular bum and legs.”²⁶

Visiting the gym is merely for the well off, subscription at a gym starts of at 85 reais a month. But the *cariocas* don’t have to fear bodily decay because of their economic position. At several locations along the beach and positioned in some of the Rio neighborhoods we come across steel gymnastic equipment, free for use and when passing by never seen unutilized. The Rio Praia Maravilhosa is a governmental initiative which has provided the city with 40 of these gymnastic equipment areas. At Rua Sao Clemente, a main road in Botafogo where the entrance of *comunidade* Santa Marta is located, we can find one of these gymnastic equipment parks. The accessibility for the inhabitants of the lower class *favela* (or how the inhabitants prefer to call it, *comunidade*) to health and exercise has increased massively through this governmental initiative. Also gymnastic classes are given on the Rio bayside at night, young boys and girls play soccer and others train with a personal trainer. The



Rio Praia Maravilhosa, © www.promoview.com.br

majority of my female informants visit the gym frequently, a toned body is very important in this day and age and exercising in the gym gives them the ability to eat unhealthy dishes whenever they prefer. They do this to maintain their weight and not necessarily to lose weight while this is only the goal of Rayana. With exercising specific body parts can become more muscular, when exercising the stomach, legs and bum are being dealt with. Nathalia get's up every morning at 5 to visit the gym 4 times a week, to maintain her weight and not necessarily to lose weight. As we can see in the example of the gymnastic equipment areas at both the beach as the *comunidade* body modification becomes more accessible for the different social classes and this accessibility moderates use. Luciane, a beautiful *mulata* inhabitant of Santa Marta immediately erases the idea from my head people in her social position aren't able to pay for a plastic surgery treatment, she herself, sister and cousins have had plastic surgery treatments. These treatments resulted in being less expensive than I thought, at the extremely low price, compared to in Western countries; of 1000 reais a breast enhancement surgery takes place. According to Alexandre Charão who executes dozens of operations a month also liposuction is of great importance in the beauty enhancement industry.²⁷

For the girls less endowed in the chest and bum area there also exists a less drastic possibility to enhance their curves, by means of padded underwear, not only the bra department has padded examples, but also knickers in padded editions are positioned in the sexy lingerie department of clothing stores for teens. (See Image 1, page 30). My informants claimed not to make use of this beauty enhancing product. Lifelike shaped they can enhance the butt area and provide the owner with more self confidence, a beauty norm contrary to in Europe and the United States where according to females a round shaped bum is synonym to chubbiness. Striking is the fact that these knickers were only sold in one specific skin tone, the one portrayed in the image, light skinned, which could indicate feel who insecure about their bum and want it enhanced are more frequently, if not only light skinned.

Alexandre Charão stated that beauty enhancement treatments can result in more self esteem but on the other hand it can also result in a rejection of one's background; whilst this racial and genetic background has created the body that the person in question dislikes. "Bodies are modified for many reasons—for example, to register participation in a social group, to claim an identity in opposition to a social group, to signal a significant change in social status—but the overarching theme and primary end of most body work is the pursuit and attainment of beauty, however it may be defined." (Reischer, 2004, 297) This theory we can apply to Brazil without doubt, young medium till dark skinned females are in the pursuit to obtain physical beauty which stands closer to mulata beauty by for instance straightening their hair and shading their nose to make it seem more Caucasian. By these means they try to climb the social class ladder to compete with a social group that exists of light-skinned females who have better prospects which we can ascribe to this particular lighter skin color. Physical appearance has become a site of competition, as a result of education and experience in the job market not necessarily providing these girls with job opportunities; their physical appearance has to be adjusted to the mainstream accepted ideal, Perlman states (2010, 144). Simultaneously with the physical body, the individual as a whole seems no longer limited. By adjusting ones appearance, the ability to change social class beneficially seems within reach. This adjusting of appearance can happen in two ways, the contemporary method consists out of diminishing the gap between the upper and lower class because of adjustments in the physical appearance of the lower class *cariocas*, according to Perlman (2010, 144).

Concluding I can state that genetic mixture is of great influence on beauty ideals and in particular on body norms therefore on the aesthetics of these females. Even though they exercise extensively this treatment is not able to resolve their body issues and more drastic measures result in being the only solution. Both the majority of Brazilian males and females seem to have second to none problems with showing off their body and even so the manufacturability of the body. The outer world is allowed to see the time, money and effort they put in their physical appearance. Beauty ideals can vary in between social classes, upper class girls are described by their equals as more preoccupied with their looks and therefore neater and more elegant. But by means of several initiatives of both the municipality (whom installed equipment for free outdoor exercise) as individual salon owners (who offer the ability to be a hairdresser or manicure model to save money) the visual gap between upper and lower class *cariocas* becomes less apparent. Physical appearance becomes a site of competition between the two in addition to education and career.



Bum enhancing knickers at Brazilian fashion store Marisa.

4. Race, body and identity.

Following up theory on the anthropology of the body seen through an umbrella social body and an analysis of the ruling beauty ideals and norms in Brazil this chapter provides with in depth information on race, race relations and identity formation. In particular the term *racial identity* will be clarified in this chapter. A closer look will be taken on ethnicity, race and beauty in Brazil in the past and in this day and age. The primary paragraph introduces my informants' view on their racial background followed by a paragraph in which race and color in their everyday personal life is discussed. Followed by relating race to the contemporary Brazilian esthetic ideals and body norms with the final paragraph rounding up by taking a closer look at the color and body strategies these young women seize in their representation.

4.1 Self categorization in terms of race

Trying to determine ones skin tone in Brazil is a complicated issue which derives from the fact that skin color is seen through subjective eyes. A three color division of *brancos* (whites), *pardos* (multiracial individuals, also popularly known as *mulatos*) and *pretos* (blacks) was created by the IBGE²⁸, which opposed black to white and chose one term to define individuals whose appearance showed their multiracialism, later on *indígena* and *amarela* (asian roots) were added to the IBGE classification as well.

My female informants have classified themselves as *branca*, *branca brasiliada*, *light mulatta*, *mulatta* and *negra*. *Branca brasiliada* can be defined as white from origin but tanned artificially or by exposing to the sun. A subjective view on ones racial descent results in girls having a certain idea of what their racial classification should be which is not shared by the outside world. Kiu experiences this color classification by others on a daily basis, which doesn't coincide with her personal opinion.

“Yes, people say I'm *morena* but I consider myself *negra*”²⁹

When I ask Jaína, 21 year old fashion victim and student, how she would describe her skin tone she answers me *branca*. Mónica and Rosa, both hairdressers at the salon in Santa Marta, immediately interfere “*Parda!*, *Amarella!*”. When confronted with the racial classification list of Fernanda immediately points at the possibility *humana*. I ask her what the difference between this racial classification and others is. She says she doesn't know, had never heard of it before but she felt *humana*, just like everyone in the world. When letting her choose between the others she chooses *branca*, an accurate classification. Striking is the fact that not only the subjective view of the informant on her racial classification is of influence to our perception but also because of racial mixing it's really hard to determine to which phenotype they belong. Liliane describes herself being *branca brasiliada*. Her brother is *moreno claro* and her mother is *negra*, she resulted in being very light skinned.³⁰ Lenny, classifying herself as being white, tells me her mother is white, her father a *mulato*, dark skinned with *pelo crespo* (kinky hair) and her sister is *morena*.³¹

Brazilian people can be dark skinned but at the same time having pointy, European, facial features and light skinned people having a broad nose and voluminous, broad lips. When someone gets tanned by the sun and/or bleaches her hair the racial descent results in being indefinable.

Striking is the fact that while Brazilian media do not portray a very dark skin as beautiful and attractive the market selling skin lightening creams does not find a great acquisition in Brazil, in contrary to for instance Jamaica. According to de Santana Pinho, "there are virtually no products for bleaching the skin in the Brazilian market." (2009, 46) Alexandre Charão confirms this, there does exist a beauty treatment which bleaches the skin by applying a certain acid, but this is extremely expensive and is therefore not accessible for the middle or lower class young females. My upper class informants neither used this treatment.

Simone dos Santos doesn't consider color something you get born with and with which you will stick for eternity, she states the possibility of skin bleaching wouldn't be a negative development.

"Nowadays there are so many modern developments which help you change your physical appearance. Why not change ones color as well? Something not considered as mainstream is always prettier"³².

Sansone states that during his field research in Bahia his informants identify themselves as lighter than the opinion of the researcher. They used the most varying terms to describe their skin tone like for instance the color of an LP (Sansone, 2003, 41), or the color of a donkey running away scared (Araújo, 2003,32). Luckily my informants weren't so creative with coming up different skin tones. During my research I have compared my informants' self-identification with my own observations and the majority of the girls classified themselves racially in the same manner I would have. Striking though, was that Camilla Nascimento Rodrigues and Christiane Santos, according to my opinion sharing the same skin tone, classified themselves as being negra, just like Thaíza while they were several tones lighter than the latter. This contradicts Sansone stating that it's common to classify oneself lighter than perceived by others. Mulatta and parda was most often used by the racially mixed girls, girls with the same appearance could describe themselves as mulatta while the other would clearly state she was parda. "For Gilberto Freyre, in the 1960s, Brazil was already going through this phenomenon of loss of color, the main symptom of which was the popularization of the term "moreno" (moreno is an imprecise term that could mean dark white or light brown or even black). According to him, the increased use of this word was not only a semantic transformation, but 'a growing trend in which not only the white moreno was considered moreno, as before, but also the *parda* and even the *preto*, in various degrees of morenidade, from light to dark, due to the effects of *mestiçagem*'". (Guimarães, 2010, 7)

According to Lenny, self classified as *branca* racial classifications in Brazil consist only out of blacks, whites, morenos and mulattos. 22 year old mulata Aline Vilhena Santiago states albino, blondes, redheads, orientals and mestiços should be added to the racial classification scale. Thaíza, dark skinned herself, states attention to the indigenous, *parda* and *amarelo* race, this last racial classification is differently defined by my informants, some state the *amarelo* is a person from Asian descent while others defined it resulting in being light skinned people who adjust their physical appearance through tanning.

Cristiane Santos, self classified as *negra*, considers bronzing as literally and figuratively speaking not showing your 'true colors';

“I believe the only color that matters is your natural skin tone, unaffected by artificial tanning.”³³

Edvânia Souza de Traíjo, the 21 year old *parda* daughter of my apartments cleaning lady, living in a *comunidade* just outside the city centre of Rio de Janeiro tells me;

“I consider artificial tanning bad health wise, besides, everything artificial does not count.”³⁴

Because of this wide variety of skin tones I wondered whether the girls these girls would cling to a specific racial group in their social spheres. They answered negatively and stated that because of their racially mixed backgrounds they did not feel specifically part or excluded of racial groups. Important paying attention to is the fact this could be socially desirable answers, the fact that they answered instantly, without hesitating to this question doesn't make it easier to solve this ambiguity. Trusting in the fact the majority stated their group of friends is racially mixed and having in mind the look in the eyes of some of these girls when confronted with the question whether they valued skin tones different from others which could best be described as insulted, I can state the girls don't cling to a specific racial group based on racist prejudice.

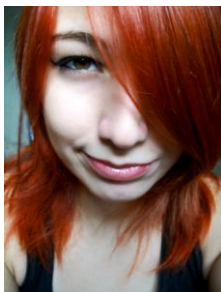
4.2 Experience of race and color in the personal life.

To obtain a better view on how my informants experience their discovery of the self in relation to race this paragraph summarizes experiences they've told me about which could affect their racial identity. Both male as female voices on this issue are ventilated.

Lying on the beach with my friends the 34 year old, dark skinned, E. da Silva Costa approached us. He roamed the Ipanema beaches looking for blonde female tourists, without hesitation he would position himself next to you on the *kanga* where he tells he is looking for a *gringa* girlfriend with blond hair so the *brasileiras* would come to their senses and change their opinion about dating dark skinned guys, if a *gringa* girl would be into dark skinned guys than they would be rapidly convinced as well.

“If Brazilian girls see me hanging out with you (3 females students of Dutch descent, red.) they'll instantly consider me a good catch. They'll think I'm a good guy.”³⁵

Contrasting this quote were the responses of my female informants when asked to describe their ideal partner,



Flávia Schmidt

the majority of the girls stated skin tone was not of any importance. Flavia, Luciane, Cristiane and Taiara did state they preferred lighter skinned males as their partner. These girls themselves vary on the *cor* scale from *branca*, *mulatta*, and *parda* to *negra*. Race can play a big part in love relationships, the majority of the girls state they don't consider a specific *cor* more attractive than another. Camilla says:

“Dark skinned girls are more attracted by body type and also pay attention to ones color, a lot of these girls want to be in a relationship with men of the same *cor* because nowadays there still seems to rest a taboo on interracial relationships.”³⁶

She, being a dark skinned girl herself, points out therefore that the girl attribute a value judgment to the color of their partner, not deriving from a racist ideology but out of convenience, to avoid cultural difference and

judgments by the social body. They stated they considered this skin tone as more attractive, when asked whether social class or economic position was of importance they responded negatively. *Cor* is overall not seen as a delicate subject by any single informant, they think the subject is handled in a more light weighted manner than in other parts of the world.



Thaíza da Silva
Helena Lopes

“Yes, I think skin tone is a delicate subject, but in Brazil it’s more easily approached. In other parts of the world it is seen as a sensitive subject. However it is a subject that generates much controversy in the world as a whole.”³⁷ according to Thaíza.

To obtain a clearer view on tolerance in between racial groups I’ve let my informants answer several questions on their friends and ideal partner. With these questions I aimed at obtaining more information whether people value color differently within others than in themselves and if they ascribe several characteristics to skin color. Because some groups of friends of my informants were racially mixed and others resulted in being quite racially homogenous I came to think I would need more information on whether these young femals specifically choose their friends, feel a better connection with people of the same racial or social class. Every individual informant claimed to have friends with other phenotypes than those of themselves, although being proud of their own racial group they wouldn’t cling to this specific group.

Stating to be a racial democracy, a term introduced by both Arthur Ramos as Gilberto Freyre (Guimarães, 2005, 119), would mean Brazil could be defined as a society with no discrimination based on race. Contrary to these statements there came to light that even in this day and age discrimination takes place in this country originating from miscegenation, some situations seem extremely racist to the outer world but are so internalized in the daily life of the ‘victim’ it is no longer seen as a racist action. Like for instance the ‘loving’ way both teachers as students at *Colegio Estadual Ernesto Farias* in Mangueira referred to an also attendant teacher as *negrinha*, a for me stunning situation. In an informal conversation with Gabriel Passos Kafuri, a 22 year old, middle class white male from Grajaú tells me

“Color can be a delicate subject but it depends on the situation in which it is used. You can use *nigga* in an informal conversation between friends but it’s actually an insult.”³⁸

Other comments I’ve overheard without doubt derived from a racist mind, even though Brazil is described and by the outer world perceived as a racial democracy it’s common that, the idea exists, lighter skinned people obtain better chances in life than their darker skinned compatriots. Luciane considers showing more light skinned girls in the media as being of a bad influence on her surroundings

“People will like light skinned individuals better because of the media. My 8 year old daughter has curly, kinky hair, sometimes she doesn’t want to go to school because she considers herself ugly because she doesn’t look like the other girls in school.”³⁹

In the media darker skinned models and actors are gaining terrains but the percentage of afro descendents in the media still results in being second to none. Gabriel;

“Before race was a more delicate subject, but television has had a big influence by introducing black actors in telenovelas.”⁴⁰

In the modeling industry it is still hard to enter when being darker skinned, Tainá de Souza Cristino, a 14 year old high school student, tells me about her goal to become a model which she shares with her current boyfriend, it's hard for him to enter the business because he is *moreno*. Whether or not embracing your racial identity has just as much to do with influence of the media as with influence of people in your surroundings. By obtaining specific, based on racist situations, memories of my informants I got a better insight in the “racial democracy” as an illusion or better said disillusion. We can clearly speak of contemporarily (hidden) racism between racial groups, sometimes it is more in the open than other times but racism still forms part of daily life in Rio de Janeiro. My light skinned informants seemed blind for this phenomenon and therefore ignored its existence when being asked about it. In my conversations with Camilla the subject was easily led to racism and discriminatory approaches towards her. She experienced strikingly many situations led by racist ideas.

“It's difficult here, when I was 13 years old kids in class called me names, monkey for instance. There does exist a law against racism here in Brazil but this is a bad development, it must be thought, must form part of education.”⁴¹

Tainá's classmate, the 16 year old Anna Greice Soarez da Silva has also been called horrible names because of her racial descent.

“Yes there is a lot of discrimination in Brazil, several girls have called me names like coffee”⁴²



Anna Greice Soarez da Silva

These girls didn't turn out to be *branca mesmo* but were also black but still slightly lighter skinned than Anna Greice. While trying to define the difference between *mulatta* and *parda* I came across a youth forum on which the difference between the definitions of *parda* and *morena* was posed as subject of discussion, this forum topic opened my eyes on extremely negative sentiments towards *mestiçagem*, with comments like; “There is no difference (between the terms *parda* and *morena* red.), in general the two are extremely ugly and have horse like faces. Go for the white girls.”⁴³ And “These two form part of the quota system (positive discrimination system based on race, red.), you don't”⁴⁴. These were posted by two different people and commented on in an approvingly manner by others. They reflect how some people, without sharing their true identity with the outer world valorize mixed descent. An opinion completely contradictory to the one both my female and male informants shared with each other.

Every year during Carnival these racial matters are being put aside and the focal point are the samba dancers who make the carnival parade the big spectacle it has become over the last decades. The *mulatta* and *morena* are not just portrayed as the beauties of the parade; they get their own three storey platform. Not only is Carnival a festivity in which afro descendent and racially mixed appearance is revalued. Also it can be seen as an indirect appreciation of the lower social classes, the parade organized in the Sambodromo consists out of the 12 best samba schools, showing their skills to the public. These samba schools are all situated in *favela's* or *comunidades* in Rio de Janeiro. Therefore the entire act, the music, dance, clothing and floats are being created and subsidized by the *comunidade* inhabitants, by visiting the Sambodromo *desfile* and broadcasting it on several

television channels both the racially mixed and dark skinned individuals as *comunidade* inhabitants are being appraised.

4.3 Beauty and body norms in relation to race.

In the magazines I have analyzed (Vogue, Gloss, Nova, Marie Claire, Criativa, AnaMaria, Viva, Tititi, Minha Novela Sou+Eu!) one out of every 8 girls was not light skinned. According to plastic surgeon Alexandre Charão do Brazilian magazine editorial offices use pictures from other regions like for instance Europe and the United States to keep down the costs for photography. In practice the women who read these magazines don't become influenced by the skinniness of the models or by their light skin, they focus more on a bigger chest and bum.

“I believe that the beauty industry uses readymade international beauty imagery to diminish the costs. In fact, if we think of Brazil, the regional differences in physical appearance are so massively that these should on the other hand should justify more locally focused beauty ideals. But for financial reasons this does not occur. In practice, we see that women just "absorb" what interests them, more voluptuous breasts, a more voluminous bum. Other features such as slimness and light skin are being left aside.”⁴⁵

Fernanda Escarlata, a self declared *branca*, from the rich neighborhood Barra da Tijuca, claims the amount of darker skinned models in magazines doesn't reflect the Brazilian society adequately, this amount is growing though.

“There used to be a small amount of dark skinned models portrayed in the magazines, but this quantity has grown nowadays.”⁴⁶

All female informants responded very positive on the question whether or not they were proud of the *mestiçagem* culture. They all had friends or family members from a different racial descent and *mestiçagem* resulted for them in two positive outcomes; respect towards people from another racial descent, Brazilians know better how to cope with the mixture of races in one country and therefore show more respect towards other ethnicities. The second positive outcome is the beauty which is created by racial mixture; beautiful aspects of several races are added up in one person. The girls state that color is not of importance in beauty, Lenny;

“Beauty should be seen as a whole, and not through skin tone. Skin tone is not of importance”⁴⁷

“Skin tone is not synonymous to beauty”⁴⁸.

It is hard to discover whether or not these girls are trying to answer in a socially desirable manner, but important stating is the fact they all responded really quickly to this question. They reacted as if I stated something clearly improbable when I asked them whether beauty depends on color or not. Only four girls consider one specific color more outstanding than another, The 18 year old *parda* student Taiara Rejane states that dark skinned girls are of an incomparable beauty. Margarida states “*morena* is a more outstanding skintone”⁴⁹, Anna Greice and her

17 year old colleague at school, Brida Beatriz share this opinion. Margarida herself is a light mulatta and considers *morena* being the most beautiful but posed a lot of attention to the fact that every color has its own beauty representation. According to Tainá *moreno* is the skin tone guys prefer in a girl.

“ I don’t think beauty depends on skin colour but guys like *morenas* better.”⁵⁰

Only being 14 years of age she doesn’t feel affected in her racial identity by influence of the media of by the ruling beauty ideal seen through male perspective.

“Boys think *morenas* are more attractive but I prefer to be *negra*”⁵¹

The first day of introduction for the UniRio freshmen, my friend, 19 year old mulatta Rayana invites me to meet some of her female friends. I enter the schoolyard of Rayana’s university were people shamelessly start staring at me. Expecting that would be because they didn’t know me Rayana told me otherwise. According to her Brazilian girls think foreign girls are mysterious in their looks and way of moving and therefore an example for themselves. When I tell her for us western girls, Brazilian girls are the exotic and therefore exemplar ones, she becomes timid. One of their classmates enters the schoolyard and every single student, male or female, turns their heads, she is really fair skinned and looks French but results in being *carioca*. It is clear that her classmates and she herself attribute a higher value judgment to this girls beauty because of her clearly lighter skin tone than her classmates. Surrounded by her flawless peers and being a beauty herself Rayana says; She is the hottest girl in school, all the guys are in love with her.

Overall it seems *mulata* and *negra* females describe one skin tone lighter as their own as being considered by themselves and or others as more attractive whilst my light skinned informants clearly wanted to state beauty is not inherent to a specific skin tone.

4.4 Color and body strategies and representation.

I have asked my informants whether a division existed in the beauty ideals being appropriated by girls from racial descent, according to them there existed no division between these ideals. Light skinned girls overall tried to achieve a pretty similar beauty ideal as darker skinned girls, all of them wanted to be slender, having straight hair and a thin Caucasian nose was ideal according to them, all ideals which are represented in the printed media as aesthetic. These three aspects come forth out of genetics and are therefore hard but not improbable to change. One exception in communal beauty ideals are the female curves which were embraced by the *mulata*, *morena* and *negra* informants but were not included in the training schedule of the majority of my *branca* informants. The ruling Brazilian beauty ideals have not changed much over the years whilst contemporaneous beauty ideals and body norms are partially based on *mestiçagem das raças*, their racial mixture and consequently their genetics which can produce bigger bums, muscular legs and a *mulata* or *morena* skin color. The beauty ideals projected in the media differ a lot from the ideals the girls hold on to, these are more European and Northern American based ideals and therefore the girls do not feel pressured to achieve this beauty ideal.

Concerning skin color they do not follow the ideal portrayed in the media, they do not want to be the ‘branca leite’ girls portrayed in the media. Whilst females from Europe and the United States try to obtain as

little tan lines as possible this is a universal standard for the lighter skinned Brazilian females, even the upper class females who consider themselves western like consider tan lines as feminine and sensual. A tanned skin on which tan lines are showed off to display the difference between their natural skin tone and their tanned body parts is considered sexy from both a male and female perspective. The contrast shows they choose to obtain this certain skin color and were not born darker skinned, this clearly points out the manufacturability of the body and with it the representation of the self as both something they want to be and their natural genetic make-up. Tan lines are considered sexy and therefore shown a lot because they emphasize a contrast of the original skin tone and the sun touched skin.

“I, and Brazilian women in general, I think, like to show off the difference of the skin covered and uncovered by a bikini, so the progress can be shown.”⁵² Nathalia tells me.

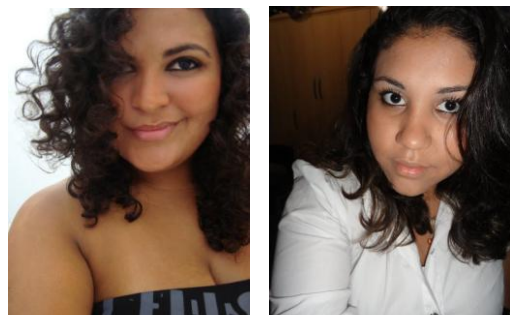
My female informants do not feel insecure about themselves although always some minor adjustments are desired by them. Losing weight is of the biggest importance, the lean and slender girls want to maintain their weight, “continuar o corpo”, while the more voluptuous girls would want to lose some weight. To let the answers not be influenced by their economic position I asked them what they would change about their appearance if they would have the needed economic resources. Simone, Luciane, Thaíza, Jaína, Flávia, Tainá and the 21 year old *brasileira parda*, Edvânia wouldn’t refuse a breast enhancing surgery, a total of 7 out of 23.. As stated, the chest area is considered the problem zone because of the genetic build of *brasileiras* in general. A more alarming fact is that the youngest informants feel insecure about facial aspects which can only be adjusted through radical plastic surgery, Tainá tells me about her main insecurity.

“Overall I’m satisfied with the way I look but I want to change my mouth, it’s too big.”⁵³

Brida Beatriz even so is confronted with insecurity about a specific facial feature.

“My nose is really big, I want that to be changed.”⁵⁴.

These broad facial features, both the mouth as the nose can be considered a result of these girls’ racial origin, both girls classified themselves as being *morena*. Deriving from the fact they don’t have the matching skin color to the facial features, this can result in insecurity and dissatisfaction with the mentioned facial features. During my visit at UniRio, a state university situated in the middle class neighborhood Botafogo, I discovered for the first time, that having a broad nose while being mulatta or *morena*, was considered unattractive and overhearing a conversation between 20 year old Juliana Baretto and her class mate Rayana Miccolis provided me with the knowledge these girls were really excited about a makeup advice they had seen on you tube, applying facial powder several tones lighter than their own on the wings



Rayana Miccolis & Juliana Baretto

of the nose would make it appear smaller. A broad nose shows their racial background and in combination with a lighter skin they rather want to adjust their nose to adjust it to their light skinned appearance.

But not only the facial features can give away ones racial background. “Hair texture has long been used as an indicator of racial background and a basis for racial classification. As a key marker of racial difference, hair assumes a central role in the racial politics of everyday life in Brazil.” (Caldwell, 2007, 87). The hair therefore is the main aspect Brazilian women adjust, every single informant stated they considered hair the most important indicator of beauty. The majority of the *mulata* informants straighten their hair because their genetics result in having kinky hair which doesn’t gratify the contemporary beauty ideal showing long, smooth hair. Some only do this for special occasions like Juliana, others wear this hairstyle every day. Antonia states

“Women don’t want kinky nor curly hair.”⁵⁵

Cabelo crespo, a term often used by my informants but in daily speech frequently replaced for the term *cabelo ruim*, bad hair. Important is noting my informants have never used this term to describe kinky hair. *Ruim* is an attributed value judgment by the social body based on racist thoughts, striking is that because the term has been starting to form part of Brazilian vocabulary the denigrating charge to it becomes invisible to the ones who use the term. Straight hair is the ideal almost every *mulatta* and *morena* woman tries to achieve, hair straightening is the beauty treatment used on a daily basis by almost every single one of my informants. They want the hair to look neat and less messy because it was so curly. “Many who self identify as *preta* engage in hair straightening as a way simply to be more acceptable aesthetically and to compete more effectively with the *morenas*.”(Burdick, 1998, 18). Also a *mecha* or coupe soleil is very popular, according to Graça, employee of a hairdressers salon in middle class neighborhood Botafogo.⁵⁶ Just like Shakira and Beyonce who have already discovered that discoloring the hair resulted in a more widespread success over the world, because they could compete more easily with their blonde colleagues in show business, this tactic has now become part of the beauty routine of some Brazilian females.

Concluding I can state whilst Brazilians are everyday confronted with mixture of racial descent, it still results in being a delicate issue which doesn’t seem to become less heavy handed through time. Interaction with people of different races and or mixtures is ordinary and sticking to a certain racial group is not something Brazilians aim at. However we can speak of confronting relations based on racism which makes some of my dark skinned informants focus on their racial background, all of them choose to not (intentionally) renounce this background, Tainá and Brida state they are proud of being *morena* but their insecurities do derive from their genetics which are a result of racial mixture. Segregation and discrimination are aspects of society which can result in discontent with ones racial descent, but this discriminatory sphere can also be created unintentionally. Examples of this can be a media reigned by mainly light skinned managers which can affect the lack of representation of various races in magazines or telenovelas. In Brazilian vocabulary discriminatory elements come to the fore which when are internalized can result in losing their primary meaning and can be used in a playful way by some. Another striking aspect of Brazilian vocabulary is the wide range of color specifications and the looseness in which these terms are applied in everyday language to describe oneself. Individuals can

adapt these categorizing terms to their liking, describing themselves as more light or dark skinned than perceived by others.

Conclusion

Individual identity is created under the influence of interaction with the social body. And as I have demonstrated through my informants reflection on their physical appearance this appearance can be considered the expression of identity. Individualism seems to rule the world and beauty ideals and body norms in particular, portraying oneself as unique is essential. But as both Tiemersma and Bourdieu state the social body is of great influence on these norms, body norms and beauty ideals are more often influenced by collective identity than individual identity. “Appersonization”, the adjusting of the physical body by incorporating what we see in the physical appearance of others, is a result of a previously constructed set of norms on esthetics, the habitus as Bourdieu states. According to Bourdieu distinction in habitus depending on social class creates certain beauty ideals and body norms, an observation my female informants agree upon by stating they notice a class based division in terms of beauty and body norms.

Racial identity is the distinctiveness of the self towards others based on race. As stated in the racially mixed society of Brazil social interaction takes place between individuals of every racial descent. Therefore in interaction with their surroundings my informants do not necessarily evaluate their racial identity, or consider themselves different from the social body based on their racial makeup. But despite the culture of *mestiçagem* my informants perish racist encounters, sometimes brought in a more “playful way” than others. These encounters seem to result in the augmentation of pride in dark skinned girls. Gilberto Freyre’s racial democracy implies there does not exist a racial hierarchy. Every skin is considered equal in Brazil. But as the chapter on race in everyday life clarifies both racism and segregation as Gilberto Freyre’s idea of a racial democracy with the racially mixed *Brasileiro verdadeiro* rule contemporary Brazilian society, both forms of social intercourse exist side by side. My informants state they don’t address value judgments to skin tone and state Brazil has a unique position in the world because of their acceptance of *mestiçagem* but at the mean time racism takes place on a daily basis as well. Racial democracy can even be considered a utopia many Brazilians openly believe in. Dark skinned individuals can be called names in both a predetermined offensive way as a way which seems innocent and playful. This last approach tries to undermine racism in Brazil just like the girls stating they don’t prefer a specific skin tone but overall do have a preference for the *morena* and *mulata* skin tone in both males as females. This shows us in Rio de Janeiro there does exist an idea of a racial esthetic and erotic hierarchy, a hierarchy Goldstein presupposed only existed in the shanty towns.

Both Goffman and Telles state individuals hide specific aspects of their physical appearance in order to present themselves differently. The outcome of my field research is that these specific aspects which are adjusted most frequently have to do with racial background of the individuals. Therefore I consider body engineering as giving form to racial identity, for the process of engineering derives from discontent with natural, congenital physical features. Softening the hair texture and augmentation the chest area are most frequently dealt with in the body engineering processes, supplemented with diminution of the nasal area and the mouth by both make up as plastic surgery. Kinky hair, a broad nose and full lips are all physical aspects deriving from the racial makeup of my informants, aspects they feel unsatisfied with. A duality seems to exist in the fact that both light as dark skinned girls want to achieve African-like female curves. Both the ones in favor of the idealized European ideal as the ones in favor of the African ideal of muscular legs and a round shaped bum are focused on the following three aspects; slenderness, a prominent chest zone and a voluptuous bum. This specific beauty

ideal of the round shaped mulata and morena is not reproduced by the local printed and visual media. Girls in the magazines are represented similarly to the ones in European and Northern American magazines, even though this is not the beauty Brazilian girls want to obtain. Therefore the majority of my informants don't feel affected by this unequal representation. Those who do try to follow the standards portrayed in the media are the light skinned girls, they can relate themselves to the portrayed models because of a similar appearance and therefore feel more addressed to. Telles statement on body engineering to approach an ideal which in some ways is similar to the European and Northern American upper and middle class ideal has everything to do with upward mobility. Because of straightening the hair, being slender and wearing well groomed clothing the girls try to obtain a bigger agency. An idealized version of the self as Shilling defines is created. These physical aspects are considered more sophisticated and therefore they are more presentable which can have a positive effect on career opportunities.

Harry Hoetinks somatic norm clarifies the subjectivity of racial classification, one can be considered a certain skin tone by themselves and another by the social body. This subject being disputable does not result in dissatisfaction of my female informants in terms of race, if they would have a say in it they wouldn't choose to be of a different racial descent. Dark skinned girls specifically feel a sense of 'orgulho', pride, towards their racial descent. Striking is the just pointed out displeasure with their congenital aesthetic aspects, seemed to be unconscious. They did not consciously link these specific aspects like bodily build, hair texture and facial features to their race and more specific racial identity. But I would like to state my *morena* and *negra* informants aim at a physical appearance of individuals who are several skin tones lighter than themselves. Even though claiming they feel content with their racial makeup, they would like to change physical aspects deriving from it. Both the interaction with the social body, consisting out of both face to face contact with people in their surroundings as printed and broadcasted media is rejected by my informants as being of any influence on their racial identity. But as we can see from the fact they would like to change their physical appearance to an overall similar look as the one portrayed by magazine models, unconsciously they are led by this fixed set of body and beauty norms. Interesting to point out is that my well educated informants, those attending university, entirely reject the media as being a role model while the high school girls do not necessarily describe the media as being an imposing organ.

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Appendix 1.

Self-reported racial categorizations by students of the CEFET school, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 2005. Used to let the girls reflect on their auto-racial classification.

Categories	Males		Females		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Alva (light skinned)	1	.5	...	...	1	.2
Amarela (yellow)	1	.5	1	.4	2	.5
Branca (white)	76	38.4	104	45.8	180	42.4
Cabocla (mixed) ^a	1	.5	...	...	1	.2
Caucasiana (Caucasian)	1	.5	...	...	1	.2
Humana (human)	2	1.0	...	...	2	.5
Indígena (indigenous)	1	.5	1	.4	2	.5
Mameluca (mestizo) ^b	1	.5	...	...	1	.2
Marrom (brown)	2	1.0	...	...	2	.5
Mestiça (mestizo)	2	1.0	2	.9	4	.9
Misturada (mixed)	...	...	1	.4	1	.2
Morena (mulatto)	17	8.6	13	5.7	30	7.1
Morena clara (light mulatto)	6	3.0	1	.4	7	1.6
Morena escura (dark mulatto)	1	.5	...	...	1	.2
Mulata (mulatto)	...	...	1	.4	1	.2
Negra (black) ^c	26	13.1	24	10.6	50	11.8
Parda (brown)	60	30.3	77	33.9	137	32.2
Preta (black)	...	...	1	.4	1	.2
Not declared	...	...	1	.4	1	.2
Total	198	100.0	227	100.0	425	100.0

^a*Cabocla* refers to peasants of mixed Portuguese and indigenous ancestry.

^b*Mameluco* is a term of Portuguese origin describing the first-generation offspring of a European and an Amerindian.

^c*Negro* refers to black in the sense of the black activists in Brazil.

(Ventura Santos, 2009, 791)

Footnotes

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- ¹ Luciane Nascimento de Souza on the 1st of April. “O tipo físico que a maioria das mulheres brasileiras quer alcançar es magrinha, mas isso é muito difícil por a genética. As mulheres são cheinhas, então é difícil alcançar esse tipo físico.”
- ² Nathalia Oliveira da Silva on the 15th of February.
- ³ Aline Vilhena Santiago on the 3rd of March. “Sim claro existe uma diferença no perspectiva masculino e feminino, nós observamos a beleza da mulher em um conjunto todo, os homens olham mais para bundas e peitos rsrs.”
- ⁴ Nathalia Oliveira da Silva on the 15th of February.
- ⁵ Margarida Mesquita Sousa on the 22th of February. “Não, eles têm os mesmos ideais de beleza, a única diferença é a maneira em que obtê-lo. A cirurgia plástica está disponível apenas para o alto classe, tem grande influência nessa classe social para melhorar a sua aparência.”
- ⁶ Camilla Nascimento Rodriguez on the 15th of March. “No classe alta as mulheres querem ser magras, bonitas e focam muito no cabelo. Querem fazer a diferença. No classe baixo as mulheres querem um corpo gostoso, um corpo escultural.”
- ⁷ Elenir Mello on the 2nd of March.
- ⁸ Luciane Nascimento de Souza on the 1st of April. “As mulheres do morro se cuidam mais, são as mais bonitas, mas não tem tudo as possibilidades por causa do dinheiro. Têm uma beleza natural.”
- ⁹ Thaíza da Silva Helena Lopes on the 10th of March. “Sim. Na classe mais rica, as mulheres se preocupam mais com a vaidade, são mais elegantes. Já na classe mais pobre, as mulheres se preocupam mais com a exposição do corpo, não levando em conta suas imperfeições, tornando-se assim vulgares.”
- ¹⁰ Simone dos Santos on the 14th of March. “Aqui no Brasil o que chama atenção é o quadril, a coxa, o bumbum.”
- ¹¹ Cristiane Santos on the 18th of March. “Acho que não existe um padrão de beleza brasileiro. Essa coisa de mulher brasileira ser “assim” acho que é antigo e se perpetuou até hoje, enquanto os padrões mudam mas a divulgação não acompanha essa mudança.”
- ¹² Liliane on the 22th of February. “muita branca leite”
- ¹³ Cris Bella Ferreira on the 10th of April. “São montadas que aparecem na mídia e a mulher brasileira em geral, que não está na mídia e não vive disso geralmente não tem a condição financeira para ter corpos perfeitos.”
- ¹⁴ Fernanda Escarlata on the 17th of February.
- ¹⁵ Taira Rejane on the 6th of April.
- ¹⁶ Camilla Nascimento Rodriguez on the 15th of March. “Isso padrão se estabelece nas academias, a praia, baile funk. Colocado, marketing sofisticado. Brasil no período da Carnaval mostra a ideal de beleza geral brasileira. Gisele Bündchen não representa a beleza brasileira.”
- ¹⁷ Paula Oliveira dos Santos on the 8th of April. “Quero aumentar o bumbum, tô insatisfeita por comparação com amigas, não por a mídia.”
- ¹⁸ Alexandre Charão on the 24th of March. “Acredito que a indústria de produtos de beleza utilize comerciais internacionais para diminuir custos. Na verdade, se formos pensar em Brasil, as diferenças regionais são tão grandes que deveriam justificar comerciais mais locais. Mas por motivos financeiros isto não acontece. Na prática, vemos que as mulheres só “absorvem” aquilo que lhes interessa, seios maiores, bumbum mais empinado. Outras características, como magreza e pele clara, são deixados de lado.”
- ¹⁹ Simone dos Santos on the 14th of March. “Por eu ser gordinha, sim acaso sinto pressão para melhorar minha aparência física. Já que a moda é ser magrinha. Mas não sofro por isso.”
- ²⁰ Luciane Nascimento de Souza on the 1st of April. “A maioria das mulheres brasileiras não tem peito, por isso a demanda da cirurgia plástica cresce.”
- ²¹ Luciane Nascimento de Souza on the 1st of April. “Me sinto mais satisfeita depois a cirurgia plástica, mas ainda não totalmente. Sinto incerteza, por exemplo quero o bumbum mais grande, mais perna e tratamento dos dentes.”
- ²² Alexandre Charão on the 24th of March. “Quase sempre (95%) mulheres, entre 40 e 60 anos de classe média ou média alta e de pele branca”
- ²³ Alexandre Charão on the 24th of March.
- ²⁴ Alexandre Charão on the 24th of March.

²⁵ Nathalia Oliveira da Silva on the 15th of February.

²⁶ Sara Requeira on the 15th of April. “Aqui mulheres e homens de todas as idades e classes sociais fazem exercicios. As mulheres participam em aulas ginsticas pra obter um corpo definido, pernas e bunda muscular.”

²⁷ Alexandre Charão on the 24th of March. “Se acho a modificação pode resultar em o levanto da auto estima? Com certeza, diversos questionários científicos têm sido aplicados, comprovando a melhora da auto-estima e da imagem corporam antes e depois da cirurgia.”

²⁸ IBGE - Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatísticas (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics)

²⁹ Cristiane Santos on the 18th of March. “Sim, as pessoas dizem que eu sou morena. Mais de um modo geral me acho negra.”

³⁰ Liliane on the 22th of February.

³¹ Idem

³² Simone dos Santos on the 14th of March. “Hoje em dia com tantas coisas modernas que nos ajudam a mudar de cara se for preciso. Por que não de cor também? Embora o natural seja sempre mais bonito.”

³³ Cristiane Santos on the 18th of March. “Acho que a cor que vale é a sua cor natural sem bronzeamentos artificiais.”

³⁴ Own translation of quotation from informal conversation with Edvânia Souza de Traíjo on the 12th of April. “Eu acho que o bronzeamento artificial é muito prejudicial a saúde, tudo que é artificial não presta.”

³⁵ E. da Silva Costa on the 12th of February. “Se as brasileiras me veem com vocês acham que sou boa rapaz.”

³⁶ Camilla Nascimento Rodriguez on the 15th of March. “Mulheres negras dão mais importancia ao tipo físico, a cor (muitas preferem se relacionar com homens da mesma cor porque ainda existe um tabu sobre relaciones interraciales) e também a condição financeiro.”

³⁷ Thaíza da Silva Helena Lopes on the 10th of March. “Acho que no Brasil o assunto é tratado com mais facilidade, em outros lugares do mundo como nos Estados Unidos sim, acho que é um assunto bem delicado. No entanto é um assunto que gera muito polêmica no mundo todo.”

³⁸ Gabriel Passos on the 21th of March. “Cor pode ser um assunto delicado, mas depende como falando. Pode usar *negão* entre amigos, mas é uma má palavra.”

³⁹ Luciane Nascimento de Souza on the 1st of April. “Pessoas vão gostar mais as brancas por a mídia. Minha filha de 8 anos tem cabelo ondulado, crespo e a vezes não quer ir a escola porque acha ela e fea porque não parece a os outras meninas na escola

⁴⁰ Gabriel Passos on the 21th of March. “Antes foi mais delicado, mas a televisão teve muito influencia com actores pretos nos telenovelas.”

⁴¹ Camilla Nascimento Rodriguez on the 15th of March. “É muito complicado cá, quando tive 13 anos me chamavam nomes maus na escola como macaca. Cá tem lei contra isso mas acho que é mau quando devem redigir um lei contra racismo, deve ser aprendida, formar parte da educação.”

⁴² Anna Greice Soarez da Silva on the 8th of April. “Sim tem muito discriminação aqui no Brasil. Varias vezes meninas me tem chamado café.”

⁴³ Quotation from the following blog: http://forum.jogos.uol.com.br/qual-a-diferenca-entre-parda-e-mulata_t_1156967?page=1:

“nao tem diferença, geralmente as duas são feias pra porra e tem cara de cavalo. vá pelas branquinhas”

⁴⁴ Quotation from the following blog: http://forum.jogos.uol.com.br/qual-a-diferenca-entre-parda-e-mulata_t_1156967?page=1: “os dois tem cotas, você não”

⁴⁵ Alexandre Charão on the 24th of March. “Acredito que a indústria de produtos de beleza utilize comerciais internacionais para diminuir custos. Na verdade, se formos pensar em Brasil, as diferenças regionais são tão grandes que deveriam justificar comerciais mais locais. Mas por motivos financeiros isto não acontece. Na prática, vemos que as mulheres só “absorvem” aquilo que lhes interessa, seios maiores, bumbum mais empinado. Outras características, como magreza e pele clara, são deixados de lado.”⁴⁵

⁴⁶ Fernanda Escarlante on the 17th of February. “Há poucas negras nas revistas, mas hoje em dia mais.”

⁴⁷ Elenir (Lenny) Mello on the 2nd of March. “A beleza deve ser analisada pelo conjunto e não pela cor. A cor não importa.”

⁴⁸ Simone dos Santos on the 14th of March. “A cor da pele não é sinônimo de beleza.”

⁴⁹ Margarida Mesquita Sousa on the 22th of February. “morena é mais chamativa”

⁵⁰ Tainá de Souza Cristino on the 6th of April. “não acho beleza depende do cor de uma pessoa mas os garotos gostam mais as morenas”

⁵¹ Tairara Rejane on the 6th of April. “A beleza negra é incomparável”

⁵² Nathalia Oliveira da Silva on the 15th of February. “Eu, e as brasileiras em geral, acho, querem mostrar a diferença entre o pele para exibir o processo de exportação ao sol.”

⁵³ Tainá de Souza Cristino on the 6th of April. “Tô satisfeita mais quero mudar minha boca, e grande demais.”

⁵⁴ Brida Beatriz de Rezende on the 6th of April. “Minha nariz é tão grande, quero mudar isso.”

⁵⁵ Antonia on the 22th of February. As mulheres não querem o cabelo crespo/cacheado.

⁵⁶ Graça, Bruna and Marise on the 11th of February.