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Values of culture in comparative perspective
- the meaning of family
in Brazilian and American cultures

This article focuses on the value and meaning of the family in Brazilian and American cultures. I introduce the subject by presenting a definition of 'family' as well as other terms that will be useful later for the description of the family patterns in both countries. In the following section, I describe the family in the United States starting from the colonial era to the present and show the findings of some American surveys. This is followed by the presentation of the family values from Brazilian point of view; I discuss here the research I conducted in Rio de Janeiro and analyze the questionnaires I distributed among Brazilian students. In the final section I compare family values in Brazil and the United States and show that the traditional family patterns in Brazil start to change and become similar to those in the United States.

Family - background

Recognizable forms of family are found in every known society. Kinship (relationship between 'blood' relatives) as well as affinity (relationship between relatives by marriage) play an important role in all human societies (Kottak 1991:312).

One definition (Knox 1985:12) says that family is identified as a social group characterized by common residence, economic cooperation, and reproduction. However, the anthropologists have documented the existence of many different family patterns, so this definition does not cover all types of families, e.g. childless couples, spouses keeping money separate, etc.

The U.S. Census Bureau defines family as a group of two or more persons who are related by blood, marriage, or adoption. According to this definition, two siblings or two spouses constitute a family.

In a lifetime a person generally belongs to at least one family: family of orientation - the one you are born into, and then to family of procreation – a family that begins when you marry and have children (Knox 1985:13, Kottak-Kozaitis 1999:253).

Anthropologists classify family as consanguine (related by blood) and conjugal (related by marriage) in type (Haviland 1996:230). One widespread but nonuniversal type of a conjugal family is the nuclear family consisting of husband, wife, and their dependent children. The nuclear family, which has become the ideal in North American society, is an independent unit that must look after itself, so the individual members are strongly dependent on each other. The small nuclear family of industrialized societies has evolved from the larger extended family, a combination of conjugal and consanguine families. The extended family is the prevailing form of family in more than half of the societies known to anthropologists. Extended family consists of two or more nuclear families related by blood or ties, that live together, e.g. a married couple with one or more of their married children. The members of such family work together as a group and deal with outsiders as a single unit. Such family may be a self-sufficient economic unit (Haviland 1996:257-258, Kottak-Kozaitis 1999:258).

Sociologists claim that the trend from the large, patriarchal, consanguine type of family to the small egalitarian, conjugal type means the wider acceptance of the values of freedom, independence, and equality. But at the same time it means the weakening of certain traditional values, such as loyalty to parents and kin, respect for ancestors and the past, obedience to authority, and strong bond with the family.

The family functions to satisfy certain universal needs, such as sexual satisfaction, emotional support, procreation, personal and cultural identification, child-rearing, and education. The dependence of human beings upon their families for the satisfaction of some of their needs and desires makes family the most enduring and universal social institution. The family strengthens the bonds of an individual to a society. The web of relationship and the social control that is exerted by families over the individual is an important force in integrating a society and making it cohesive. The network of social needs such as regulation of sex, cooperation between sexes, the child-rearing, the formation of political and economic alliances are all connected with the single institution, the family.

Marriage is often the basis of a new nuclear family. According to the anthropologist Conrad Kottak, marriage is "a socially approved relationship between a socially recognized male (the husband) and a socially recognized female (the wife) such that children born to the wife are accepted as the offspring of both husband and wife. The husband may be the actual genitor (biological father) of the children or only the pater (socially recognized father)", (Kottak 1991:299). The universality of marriage within different societies and cultures is attributed to many basic social and personal functions it performs, such as procreation, provision of sexual regulation, care of children and their education and socialization, division of labor between sexes, economic production and consumption, and provision for satisfaction of personal needs like love, affection, and companionship.

There exist various types of marriage. Monogamy is a marriage in which an individual has a single spouse, while polygamy is a form of marriage in which one has several spouses in order to increase household productivity or one's prestige, and it is favored by about 80 to 85% of the world's societies (Haviland 1996:230). Polygamy includes polygyny – the marriage of a man to several women, and less common polyandry – the marriage of a woman to several men. In North America, polygamy is against the law, but as divorce and remarriage grow more common, Americans practice serial monogamy – individuals have more than one spouse but not at the same time (Kottak 1991:325). The Western egalitarian ideal that an individual should be free to marry whomever he likes and that marriage is based on love contributes to the instability of marital relationships. It is an unusual arrangement, as in many cultures marriage is arranged by parents who choose the spouse for their child for the economic or political advantage of the family unit. In addition to the usual male-female marriages, some societies recognize homosexual marriage (marriage between persons of the same sex), (Haviland 1996:240, Kottak-Kozaitis 1999:157).

Divorce, the dissolution of marriage, is possible in all societies, and in most societies a divorced person soon remarries, which leads to the formation of the stepfamilies called also blended families, "kin units formed when parents remarry and bring their children into a new household" (Kottak 1991:303). Besides, high divorce rates

and sexual activities outside wedlock in Western societies have contributed to the rise in single-parent families headed by women.

Along with kinship ties, many societies cultivate fictive kinship ties that are modeled on those of true kinship and used to extend the relationships between people. One of the best-known extensions is by blood brotherhood; two persons who enter into a compact of blood brotherhood act toward one another with familiarity, render mutual assistance, and rely on each other. Another example is the *compadrio* system (godparenthood) in Brazil, which is used to strengthen already existing kinship ties or as a mechanism for bringing outsiders into the family circle. In many parts of the country, a Brazilian may expect to receive a godparent not only at baptism, but also at Confirmation and marriage (Wagley 1971:172).

In the United States, people develop psychological ties with those they like and can count on constructing the family of affiliation when their own family does not meet their needs (Kottak-Kozaitis 1999:255).

Family from American point of view

In order to present the contemporary American family, we should take a look at the changes in the family life in the past three centuries. To understand the characteristics of the typical American family, it must be recognized that there have been many familial arrangements starting from the colonial era and ending with the post-World War II period. The family structures have altered, and historians claim that industrialization, migration, and urbanization are viewed as the major factors that have affected traditional family life. However, the greatest changes, which raised questions about continuity and discontinuity in family life, were introduced in the 1960's with the changing of sexual roles, Women's Movement, etc.

In the colonial era, most European settlers were shocked at the Native American sexual habits, as they believed in the superior Christian morality and patriarchal authority, whereas many Native American peoples accepted polygamy, premarital intercourse, and institutionalized cross-gender dressing; they did not associate naked body or sexual intercourse with sinfulness which was common among Europeans. The colonial-era family was an integral part of the society. It can be described as a "little commonwealth", as it was governed by the same principles of hierarchy as the larger society (Freedman 1997:288). Adult male heads of the household held political authority, whereas women, children, servants, and slaves remained subordinate. The husband-father was responsible for the peace and order of his family, deciding on his children's occupations and marriage choices, and controlling the property of his wife if she had any. The household included unrelated individuals, such as boarders, lodgers, apprentices, and servants, which was connected with a different concept of family life and the idea of the household as a place of production. The colonial family was the fundamental economic, educational, political, and religious unit of society. As in premodern Europe, it was the locus of production and consumption, as well as the institution responsible for the education of children and the care of the elderly. In fact, during seventeenth century, a sharp division between law, economics, and politics and family life was unimaginable. The shortage of labor force and abundance of land were the causes of high reproduction. Few of the colonists remained single, and they married

young, allowing many years for childbearing. In fact, married women could expect to bear more than eight children (Freedman 1997:289).

In the eighteenth century a new family system began to emerge. According to the historian Carl Degler, the modern American family began to take shape in the years between the American Revolution and about 1830. The newly emergent family in the nineteenth century exhibited four characteristics that had been absent in previous centuries. The family was characterized by marriage based on mutual affection and respect between partners, the doctrine of the two spheres, which will be explained later, child centeredness, and small size (Degler 1980:8).

In the half-century after the Revolution the bases of marriage began to shift in modern direction. Gradually, parental control over the marital choices of their children weakened and free choice by the partners became the basis of family formation. Marriage was no longer thought a transition to parenthood, and procreation was not its major goal like in the pre-industrial marriage. People in the nineteenth century started to refer to love and affection as the foundation of the attraction between marital partners and the beginning of family. Love as the basis for marrying emphasized individualism and subordinated all familial, social, or group considerations to individual preference, which means that the family values changed from the collective to individualistic ones. Today the personal happiness and affection are considered the only proper foundation for a marriage.

The wife started to be perceived by the society as the moral superior of the husband, as she was responsible for the ethical and spiritual character, as well as the tranquility and comfort of the home. Her primary role was the care of children and the maintenance of the home. Moreover, women were called "angels of the house", as they were moral guardians of the family (Degler 1980:26). Women's life was spent within the home and with the family, while men were active outside the home, at work or in politics, being responsible for economic support, so a clear division of labor replaced the old economic cooperation. Such division of labor and activity is referred to as "the doctrine of the two spheres," or "separate spheres" (Degler 1980:9, Freedman 1997:290). Some historians claim that women's position was restricted only to the home which underlined their submissiveness and passivity. However, other historians observe that women gained a new recognition at home and broke the hierarchy that had assigned superiority to men in all spheres of activity. Domesticity was an alternative to patriarchy, and actually it denied patriarchy by asserting a companionate role for women. At the same time, as women accepted the separation of roles, they denied themselves opportunities for activities outside the home. However, many of them found the work of the home demanding and not enjoyable.

The ideology of domesticity glorified women's domestic role and stressed that women's destiny was motherhood, so raising children became primarily women's task. It was also reinforced by the industrial changes that were removing or simplifying some of women's traditional duties at home, thus leaving child care as a growing part of women's day and life.

Men recognized the dominant role played by women in the proper rearing of children and their authority in familial matters.

Children were no longer expected to join the work force and they began to be seen as different from adults; they were perceived as innocent and natural, deserving not only material care but also love and protection. Childhood began to be treated as a distinct stage of life. Parenthood became a major personal responsibility and families were increasingly centered upon the bringing up their offspring. Parents started to view their efforts in child rearing as investments in future social security. At the beginning of the nineteenth century large numbers of books written especially for children, and advice books on their proper rearing, were published in the United States (Degler 1980:68, Hareven 1983:350).

Another sign of the emergence of the modern family in the early nineteenth century was a decline in the size of families. This shift from large to small families that occurred during the nineteenth century is called "demographic transition" by demographers (Degler 1980:178). The fertility rate of white women (the average number of children born by a woman by the time she reaches menopause) dropped by 50 percent between 1800 and 1900, falling from 7.04 children in 1800 to 3.56 in 1900 (Degler 1980:181). It is documented that couples used contraception, and sex became less associated with reproduction and more important as a form of personal intimacy and pleasure. One of the reasons for the limiting family size was the lack of available arable land which caused inability of earning sufficient income to support family, and as a result, the postponement or rejection of marriage by men. Obviously, fewer women gave birth to children and those who got married later reduced their years of childbearing. Besides, as commercial economy expanded, children became more costly to raise and educate than in the pre-industrial era; moreover, there was no need for a large number of children to serve as a cheap labor force.

In general, families began to believe that they could shape their lives and control their future as they had not been able earlier. Households became smaller since the growing wage-labor system attracted young, single workers into towns and cities, so more and more individuals gained independence from parents. Under the influence of industrialization, many family functions were transferred to the institutions outside the family, e.g. schools, hospitals, banks, insurance companies, etc. In post-industrial era, the family ceased to be a self-sufficient work unit limiting its economic functions to childcare and consumption. Unlike in pre-industrial era, the work place was separated from the home and the family lost its economic and productive functions, as they shifted to the market place. Therefore, the home started to be associated with private, emotional life and glorified as a "therapeutic refuge" from the outside world, while the family became "a more specialized agency" much more isolated from public life than before (Hareven 1983: 348-349).

During the twentieth century some revolutionary changes caused by the falling birthrate, the revolution in morals and manners, an alarming rise in the divorce rate confronted American families. According to the new ideal of family that emerged, that of "companionate family" (Degler 1980: 28), relations within the family were no longer based on patriarchal authority but on affection and mutual interest; spouses became friends and lovers, while children and parents became pals. The traditional concept of marriage as a sacred duty or obligation was replaced by a new ideal of sexual satisfaction, companionship, and emotional support.

Since World War II, the number of married women participating in the labor force has dramatically increased, which made wives less financially dependent on their husbands and blurred the once clear sexual division of roles in housekeeping and child rearing. In 1950, 25 percent of married women worked outside home, while in the late 1980s the figure was 60 percent (Kellogg-Mintz 1988:204). The Women's Liberation Movement attacked the family's exploitation of women and raised women's consciousness of their families and abilities, thus weakening the traditional female role. Women started to believe that both husband and wife should have jobs, both should take care of children, and both should do housework.

Besides, since the late 1950s, the relationship between collective family needs and the values of individualism, personal happiness, autonomy and self-realization has grown problematic and career expectations have come into conflict with a more traditional view of marriage as an institution in which the spouses must sacrifice for the good of the family. The individualization of family relations has led to an emphasis on intimacy, emotional nurture, and the privacy as the major base of family relations. On the one hand, it has contributed to the liberation of individuals, but on the other hand, it has led to a greater separation among family members and isolation of older people. Also the economic mobility started to separate individuals from their family, disrupt romantic attachment, and break marriages.

Increasing selfishness and self-centeredness, which are incompatible with strong family attachments, caused a dramatic increase in divorce rates and non-marital relationships in 1960s. Today 60 percent of American marriages end in divorce (Veiga – Granato 1999:100).

The North American family of orientation and family of procreation have diverse forms, and the term 'family' is no longer applied exclusively to conjugal or nuclear families composed of a husband, wife, and their dependent children, but also to any group of two or more people domiciled together. Such groups include single-parent households, female-headed families, blended families comprising of stepparents and stepchildren or adoptive parents and their children, couples cohabiting outside wedlock, including gay couples. Actually the number of nuclear families is decreasing; the U.S. Census Bureau shows that nuclear families comprised 40 percent of American households in 1970, and only 25 percent in 1995 (Kottak-Kozaitis 1999:257).

In the United States, kinship takes many forms. Along with blood families and families-in-law, many Americans cultivate fictive kinship ties, "reciprocal provision of goods and services, including affection, companionship, and shared values, between nonlegally, nonbiologically, but socially related individuals" (Kottak-Kozaitis 1999:254). They speak of a close friend as 'brother' or work colleagues as 'family'. Besides, when their family is not available or does not meet their needs, they construct a family of affiliation, which refers to psychological ties with people they like and can rely on for social, emotional, and material support. Friends, children or lovers from supportive networks prove comforting for individuals, as they meet their expectations (Kottak-Kozaitis 1999:255).

In order to show how Americans perceive the American family, I would like to present the results of a study of a student sample conducted by Rogelio Diaz-Guerrero and Lorand B. Szalay and reported in *Understanding Mexicans and Ameri-*

cans. Cultural Perspectives in Conflict (1991). The sample included 100 students from the University of Maryland with an equal number of males and females. According to Guerrero and Szalay, the Americans think of family mainly in terms of individual roles such as mother, father, brothers, sisters, and other relatives. They perceive family as individual people living together, underlying the importance of the individuals. Family should be the source of personal satisfaction and should meet one's emotional needs. Family is highly valued as a social setting, but it should not interfere with independence and autonomy of the individual, since one is to make his own decisions according to his own interests. Therefore, American views of family roles are based on the self-oriented, individualistic, and competitive ideas, supported by family relations that encourage autonomy and independence (Diaz-Guerrero – Szalay 1991:43).

Americans emphasize husband-wife and father-mother relationship rather than parent-child relationship as the foundation of the American family structure. It is connected with the fact that individualism, personal happiness and satisfaction are very important for Americans; they get married if they love each other and are ready to divorce when the love-based ties cease to exist (Diaz-Guerrero – Szalay 1991:45-47). Unlike Brazilians, they do not associate father and mother primarily with love, affection or understanding, but they interconnect the role of the father with mother, and the role of the mother with father. They relate the image of husband to that of wife as well as underline wife's relationship with her husband, thus confirming the importance of husband-wife axis of the family. The dominant ideas that Americans associate with marriage are love and sex, as well as the role of husband and wife. They also emphasize the notion of togetherness, while, for example, Brazilians underline marriage as union and fusion of two people. It seems that American students stress individuality and two separate identities of the partners. They see in marriage a companionship and a partnership between two persons.

The basis for the choice of a marriage partner and the basis of marriage is romantic love. In fact, Americans believe in love as the foundation for enduring relationship. According to the surveys in 1970 and 1980, 96 percent of all Americans held to the ideal of two persons sharing life and home together. However, in 1978, 60 percent of them said that most couples getting married did not expect to remain married for the rest of their lives (Bellah 1996:90). It can mean that love relationships are desirable but difficult to achieve. Americans consider space, self-government, happiness, self-fulfillment, and love as the basic criteria of a good marriage and they are torn between the desire of inner freedom, self-realization and the image of marriage as permanent commitment, obligations, self-denial, and self-sacrifice. It may seem that the more love and marriage are seen as sources of psychic satisfaction, the less they fulfill their function of providing people with stable, committed relationships. One can leave marriage one does not like easily, since nowadays divorce as a solution to unhappy marriage is much more acceptable than ever before.

In the nineteenth century, divorce was considered socially unacceptable and many couples lived together as strangers or in deep conflict. However, legal divorce was replaced by high rates of desertion and separation (Hareven 1983:360).

According to Diaz-Guerrero and Szalay (Diaz-Guerrero – Szalay 1991:103), American students see a close potential relationship between marriage and divorce.

They list various causes of divorce such as hatred, adultery, and fighting and seem to be aware of the negative effects of divorce suffered by the family children. They also associate divorce with the court, lawyers, judges, and the alimony, which can be caused by the influence of television and other mass media exposures or by the direct personal experience. Although divorce has negative emotional consequences such as sadness, pain, and hurt, it is described as desirable.

It seems that marriage and the family continue to be important institutions for the Americans although they are more fragile and difficult to maintain than ever. Because of the high divorce rates, some people may say that the family in the United States is fading away, but in my opinion it is not true, as the increase in divorce statistics is not the evidence of family breakdown. I think that familial attachment is a universal value and American family is undergoing important transitions, but it is not going to disappear, and the high divorce rates demonstrate that people care about the quality of family life and marriage, and they are ready to dissolve an unhappy relationship if it does not fulfill their marital, emotional, or psychological needs. Actually, many people decide to replace the unsatisfactory marriage with a more successful one.

Besides, other forms of family that seem to threaten the traditional family, such as couples cohabiting outside wedlock or homosexual couples, as well as other alternative family forms and life styles, have always existed but they have been less visible. More recently alternative life styles have become part of the society because they are better tolerated now than in the past.

Family from Brazilian point of view

This section is mainly based on a study of a student sample tested by the present author in August and September of 2000 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The sample comprises 100 students of the age from 20 to 34, including 40 males and 60 females. The students are undergraduates from a number of universities, such as Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Pontificia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro, Universidade do Rio de Janeiro UNI-RIO, and Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro. They have different ethnic origins and most of them come from middle and upper-middle social class. Obviously, the sample of 100 students cannot be considered representative of the whole Brazilian nation, but the focus is put on how the given group views and understands the issue of family.

The students were asked to fill in the questionnaires that consist of two parts. The first part is based on the Associative Group Analysis (AGA) method, a nondirective, in-depth analytic technique that relies on the analysis of thousands of free associations produced by the respondents to given stimulus words. This method seeks to reconstruct people's belief system and their dominant priorities. The main focus is on how people are predisposed to view a particular subject by providing opportunity for people's natural opinions to emerge (Diaz-Guerrero – Szalay 1991:21-23).

The questionnaires were given to students in their native language, Portuguese, in order not to limit their answers (Fig. 1). The students were asked to respond spontaneously to each of the stimulus words with at least three related ideas or issues. The number of responses was not limited, but the respondents produced usually three associations. The respondents received the following instructions in their native language:

"Please write down at least three words which you associate with the following terms: family, father, mother, husband, wife, marriage, divorce".

In the second part of the questionnaire, the present author asked five direct questions in order to gain detailed data about the respondent's family background and his personal judgments:

Figure 1. The model of a questionnaire

1. Who is the most important member of your family?
2. On which occasions do you ask your family for help?
3. Do you live with your family? If yes, who do you live with?
4. How important is the family in your life?
5. What are the main characteristics of the Brazilian family in your opinion?

Sexo: ( ) Masculino   ( ) Feminino
Idade: ( ) anos

Escreva pelo menos 3 palavras que você associa com os termos abaixo:

Família	Pai	Mãe	Marido
....	....	....	. ...
....	....	....	....
....	....	....	....
....	....	....	....
....	....	....	....

Esposa	Casamento	Divórcio
....	....	....
....	....	....
....	....	....
....	....	....
....	....	....

1. Qual é o membro mais importante na sua família?
2. Em quais ocasiões você pediria ajuda para sua família?
3. Você mora com a sua família? Em caso afirmativo com quem?
4. Qual é a prioridade que a família tem na sua vida?
5. Em sua opinião, quais são as principais características da família brasileira?

Brazilian definition of the term 'family'
The associations with 'family' in the order of frequency of occurrence were:

1 union	7 affection
2 love	8 structure
3 support	9 friendship
4 basis/foundation	10 important
5 safety	11 attachment
6 home	12 understanding

The detailed responses to 'family' translated into English, as well as Portuguese replies are presented in the Fig. 2.

Figure 2. The table of answers to the term 'family'

Response	Quantity	Percen-tage	First place	Second place	Third place
1 Union *(união)*	43	43%	25	12	5
2 Love *(amor)*	29	29%	8	11	8
3 Support *(apoio, suporte, ajuda)*	26	26%	13	7	4
4 Basis/foundation *(base, núcleo)*	17	17%	6	7	4
5 Safety *(segurança)*	16	16%	4	3	8
6 Home *(lar, casa)*	15	15%	9	3	8
7 Affection *(afeto, carinho)*	11	11%	1	4	4
8 Structure *(estrutura)*	7	7%	2	1	2
9 Friendship *(amizade)*	7	7%	-	3	3
10 Important *(importante)*	6	6%	4	2	-
11 Attachement *(laço, apego, elo, vínculo)*	6	6%	2	3	1
12 Understanding *(compreensão)*	6	6%	1	2	2
13 Teaching *(aprendizado, formação, educação)*	5	5%	2	2	1
14 Protection *(proteçao)*	5	5%	1	1	1
15 Happiness *(felicidade)*	5	5%	-	4	1
16 Trust *(confiança)*	5	5%	-	1	3
17 Respect *(respeito)*	5	5%	-	-	5
18 Strength *(força)*	5	5%	-	1	2
19 Harmony *(harmonia, equilíbrio)*	4	4%	-	1	3
20 Sacred *(sagrada)*	3	3%	2	1	-
21 Children *(filhos)*	3	3%	2	-	1
22 Everything *(tudo)*	3	3%	1	1	1
23 Fundamental *(fundamental, essencial)*	3	3%	1	2	-
24 Parents *(pais)*	3	3%	-	2	1
25 Cooperation *(cooperação)*	3	3%	-	2	1
26 Solidarity *(solidariedade)*	3	3%	-	1	2
27 Companionship *(companheirismo)*	3	3%	-	-	3

a) Terms that were mentioned twice: integration *(integração)*, siblings *(irmãos)*, brotherhood *(fraternidade)*, responsibility *(responsibilidade)*, complicated *(complicada)*, coziness *(aconchego)*, living together *(convívio)*, differences *(diferenças)*, joy *(alegria)*, repression *(repressão)*, tradition *(tradição)*, arguments *(brigas)*, problems *(problemas)*, peace *(paz)*, caring *(cuidado)*, worry *(preocupação)*, stability *(estabilidade)*.

b) Terms that were mentioned once: life *(vida)*, world *(mundo)*, husband *(marido)*, solidity *(solidez)*, hospitable *(acolhedora)*, disagreement *(desavença)*, misunderstanding *(desentendimento)*, conflict *(conflito)*, sincerity *(sinceridade)*, priority *(prioridade)*, ideal *(ideal)*, agreement *(concórdia)*, extensive *(extensa)*, contemporary *(contemporânea)*, hierarchic *(hierarquic)*, eternal *(eterna)*, blood *(sangue)*, father *(pai)*, meeting *(confraternização)*, barbecue *(churrasco)*, food *(comida)*, coffee *(café)*, dinner *(jantar)*, commitment *(comprometimento)*, nuclear *(nuclear)*, disunity *(desunião)*, irreplacable *(insubstituível)*, attention *(atenção)*, work *(trabalho)*, room *(sala)*, partnership *(cumplicidade)*, duties *(deveres)*, laundry *(roupa lavada)*, roots *(raizes)*, heart (*coração)*, necessary

(necessário), example *(exemplo),* mother *(mãe),* well-being *(bem-estar),* God's gift *(dávida),* realization *(realização).*

The most frequent response is union, which was given by 43% of the respondents. It emphasizes the cohesive character of the family and suggests a closer bond, a subordination of the individual's interests to those of the group. While analyzing the responses it should be mentioned that the order in which certain words appear is significant, as it shows what is the most important for the Brazilians. In fact, the response 'union' appears as the first response the most frequently (25 replies), thus underlying the fact that it is the priority for the respondents. As the second most frequent response is given 'support' (13 replies), which suggests that one of the most important roles of the Brazilian family is giving support and helping each other. Taking into account the fact that some words are close to each other in meaning or belong to the same category, it can be assumed that some responses can be grouped together into the following manner *(Figure 2 a):*

Main components	Responses	Total number
1 Love	love, understanding, affection, safety, friendship, protection, trust, respect, harmony, peace, caring, agreement, sincerity, commitment	95
2 Together / united	union, living together, cooperation, attachment, solidarity, companionship, support, integration	88
3 Base / home	basis, structure, home, strength	49
4 Happy / good	happiness, important, sacred, everything, priority, fundamental, joy, ideal, necessary, well-being, God's gift, heart	31
5 Problems	repression, complicated, arguments, problems, disagreement, misunderstanding, conflict, disunity	12

The Brazilians place less emphasis on individual roles and more on affective ties. They underline that the family is the source of love, affection, and understanding, reflecting a strong emotional interdependence. The family gives them also protection and safety.

They pay attention to upbringing and the socialization of the children, and stress that one of the roles of the family is teaching. Unlike Americans, who perceive the family as the individual, independent people living together, Brazilians place heavy emphasis on the family as a social basis and as a group of people who cooperate and support each other. While analyzing the responses, it should be noticed that 12% of the respondents associate the family with problems. It can be assumed that it is connected with the private life experience of a given person. In fact, more students emphasize positive aspects of the family (31 responses).

As mentioned earlier, the family is the source of support for Brazilians. In the second part of the questionnaire, the students give interesting answers to the question "On which occasions do you ask your family for help?". 56% of the respondents say they can always ask their family for help in all possible situations. 32% of the respondents ask family for help when they have financial problems, 19% when they have health problems, 15% when they need advice in their emotional life. 4% of the res-

pondents need family's help as far as their professional career is concerned, two persons turn to their family when they are in despair, one person when she wants to take revenge, and one person when he has problems with drugs.

I would like to add that family seems to be the most important thing in the life of Brazilians. The following answers were given to the question: 'How important is the family in your life?'

- 88% of the respondents recognized the family as priority and put it in first place,
- 8% of the respondents placed the family in second position after career or personal life,
- one person said that family is placed just after God,
- one person answered: 'I don't know',
- one person put family in fourth place after personal life, work, and studies,
- one person answered that the family had only a symbolic meaning, which was connected with the fact that a given respondent was disappointed with her family at the time of filling in the questionnaire.

It is worth analyzing how Brazilians characterize the Brazilian family. The most frequent response to the question: "What are the main characteristics of the Brazilian family in your opinion?" is union/united *(união/unida)* which was mentioned 38 times. The students emphasize that the Brazilian family is numerous *(numerosa)*, aggregated *(agregada)*, and underline its positive aspects such as happiness *(felicidade)*, affection *(afeto, carinho)*, protection *(proteção)*, joy *(alegria)*, hospitality *(hospitalidade)*, friendship *(amizade)*, companionship *(companheirismo)*, solidarity *(solidariedade)*, respect *(respeito)*, support *(apoio)*, help *(ajuda)*, and understanding *(compreensão)*.

They also mention that the Brazilian family is traditional *(tradicional)*, but it is undergoing transformation *(em transformação)*. Three respondents said that Brazilian family is maintained by father and governed by mother. Seven persons said that it is patriarchal *(patriarcal)* and three persons are of the opinion that it is chauvinistic *(machista)*. However, also the following responses appear: divorce *(divórcio)*, nuclear *(nuclear)*, separated parents *(pais separados)*, matriarchal *(matriarcal)*, modern *(moderna)*, centralized on mothers *(centralizada nas mães)*, mother is the support of the whole family structure *(mãe é a sustentação de toda a estrutura familiar)*. Such responses suggest that the Brazilian family is indeed changing and mother is playing a very important role.

Besides, the respondents pay attention to the fact that the contemporary Brazilian family is suffering *(sofrida)* from instability and possible destruction. It also faces financial problems *(dificuldades financeiras)* and has to struggle to survive *(lutadora, batalhadora)*. Despite the problems that the Brazilian family has to face, it still remains the fundamental social unit. Moreover, the family has been considered the most important institution in the history of the nation and has played a dominant role in the course of the Brazilian history. Brazilians' primary allegiance is to their family of orientation, or family of birth. Historically the larger the family the better, as large families provide security because kin are supposed to care for and protect each other. The family in Brazil derives from the Portuguese model. During the colonial period the core of the social order was *parentela*, the patriarchal exten-

ded family, which can be described in English as 'kindred' (Wagley 1971:168), and which still is the most significant kin group for many upper class families. It includes all recognized relatives on both one's mother's and one's father's side, along with the kinsmen of one's spouse. The number of people you may consider kin is limited only by genealogical memory and willingness to recognize distant kinship bonds. Upper-class Brazilians are interested in genealogy, therefore the *parentela* of an upper class Brazilian may include hundreds of people. The traditional *parentela* can be extended by fictive kinship in which outsiders are treated as kin. The most common form is the *compadrio* system (godparenthood). In the Brazilian Catholic tradition, godparents (*padrinho* and *madrinha*) are chosen to sponsor a child's baptism, establishing a special relationship of intimacy and responsibility not only between the godparents and the *afilhado* (child), but also between the godparents and the parents of the child, who call each other *comadre* or *compadre* (Wagley 1971:172). The godparent is expected to take the place of a parent in case of need and to help the godchild on any occasion. In many parts of the country, a Brazilian may expect to receive a godparent not only at baptism, but also at Confirmation and marriage.

The system of *compadrio* is used in Brazil in two ways. On the one hand, it is used to strengthen already existing kinship ties. Therefore, it is traditional for an older sibling, an aunt, an uncle, or perhaps a distant cousin to become the godparent of a child. On the other hand, the *compadrio* system is used as a mechanism for bringing outsiders into the family circle. Members of the lower class ask upper-class individuals to become the godparents of their children, thus linking themselves and the godchild in a pseudo-kin relation to such a group. Family members can be also added through the less formal *agregado* (aggregated) method. *Agregados* live with and are treated as family members. Historically, *agregados* were taken by the *patrão*, the landowner, into his family. Nowadays, it provides an informal adoption system (Neuhouser 1999:90).

It should be added that kinship has traditionally dominated Brazilian economic life. Many important families originated as the owners of coffee and sugar plantations or vast cattle ranches. In the beginning the large patriarchal families were an integral part of an agricultural, rural and economic regime that depended on slaves for labor. However, the influence of large *parentelas* gradually spread from the agricultural regions into the cities. Virtually all-Brazilian commercial and industrial enterprises were once family-owned and family-run. Moreover, a man's role as a member of a kinship circle directly influenced the way he conducted business activities. In the business world and professional life, it is expected that kinsmen will ask one another for favors and support. Kinship provides 'key contacts' within administrative structures. In fact, the status and role of the individual in the society is established by his family connections.

Brazilian definition of the term 'father'

The detailed responses to 'father' translated into English, as well as Portuguese replies are presented in the Fig. 3.

Figure 3. The table of answers to the term 'father'

Response	Quantity	%	First place	Second place	Third place
1 Friend *(amigo, amizade)*	31	31%	15	11	4
2 Love *(amor)*	19	19%	7	2	7
3 Support *(apoio, suporte, ajuda, auxiliar, sustento)*	19	19%	4	4	10
4 Respect *(respeito)*	17	17%	2	8	5
5 Affection *(carinho, afeto)*	15	13%	1	10	3
6 Work *(trabalho, trabalhador)*	14	14%	2	5	6
7 Safety *(segurança)*	12	12%	9	-	3
8 Example *(exemplo, modelo)*	11	11%	5	2	2
9 Protection *(proteção)*	10	10%	8	2	-
10 Strength *(força, forte)*	9	9%	4	2	2
11 Authority *(autoridade)*	8	8%	3	5	-
12 Responsible *(responsável)*	7	7%	4	2	1
13 Money *(dinheiro)*	6	6%	1	3	1
14 Provider *(provedor)*	5	5%	4	-	1
15 Strict *(rigidez, firmeza)*	5	5%	1	3	1
16 Teacher *(educador, ensinamento, professor)*	5	5%	-	2	2
17 Order *(ordem)*	4	4%	2	2	-
18 Understanding *(compreensão)*	4	4%	1	2	1
19 Boss *(chefe, lider)*	4	4%	1	1	2
20 Trust *(confiança)*	4	4%	1	-	3
21 Important *(importante)*	4	4%	-	1	3
22 Struggle *(lutador, luta)*	3	3%	3	-	-
23 Direction *(direção, discernimento)*	3	3%	1	-	2
24 Companion *(companheiro)*	3	3%	-	1	2

a) Terms that were mentioned twice: discipline *(disciplinador),* attention *(atenção),* conversation *(conversa, diálogo),* distance *(distância),* infidelity *(infidelidade),* fear *(medo, temor),* caring *(zelo),* control *(controle),* patient *(paciente),* wisdom *(sabedoria),* everything *(tudo),* duties *(deveres),* honest *(íntegro),* admiration *(admiração),* power *(poder),* home *(casa).*

b) Terms that were mentioned once: studies *(estudo),* essential *(essencial),* instruction *(instrução),* jealous *(ciumento),* obedience *(obediência),* football *(futebol),* seriuos *(sério),* son *(filho),* comfort *(conforto),* inspiration *(inspiração),* unnecessary *(supérfluo),* disunity *(desunião),* reference *(referência),* courage *(couragem),* enthusiasm *(entusiasmo),* intelligence *(inteligência),* smile *(sorriso),* master *(mestre),* dedication *(dedicação),* victory *(vitória), fun (brincadeira),* encouragment *(estímulo),* ideal *(ideal),* quiet *(calado),* fair *(justo),* generous *(generoso),* hero *(herói),* character *(caráter),* law *(lei),* progress *(progresso),* pig *(porco),* I *(eu),* the one who solves the problems *(resolvedor de problemas),* beer *(cerveja),* music *(música),* ignorance *(ignorância),* laziness *(preguiça),* car *(carro),* conflicts *(conflito),* non-authoritative *(menos peso),* different *(diferente),* worry *(preocupação),* balance *(equlíbrio),* absence *(ausência),* man *(homem),* divorce *(divórcio),* cold *(frieza),* present *(presente),*

adviser *(conselheiro),* faithful *(fiel),* beloved *(amado),* possessive *(possessivo),* domineering *(dominador),* structure *(estrutura),* patriarch *(patriarca),* idol *(ídolo),* basis *(base),* determination *(determinação),* sweetness *(doçura),* difference *(diferença),* similarity *(semelhança),* missing *(saudade),* memory *(lembrança),* freedom *(liberdade).*

The associations with 'father' in the order of frequency of occurrence were:

1. friend	7. safety
2. love	8. example
3. support	9. protection
4. respect	10. strength
5. affection	11. authority
6. work	12. responsible

The Brazilians do not interconnect the role of the father with mother, like Americans do. They give the most attention to the human character of the father. After grouping the words that are close to each other in meaning or belong to the same category, we receive the following clusters of related responses *(Figure 3a):*

Main components	Responses	Total number
1. Love	love, affection, understanding, safety, protection, trust, caring, attention, beloved	69
2. Friend / good	friend, companion, important, patient, conversation, honest, wisdom, everything, comfort, intelligence, smile, fair, generous, faithful, sweetness, balance	56
3. Authority/ respect	respect, authority, boss, strength, strict, order, idol, discipline, power, obedience, master, domineering	55
4. Work/ responsible	work, money, responsible, support, struggle, provider	54
5. Teacher	teacher, example, direction, instruction, reference, adviser, encouragement	23
6. Negative	infidelity, unnecessary, distance, disunity, ignorance, conflicts, absence, divorce, fear, laziness, cold	15

It can be assumed that the Brazilians stress the father's role as a 'friend'. The word 'friend' is not only the most common response (31 % of the respondents), but it also appears as the first response the most frequently (15 replies), (see Fig. 3), thus being the priority for the people.

Such values as love, affection, and understanding are strongly attributed to the father. Brazilians underline his good, affectionate character. At the same time they stress authority, respect, and characterize the father as a boss and someone who is strong, powerful and strict. It may be interesting to observe that words such as 'friend', 'companion' seem to be incompatible with subordination, but Brazilians put on them the similar emphasis as on the authority and respect. They also pay attention to the role of the father as a worker, a provider, a source of support and protection, emphasizing his responsible character. They perceive father as an example, a teacher, and a guide who directs them and tells them what to do.

It should be mentioned that 15% of the respondents describe the father in negative terms, but it is probably connected with the private experience of a given person.

Brazilian definition of the term 'mother'

The associations with 'mother' in the order of frequency of occurrence were:

1. love	7. support
2. affection	8. respect
3. friend	9. caring
4. protection	10. work
5. sacrifice	11. trust
6. understanding	12. teacher

The detailed responses to 'mother' translated into English, as well as Portuguese replies are presented in the Fig. 4.

Figure 4. The table of answers to the term 'mother'

Response	Quantity	Percentage	First place	Second place	Third place
1 Love *(amor)*	38	38%	20	9	8
2 Affection *(afeto, carinho)*	31	31%	9	11	11
3 Friend *(amiga, amizade)*	27	27%	7	11	5
4 Protection *(proteção, protetora)*	14	14%	5	8	1
5 Sacrifice *(renúncia, dedicação)*	12	12%	3	7	2
6 Understanding *(compreensão)*	10	10%	4	5	1
7 Support *(apoio, suporte, ajuda, auxiliar, sustento)*	10	10%	3	2	5
8 Respect *(respeito)*	10	10%	2	5	3
9 Caring *(zelo)*	7	7%	4	2	1
10 Work *(trabalho, trabalhadora)*	7	7%	1	1	3
11 Trust *(confiança)*	7	7%	-	3	3
12 Teacher *(educadora, ensinamento, educação)*	6	6%	3	1	1
13 Confident *(confidente)*	6	6%	1	2	3
14 Companion *(companheira)*	6	6%	1	2	3
15 Safety *(segurança)*	5	5%	2	-	3
16 Adviser *(conselheira, conselho)*	5	5%	1	3	-
17 Example *(exemplo, modelo)*	5	5%	2	1	2
18 Guide *(guia,*	5	5%	1	1	1

orientação)					
19 Life *(vida)*	4	4%	2	-	1
20 Struggle *(luta, guerreira)*	4	4%	1	2	1
21 Giving *(doação)*	4	4%	1	-	2
22 Joy *(alegria)*	4	4%	1	-	3
23 Attentive *(atenciosa)*	3	3%	3	-	-
24 Responsibility *(responsabilidade)*	3	3%	1	-	2
25 Reference *(referência)*	3	3%	-	1	2
26 Intelligent *(inteligente)*	3	3%	-	2	-

a) Terms that were mentioned twice: everything *(tudo)*, gratitude *(gratidão)*, lap *(colo)*, patience *(paciência)*, cozy *(aconchego)*, generous *(generosidade)*, comfort *(conforto)*, determined *(determinada)*, partner *(cúmplice)*, worried *(preocupada)*, courage *(coragem)*, strength *(força)*.

b) Terms that were mentioned once: home *(casa)*, independence *(independência)*, disagreement *(divergência)*, similarities *(semelhança)*, effort *(esforço)*, submissive *(submissa)*, beloved *(amada)*, insecure *(insegura)*, rivalry *(rivalidade)*, clothes *(roupas)*, tenderness *(ternura)*, common sense *(bom senso)*, hospitable *(acolhimento)*, dialogue *(diálogo)*, smile *(sorriso)*, values *(valores)*, food *(comida)*, hair *(cabelo)*, voice *(voz)*, always *(sempre)*, shout *(grito)*, shelter *(abrigo)*, calm *(calma)*, restaurant *(restaurante)*, telephone *(telefone)*, lonely *(sozinha)*, kitchen *(cozinha)*, exhaustion *(esgotamento)*, fragility *(fragilidade)*, law *(lei)*, saint *(santa)*, angel *(anjo)*, maternity *(maternidade)*, emotion *(emoção)*, sweetness *(doçura)*, annoyance *(chateação)*, missing *(saudade)*, authority *(autoridade)*, cook *(cozinheira)*, manager *(administradora)*, prudent *(prudente)*, look *(olhar)*, telling off *(bronca)*, skillful *(destreza)*, experience *(vivência)*, maturity *(maturidade)*, intuition *(intuição)*, great *(grandiosidade)*, wisdom *(sabedoria)*, harmonious *(harmoniosa)*, house wife *(dona de casa)*, important *(importante)*, loving *(amorosa)*, flexible *(flexível)*, essential *(essencial)*, loyalty *(lealdade)*.

The Brazilians view mother first as a source of love, affection, and understanding. The word 'love' was mentioned by 38% of the respondents and it is the most common response. When we take into account the order of appearance of the responses, it can be noticed that 'love' appears as the first response the most frequently (20 replies), thus underlying the fact that it is the priority for Brazilians. The second place is taken by the word 'affection' (31%), which is also the second most frequent response (9 replies).

Since some words have similar meaning or belong to the same category, they can be grouped in the following way *(Figure 4a):*

Main components	Responses	Total number
1. Love	love, affection, caring, understanding, trust, attentive, tenderness, loving, beloved, respect	109
2. Friend / good	friend, confident, companion, partner, intelligent, everything, generous, cozy, comfort, hospitable, joy, smile, patient, saint, angel, sweetness, great, wisdom, harmonious, important, loyalty, essential	68
3. Protection	protection, safety, support, shelter	30

4. Sacrifice	sacrifice, struggle, giving, effort, responsible, exhaustion, submissive	28
5. Teacher	teacher, example, guide, reference, adviser	24
6. Work	work, clothes, food, kitchen, cook, manager, skillful, house-wife	14

Brazilians emphasize mother's role as a friend and a confident. They underline her good, affectionate character. Some of them call her even angel and saint. They are of the opinion that mother gives you protection, support, and the feeling of safety. This heavy reference to love, protection, and safety may suggest strong affective ties between mother and children. In fact, Brazilians stress mother's relationship with the children rather than with the father or husband. Besides, the respondents pay attention to the fact that mother sacrifices herself for the family. They emphasize her role as a teacher, an adviser, and an example to follow.

The Brazilians also mention her role as a housewife and consider her 'the head of the household'. At the same time we may observe special respect given to mothers, as they take a dominant role in family matter. It is interesting to notice that there are no negative terms mentioned to describe mother, except for the two following words: 'disagreement' and 'annoyance', while in the case of father, a greater number of negative terms is given.

In general, it seems that the value of motherhood is very important for Brazilians. I would like to add that in the second part of the questionnaire, 47% of the respondents answered that mother (*mãe*) is the most important member of their family, and only 13% said that father (*pai*) is the most important. 6% of the students are of the opinion that that both parents (*pais*) are equally significant, while 9% of the respondents think that they are the most important members of their family (*eu*).

The rest of the answers to the question: "Who is the most important member of your family?" is as follows: 13% - everyone (*todos*), 3% - husband (*marido*), 3% - grandmother (*avó*), 2% - children (*filhos*), 2% - not possible to choose one member, 1% - brother (*irmão*), 1% - God *(Deus).* Only 2% of the respondents answered that children are the most important members of their family. It can be connected with the fact that the research was done among students who do not have children yet, therefore they emphasize the importance of parents.

Brazilian definition of the term 'husband'

The associations with 'husband' in the order of frequency of occurrence were:

1. companion
2. love
3. friend
4. fidelity
5. partner
6. respect
7. responsibility
8. affection
9. trust
10. union
11. sharing
12. work

The detailed responses to 'husband' translated into English, as well as Portuguese replies are presented in the Fig. 5.

Figure 5. The table of answers to the term 'husband'

Response	Quantity	Percentage	First place	Second place	Third place
1 Companion *(compan-heiro, companheirismo)*	49	49%	24	14	8
2 Love *(amor)*	36	36%	14	12	8
3 Friend *(amigo, amizade)*	34	34%	9	17	5
4 Fidelity *(fidelidade, fiel)*	22	22%	4	5	11
5 Partner *(parceiro, parceria, cúmplice)*	14	14%	2	4	7
6 Respect *(respeito)*	12	12%	1	4	6
7 Responsibility *(responsabilidade)*	11	11%	5	4	2
8 Affection *(afeto, carinho)*	11	11%	2	5	4
9 Trust *(confiança)*	6	6%	3	2	-
10 Union *(união)*	6	6%	2	2	2
11 Sharing *(compartilhar, dividir)*	6	6%	2	3	1
12 Work *(trabalho, trabalhador)*	5	5%	2	-	2
13 Understanding *(compreensão)*	5	5%	1	-	2
14 Provider *(provedor)*	4	4%	3	1	-
15 Attentive *(atencioso)*	4	4%	2	1	1
16 Sex *(sexo)*	4	4%	1	2	1
17 Father *(pai)*	4	4%	1	2	1
18 Support *(apoio, ajuda)*	4	4%	1	2	1
19 Money *(dinheiro)*	3	3%	2	-	1
20 Man *(homem)*	3	3%	2	-	1
21 Living together *(con-vívio)*	3	3%	1	1	1
22 Boss *(chefe, líder)*	3	3%	1	1	1
23 Safety *(segurança)*	3	3%	-	2	1
24 Dedicated *(dedicado)*	3	3%	-	1	-
25 Funny *(divertido, engraçado)*	3	3%	-	-	2

a) Terms that were mentioned twice: lover *(amante), cooperation (cooperação),* strength *(força),* betrayal *(chifre, traição),* family *(família),* to complete *(preenchimento),* children *(filhos),* present *(presente),* annoying *(chato),* honest *(honestidade),* advice *(aconselhamento),* financial support *(apoio financeiro, sustento).*

b) Terms that were mentioned once: essential *(essencial),* future *(futuro),* victorious *(vitorioso),* passion *(paixão),* sincere *(sincero),* loving *(amoroso),* comfort *(conforto),* pleasure *(prazer),* intimacy *(intimidade),* equality *(igualdade),* teacher *(educador),* balance *(equlíbrio),* power *(poder),* pot-bellied *(barrigudo),* society *(sociedade),* I don't know *(não*

sei), doubts *(dúvidas),* decision *(decisão),* patience *(paciência),* everyday life *(cotidiano),* seriousness *(seriedade),* escape *(fuga),* perseverance *(perseverança),* compromise *(ceder),* infidelity *(infidelidade),* car *(carro),* discipline *(disciplinador),* solving problems *(resolvedor de problemas),* strange *(estranho),* difficult *(difícil),* complicated *(complicado),* protection *(protetor),* weakness *(franqueza),* libido *(libido),* achievement *(conquista),* attraction *(atração),* good *(bom),* kind *(gentil),* home *(casa),* direction *(direção),* struggle *(luta),* admiration *(admiração),* basis *(base),* commitment *(compromisso).*

The Brazilians characterize husband as companion, partner, and friend, thus emphasizing the idea of marriage partnership. The word 'companion' is the most common response, as it was given by 49% of the respondents, and moreover, it appears as the first response the most frequently (24 replies), confirming that it is the priority. The word 'friend' is mentioned by 34% of the students and appears in third place. The Brazilians put also heavy emphasis on the fact that husband is the source of love; the word 'love' is placed on second position, as it is given by 36% of the students.

After grouping the answers, the following clusters of responses appear *(Figure 5a):*

Main components	Responses	Total number
1 Companion / marriage	companion, partner, union, friend, sex, sharing, living together, lover, to complete, commitment, cooperation	124
2 Love	love, affection, trust, attentive, passion, loving, safety	62
3 Good / faithful	fidelity, honest, good, kind, dedicated, funny, sincere, comfort, patience, perseverance, essential	37
4 Responsibility	responsibility, respect, boss, discipline, strength, power, teacher, solving problems	32
5 Worker / provider	work, provider, support, money, struggle, protection	21
6 Father	father, children, family	8
7 Negative terms	betrayal, annoying, infidelity, difficult, complicated	7

Except for attributing to the image of husband such terms as 'companion', 'friend', 'love' and 'affection', it can be easily noticed that Brazilians stress his personality characteristics describing him as good, honest, and faithful. In fact, these characteristics are also mentioned in the Brazilian image of wife. As in the case of father, the Brazilians underline responsibility and respect, but actually they do not mention authority. It may suggest that husband is responsible for the family, but he is not superior to his wife, as they are equal partners for each other. Besides, the stress is put on the husband's role as a worker and a provider, as well as on his sexual identity, man *(homem).* It is interesting to observe that Brazilians relate the image of husband to that of father, but they do not make any references to wife. It does not mean that they pay little attention to the wife, because as we will see later, they also pay no attention to husband in the context of wife. It rather suggests that the husband-wife relationship is less important to the Brazilians than, for example, to Americans, who make many references to husband-wife relations. It should be added that some negative terms, such

as 'infidelity', 'complicated', 'annoying', etc. are given to describe husband, and it may be assumed that it is related to the private experience of the respondents.

Brazilian definition of the term 'wife'
The associations with 'wife' in the order of frequency of occurrence were:

1. companion
2. love
3. friend
4. affection
5. fidelity
6. mother
7. partner
8. dedicated
9. trust
10. woman
11. sex
12. union

      The detailed responses to 'wife' translated into English, as well as Portuguese replies are presented in the Fig. 6.

Figure 6. The table of answers to the term 'wife'

Response	Quantity	Percenta-ge	First place	Second place	Third place
1. Companion *(companheira, companheirismo)*	42	42%	25	6	8
2. Love *(amor)*	38	38%	12	12	10
3. Friend *(amiga, amizade)*	35	35%	10	14	7
4. Affection *(afeto, carinho)*	21	21%	5	9	7
5. Fidelity *(fidelidade, fiel)*	18	18%	4	8	4
6. Mother *(mãe)*	11	11%	3	5	3
7. Partner *(parceira, parceria, cúmplice)*	10	10%	4	2	4
8. Dedicated *(dedicada, dedicação)*	9	9%	5	1	3
9. Trust *(confiança)*	7	7%	3	1	-
10. Woman *(mulher)*	7	7%	3	-	3
11. Sex *(sexo)*	7	7%	1	4	1
12. Union *(união)*	7	7%	-	5	2
13. Support *(apoio, suporte)*	6	6%	3	2	1
14 Caring *(zelo, cuidado)*	6	6%	2	3	1
15. Respect *(respeito)*	6	6%	1	1	3
16. Family *(família)*	5	5%	2	1	2
17. Lover *(amante)*	5	5%	2	-	3
18. Understanding *(compreensão)*	4	4%	1	-	3
19. Sharing *(compartilhar, dividir)*	3	3%	1	2	-
20. Work *(trabalho, trabalhadora)*	3	3%	1	1	1
21. Future *(futuro)*	3	3%	-	2	1
22. Beauty *(beleza)*	3	3%	-	1	2
23. Children *(filhos)*	3	3%	-	-	3
24. Loyal *(leal, lealdade)*	3	3%	-	-	3

a) Terms that were mentioned twice: admiration *(admiração),* home *(casa),* housewife *(dona de casa),* living together *(convívio),* strength *(força),* struggle *(batalhadora),* independence *(independência),* to complete *(preenchimento),* patience *(paciência),* sincere *(sincera).*

b) Terms that were mentioned once: commitment *(compromisso),* modern *(moderna),* possession *(posse),* reference *(referência),* attraction *(atração),* freedom *(liberdade),* structure *(estrutura),* capable *(capaz),* creative *(creativa),* cozy *(aconchego),* helper *(ajudante),* leader *(cérebro),* provider *(provedora),* annoying *(chata),* kitchen *(cozinha),* cooker *(fogão),* washing machine *(máquina de lavar),* compromise *(ceder),* perseverance *(perseverança),* jealous *(ciúmes),* sweetness *(docilidade),* matriarch *(matriarca),* funny *(divertida),* marriage *(casamento),* church *(igreja),* routine *(rotina),* position *(posição),* conversation *(conversa),* balance *(equilíbrio),* strict *(firmeza),* bed *(cama),* power *(poder),* energy *(energia),* control *(controle),* present *(presente),* intimacy *(intimidade),* joy *(alegria),* pleasure *(prazer),* comfort *(conforto),* integration *(integração),* courageous *(corajosa),* search *(busca),* essential *(essencial),* tolerant *(tolerante),* safety *(segurança),* attentive *(atenciosa),* loving *(amorosa).*

As in the case of husband, the Brazilians emphasize the role of wife as companion and friend. The word 'companion' is the most common response, as it is mentioned by 42% of the respondents, and it appears as the first response the most frequently (25 replies). The word 'friend' was given by 35% of the students and is placed on third position. The Brazilians put heavy emphasis on wife as the source of love and affection; the word 'love' appears in second place, as it is mentioned by 38% of the respondents, while the word 'affection' on fourth place, being mentioned by 21% of the students.

The words that belong to the same category can be grouped in the following manner *(Figure 6a):*

Main components	Responses	Total number
1. Companion / marriage	companion, friend, partner, sharing, sex, union, church, lover, living together, to complete, commitment, marriage	117
2. Love	love, affection, attentive, loving, caring, understanding, loyal, safety, trust, respect	88
3. Good / faithful	fidelity, sincere, patience, comfort, sweetness, essential, perseverance, funny, courageous, tolerant, joy, admiration	31
4. Mother	mother, children, family	19
5. Work	work, support, housewife, capable, provider, kitchen, cooker, washing machine, struggle	18

The Brazilians underline good character of wife attributing to her such personal qualities as fidelity or sincerity, so the qualities similar to those emphasized in their image of the husband. As in the case of mother, they stress respect, but they do not mention responsibility. It can be connected with the fact that they attribute responsibility to husband, emphasizing that he is responsible not only for the children but also for the wife, so for the whole family. At the same time there is no indication of the subordinate role of the wife, which may suggest that the Brazilians want to stress the idea of marriage partnership.

It should be noticed that the Brazilians underline the wife's role as a mother, but they do not make any reference to husband. It confirms the previous observation that, unlike Americans, the Brazilians place little emphasis on the wife-husband relationship. As in the case of mother, they stress the wife's role as a housewife. Besides,

they underline her sexual identity (woman) and her role as a lover. They also mention her beauty and physical attractiveness.

It is interesting to observe that, just like in the case of mother, the Brazilians do not attribute negative terms to the wife, except for the two following words: 'annoyance' and 'jealousy'. But both father and husband are described in a greater number of negative terms. It can be connected with the fact how the respondents perceive the members of their family.

After analyzing the responses to the terms: 'father', 'mother', 'husband', and 'wife', I would like to add that that traditional gender ideologies in Brazil, *machismo* and *marianismo* are being transformed. Figure 6b shows the differences between those ideologies:

Figure 6b. Brazilian gender ideologies (Neuhouser 1999:84)

Machismo	Marianismo
Aggressive	Passive
Dominant	Submissive
Biological	Spiritual
Physical	Moral
Childlike	Wise
Sexual	Asexual
Political	Apolitical
Public sphere	Private sphere
Rua/street	Casa/home
Productive labor	Reproductive labor
Household finances	Household nurture

Some of the elements of *machismo* and *marianismo* can be still observed in the contemporary Brazilian families. Men are to be active in the public sphere of paid labor; their primary duty is to provide income for the family, which can be also confirmed by the analysis of the questionnaires. According to machismo, they should be aggressors, so they must take initiative in all senses, including business, solving problems, as well as courtship. But their superior strength means they must show courtesy and respect to women by opening doors, helping with coats, paying the bills, etc. According to *marianismo,* women are defined by motherhood; their primary duty is reproductive labor within the household, managing family life, and taking care of others. Therefore, women's primary activities are in the private sphere, or domestic sphere. They are viewed as more spiritual than men, more moral and wiser; it can be confirmed by the fact that the respondents of the questionnaires apply negative terms to father and husband, but not to mother or wife. They also underline the importance of mother, her strong, affective ties with children and sacrifice for the family. However, in contemporary Brazil, *machismo* and *marianismo* are being questioned and transformed, especially by women. Men are not perceived as aggressive and dominant, nor are females perceived as passive, submissive or asexual thanks to women's involvement in education, labor force and politics that has increased rapidly in the last three decades. Those changes are revealed by the national surveys. In 1967, 81% of women agreed that being a wife/mother/housewife was enough to be completely fulfilled, but in 1994, only 21% of women agreed with this statement. When asked if a woman should work if she does not need the income;

68% of women in 1967 said no, but in 1994, 86% of women said yes. (Neuhouser 1999:91).

Brazilian definition of the term 'marriage'
The associations with 'marriage' in the order of frequency of occurrence were:

1. union	7. respect
2. love	8. companionship
3. fidelity	9. commitment
4. responsibility	10. sharing
5. children	11. family
6. partnership	12. happiness

The detailed responses to 'marriage' translated into English, as well as Portuguese replies are presented in the Fig. 7.

Figure 7. The table of answers to the term 'marriage'

Response	Quantity	Percen-tage	First place	Second place	Third place
1 Union *(união)*	44	44%	32	7	4
2 Love *(amor)*	29	29%	9	10	8
3 Fidelity *(fidelidade)*	11	11%	4	3	4
4 Responsibility *(responsabilidade)*	11	11%	2	4	2
5 Children *(filhos)*	11	11%	-	6	4
6 Partnership *(parceria, cumplicidade)*	10	10%	1	6	1
7 Respect *(respeito)*	9	9%	1	5	3
8 Companionship *(companheirismo)*	9	9%	1	3	4
9 Commitment *(compromisso)*	8	8%	3	3	2
10 Sharing *(compartilhar, dividir)*	8	8%	3	-	4
11 Family *(família)*	8	8%	1	4	1
12 Happiness *(felicidade)*	8	8%	1	3	2
13 Trust *(confiança)*	5	5%	1	1	3
14 Attachement *(laço, elo)*	4	4%	2	1	1
15 Dream *(sonho)*	4	4%	2	1	1
16 Sacrifice *(renúncias, dedicação)*	4	4%	2	1	-
17 Difficult *(difícil)*	3	3%	1	1	1
18 Safety *(segurança)*	3	3%	1	-	2
19 Life *(vida)*	3	3%	1	-	2
20 Plans *(planos)*	3	3%	1	-	2
21 Future *(futuro)*	3	3%	1	-	2
22 Friendship *(amizade)*	3	3%	-	2	1
23 Hope *(esperança)*	3	3%	-	2	1
24 Affection *(carinho)*	3	3%	-	1	2
25 Understanding *(compreensão)*	3	3%	-	1	2
26 Eternity *(eternidade)*	3	3%	-	1	1

a) Terms that were mentioned twice: doubts *(dúvidas)*, passion *(paixão)*, institution *(instituição)*, party *(festa)*, compromise *(ceder)*, home *(casa)*, choice *(escolha)*, church *(igreja)*, growth *(crescimento)*, prison *(prisão)*, relationship *(relacionemento)*, joy *(alegria)*, mutual giving *(doação mutual)*, routine *(rotina)*, arguments *(brigas)*, structure *(estrutura)*, contract *(contrato)*, bank-

ruptcy *(falido, falência)*, optional *(facultativo)*, support *(suporte, apoio)*, social basis *(base social)*, to complete *(completar)*.

b) Terms that were mentioned once: sincerity *(sinceridade)*, necessary *(necessário)*, always *(sempre)*, total satisfaction *(plenitude)*, meeting *(encontro)*, values *(valores)*, consolidation *(consolidação)*, dynamic *(dinâmico)*, living together *(convivência)*, blessing *(bênção)*, individuality *(individualidade)*, stress *(desgasta)*, maturity *(amadurecimento)*, status *(status)*, mission *(missão)*, outdated *(ultrapassado)*, will *(vontade)*, identity *(identidade)*, emotion *(emoção)*, consensus *(consenso)*, benefits *(ganhos)*, stage *(etapa)*, amusement *(diversão)*, association *(associação)*, construction *(construção)*, harmony *(harmonia)*, new life *(vida nova)*, bed *(cama)*, annoyance *(aborrecimento)*, belly *(barriga)*, unimportant *(não importante)*, socially necessary *("necessário")*, ring *(anel)*, handcuffs *(algemas)*, ceremony *(cerimônia)*, difference *(diferença)*, beginning *(início)*, confusion *(confusão)*, altruism *(altruismo)*, everyday life *(cotidiano)*, tiring *(cansativo)*, experience *(vivência)*, adaptation *(adaptação)*, innovation *(inovação)*, time *(tempo)*, sex *(sexo)*, never *(nunca)*, nightmare *(pesadelo)*, convention *(convenção)*, exchange *(troca)*, business *(negócio)*, law *(lei)*, unit *(unidade)*, sleep *(sono)*, expensive *(caro)*, good *(bom)*, search *(busca)*, luck *(sorte)*, bad luck *(azar)*, attraction *(atração)*, loyalty *(lealdade)*, brotherhood *(fraternidade)*, help *(ajuda)*, temporary *('que seja eterno enquanto dure')*, jealousy *(ciúme)*, hypocrisy *(hipocrisia)*, question *(questão)*.

The Brazilians put heavy emphasis on the marriage as a union. The word 'union' is the most common response, as it is given by 44% of the respondents and, moreover, it appears as the first response the most frequently (32 replies) underlying the fact that it is the priority for the Brazilians. The second dominant idea strongly connected with marriage is love, which is mentioned by 29% of the respondents.

When we group together words that belong to similar categories, it is easier to do an analysis and the following clusters of responses appear *(Figure 7a):*

Main components	Responses	Total number
1. Union / togetherness	union, attachment, living together, relationship, partnership, companionship, consolidation, to complete, unit	74
2. Love	love, affection, fidelity, sincerity, sharing, respect, trust, understanding, sex, loyalty	71
3. Happiness / safety	happiness, total satisfaction, safety, support, good, responsibility, amusement, altruism, joy, help, luck,	30
4. Family	children, family, home	21
5. Future / forever	future, plans, hope, dream, life, eternity, necessary, new life	21
6. Problems	difficult, prison, arguments, stress, annoyance, handcuffs, tiring, nightmare, never, hypocrisy, bad luck, jealousy	16

Brazilian definition of marriage as a union implies a fusion of two persons without emphasizing their separate identities. The Brazilians see in marriage a companionship and partnership of those two united persons. They underline emotional ties, so not only love, but also other good qualities such as respect, trust, fidelity, and happiness are attributed to marriage. Since Brazilians view marriage as providing safety, sharing, and happiness, they do not make any reference to divorce. However, they are conscious of the problems that may appear in marriage. Some of them describe marriage as prison, nightmare or handcuffs, but such opinion is probably caused by the young age of the respondents. Also responses such as future, plans, and dream indicate that students are not mature enough to get married and think about marriage in relation

to their future plans. It is interesting to notice that the Brazilians do not think about marriage in the terms of the marriage partners, husband and wife, but they mention children and family. It may confirm the earlier observation that, unlike Americans, the Brazilians place little emphasis on the husband-wife relationship, but they rather pay attention to the parent-child relationship.

Brazilian definition of the term 'divorce'

The detailed responses to 'divorce' translated into English, as well as Portuguese replies are presented in the Fig. 8.

Figure 8. The table of answers to the term 'divorce'

Response	Quantity	Percentage	First place	Second place	Third place
1. Sadness *(tristeza)*	19	19%	10	4	4
2. Separation *(separação)*	15	15%	10	3	2
3. End *(fim)*	14	14%	9	1	4
4. Arguments *(brigas)*	13	13%	2	6	5
5. Beginning *(começo, início)*	13	13%	1	5	6
6. Breaking off *(rompimento, quebra)*	12	12%	7	3	2
7. Freedom *(liberdade)*	11	11%	2	5	4
8. Necessary *(necessário)*	8	8%	5	3	-
9. Disunity *(desunião)*	8	8%	4	2	2
10. Disappointment *(decepção, desilusão)*	8	8%	3	1	3
11. Pain *(dor)*	7	7%	3	3	-
12. Frustration *(frustração)*	7	7%	3	1	3
13. Loneliness *(solidão)*	7	7%	-	3	4
14. Loss *(perda)*	7	7%	-	1	4
15. Solution *(solução)*	5	5%	2	1	2
16. Failure *(fracasso, naufrágio)*	5	5%	1	2	2
17. Suffering *(sofrimento)*	5	5%	1	2	2
18. Disaffection *(desafeto)*	5	5%	1	1	1
19. Sorrow *(mágoa)*	5	5%	-	4	1
20. Disagreement *(desacordo, farpas, atrito)*	5	5%	-	4	1
21. Lack of love *(desamor)*	4	4%	1	1	1
22. Decision *(decisão)*	4	4%	1	1	1
23. Unhappiness *(infelicidade)*	4	4%	-	4	-
24. Unpleasant *(desagradável)*	3	3%	2	1	-
25. Choice *(escolha, opção)*	3	3%	2	1	-
26. Bad *(ruim)*	3	3%	2	-	-
27. Stress *(desgaste)*	3	3%	1	2	-
28 Division *(divisão)*	3	3%	1	1	1
29. Incomprehension *(incompreensão)*	3	3%	1	1	1
30. Incompatibility *(incompatibilidade)*	3	3%	-	2	1
31. Consensus *(consenso)*	3	3%	-	1	2

a) Terms that were mentioned twice: indifference *(indiferença),* doubt *(dúvida),* distance *(distáncia),* money *(dinheiro),* children *(filhos),* egoism *(egoísmo),* infidelity *(infidelidade),* anger *(irado),* disrespect *(desrespeito),* happiness *(felicidade),* inevitable *(inevitável),* new life *(vida nova),* tiredness *(cansaço),* regret *(arrependimento),* achievement *(conquista),* change *(mudança),* differences *(diferenças),* mistakes *(erros, equívoco),* possible *(possível),* destruction *(destruição).*

b) Terms that were mentioned once: extremity *(último caso),* be reborn *(renascer),* way out *(saída),* danger *(perigo),* cautious *(cuidado),* mistrust *(desconfiança),* disturbance *(transtorno),* stain *(mácula),* justice *(justiça),* decisive *(decisivo),* sincerity *(sinceridade),* unnecessary *(desnecessário),* crisis *(crise),* fashionable *(voga),* repair *(consertro),* sentence *(sentença),* life *(vida),* sin *(pecado),* judge *(juiz),* lawsuit *(litígio),* alimony *(pensão),* instability *(destabilidade),* bureaucracy *(burocracia),* expenses *(custo-gastos),* undesirable *(indesejável),* joy *(alegria),* goods *(bens),* benefits *(benefícios),* tears *(lágrimas),* fight *(batalha),* missing *(saudade),* hatred *(ódio),* complicated *(complicado),* problematic *(problemático),* understandable *(compreensível),* lack of companionship *(descompanheirismo),* normal *(normal),* courage *(couragem),* difficult *(dificuldade),* uncertainty *(incerteza),* friendly *(amistoso),* attempt *(tentativa),* torment *(tormenta),* stage *(etapa),* intolerance *(intolerância),* harmful *(prejudicial),* lie *(mentira),* individuality *(individualidade),* reflection *(reflexão),* giving up *(desistência),* discomfort *(desconforto),* resentment *(rancor),* betrayal *(traição).*

The associations with 'divorce' in the order of frequency of occurrence were:

1. sadness	7. freedom
2. separation	8. necessary
3. end	9. disunity
4. arguments	10. disappointment
5. beginning	11. pain
6. breaking off	12. frustration

Actually there are various responses associated by the Brazilians with the term divorce, but they are close to each other in meaning or belong to the same category. The analysis will be easier to do when we group the responses in the following way *(Figure 8a):*

Main components	Responses	Total number
1 Sadness / pain	sadness, pain, disappointment, frustration, suffering, loneliness, loss, failure, sorrow, unhappiness, stress, unpleasant, tiredness, regret, destruction, stain, tears, crisis, missing, torment, harmful, resentment, anger	93
2 Marital problems	arguments, disaffection, disagreement, lack of love, egoism, incomprehension, incompatibility, indifference, hatred, mistakes, disrespect, infidelity, lie, differences, mistrust, fight, disturbance, discomfort, lack of companionship, uncertainty, intolerance, betrayal	55
3 Separation	separation, end, breaking off, disunity, division	52
4 Necessary / good	beginning, freedom, necessary, solution, new life, achievement, understandable, possible, be reborn, way out, sincerity, repair, joy, benefits, friendly, happiness	52
5 Bad / wrong	bad, extremity, unnecessary, danger, sin, undesirable	8

First, it should be noticed that the Brazilians emphasize negative consequences of divorce (93 replies). They strongly underline the human, emotional consequences such as sadness, pain, disappointment, frustration, suffering, etc. But they seem to be unaware of the negative effects of divorce suffered by the family and children. They also stress marital problems and various causes of divorce (55 responses). Among these, arguments are in first place, than disaffection, disagreement, lack of love, incomprehension, incompatibility, etc.

The Brazilians associate divorce with separation, ending the marriage relationship (52 responses). Although, as mentioned above, divorce has negative emotional consequences, the Brazilians emphasize its necessity and characterize it as desirable. According to them, divorce can mean freedom, good solution, and beginning of a new life. It should be mentioned that only 8 negative responses are given to describe divorce as bad, undesirable or unnecessary. In fact, the necessity of divorce is consistent with the strong preoccupation with marital problems and the need of modernization expressed by the Brazilians.

I would like to add that in the second part of the questionnaire 49% of the students say that they live with both parents, while 28% live with mother, which constitutes a considerable number of the respondents. The rest of the responses to the question: "Do you live with your family? If yes, who do you live with?" is as follows: 10% live alone, 6% with husband or wife, 3% with father, 3% with brothers or sisters, 1% with uncle and grandmother.

It confirms the fact that the number of divorces and female-headed households in Brazil is growing rapidly. According to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, *Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE),* one out of 9 marriages ended up in divorce in 1985, while ten years later the proportion was much bigger, as one out of 4 marriages ended up in divorce (Veiga - Granato1999:100). Moreover, in 1970, 13 % of all households were female-headed, but by 1990, 20% were estimated to be headed by women (Neuhouser 1999:88).

Comparison of the family values in Brazil and the United States

Brazilian family differs from American family. The first visible difference is that the Brazilian family tends to stretch out in a network of relatives and *compadres*, so it is much larger and much closer than American one, in which close kinship ties are restricted. It forms a fundamental social unit, where all members are significant, and exerts much greater influence on family members than American family. Perhaps because the network is so large and the bonds are so strong, one finds little rivalry and many close relationships in Brazilian family. Brazilians maintain traditional family view; they feel a strong sense of family loyalty and consider it an automatic duty to help family members, and regard family as the source of support, cooperation, and emotional interdependence, whereas from American point of view family relations are the source of personal satisfaction, and the existence of family depends mainly on the love-based relationship of husband and wife, and it cannot survive if there is no love or understanding between the spouses. Brazilians emphasize the cohesive and collective character of the family, sharing, and a subordination of the individual's interests to those of the group, whereas Americans perceive family as individual people living to-

gether, underlying the importance and independence of the individuals. Furthermore, American family roles are individualistic and self-oriented. Their concept of family is more strongly connected with the husband-wife relationship than with the parent-child relationship, whereas Brazilians regard the parent-child relations as the axis of the family, making no references to husband-wife relationship.

In American family children are socialized to become independent, autonomous, individualistic, and competitive; they leave the house very early and live with strangers, whereas Brazilian children perceive that cooperation and emotional interdependence are important components of family relations and they are taught that family is the main point of reference in terms of identity and emotional or economic support and security.

Both American and Brazilian students stress love as the basis for marriage. It seems that love and commitment are desirable but difficult to keep. They see in marriage a companionship and partnership between two persons, but Americans stress individuality and two separate identities of partners, whereas Brazilians define marriage as a union and fusion of two persons without emphasizing their separate identities. Both Brazilians and Americans are aware of marital problems but Americans, unlike Brazilians, see a very close relationship between marriage and divorce, which can be explained by the fact that the divorce rate in the United States is higher than in Brazil. Both American and Brazilian students characterize divorce as desirable and emphasize its necessity regarding it as the best solution to an unhappy marriage. Moreover, the number of single-parent families and non-marital relationships is growing rapidly in both countries.

It seems that Brazilian students wait with getting married until they are ready to have children and family, since many of them associate marriage with such words as 'future' and 'future plans'. In Brazil since 1996 there has existed a semi-formal form of marriage called *concubinato*. It guarantees some legal rights as marriage, but it is easier to enter into and dissolve. Nowadays, many young couples live in such a relationship. However, it should be taken into account that Brazilian sample belongs to an urban setting (Rio de Janeiro) and to middle and upper-middle social class, where family structure retains some traditional characteristics, but also acquires many modern features, which may be uncommon among rural and lower class families.

Although Brazilian and American families are different from each other, the idea of marriage and divorce expressed by both Brazilian and American students is quite similar and it can be noticed that traditional family patterns in Brazil start to change and become similar to those in the United States.

Conclusions

It seems that Brazil and the United States have many things in common. They have the two largest economies and are the most populous countries in the Western hemisphere. They are heterogeneous societies. Throughout their histories, which have been the case until today, each country has been influenced by streams of immigration from Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. Besides, they have populations of native Indians, some of whom live in areas that the Federal government has put aside for them. In both countries, there was colonization and slavery. However, the first settlers

in Brazil and the United States had different origins, cultural patterns, religions, and experience. Therefore, their history developed in various ways and different national characteristics become dominant, including different ways of perceiving family values.

The basis of American national character is the British–American Protestant core that has been influenced by immigrants. As a result, the modern United States is a multicultural society, where different traditions and cultures coexist within the single nation. As far as Brazil is concerned, its population is a heavy multiracial mixture of the Indians, Africans, and Catholic Portuguese, influenced by the immigrants from Europe and Asia.

Protestantism, as well as difficult conditions in the New World, were shaping the formation of the American national features and contributed to the development of such characteristics as self-reliance, self-sufficiency, independence, freedom, individualism, equality, appreciation of work, and importance of material success. In the United States, one's social identity, the self-judgement and the judgement of others are based on what one does and achieves, and not on his family connections. Americans believe that action and hard work are rewarded by success, and that through efforts one can improve the present and bring about a better future. Unlike Americans, Brazilians look down on manual labor and they would say that personal connections and family background are more important than what a person does and achieves on his own. Personalism, reliance on personal qualities and institutions such as the extended family, *compadresco*, and the network of friends prevail in the modern Brazilian culture. Such attitudes originated in the colonial era when the Portuguese bequeathed to the Brazilians the antipathy towards manual work alongside with a strong sense of loyalty and obligation towards family and friends on the one hand, and a weak sense of loyalty and obligation towards the legal institutions on the other. The importance of personal relationships was a basic feature of Portuguese character; it resulted in the development of a typical Brazilian social mechanism *jeitinho*, which emphasizes that, the society privileges the human aspects of social reality over the legal and institutional ones.

The main features of American and Brazilian cultures can be observed in the perception of family values in both cultures. It seems that in Brazil the family is more highly valued than in the United States, which is connected with the existence of different national characteristics in both countries. Americans underline the importance and independence of the individual, therefore, they perceive family as a group of individual people living together. According to them, family should fulfill one's emotional needs and be the source of personal happiness and satisfaction. Moreover, American family roles are individualistic and self-oriented. Brazilians, on the other hand, maintain traditional family view regarding family as the source of cooperation, security, safety, and emotional interdependence, emphasizing a subordination of the individual's interests to those of the group.

Both Brazilians and Americans consider romantic love as the basis for the choice of a marriage partner but the character of marriage differs. Americans stress individual needs, autonomy, two separate identities of partners, and subordination of all familial considerations to individual preference, whereas Brazilians underline collec-

tive family needs, sharing, safety, and define marriage as union and fusion of two people.

The values of individualism, freedom, self-realization, independence, self-government, and self-fulfillment expressed by the Americans collide with the image of marriage as permanent commitment, self-denial, and self-sacrifice. Therefore, Americans are ready to divorce when marriage does not fulfill their personal needs and love-based ties cease to exist, which results in high divorce rates, high number of single-parent families, female-headed households, non-marital relationships, and remarriage. Also Brazilians characterize divorce as desirable, which means that traditional family patterns in Brazil start to change. The increase in divorce statistics and alternative family forms and life styles, which is visible especially in the United Sates but can be found also in Brazil, does not mean that family is fading away, but it means that family is undergoing important transitions.

It should be added that the Brazilian culture is influenced by the American culture, so the traditional family patterns in Brazil are becoming similar to those in the United States.

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