Introduction

"An Iron Chain around Your Soul"

> Evangelical couple seeking to adopt a girl between the age of 12 and 18 to live with us and take care of our one year old baby. She can live with us and go to school. The father and mother are business owners. The girl must be introduced to us by a parent or guardian.

In May 2014, a couple posted the above advertisement in the *Diário de Pará*, a newspaper based in Belém, Pará, Brazil, to find a *babá* (nanny) for their baby. The publication of an ad of this nature in a mainstream newspaper reflects the pervasive practice of "adopting" young girls into families for the purpose of exploiting them as unpaid domestic workers (Beltrão 2016).[1] The listing sparked an uproar among prominent social activist groups in Brazil that marshaled social media platforms to denounce what was viewed as the couple's poorly veiled effort to exploit child labor under the guise of adoption.[2] The ad itself includes multiple legal violations: it advertises to "adopt a girl" (adoptions via the local newspaper are illegal) for the purposes of putting her to work (adoption for labor is illegal) by caring for their baby (child labor exploitation is illegal), and for no salary (not paying a domestic worker is illegal).

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[1] Beltrão (2016) reveals the harrowing yet commonplace occurrence for indigenous and Black children from peripheral areas in the state of Pará to be transferred to other individuals and abused both for their manual and/or domestic labor and sexually exploited. The Black children who are taken often belong to quilombo communities, which are areas that were established by enslaved Africans who escaped slavery.

[2] Adding insult to injury, the couple's attempt to use their religious identity, as "an evangelical couple," to justify their actions and, further, the inclusion of their status as business owners only made it more offensive that they were looking to exploit a child rather than pay an adult to provide this service.

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Moreover, Brazilians of diverse backgrounds converged toward consensus that the actions of this couple were an anachronistic reminder of Brazil's shameful history of slavery. Indeed, the couple's newspaper posting mirrors the ads published back in nineteenth-century Brazil (only a few years after the abolition of racial chattel slavery in Brazil), except the language of older ads was more explicitly racist. An 1896 newspaper ad in São Paulo, Brazil, read: "We are looking for a dark-skinned Black nanny to cook and clean; Looking for a little Blackie to clean the house and handle the children."[3] In 2014, race was not explicitly mentioned and perhaps needed not be since the majority of domestic workers in Brazil are Black women.[4]

As intensely as Brazilians berated the couple online for the exploitative ad, it is precisely because of the normalization of informal or clandestine adoption, what is known as *criação*, that the couple did not anticipate the barrage of critique that they received nor did they fear prosecution (Fonseca 1986, 2002a, 2003). Though critiques of the couple's ad were widespread, the outcry tended to overlook and, in worse cases, vilify informal care, including kinship-based fostering, which is practiced widely. Indeed, instead of being institutionalized, the 163 million children around the world who do not live with a biological parent are placed in informal familial arrangements (Leinaweaver 2008).[5] Anthropologist Claudia Fonseca's meticulous research (1986, 2002a, 2002b, 2002c, 2003, 2013) on the cultural and legal ramifications of informal adoption in Brazil has pivotally outlined the positive meanings that families attribute to child-lending practices.[6] Fonseca, in particular, has for decades highlighted the benefits of the "circulation of children" among poor and working-class families in Brazil (Fonseca 1986, 2002a, 2003, 2005). She offers the nuanced conclusion that the care informally adoptive families

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[3] "Precisa-se de uma criada de cor preta que cozinha e lava; precisa-se duma negrinha para arranjos de casa e lidar com crianças." Author's translation. Biblioteca Nacional, Setor de Microfilmes, Jornal do Commercio, 1 de janeiro de 1888; 8 de janeiro de 1890; e 14 abril de 1901 as cited from Dantas (2020).

[4] Marcondes et al. (2013).

[5] In addition to those cited by Leinaweaver (2008), there are numerous examples of informal adoption or fosterage that emerge from mutually beneficial arrangements between status equals in global contexts. See Baran & Pannor (1989); Goody (1992); Weber (2001).

[6] *Criação* is not a Brazilian idiosyncrasy, but rather is commonly practiced throughout Latin America, including Mexico and Peru, among other countries. In Spanish-speaking Latin America, the practice is known as *criadazgo* and in Peru alone, 50,000 Peruvian children live as *criadas* in exchange for food and shelter (Leinaweaver 2008).

provide reflects the mutual aid and interdependency used among vulnerable families as a survival strategy.[7]

Second-Class Daughters, however, exposes the murky fault lines demarcating where the "circulation of children" shifts from being a mutually beneficial kinship arrangement to, as one respondent described, a "child trafficking ring" and what others routinely referred to as "slavery." In fact, this research shifts the focus of analysis away from children to emphasize what occurs when these children become adults.[8] It reveals how exploitative forms of informal adoption can be justified using the same racialized, gendered, classed logics that undergirded chattel slavery, and can also include some of chattel slavery's most brutal aspects including strenuous and life-threatening labor without compensation. National and transnational scholars have identified how an increasingly global system of domestic labor exploitation exploits women, and women of color, especially (Ehrenreich, Hochschild, and Kay 2002; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2001a; Parreñas 2015). However, as this work will examine, several factors differentiate exploitative forms of informal adoption in Brazil. These factors include the significance of cultural repertories connected to slavery, the comingling of authority and cordiality, ideological tropes that shape readings of poor and often Black women's bodies and labor, and (most notably) a culturally specific affective and moral framework that maintains the system (Arend 2005; de Santana Pinho and Silva 2010).

I never intended to write a book about informal adoptions. Beyond the compelling analysis of informal adoption or *criação* that I had read in Twine's (1998) seminal book, I knew very little about the experiences of the Brazilian girls and women referred to as *criadas* or *filhas de criação* (informally adopted daughters).[9] Everything changed when I saw Nadia, a middle-aged Black woman, sleeping on the floor in the home where

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[7] Specifically addressing the innovative familial strategies that Black families developed during and after slavery in the Americas, Spillers (1987) asserts that "the inviolable Black family" remains one of the supreme social achievements, for which flexible notions of kinship and family have been the touchstone (74).

[8] Other studies have also focused on the exploitative aspects of *criação* (Portuguese) or *criadazgo* (Spanish) in order to clarify the conditions under which these practices may not be mutually beneficial especially when they involve emotional, sexual, and labor exploitation. See Arend (2005); Beltrão (2016); Dalla Vecchia (2001); De Azevedo (2017).

[9] My first introduction to the existence of *criadas* is Twine's (1998) book, *Race in a Racial Democracy*. In it, she includes a troubling picture of a young Afro-Brazilian girl holding the white baby for whom she provides care. She further describes the way that white families invoke the notion of family to mask the exploitative nature of these relationships.

I rented a room from a Brazilian family.[10] The family's home was in an expensive high-rise along the shore of Salvador, Bahia, Brazil. Nadia had been omnipresent in this family's home. I saw Nadia cleaning, cooking, folding clothes, and performing other household tasks around the house, so I reasonably assumed she was a paid domestic worker. Once, while wading through an early morning haze on route to the kitchen for a drink of water, I noticed the family's teenaged son's bedroom door ajar.

A casual glance into his room revealed Nadia's brown body curled up on the floor at the young man's bedside. The sight of a thin, worn sheet draped over Nadia's body, which barely covered her feet, unnerved me. I returned to my room with tight knots in my stomach. Why was Nadia sleeping on the floor and in his room? Did she live in the house? Did my presence in the house mean that I had taken the room and bed where she usually slept? When I casually asked her about her experiences living with the family, Nadia smiled and replied, "Me tratam como se fosse filha da família" (They treat me as though I were a daughter of the family). Nadia's narrative reflected the "myth of being like a daughter," which suggests that unpaid domestic labor is comparable to the just, inclusive, and "natural" age-based division of labor typical of families (Young 1987: 365). However, Nadia's emotional and physical abuse alongside the nonpayment for her labor exposed the underside of her "family" status. These contradictions persuaded me to pry open the figurative door left ajar, to expose the inner workings of this peculiar entanglement of race, gender, family, and work in Brazil.

In a slightly less affluent home, I realized within two months of meeting Tânia, another middle-aged Black woman, that she, too, was a *filha de criação*. Typically, the term *filha de criação* was used in reference to young girls who were "given" away and informally adopted into families without a formal legal process. I, like many other researchers, assumed that informally adopted children eventually married or ran away to start families of their own.[11] Yet, like Nadia, Tânia was an adult *filha de criação* who continued living with the well-to-do family long after she

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[10] All names are pseudonyms, ages have been slightly altered (no more than five years), and inconsequential details (such as gender of certain family members) may be altered in order to protect their identities.

[11] Research on fosterage and informal adoption often has as an implicit assumption that individuals enter as children and leave as adults. However, not only do some "adopted daughters" enter as adults; some who do enter as children never leave. They may be treated well or occupy a slave-like position for their entire lives (Dalla Vecchia 2001; de Azevedo 2017).

was "adopted" at age seven. She had lived in their home over forty years, and even when employed outside the home, she performed domestic labor without monetary compensation. Unlike Nadia, she adamantly rejected any suggestion that she was part of the family, and instead, with time, she progressively shared examples of abuse and labor exploitation. To be certain that I understood the extent of her exploitation, Tânia shared in her characteristically matter-of-fact voice, "You feel the distance in the way that you are treated, the way you are insulted and humiliated ...You realize that you are really property. I can beat my property, I can ask it to do anything, I can do anything to it."[12] These haunting words lingered as another reminder that towering condominiums boast all of the accoutrements of middle-class living, but also serve as the site of one of Brazil's oldest traditions: slavery.[13]

But how widespread were exploitative forms of *criação*, and, particularly, how many adult women were living in these conditions outside Bahia? In the state of Amazonas and Paraíba, I found numerous cases of *filhas de criação*, who shared a surprisingly similar trajectory to the women I had met in Bahia. Marina, a mixed-race woman (African and indigenous roots) in the Amazon, was only twenty-two years old when we met, and she felt trapped and exploited in her current work/family arrangement where she was referred to as a *filha de criação* and treated as an unpaid domestic worker. In the northeast state of Paraíba, Maisa, a Black woman in her fifties, had been informally adopted at such a young age that she did not even remember her biological family or know her true birthday. She doted on her adoptive family even as she reflected on her taxing unpaid work schedule. Maisa still lives with this family and predicts that she will die in their care. And most unexpectedly, there was Kátia (also in Paraíba), a white, college-educated women, who defied what I thought I knew to be true of *filhas de criação*. She shared with me a harrowing account of her life as a *filha de criação* who moved through three exploitative foster families until she ultimately escaped and created a family and life of her own. She described her experience in *criação* by referring to it as a "child trafficking ring" wherein poor girls are sold a dream, but end up defrauded and exploited.

[12] Hordge-Freeman (2015b) provides an extended analysis of Tânia's full quote and additional aspects of this interaction in *The Color of Love* (106).
[13] See also Roth-Gordon (2016) and Corossacz (2015; 2017) for a review of the practices and behaviors common to what is referred to as Brazil's A-B class.

Over the course of ten years, I met and maintained contact with more than a dozen women, *filhas de criação*, who shared that they had been (or continue to be) exploited in a slave-like or semi-servitude fashion. As I shared these encounters with my Brazilian colleagues, I was met with knowing nods and, in some cases, indifference. So common is the prevalence of informal adoption in Brazil that the phrase *adoção á brasileira* (Brazilian-style adoption) is used to describe how impoverished families transfer the care and guardianship of their children to individuals and families with more resources (Fonseca 1986, 2002a, 2002b). Despite the risks, informal adoptions are sometimes preferred by families because they allow them to sidestep bureaucratic processes, select adoptive families on their own terms, retain their parental rights, and maintain relationships with their children.[14] This practice is imbued with complex meanings by families and is pursued with various ends in mind including the amplification of the kinship group in ways that might be later beneficial to disadvantaged families (Fonseca 2003; Leinaweaver 2008). Nevertheless, serious problems arise when the practice occurs among social unequals because it is under these conditions that "adopted" children are more likely to be required to care for others rather than receive care.[15] In cases where *criação* is exploitative, the rhetoric of being "like family" is reinforced by a framework of hierarchical familial relations that has the potential to naturalize exploitation that begins in childhood and extends until death (Collins 1998).

While it is true that overarching systems of oppression afford *filhas de criação* little room to negotiate, *Second-Class Daughters* disrupts prevalent narratives of passive victims and monstrous villains. It is not an account of perfect victims, but rather of *batalhadoras* (warrior women) who navigate diverse realities, weigh limited options, and exert their individual agency wherever possible to forge what they perceive is their best possible outcome. This book theorizes the features, patterns, and discourses that characterize their exploitation with an emphasis on affective encounters and ambiguous relationships. It also offers space to consider how *filhas*, themselves, reinterpret and reconceptualize their experiences to give new meaning to their lives. A one-dimensional

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[14] Fonseca (1986, 2002a, 2002c) describes the "circulation of children" as often occurring among families of low socioeconomic conditions where some families may have more means than others, but the differences are often not drastic. Families anticipate maintaining contact and reclaiming their children in the future when they are able to do so.

[15] Da Cunha (2008); Leinaweaver (2008).

portrayal of the women and their adoptive families is not just inappropriate; it would hinder the more theoretically valuable argument about how love and affect can be weaponized to both support *and* subvert domination. This work examines the mechanisms that ensure respondents' ensnarement in a system of ambiguous affective power relations and structural disadvantage, while also uncovering moments when *filhas de criação* make this same system bend to their will.

SLAVERY AS THE PRESUMED PAST IN THE PRESENT

The naturalization of exploitative forms of *criação* cannot be understood without discussing Brazil's extended role as the largest country in South America and longest-lasting slavocracy in the Americas (see Figure I.1 for a map of Brazil). During the transatlantic slave trade, over four million enslaved Africans were kidnapped and brought to Brazil, providing the labor that was the foundation of a soon to be burgeoning nation (Andrews 2001; Butler 1998). Brazil's proximity to the West African coast ensured a consistent flow of Africans, and while men were preferred, women and children were also enslaved and constantly subjected to sexual terrorism and exploitative labor on *fazendas* (plantations), among other places (Mattoso 1986). The commodification and exploitation of Black bodies, including those of Black children, for centuries in Brazil provides an essential historical context to understand *criação*.

One of the lasting legacies of Brazil's substantial role in the transatlantic slave trade is the sheer pervasiveness of domestic labor: Brazil is home to the greatest number of domestic workers.[16] These workers are disproportionately Afro-Brazilian women who receive menial wages, poor treatment in precarious conditions, and who work exploitative hours often as part of the informal economy (Araújo and Lombardi 2013; Bernardino-Costa 2014).[17] Due to the relegation of domestic workers to the informal labor market and the failure of the government to even recognize their status as workers, they have been historically some of the most vulnerable workers in the country (Bernardino-Costa 2011; de Santana Pinho and Silva 2010).

As Bernardino-Costa's (2011) work has richly documented, a second lasting aspect of Brazil's role as the largest slaveocracy is the enduring notion of the "good master," which is based on the idea that "during the

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[16] International Labour Office (2013).   [17] Bernardino-Costa (2014).

FIGURE I.I Map of Brazil

period of slavery the relations between whites and slaves were free of excessive violence and brutality that characterized other slave societies" (1). Portrayals of Brazil as a "racial paradise" that emerged in the early 1900s relied on the sanitization of slavery through ideas about the "good master," the adoring *mãe preta* (Black mammy), and the erasure of the centuries of enslavement and sexualized violence against Black women (Caldwell 2007; Freyre 1964 [1933]; Rezende and Lima 2004; Twine

1998). Colonial relationships that were replete with savage violence were often reframed as loving. Though this ideology remains pervasive, Black Brazilians have never passively accepted subjugation or internalized these representations without critique (Andrews 2001; Butler 1998; Hanchard 1998). From early slave ship rebellions, planned slave revolts, the development of quilombo communities for escaped Africans, and the emergence of political organizations such as the *Movimento Unificado Negro*, sustained resistance characterizes the experiences of Black people in Brazil (Conrad 1994; Nascimento 2004; Perry 2013).[18] Recent contributions from Brazilian researchers and historians reveal the unconventional resistance strategies employed by both enslaved and freed Black Brazilian women in the 19th century through the present (Rocha 2009; Xavier, Farias and Gomes 2012).

In terms of resistance, this research on *criação* emerges on the heels of the successful mobilization of Afro-Brazilian women-led domestic workers' unions and the growing opposition to the inequalities and indignities suffered by Black people more broadly (Bernardino-Costa 2014; Biroli 2018; Alvarez and Caldwell 2017; Harrington 2015). In March 2013, under leadership of Afro-Brazilian women union leaders, the Brazilian Congress approved one of the most sweeping domestic labor reforms in the Western Hemisphere. Given the intentional efforts previously taken by the state to exclude domestic workers from even being considered laborers, this victory takes on even greater significance. De Santana Pinho (2015) expounds upon this vital historical context:

For example, when the *Consolidação das Leis Trabalhistas* – ClT (Consolidation of labor laws) was established in 1943, domestic workers were excluded from its coverage because it was understood that maids carried out "non-economic" labor.... The ClT was the first set of laws to unify workers' rights in Brazil, and it represented a major victory for the working class. By excluding domestic workers from its benefits, Brazilian legislators maintained the status quo of millions of poor (and mainly black) women, thus contributing to further naturalizing their position as "less than" laborers. (107)

In stark contrast to earlier legislation, the 2013 reforms recognized domestic work as a profession with all rights that this designation allows, including a formal stance on labor abuse, regulations about compensation, social security, right to vacation, health care, and a formal system to address grievances (Brazil Ministerio do Trabalho 2013). Indicative of the

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[18] As Anderson (1996) shows, the best example of this resistance is embodied by quilombo communities, of the which the largest, Palmares, withstood invasion for over 200 years.

extent to which the law would intervene to dismantle the link connecting domestic abuses and slavery, these laws have been referred to as Brazil's "second abolition of slavery."[19]

These legislative developments are promising; however, *filhas de criação* are part of a unique group that has historically been situated as the most marginalized and invisible workers in Brazil.[20] The aforementioned labor laws have not significantly impacted the lives of the *filhas de criação* in this study who were "taken in" by families under the auspices of informal adoption. None of the *filhas de criação* who are included in this study accessed these laws to receive the pay, benefits, and protections to which they would be rightfully entitled.[21] Further revealing the gaps in legislation, the informally adopted daughters in this study remain on the fringes of the informal economy and outside the reach of these new laws because of their ambiguous positions as family members and workers. The cultural logic of *criação*, the ambiguity of their positionality, their high level of dependency, and moral ambiguities create doubts, in their own minds, about whether such legislative protections even *should* be extended to them. This ambiguity is amplified by the fact that sometimes *filhas de criação* may begin in a home as a paid worker and later transition into being a *filha de criação*, and vice versa. Some are partially paid and others receive nothing at all. For example, Indira, whose informal payments stopped years ago, lamented that her adoptive family members "have been making a slave out of me." Not only did she refuse to report them to the authorities; she lied to others about having received payments in order to protect the family's honor and her own. The moral ambiguity of these relationships similarly explains why Tânia, who felt like "property," simultaneously asserted that she should feel gratitude for her adoptive family.

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[19] In March 2013, Eliana Menezes from the Domestic Workers Union of São Paulo referred to the 2013 legislation as the "segunda abolição da escravatura." www.cartacapital.com.br/sociedade/pec-das-domesticas-e-segunda-abolicao-da-escravatura-diz-lideranca/.

[20] Offering one of the most comprehensive analyses of the precarious status of *filhos de criação* in the late twentieth century, Dalla Vecchia (2001) describes *criação* as a semi-servitude form of production where *filhos de criação* were "almost always exploited and maintained in a state of dependency and submission, politically controlled, culturally excluded, marginalized in family relations, and limited both recreationally and religiously" (ix).

[21] Fonseca (2002a) writes about these gaps and attributes them to the fact that "Brazilian laws, often touted as being on the forefront of progressive international legislation, give so little heed to local values and social dynamics" (398).

Unifying a theme that rests at the crux of the *filhas*' narratives, the affective ties constructed between adopted daughters and their adoptive families are central, not coincidental to their exploitation (Brites 2007; Goldstein 2003; Kofes 2001). In this sense, this contemporary form of slave-like exploitation is most notably based on affective technologies of domination. These adoptive families leverage culturally specific notions of love, obligation, gratitude, and morality to create a sense of family where membership is conditioned on obedience and servitude. The power that affective ties wield becomes an emotional juggernaut, which as *filha de criação* Kátia explains is more powerful than physical confinement because "não tem o ferro no pescoço, mas tem na alma né!" (there is not a chain around your neck, but there is one on your soul!). *Filhas de criação* featured in this research share narratives that when woven together form a tapestry of experiences, dreams, and decisions produced in the context of ambiguous family/work relationships. No longer children, they face significant structural disadvantage, and work to reconcile the ambiguity of their affective embeddedness in the adoptive families that house them and which, in some cases, represent the only family they remember.

When I have presented findings from this research, there is often a tendency to ask why *filhas de criação*, especially now as adults, do not simply leave their adoptive families. This line of questioning is problematic not the least because it is predicated on the assumption that these women have not attempted to leave and because it assumes that leaving will provide freedom. In recognition of their agency, decision-making, and their perceptions of their structural reality, I show that *filhas de criação* perceive significant challenges to their survival if they were to leave the "protection" of their adoptive families (Arend 2015; de Azevedo 2017; Graham 1992). Racism, classism, and sexism greatly structure the lives of these women, and these factors were driving forces for why they were originally ushered into this practice of *criação*. Moreover, as children, many did not have access to quality schools; in fact, most of them are not fully literate. As adults, their prospects in the job force are precarious, and with limited experience in the formal work force beyond domestic work and their declining health conditions, some view the uncompensated domestic work in the confines of their informally adoptive families as more secure. Socially, they are often isolated from others, and their social networks are almost completely tied to their adoptive families. Hence, entrenched structural disadvantages paired with other forms of coercion help explain their dependency on and attachments to

these adoptive families. It is from these attachments that a semblance of the most powerful emotion surfaces: love.

INFORMAL ADOPTION, KINSHIP, AND EXPLOITATION

Hidden in plain sight, adult *filhas de criação* occupy a liminal space between worker and family member. Their ambiguous but ubiquitous positioning means they are situated just outside the reach of family/kinship researchers, yet not quite within the scope of traditional labor studies. For example, informal adoptions are pervasive in Brazil and across Latin America, but research on informal kinship networks often highlights the experiences of fostered or adopted *children* where foster relationships are conceptualized as temporary arrangements until adulthood (Arend 2005; Fonseca 1986; Kaye 2006; Leinaweaver 2008). The prioritization of children is markedly clear from the preponderance of research about the trajectories of orphans or poor children (Fonseca 2006, 2013; Rossetti-Ferreira et al. 2008). This has been an important intervention, considering that in the nineteenth century, legal guardianship of destitute children was transferred to agricultural families who pursued adoption primarily as a way to expand their labor force (Kuznesof 1998; Meznar 1994). As an important actor, the state's loosening of requirements to remove a child from their parent's care was a direct result of the capitalist demand for labor (Kuznesof 1998). Researchers' emphasis on contemporary childhood, child labor laws, and informal kinship arrangements have precipitated legislative gains and fruitful debates related to child rights, work, and adoption (Fonseca 2002c; Rossetti-Ferreira et al. 2008; Tomás 2007). While valuable, until now it has been relatively unclear what becomes of these children when they are adults. Research seldom accounts for what informally adopted children's continued relationship with their informally "adoptive" families means for their production and reproductive labor over the life course.[22]

My attention to labor results from evidence that the motivations that drive the circulation of the informally adopted daughters in this study are, in part, a response to capitalistic labor needs of the receiving

[22] Studies by Arend (2005), Dalla Vecchia (2001), and De Azevedo (2017) are among the few empirical works that focus on the lives of adult *filhos de criação* (men and women).

families.[23] Domestic work is explicitly qualified as "paid" domestic work to differentiate it from the work that women (wives and mothers) typically provide in the domestic sphere. Traditional studies of paid domestic work examine salary inequities, exploitative hours, the lack of vacation, and the power dynamics that separate mistresses (*patroas*) from their maids (Brites 2007; de Santana Pinho and Silva 2010; Goldstein 2003). Researchers have thoroughly explored the challenges and possibilities that emerge when the formal roles of a domestic worker spill over to personal relationships, friendships, and other informal responsibilities (Goldstein 2003; Kofes 2001). This bifurcation of paid versus unpaid (and presumably family) domestic work nearly forecloses the possibility of discussing the condition of informally adopted daughters who provide free (and in some cases lifelong) domestic labor under the guise of family.

Second-Class Daughters fills the existing gap because it decenters children and explores the discourses, practices, and affective dimensions that sustain these ambiguous work/family relationships throughout the lives of adult *filhas de criação*. For most women in this study, *criação* does not merely describe a childhood occurrence. Rather, it is the gateway into their provision of reproductive labor to adoptive families extending through adulthood and, in some cases, until death. And the demands for their labor may even continue when they no longer physically reside with the adoptive family. By integrating a life-course perspective (Shanahan 2000), I trace how *filhas de criação* begin their tenure in childhood as adopted daughters and sisters, and later transition into becoming *mães pretas (*mammies/Black mothers), *Madrinhas* (godmothers), or even grandmothers to the generations of mostly white children that they raise. As a critical examination, I suggest that the role shifts and family titles that women hold do not emerge spontaneously, but instead are aligned with the immediate reproductive needs of the family. These role shifts and family titles are reinforced by performances of "family theater" that further obfuscate work/family boundaries (Chapter 2). The use of "family titles" masks power dynamics, and obscures the multiple ways that *filhas de criação* are differentiated in the family (Brites 2007; Goldstein 2003; Twine 1998).

Bringing visibility to a group that has been ignored far too long, *Second-Class Daughters* primarily highlights the lives of Black Brazilian

[23] Dalla Vecchia (2001) frames his analysis of *filhos de criação* around their value in a paternalistic economic system.

women who live or have lived in slave-like conditions in informal adoptive family homes. Whether they were *dada* (given) to wealthier families as children, plucked from the countryside where it is common for wealthy families to "*pegar uma menina*" (get a girl), or taken in as the "daughter" of a wealthy family's domestic worker, they were all lured by promises of a better life and educational opportunities. Many girls and women realistically expected to be productive members of the adoptive family by contributing to child-appropriate chores, but nearly all report facing the unreasonable and exploitative expectation to care for their adoptive family at the expense of their education, health, well-being, and life goals. The internal logic of *criação* is one that presumes *filhas de criação* were "born to serve" or portrays the receiving families as having performed an act of charity, and both negate the need to compensate their work (da Cunha 2008; Graham 1992). The prevailing rationale also dictates that in exchange (*troco*) for their work, *filhas de criação* receive room and board and must display, above all, gratitude (*gratidão*). What *filhas de criação* come to learn is that the expectation to show gratitude has no distinct end point, and it often requires complete submission and complicity (Chapter 3). When an argument ensues between Tânia and her adoptive family, her complaint about being "treated like a maid" is met with the dry response: "You are not my maid. I don't pay you a salary." Ambiguities abound; her lack of compensation is framed as evidence of her "true" family membership.

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

As a critical feminist and intersectional[24] analysis, this study begins with an understanding that "interlocking oppressions" of race, class, and gender shape Black women's experiences in Brazil (Bairros 1991; Caldwell 2007; Carneiro and Santos 1995; Lima and da Silva 1992; Rezende and Lima 2004; Twine 1998; Williams 2013; Xavier et al. 2012). This intervention is crucial because as Rezende and Lima (2004) note, "few studies in the fields of sociology and anthropology have specifically analyzed the condition of Black women in Brazil" (762).[25] The intersectional import of race, class, and gender is clearly evident from

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[24] My use of intersectionality is directly connected to Crenshaw's (1991) argument that Black women's positionality at the intersection of several forms of disadvantage has significant implications for their experiences and livelihoods.

[25] For notable exceptions, see Caldwell (2007), Carneiro (2011), Gonzales (1984), Pacheco (2008), Williams (2013).

the compelling statistics that, consistent with Brazil's racialized and gendered hierarchy of power, white men out-earn both white women and Black women, and Black men out-earn both white women and Black women.[26] In 2013, data suggests that 46 percent of white women versus 71 percent of Black women lived in extreme poverty; nonwhite women have less schooling and training than white women; and they tend to work in menial positions.[27]

Significant advances by women have been made in the labor force, but where white women have broken barriers, Black women have continued to be disadvantaged (Carneiro and Santos 1995; Lima et al. 2013). As part of this disadvantage, Black Brazilian girls and women are callously considered surplus labor whose exploitation is explained, in part, because "there is not enough expansion of the formal sector to absorb these workers" (Goldstein 2003: 66). In her book *Negras in Brazil*, Kia Lilly Caldwell (2007) offers a pioneering analysis that examines the manifestation of Brazil's racialized and gendered system of exclusion. Her analysis identifies wage disparities and Black women's position on the occupational hierarchy as symptomatic of Black Brazilian women's broader exclusion along several axes of society. Black women's experiences of stigmatization and marginalization have compromised their lives in a profound ways, and served as a catalyst for the emergence of their politicized identities (Caldwell 2007). It is precisely the politicization of their intersecting identities of race, class, color, and gender that led to the successful mobilization of the domestic workers' unions (Bairros 1995; Caldwell 2018; Werneck 2016). Drawing on a similar model, this work is grounded in a critical Black feminist analysis that is attentive to the insights that emerge when Black women's intersectional identities, bodies, experiences, and voices are centered in the analysis of oppression and domination (Carneiro 2011; Collins 1999, 2005; Crenshaw 1991; Gomes 1995; Ribeiro 2019).

In concert with the need to address the intersectionality of gender, class, and race and to render racial power visible, I approach this project

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[26] For a thorough analysis of Black women's economic disadvantage in Brazil, see Carneiro (2011), Carneiro and Santos (1995), Lima and da Silva (1992), and Marcondes et al (2013).

[27] Biroli and Miguel (2015). Earlier analysis conducted by Lima and da Silva (1992) revealed that Black women faced barriers to occupational mobility in comparison to white women. Lovell (1999) found that Black Brazilians experienced even more inequality (wage disparities) as they ascended to higher levels of leadership in the occupational hierarchy.

attentive to the role of whiteness as a fundamental element of inequality in Brazil.[28] For example, adoptive families are often headed by white middle-class women who use scripts of interaction with impoverished Black women that are based on racist and patriarchal ideologies, stereotypes, and unreasonable expectations of servitude due to their assumptions of Black women's inferiority.[29] Challenging studies that portray white elite men or patriarchs as operating only on the fringes of the domestic relations,[30] I bring the patriarch's presence and complicity to the forefront to expose them as both active and passive actors in the recruitment and exploitation of *filhas de criação* (see the section "Of Morality and Men" in Chapter 4). Problematizing binary notions of race and power in *criação*, I analyze how even nonwhite and Black adoptive families engage with *filhas de criação* in ways that reflect their internalization of anti-Blackness and their investment in racialized displays of power and status (Chapter 4). The Lima and Gomes families, comprised of socially mobile Black family members, are representative of the power and pervasiveness of racialized, classed, and gendered scripts for all members of society.[31]

Colen's notion of "stratified reproduction" offers a robust conceptual framework for understanding the ease with which poor Black women's reproductive power can be casually forfeited for the benefit of white families (Colen 1995; Ginsburg 1995; McCormack 2005). Consistent with this framing, Black women's bodies are viewed as dangerous when they produce biological offspring yet their bodies are considered ideally

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[28] It has only been in the last two decades that researchers have explored whiteness more deeply in Brazil. Examples in this area include Bento (2002), Corossacz (2017, 2019), De Santana Pinho (2009), Roth-Gorden (2016), and Schucman (2012).

[29] Monsma (2016) refers to these practices as emerging from "slaveocrat logics" which include the infantilization of Blacks, low tolerance for "arrogant" behaviors or disobedience, expectations of complete loyalty, disrespect for Blacks' private lives, the idea that they are naturally inferior and made to serve, and the belief that they are necessarily dependent.

[30] The intentional connection between the past and the present is echoed by the work of Fernando Conceição, who indicts Brazil, describing it as "Escravolândia" (Slaveland). This conclusion is based on his analysis of the disturbingly high levels of Black mortality. Alves (2014) and Smith (2016) further illuminate how the veneer of equality and cultural inclusion actually masks the levels of Black suffering and oppression in Brazil.

[31] Similar to the way that slaveowners in Brazil could be and often were African descendants, so too can Black family members be complicit in a system where Black women's bodies are viewed as dispensable (Furtado 2017). Indeed, racial anxieties and the desire to be associated with whiteness may lead Black adoptive family members to treat Black *filhas de criação* and their Black family members from a lower socioeconomic position in cruel ways (Hordge-Freeman 2015b).

exploitable when in the service of the social reproduction of wealthy, white families. Noting the conflict between white feminist dreams and Black women's humanity, Creuza Maria Oliveira, president of the Domestic Workers Union in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil argues:

[White women] don't want the domestic woman, the domestic worker, a Black woman, who is there working in her house, to study, to have an active sexual life, to have a child, to have her citizenship to participate politically.[32]

Black women and girls are processed through a system where their whole existence is considered "grist for the mill" in the service of the social reproduction of white families.

CATCHING FEELINGS: THE AFFECTIVE ARCHITECTURE OF DOMINATION

Second-Class Daughters is unsettling not because it recounts brute exploitation, but rather because the narratives expose the coexistence of "tense and tender" intimacies.[33] What surfaces alongside the patriarchal and racist underpinnings of *criação* is a naturalized system of affective power relations. These seemingly paradoxical affective power relations were "fundamental to conquest, as was the goals of colonizing the hearts and minds of women, children" (Stoler 2001: 865). As such, I theoretically frame this research around the notion that "power circulates through feeling . . . and [through] how it creates modes and forms of emotional knowledge" (Wasser 2019; 119). Power can impact people's bodies through emotions and these emotions can be weaponized to construct, justify, and reinforce systems of domination through what I refer to as "affective captivity." Nearly undetectable because of its ordinariness, "affective captivity" results, in part, from the sheer amount of affective labor that *filhas de criação* provide to the adoptive families and the cultivated dependency that they experience due to their structural position.

For *filhas de criação*, intimacy in their adoptive families guides their day-to-day lives, and it is crystallized by their performance of reproductive (cleaning, cooking, washing, etc.) and affective (exhibiting love and affection toward family members, especially children) labor. But this

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[32] This quote comes from an interview with Creuza Oliveira as documented in Bernandino-Costa (2011: 10).
[33] Stoler (2001).

intimacy does not overpower hierarchy; to the contrary, feelings of intimacy occur within a logic of hierarchy and differentiation (Goldstein 2003; Kofes 2001). For example, the threat that biological mothers feel from the intimate role that *filhas de criação* play in their children's lives reveals an important tension related to race, power, and motherhood. The violence of these "tender and tense intimacies" results from *filhas de criação* providing, in some cases, lifelong labor in support of the adoptive family, while being subjected to abuse and/or relegated to second-class family status (see the treatment of Ângela in Chapter 2 and Indira in Chapter 3).

Ultimately, the narratives of *filhas de criação* lay bare how social relations emerge as much from the prevailing economic and social structure as they do from a more hidden affective architecture that orchestrates microsocial interactions and relationships. Conceptual findings related to affect and domestic work, including ideas about how "affective ambiguity" and affective bonds are produced in domestic settings, serve as valuable guideposts in this work (Brites 2007, 2014; de Santana Pinho and Silva 2010; Fonseca 1986, 2002a, 2002b; Goldstein 2003; Wasser 2019). From this existing research, I develop a more sustained intersectional analysis (engaging race, class, and gender) of the affective architecture of domination in Brazil, its role in orchestrating the domestic power relations of *criação*, and its centrality in shaping the "affective captivity" that Black women experience. In this sense, this work can be situated as part of a shift in the humanities and social sciences to articulate the relationship between critical race studies, gender, affect, and power (Ahmed 2004; Bonilla-Silva 2019; Hordge-Freeman 2015b; Wasser 2019).[34]

My intersectional approach also draws on Spillers' (1984, 1987) notion of "Black gender captivities," as articulated by Jaime Alves (2016) in his research on incarceration and the "caged Black woman" in Brazil. Alves (2016) argues that "Black gender captivities" are present in favelas, kitchens of elite families, and increasingly prisons, which are "site[s] of reiteration of Black women's subaltern position in the Brazilian racial order" (234). I extend "Black gendered captivities" further to argue that what Alves (2016) describes as "state-produced patriarchal practices" and regimes of domination have both spatial and affective

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[34] Among many concepts in sociology, researchers have identified "racialized emotions" (Bonilla-Silva 2019), "affective capital" (Hordge-Freeman 2015b), "feelings rules" and "emotional labor" (Hochschild 1979), racialized feeling (Wingfield 2010) among others, to theorize the connection between emotions and racial power.

dimensions (6). *Second-Class Daughters* uses a frame of "affective captivity" to illustrate that the affective terrain is a nonphysical space that serves as a key site for the confinement of Black women.

Ultimately, I argue for recognizing "domination not only in the space of the household, but also in ways of how hierarchies of gender, race, and class are experienced, judged, and reproduced through feeling" (Wasser 2019, 124). Though structural factors direct *filhas de criação* to adoptive families, structural considerations along with affective ties are what compel them to remain linked to them even when they feel, as one respondent asserted, "I am making decisions against myself." A recurrent theme, *filhas de criação* often expressed that they could not understand the logic of their own decisions, but felt compelled to subject themselves to violent behaviors. This is an outcome of "affective captivity." This state of nonphysical confinement does not simply emerge organically from ambiguous domestic relationships, but rather emerges from routinized behaviors and performative affective interactions (Chapter 2), ambiguous or mixed messages about family roles (Chapter 3), and culturally sanctioned moral norms of gratitude (Chapter 4) that reinforce a particular set of affective power relations. Superimposed over these considerations are more individual forms of psychological coercion, including isolation, excessive surveillance, induced exhaustion and disability, sporadic pleasures, humiliation, and strenuous labor demands, that reinforce their subjugated position and dependency.[35]

To be clear, this research's emphasis on "affective captivity" is not a pivot toward a psychological analysis and away from a sociological vantage point. To the contrary, this research reveals why sociologists should take more seriously the hidden affective architecture of domination as a sociological question.[36] It is true that structural disadvantages, including lack of education, illiteracy, minimal social networks, compromised sense of self-efficacy, and a broader social structure that naturalizes their exploitation in the domestic sphere, influence Black women in Brazilian society. However, what is most telling is that even when these

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[35] Baldwin et al. (2015) use Biderman's Framework of Coercion (Biderman 1957) to conceptualize how coercion shapes the lives of trafficked domestic workers. The elements of coercion included have been adapted for this study.

[36] House (1977: 161) notes that greater "interchange" between sociology, psychology, and social psychology would yield improved theorization about microsocial interactions and macrostructural factors. Affective captivity provides an opportunity to explore the possibilities of this interchange.

barriers are removed, adoptive families' cultivation of "affective captivity" – resulting from the embeddedness of *filhas de criação* in an ambiguous web of affective power relations – serves as a failsafe that can be activated to obtain their compliance. "Affective captivity" emerges from the confluence of structural and affective embeddedness in a system of domination that the oppressed person is socialized to view as legitimate and desirable, even as it undermines their autonomy. Tânia, for example, eventually acquires education and a social network to support her autonomy, yet she does not leave her adoptive family. She laments: "It has been forty years and I still don't have my freedom" (Chapter 6).

METHODOLOGY AND POSITIONALITY: "BRINGING YOUR WHOLE SELF TO RESEARCH"

Second-Class Daughters is a multimethod qualitative study based largely on in-depth life histories, interviews, and ethnographic observations conducted over the span of ten years (2010–2020) with thirteen adult *filhas de criação* from three states in Brazil. Of these interviews, I conducted ten interviews in the State of Bahia, two in State of Paraíba and one in the State of Amazonas. This research is further informed by formal interviews with another twenty-five individuals – five attorneys, ten activists, five domestic rights union members, and five unaffiliated domestic workers – from Bahia, Paraíba, Amazonas, and Rio Grande do Sul.[37] These semi-structured interviews were extremely valuable because they shaped my understanding of *criação* and clarified the diverse forms of informal domestic work as well as the law and activism around this topic. Though valuable to my theoretical framing, these interviews are important references but none of these is directly quoted in this book. While there are drawbacks of not including these formal interviews, this decision has allowed me to amplify the perspectives of *filhas de criação*. Furthermore, it does so in a way that disrupts the culture of silence that has historically erased their voices.

   Second-Class Daughters is based on a relatively small sample of *filhas de criação*. Nonetheless, there are two key research innovations that distinguish this work from existing studies on *criação*. This study is based

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[37] I conducted these twenty-five semi-structured interviews with the goal of understanding the diverse conditions under which *criação* and informal domestic work occur, to explore the relationship between *filhas de criação* and institutions and organizations, and to learn about the potential legal recourse for exploited workers.

on data collected from over ten years of semi-structured interviews with thirteen key *filhas de criação* and additional ethnographic observations drawn from my live-in experiences in the homes of three participants and their adoptive families. It is extremely rare for studies of *criação* to benefit from an extended longitudinal scope and first-hand ethnographic observations from inside the homes of middle-class or elite families. The unparalleled level of access that I had to the seemingly mundane aspects of the lives of *filhas de criação* in these elite families played a pivotal role in exposing the critical moments, interactions, and performances that sustain systems of domination.

The second key research innovation relates to the sample itself. Not only are participants all adult *filhas de criação* from diverse states in Brazil; the respondents all lived in their adoptive families for considerable amounts of time. My interviews with Tânia and Maisa, who both spent over forty years as live-in *filhas de criação* in their adoptive families, present a rare look into the people, practices, and experiences that have shaped their lives. In comparison, the youngest respondent in this study is Marina, who is twenty-two years old and has spent five years in her adoptive family. Most of the respondents are between the ages of forty-six and fifty-three and lived for extended periods of time with or among their adoptive families. For additional reference, Appendix A provides a table of all of the *filhas de criação* included in this book, as well as the (pseudonymous) names of their adoptive families.

As this research has occurred over the last ten years, the length of time that I have known each *filha de criação* varies. I have maintained an ongoing relationship spanning five to ten years with all of the respondents, but I have known respondents who lived in the states of Paraíba and Amazonas for only about five years. My most sustained and substantial relationships are with *filhas de criação* who live in Salvador, Bahia. And while it is customary to provide the exact timing and location of my interviews and observations, due to the sensitivity of this research, I am intentionally vague about the specific details about the *filhas de criação* in this study. This is especially the case for my descriptions of the families and homes where I lived, which I describe with minimal detail in order to protect the identities of the respondents.[38]

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[38] I have known nearly all of the respondents from Salvador for eight to ten years and we have an ongoing relationship that we maintain via WhatsApp. The benefits of this particular app is that it allows us to communicate using recorded messages, which is the preferred method of communication for those who are not literate.

Interviews and Life History

In terms of the semi-structured interviews, I formally interviewed and observed *filhas de criação* at least twice and, for most of the interviewees, I conducted informal and formal interviews more than five times over this ten-year period. Formal interviews typically ranged in length from one to two hours and they occurred every two to three years. These formal, scheduled interviews were particularly important for respondents in Paraíba and Amazonas because the interviews were my only interactions with them. In contrast, my interactions with respondents in Salvador often involved informal interviews as well as observations of their family life and/or participation in events at which members of their adoptive families were present. The frequency with which we spoke and the longitudinal nature of the study allowed me to re-ask questions to ensure the consistency of their narratives and explore shifts that had occurred since our last meeting.

Key to securing some of these interviews was a white couple in Brazil, the Moreiras, that was troubled by the way that *filhas de criação* had been treated in their own families. They strategically introduced me to their family members and, in some cases, to families they knew had exploitative relationships with *filhas de criação*. Not simply allies, but accomplices in antiracism, this couple colluded with me to arrange secret interviews with *filhas de criação* away from their adoptive families. Beyond connecting us, in one case, they offered to assist a *filha de criação* in seeking legal recourse for her exploitation and agreed to serve as character witnesses on her behalf. She declined both offers (Chapter 7). This relationship with the Moreiras facilitated my research, but it was one that I had to manage carefully to ensure that I was also doing my part to protect the interests and identities of the *filhas de criação*.

Beyond the interviews, my relationship with three of the women in Salvador afforded me opportunities to sometimes travel with them alone for a period of days during which we conversed away from their adoptive families. During these trips, it was common for me to spend several hours (in one case, nearly twelve hours) listening to respondents share their life histories including past and current experiences in their adoptive families. Having never discussed their abuse or exploitation, these interviews were often experienced as what Brazilians might refer to as a *desabafo* (unburdening) or cathartic. Though our conversations often began with me asking one general question, the conversations organically evolved into layered accounts of ambiguous and exploitative interactions. Rather than

ask pointed questions, I listened intently and gently asked them to tell me more about certain interactions to allow them to reflect on some of the more contradictory aspects of their lives (e.g., sleeping on the floor, while being referred to as "mother").

This was a delicate process that required my own personal restraint in order to allow *filhas de criação* to make personal discoveries about their lives rather than me imposing my own ideas. As most had never actually recounted out loud their experiences of exploitation as *filhas de criação*, several hours of the initial interviews were often dedicated to them abruptly shifting from topic to topic as they recounted memorable and often traumatic experiences. These initial interviews were often replete with disjointed memories about people, incidents, and emotions that were extremely difficult to piece together. It was as though they had thrown all of the pieces of their memories of *criação* on the table, and over these past ten years, we have worked to arrange the pieces in a way that could best tell their life stories. Even as the narratives emanate from the respondents, the truth as it is presented is still very much the product of my interpretation and analysis.

Ethnographic Observations

In addition to the semi-structured interviews, the most valuable aspect of my research was the opportunity to have resided with three *filhas de criação* in their adoptive families in Salvador, Bahia, for a period ranging from a few weeks to as long as several months. This aspect of the research introduced me to the "hidden in plain sight" world of *criação* and the interactions that sustain the practice. My previous book, *The Color of Love*, involved observations, interviews, and rich details about racial socialization among Black Brazilian families who live in an impoverished and working-class neighborhood in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil (Hordge-Freeman 2015b).[39] Here, in this book, the sociological lens now turns to the homes of the white middle-class and privileged families, groups that have often escaped the scrutiny of social scientists.

Rarely do ethnographic researchers enter the research field knowing exactly what awaits them. So, though I would like to recount a neat

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[39] *The Color of Love* is an ethnography conducted over sixteen months in ten Black Brazilian families during which examines how racial and phenotypic hierarchies shape racial and gender socialization and in ways that have complex and contradictory ramifications including material and affective consequences (Hordge-Freeman 2015b).

narrative that I originally began work in Brazil to study *filhas de criação*, this is not so. However, as a constructivist-grounded theorist, I was led to the topic by being open to seeing beyond my initial research agenda and being flexible enough to refine my methodological strategy and question my theoretical commitments (Charmaz 2017; Hordge-Freeman 2018). My encounters with *filhas de criação* initially happened while I worked on other research projects in Brazil. As I engaged in surprisingly candid conversations with the Black women who lived in the homes where I rented a room, we organically began to talk and they eventually shared that they were *filhas de criação*. Fascinated by conversations with women who were called family but who were very much not treated as family, I began to scribble about these unanticipated encounters in the margins of my field notes. Eventually, notes from these conversations began to bleed from the margins into the main text of my research field notes. And what were initially frenzied scribbles from impromptu conversations soon became paragraphs, bulleted lists, and direct quotes from these informal conversations. The life histories of Black Brazilian women that for so long languished in the *bastidores* (backstage) refused to remain, literally and figuratively, in the margins.

These serendipitous (and, at times, secret) encounters paved the way for me to access the world of *criação*. And, unexpectedly, my extended time with *filhas de criação* in their adoptive family homes offered me firsthand experience with the "dilemmas of intimacy" and my own entrapment in pseudo-familial relationships (Hordge-Freeman 2015a). Rapport is obviously a prerequisite for the development of critical personal relationships, especially among vulnerable groups. Trust among my respondents was predicated on me performing my identity in ways that displayed that I was fully American and yet very much Brazilian at heart (Mayorga-Gallo and Hordge-Freeman 2017). We danced samba, drank beer at the plaza or on the beach, watched *novelas,* and even exercised along the shore together. Respondents corrected my Portuguese at times and laughed when the occasional grammatical mistake or pronunciation faux pas allowed them to assert their linguistic superiority. I saw respondents cry from mistreatment and came to their aid in moments of economic hardship. Likewise, they also saw me in moments of distress and came to my aid, and through this, we began to cultivate our own family-like, yet uncertain relationship.

One rainy day, as I headed out shopping, a respondent (performing the role of mother) ordered me back into the house to put on more appropriate rain shoes. I sheepishly obeyed her (despite her tone making me feel

like a child) because she was right. She was always right. Another time, I vomited and fainted in the house and one respondent picked me up off the floor and helped me into the shower.[40] One of the scariest moments was when an apartment that I lived in caught on fire. A *filha de criação*, after hearing my screams, reached for me through a cloud of smoke and led me out the door. She and I often reminisce about the time that she saved my life. It is accumulation of these experiences alongside the fleeting glances at each other in the kitchen, moments of laughter in front of the television, and crowded bus rides that conveyed my "credibility and approachability" and functioned as a building block of trust.[41]

Even as I understood that the ethnographic researcher is, herself, the research instrument (Stuart 2017), I did not expect to find myself entangled in a web of affective power relations. My access to the lives of *filhas de criação* was wholly dependent on having given myself over to the whims of affective ambiguity. Reflecting on my positionality in Brazil, I have previously expressed that my subjectivity "functioned like an off-kiltered see-saw, shaky and unpredictable" (Hordge-Freeman 2015b: 22). Part of this instability was simply due to what it meant to be a dark-skinned Black women from the United States living in Brazil. My familiarity and ease of moving through the city, because I blended in, was often interrupted by reminders that Brazilians (of all races) assumed I did not belong or was "out of place" in elite spaces.[42] My sense of uncertainty was also connected to my growing affective attachments to the *filhas de criação*, which was difficult to navigate. With my metaphorical arms flailing wildly, I could steady myself just long enough to peek my head over the confusion for a fleeting glimpse of clarity about *criação*. At moments, the *filhas de criação* would throw me a lifeline, but this was unreliable as they, themselves, were struggling to stay afloat.

As an ethnographer, I value authentic relationships and understand the power of using body and emotions for the sake of 'bringing your whole

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[40] A reminder of how women's bodies are always being policed and evaluated: although I was very ill, Tânia made evaluative comments on my body as I slouched naked and covered in vomit in the shower. She and I had a close relationship, but it was the prevailing norms about the evaluations of women's bodies in Brazil that made her comments feel quintessentially "Brazilian."

[41] Mayorga-Gallo and Hordge-Freeman (2017).

[42] Mitchell-Walthour and Hordge-Freeman (2016) organized an edited collection consisting of reflections from Black Brazilian researchers in the United States and Black US researchers in Brazil who discuss the ways that their racial, gender, and national positionalities shape their research experiences in both countries.

self to research.'[43] By doing so in Brazil, my relationships with the *filhas de criação* flourished, but they also became more complex. When Nadia tearfully stated, "você é a filha que não pariu" (you are the daughter that I never had), I began to feel the pressure to perform daughterhood and accept her eager performances of motherhood. I lost balance when others noted, "I only tell my secrets to you," because these comments made me question what would happen when the research ended and I left Brazil. Others who pondered, "Girl, I don't know how it's possible that I tell you all of these things," seemed to be wondering the same thing that I was about what to make of this "intimacy."

Ironically, this intimacy came from my "outsider-within" status – it was the product of our distance and closeness (Collins 1986). I was considered a safe person with whom they could share what they had not spoken about to others, because they found comfort in knowing that I would eventually be leaving and their narratives would leave with me. In nearly all cases, we were Black women, but I was in a privileged position by virtue of being from the United States. This was reinforced by our disparate treatment in the same house. My Americanness functioned as a type of currency that afforded me differential treatment and entrance into spaces that were off-limits to them. Between us, the disparate treatment became a source of ironic laughter and point of connection especially because I used it in a way that was beneficial to them. I witnessed the (mis) treatment that they might have otherwise swallowed, validated that events had happened as they experienced them, and was there to ask them to reflect on incidents as they were occurring. Most respondents in the study were intrigued by these aspects of my positionality, but some (at least initially) remained more skeptical and guarded. Rather than express shared intimacy in one joint interview with her sisters, a *filha de criação* asked, "Should we be telling you these things?" This question and respondents' investment in this research, despite their fears and reservations, clarified that the final product needed to be worth their time and worth the risk of opening a wound that, once open, could (and in some cases did) change everything.[44]

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[43] Hordge-Freeman (2018) discusses how researchers who bring their bodies and emotions to research are positioned to develop more authentic relationships, but must be attentive to how these same connections can undermine a project if not managed carefully.

[44] I was initially very concerned about causing harm through my interviews. I wanted to be sure to protect their identities and I also wanted to be prepared to manage their trauma. As part of my Institutional Review Board requirements in the United States, I had to have mental health resources available to provide to respondents. None of them accepted the

ON LOCATION: THE CITY OF (CAPTIVE) WOMEN

Qualitative researchers rarely have the opportunity to conduct cross-state studies in Brazil.[45] This research originally carried me to five states in Brazil including Bahia, Paraíba, Amazonas, Rio de Janeiro, and Rio Grande do Sul on a mission to locate and speak to as many *filhas de criação* as possible. Ultimately, I decided that the value of this study did not rest in me collecting interviews from random *filhas de criação* throughout Brazil. Rather than the quantity, it was the quality of the relationships that I had maintained for nearly ten years with several key informants and adoptive families that would allow me to develop a holistic and complex analysis of this practice. Though interviews were conducted with other *filhas de criação*, including by Brazilian research assistants, I privilege the interviews and experiences with the women from the Northeast (Bahia, Paraíba, and Amazonas) because they are women with whom I have had the most sustained relationships. Among these locations, the city of Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, referred to by Ruth Landes as 'the city of women,' is the heart of this study because it is home to the majority of the respondents.

A strikingly unequal city in the Northeast of Brazil, Salvador is perched on the coast of Bahia, the state that served as the main port of entrance of millions of enslaved Africans to Brazil (Ickes 2013). A nod to its economic significance as the country's most significant port during slavery, it held the designation of being the capital of Brazil for centuries. And though I began this research long after the formal abolition of slavery in Brazil, the legacy of exploitation continues to permeate the city and intermingles with every aspect of contemporary social life in Salvador. Salvador, Bahia, has previously been referred to as a "living museum" in order to reflect the fact that history can be observed in the present (Romo 2010). However, it might be more appropriately described as "living theater" to

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help, and, instead, they often thanked me for providing them with the "therapy" that they needed. I had to reiterate several times that I was a sociologist and not a psychologist, but that distinction did not matter. Griffin et al. (2003) and Etherington (2007) suggest that researching trauma often does not retraumatize individuals but can, in fact, be cathartic and illuminating.

[45] The name of this section is a tribute to the work of Ruth Landes. Landes was a Brazilianist and sociologist whose classic 1948 book, City of Women examined Afro-Brazilian religion and was among the first to entertain the possibility that race and gender, both matter to the examination of social life in Brazil.

best account for the pressures that Black Brazilians feel to perform and commodify their Blackness to survive (Smith 2016).

Drawing on an ironic usage of the term "Afro-Paradise," Christen Smith (2016) problematizes the city of Salvador as a city that is curated by a white and "almost" white elite that violently demands that Black bodies function as currency that is in motion and under threat. The mythos of Salvador, in both the national and international imaginary, is one where fetishized Black bodies not only are the main currency in circulation but are presumably also available for consumption. Stereotypical tropes are found in the inviting Black woman with a gleaming smile who dances a frenetic samba in order to entice (foreign) male admirers. It emerges in the portrayals of Black *capoeristas* whose martial arts contortions leave them with heaving chests that evoke both admiration and sexual objectification, especially from white foreign women (*gringas*). Finally, the *baianas de acarajé*, Black women dressed in garb that honors the Orixás (African deities), offer local cuisine that reflect their Candomblé religious heritage to passersby. All might be described as cultural entrepreneurs, but their visibility and acceptability hinge on their ability to line the pockets of white elites who benefit the most from commodifying Blackness (Bairros 1991; Smith 2016).

The earliest to rise are brown and Black domestic workers who wait for the public buses that will carry them to the homes of elite and middle-class families where they spend their day. So inextricably tied is the idea of a Black woman to domestic servitude that I eventually learn, much like my fellow Black women US researchers, to expect to be mistaken for a domestic worker for just being a Black woman (Mitchell-Walthour and Hordge-Freeman 2016). When I had the nerve to use the social elevator in my apartment building located in my upscale Barra neighborhood, a white woman frowned and asked me, "Você mora aqui?" (Do you live here?). Repeated assaults on my own personhood and my observations of the treatment of Black Brazilian women made me all the more intentional about saying hello and thank you to Black women in service positions. It also gave me firsthand knowledge of just a sliver of what many of these women had experienced their entire lives.

Whereas my previous research had focused mainly on the lives of socioeconomically disadvantaged Black Brazilians, my "outsider-within" status is what allowed me to explore privileged spaces that are not often examined. Among white Brazilians (and among most Brazilians, for that matter), once my US identity was known, their intrigue with my nationality often overshadowed the scripts that they might have normally used

based on my race or gender alone (Hordge-Freeman 2015a; Mayorga-Gallo and Hordge-Freeman 2017). The families with which I lived engaged with me in a way that was warm, friendly, and extraordinarily accommodating – my Americanness allowed my Blackness to be interpreted with new eyes. These same families would sometimes invite me to elite bars and social gatherings and they introduced me to other white Brazilians in ways that indicated that my Americanness and their proximity to it offered a status boost. These introductions to their friends were critical because otherwise, these same acquaintances might have treated me in the dismissive ways that Black Brazilian women are sometimes treated. Conversations with white Brazilians about lazy domestic workers and self-victimizing Blacks who claimed racism where there was none were all too common. These types of comments made it clear that white Brazilians assumed that I felt no connection to Black Brazilians or that I would agree with their racist conclusions (they were wrong on both accounts). Inevitably, these misunderstandings meant that I often found myself embroiled in disagreements with white Brazilians about racism (see Hordge-Freeman 2015a). I leaned into the layers of my privilege in order to examine gendered racism, and there were times when I also felt compelled to directly challenge these ideas. My very presence in Brazil was disruptive, especially at times when I responded to racism in ways that were not considered "cordial."

On one very late evening, a seemingly educated white Brazilian man overheard me speaking with the white family from whom I was renting a room as we sat in an outdoor *açai* bar. When he discovered I was a sociologist, he attempted to impress me by revealing that not only was he the grandson of a quite famous anthropologist, but he also actually shared his grandfather's namesake. He pulled out a green oversized card (a Brazilian identification card) which clearly corroborated his claim. Then, he proceeded to explain to me that, as his grandfather concluded, there was actually no racism in Brazil. When I disagreed, he called me "racist" and, adding insult to injury, my white host family threatened to leave me at the outdoor bar and they, too, called me "racist" for the next few weeks following the incident. When they were willing to abandon me at a bar late at night with a strange and belligerent man, I understood how deep the investment in racial democracy was for white Brazilians, in particular.

In another incident, I sat in an otherworldly conversation during which a white man in Brazil asked me with disdain, "Really, Bete, tell me one good thing that ever came out of Africa." Sensing my dismay, he repeated

his question but prefaced it first by saying, "With total respect …" He reassured me that the low status of Black Brazilians resulted not from racism but from their lack of work ethic and aversion to school. When this statement crumbled in the face of my counterargument, he offered the theory that if racial inequality or even exploitation existed it was because "some people just want to be slaves." Marshaling my academic pedigree to advance his racism, he attributed ambition to Black Americans and framed Black Brazilians as lazy. I bristled with disgust, realizing that in our back and forth no amount of well-reasoned and evidence-based data would change this. And, in the end, I had to constantly remind myself that my task was less about changing his ideas than to document how the pervasiveness of these racist ideologies had a material impact on the lives of *filhas de criação*.

ON LANGUAGE

There are several language conventions that are used throughout the book that merit explanation. The debates that problematize the misuse and appropriation of a "generic legacy of slavery" to describe contemporary labor atrocities are ongoing and significant (Beutin 2017; Okyere 2017; de Santana Pinho and Silva 2010: 92).[46] I argue that *criação* provides the perfect opportunity to "problematize continuities, examining reproduction processes in day-to-day life and from one generation to another,"[47] in order to reveal the mutually constituting relationship between Brazil's history and persistent inequalities (Monsma 2016: 9). To be clear, there are clear connections between *criação* and slavery (da Cunha 2008; Graham 1992), but these should not be misunderstood as a suggestion that current inequalities are simply vestiges of slavery. In fact, contemporary laws, policies, and practices ensure that differential

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[46] Critiquing misuses of the term trafficking and slavery, Okyere (2017) notes that there is a "lack of historicity in anti-trafficking advocates' taxonomy of the causes, scale and features of child trafficking" and a failure to fully identify the historical factors that shape current practices" (93). This point is tied to other equally legitimate concerns that anti-trafficking discourses can obscure how "the structural exclusions that colonialism and the transatlantic slave trade forced upon the global South create systems of poverty and oppression that help facilitate human trafficking" (Beutin 2017, 30).

[47] Author's translation in the text: "Precisamos problematizar as continuidades, examinando os processos de reprodução na vida coitdiana e de uma geração a outra, especialmente em épocas de significantes mudanças sociais."

opportunities and access to valued resources support regimes of gender and racial domination in Brazil.

Throughout this book, I translate the term *filha de criação* as informally adopted daughter, and this term is applied to all of the participants in this research study. The receiving families are referred to as adoptive families, but all of the relationships in this book are *informal* adoptions, which means they occurred outside the supervision of the courts or a formal juridical process. My use of the terms "informal adoption" and "adoptive family" should not be conflated with the formal and legal adoption process that is managed by the Brazilian state. There was never any formal exchange of paperwork and no formal legal transfer of guardianship in the cases mentioned in this work.[48] Formal adoptions exist in Brazil, yet none of the women who are included in this study were adopted via these legal mechanisms. Research suggests that families from lower socioeconomic backgrounds may participate in what is considered *adoção à brasiliera* or "clandestine adoption" to circumvent the time-intensive and formalized adoption mechanisms (Fonseca 2002a). Additionally, rather than use the term *filha de criação* some respondents refer to themselves as a family member *de consideração* (of consideration) because they maintain a family identity that is less connected to being a "daughter" and more connected to being an aunt, cousin, or godmother of the family. Others feel as though the term did fit them at one point in their lives but does not adequately address who they are as adults. When this is the case, I clarify how women position and understand themselves.

A final language consideration relates to racial and color categories. All of the women who are included in this study identify as either *parda*, *preta*, or *negra* except one interviewee who self-classifies as white. Those who fall in the former three categories are referred to as Black women, even if they at times descriptively referred to themselves in more ambiguous color terms such as *morena*.[49] In this analysis, I adopt the racial classification that is used by the Black movement whereby those who are brown (*parda)* and Black (*preta*) are aggregated in the category of

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[48] Fonseca (1986) notes that some mothers may, in fact, "*dar de papel passado*" (give their children away on paper) which implies they are legally relinquishing rights and future contact with their child.

[49] *Morena* is a generic term that can be used to describe nearly all Brazilians in Brazil. It refers generally to dark hair, dark eyes, or dark skin. A white Brazilian may be referred to as *morena*, if they have dark hair. A Black Brazilian may be called *morena* in an effort not to refer to them as Black. *Morena* is the most inclusive descriptive term that exists that describes nearly everybody and, in this sense, describes almost no one.

negra (Telles 2004). At the same time, as the respondents for this study reside in different regions in Brazil where understandings and constructions of blackness vary, I include physical descriptors where appropriate and discuss how differences in racial features (regardless of racial classification) shape their treatment.

ORGANIZATION OF BOOK

In *Second-Class Daughters*, I argue that "stratified reproduction" guides the treatment of Black girls and impoverished women in the practice of *criação*, whereby they are expected to forfeit care of themselves and their own biological families in exchange for a focus on the reproduction of white, middle-class, and/or elite families. The book analyzes how violent practices, discourses, and affective encounters reproduce dominant hierarchies (of race, gender, and class) through the cultivation of intimacy and emotional embeddedness. It is precisely through the coexistence of "cruel and caring intimacies" that respondents invest in the social reproduction of the adoptive family and, as a result, become beholden to "affective captivity." This book identifies how *filhas de criação* can become imprisoned by the conditions produced by their structural position and affective ties, and it also highlights moments and conditions under which they are able to exert agency to pursue the lives that they want.

In Chapter 1, "Adopting Modern Slavery: Pathways into and Discourses of *Criação*," I highlight the structural factors (racism, sexism, poverty, and rural residence) and individual-level traumas (abuse and violence) that precipitate young destitute girls' entrance into *criação*. In doing so, I discuss how the prevalence of paternalistic views about Black families and the system of favors legitimate the adoptive family's efforts to reframe exploitation as altruism or philanthropy. I highlight the disparate trajectories of the respondents by emphasizing the varying conditions and diverse forms of poly-victimization (multiple forms of exploitation) that drive their transfer into *criação*. The chapter dispels dominant myths that either demonize or romanticize *criação* in exchange for a more nuanced, even if uneasy analysis of the structural and individual factors that precipitate *criação*.

In Chapter 2, "'*Quase da Familia*' (Almost Family): Affective Ambiguity and Family Theater as Strategies of Domination," I employ a Goffmanian analysis to reveal the strategic discourses, interactions, and practices that comprise the performances that adoptive families use in order to mask domination. Moving beyond a family's framing of *criação*

as altruistic, I deconstruct concrete examples that expose how adoptive families exert domination over *filhas de criação* through the use of symbolic inclusion in family events, the strategic use of racialized "family" language and titles, threats of punishment, and contingent (and paltry) monetary exchanges. I argue that these strategies sustain the illusion of the full family status of *filhas de criação* through the cultivation of affective, social, and economic dependency, which women often interpret as family belonging.

In Chapter 3, "Prisoners of Love: Affective Captivity and Ruptures in the Family Ideology," I explore the emotional and affective ruptures that offer signals to *filhas de criação* about their second-class status in these families. As ruptures do not always (or even often) lead to critiques of the adoptive family, I focus on how *filhas de criação* identify, interpret, and respond to these moments in order to examine how they make meaning of their abuse and exploitation. I analyze their differential responses to their adoptive family's incongruent affective performances, and their resolutions through ambiguous discourses of love and affection. As I examine the contours of affective captivity, I show that *filhas de criação* are not passive, but rather can manipulate the system of affective relations for their own ends.

In Chapter 4, "The Depths and Debts of Gratitude: The Moral Code of *Criação*," I highlight the role of morality in camouflaging exploitative aspects of *criação* and legitimating systems of racial and gender domination. Conceptually, I construct the idea of a moral assemblage (moral ideologies, beliefs, and repertoires) that persuades *filhas de criação* to reframe their exploitation as morally righteous and encourages them to forgive, forget, or accept their treatment as second-class family members. Adding complexity to traditional representations, I illustrate how *filhas de criação* evaluate the morality of white and middle-class men under the logic of "good masters," especially when they are juxtaposed with their "evil" wives. Ultimately, I argue that a strong sense of moral obligation (forged by a complex constellation of practices, discourses, and emotions) provides the justification for *filhas de criação* to sacrifice everything for the protection and reproduction of their adoptive family members.

In Chapter 5, "Family Bonds and Bondage: Generational Relationships and the Persistence of *Criação*," I examine the role of intimacy between *filhas de criação* and their biological family members in *criação*. Challenging misconceptions about *criação*, I discuss evidence that some *filhas de criação* run away from their biological homes and to their informally adoptive homes. While, in some cases, *filhas de criação* are

blocked from seeing their biological family members, in many cases, ongoing relationships with their biological families provide the opportunity for siblings to serve as co-conspirators and co-collaborators in each other's search for freedom and independence. An unexpected finding is also that contact with biological family members may sometimes compel *filhas de criação* to extend the time that they provide unpaid and exploitative labor to an adoptive family. This chapter reveals the transgressive role that biological siblings can have in the lives of *filhas de criação*, while also highlighting the capacity for systems of domination to co-opt these same family ties and bonds to secure its proliferation.

In Chapter 6, "Home Sick: Health, Disability, and Exploitation of Adult *Filhas de Criação*," I examine the impact of intense, uncompensated, and often lifelong domestic work on the health and well-being of *filhas de criação*. Building conceptually on notions of "embodied inequality," the chapter emphasizes physical health (sleep deprivation, back pains, etc.), mental health (anxiety, emotional stability, and self-esteem), and sexual health (sexual harassment and discouragement of healthy sexual development) to center the multidimensional ways that Black women's health and lives, in particular, are considered expendable. Beyond the correlations between *criação* and low self-reported health, I explain how health and disability perpetuate exploitation: the precarious health status of *filhas de criação* is not simply a result of their exploitation, but rather it leads to physical disability, which incentivizes them to remain tied to their informally adoptive families.

In Chapter 7, "Freedom to 'Live Her Own Liberty': From Existence to Resistance among *Filhas de Criação*," I pinpoint the diverse strategies of resistance and agency employed by *filhas de criação* throughout the life course. I suggest that their resistance to racial, gender, and class domination, much like their captivity, occurs on multiple levels including through their affective performances, manipulation of the family ideology, escape, subterfuge, and reinterpretation and rejection of certain family relationships. By organizing these resistance strategies based on women's status at the time of our interview (those who had escaped and severed ties, those who moved out but remain attached to their adoptive families, and those who currently live with their adoptive families), I illustrate how women's experiences fall on a continuum of freedom and captivity. Ultimately, they navigate this continuum in ways that allow them to maximize the levels of freedom available to them.

In the concluding chapter, "The Last of Our Kind?," I reiterate how the hyperexploitation of *filhas de criação* is sustained by an affective

architecture of domination that interlocks morality and family to produce affective captivity. Zooming out from informal adoption, I revisit the current status of the domestic workers' rights movements and the extent to which this movement has impacted the lives of domestic workers in Brazil. I highlight the role of consciousness-raising and leveraging transnational connections in order to eradicate labor exploitation. I also explore the relevance of this research for a more robust racial and gender analysis of human trafficking and labor exploitation around the world with an emphasis on the ways that other countries in Latin America view and/or have addressed informal adoption. In doing so, I critique the tendency to criminalize all informal family arrangements, and, instead, I promote alternative approaches that are culturally relevant and realistic for Brazil's uncertain future. There are glimmers of hope that emerge from the individual journeys of the women in this study, especially in the context of broader mobilization around workers' rights. At the same time, the more substantial finding is that the level of structural violence that *filhas de criação* experience paired with the power of their affective captivity offer a chilling reminder that one of the most powerful weapons that has been used in the service of domination is love.