

5-2006

South Goes South: American Perspectives on Southern Immigrants to Brazil

Ernest R. Rheume
University of Rhode Island

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/srhonorsprog>



Part of the [American Politics Commons](#), and the [Latin American Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Rheume, Ernest R., "South Goes South: American Perspectives on Southern Immigrants to Brazil" (2006).
Senior Honors Projects. Paper 16.
<https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/srhonorsprog/16>

This Article is brought to you by the University of Rhode Island. It has been accepted for inclusion in Senior Honors Projects by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@URI. For more information, please contact digitalcommons-group@uri.edu. For permission to reuse copyrighted content, contact the author directly.

Ernest Rheume

South Goes South: American Perspectives on Southern Immigrants to Brazil

Reconstruction following the American Civil War led to conditions in the South that caused upwards of 20,000 Americans to go into exile. Of these, approximately 2,500 to 3,500 made the trip to Brazil and established settlements of varying success. One hundred forty one years later descendents of the original settlers, known as the Confederados, still populate the areas of Americana and Santa Barbara D'Oeste, Brazil. Extensive studies have been conducted on the history of the migration and the resulting settlements, yet conflicting perspectives of the Confederados exist within American society. These include different understandings of the Confederate Battle Flag, the purpose of their annual Festa Confederada and the racial dynamics within the Confederado community. This research seeks to uncover the underlying causes of these varying perspectives and to suggest ways in which a more accurate understanding of the Confederado community may be gained.

Keywords: Confederados, Brazil, Immigration, Civil War

Faculty Sponsor: Professor Ronald Onorato, Department of Art History

History/ Anthropology Major

**South Goes South:
American Perspectives on
Southern Immigrants to Brazil**

Ernie Rheume

HPR 401

May 7, 2006

Driving inland two hours from Sao Paulo to the Confederado towns of Americana and Santa Barbara D'Oeste is like driving back in time. The strains of Dixie along with a distinctly southern dialect can be heard rising amidst the sugar cane fields. Confederate flags drape from the windows aligning the streets as women in hoop skirts and men in uniforms bustle about. The year 1861 is still alive and well in these Brazilian towns as if the American Antebellum South had never ceased to exist. However, this is a completely false description, both of the Confederados now and in the past. Still, this romanticized view may not be far off from what a number of Americans hold in regards to the Confederados of Brazil.

Reconstruction following the American Civil War led to conditions in the South that caused upwards of 20,000 Americans to go into exile. Of these, approximately 2,500 to 3,500 made the trip to Brazil and established settlements of varying success.¹ One hundred forty one years later descendents of the original settlers, known as the Confederados, still populate the areas of Americana and Santa Barbara D'Oeste, Brazil. Extensive studies have been conducted on the history of the migration and the resulting settlements, yet conflicting perspectives of the Confederados exist within American society. This research seeks to uncover the underlying causes of these varying perspectives and the effect they have upon American and Confederado relations.

This research incorporates primary and secondary sources relating to the Confederados as well as personal interviews conducted in July 2005 at the Campo Cemetery in Santa Barbars D'Oeste, Brazil. The research also relies heavily on American produced sources on the Confederados in an attempt to compare and contrast the ways in which the Confederados exist today and how Americans perceive them. The

American views range from scholarly accounts of Confederado history and attempts to analyze their modern society to White Power dreams of Confederate racial superiority. Examining each view for the reasons of its formation and the implications behind it, this research hopes to suggest ways in which a more accurate understanding of the Confederado community may be gained.

The Confederado immigration which this research focuses on took place from 1865 into the late 1870's, leaving places such as Alabama, Texas, South Carolina, and Georgia. Initially they settled in areas the areas of Sao Paulo, Santarem, Rio de Janeiro, and Parana, but history proved only the settlements in Santa Barbara and Americana successful. It is estimated that more than 50% of those who traveled to Brazil eventually returned to the United States due to various unanticipated hardships. However, those who choose to remain tended to congregate around the Col. William Norris settlement in the area of Santa Barbara and Americana.² First settled in 1865, the Americans in this area have retained their sense of Confederate and American identity over the past one hundred and forty one years. In a country of immigrant groups such as Brazil, these people not only remember their Confederate ancestors but embrace their heritage as a way of distinguishing themselves from other Brazilian groups.

The Confederados as they exist today have become fully integrated into Brazilian society. Indeed, if one were to ask them their nationality the answer would be Brazilian. Confederado member and group historian Judith Mac Knight Jones recounted her feelings about being Brazilian in her description of her first trip to America.

I grew up thinking of the United States as a wonderful place. Then I went to see it for myself. We sailed to New Orleans and visited several states, meeting a lot of relatives we still have up there. After a while I started to get homesick. Home seemed very far away. When it was time to come back, we went to board the ship

in New Orleans and as I put my foot on the gangplank, I looked up and saw the Brazilian flag, I knew then what I was... I'm Brazilian.³

Or as her son Allison Jones so eloquently put it, "My heritage is Confederate, but I'm Brazilian first."⁴

As is with the whole of Brazil, the Confederados of today speak Portuguese. While a number are bilingual in English, this is usually not their primary language learned. Those families who feel it important that their children speak English either teach it themselves or send their children to an outside English language school. Linguistic studies done by Michael Montgomery and Cecil Ataide Melo on the English spoken by the Confederados revealed that it closely resembled American Southern English from the 19th century.⁵ However if the Confederados continue to send their children to English language schools, such as Planet Idiomas in Santa Barbara, instead of directly passing down English within their families, the distinctive Southernness of their English may soon disappear. Moreover, a working knowledge of the English language is no longer a distinguishing characteristic of the Confederados. Planet Idiomas director Osny Cascapera revealed that the majority of Brazilians learning English at his school were not members of the Confederado community.⁶

The residences and occupations of the Confederados are also mixed in with the larger Brazilian society. While a large number of Confederados still live in the vicinity of Santa Barbara and Americana, just as many descendants have spread out over the country. The initial Confederado settlements started out as farming communities, and over time as Southern doctors, dentists, and teachers settled in the areas did the scope of their professions widen. This trend continues today with Confederados filling a wide range of professions from artisans to skilled professionals. The family of Nelson del

McKnight still owns the farm their ancestors purchased in 1867 upon their arrival.

Recently however, as their economic interests have turned away from farming, their daughter Susie McKnight is converting the farm into banquet facilities.⁷

What does separate these Confederados from the larger Brazilian society is their attachment to the Campo Cemetery and the customs and institutions which have sprung up around it. The Campo Cemetery is located just outside of Santa Barbara and today serves as a focal point for the Confederado community. Started in 1868 on the land of Col. Anthony Oliver with the death of wife Beatrice, this small family plot soon grew to encompass the graves of generations of Confederados. The cemetery initially grew out of necessity as the Protestant Confederados were not welcomed in Brazil's Catholic cemeteries.⁸ In "A Community Center: Evolution and Significance of the Campo Site in the Santa Barbara Settlement Area," Cyrus B. Dawsey explains the transformation of this initial family burial plot into a community unifier and cultural shrine for the Confederados. With the construction of a chapel on the grounds in 1878, the site became one of religious significance for Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian denominations. Today the Campo cemetery is owned by the Fraternity of American Descendancy and has grown to include a meeting and recreation area, a dance arena, and a museum on the Confederado history.⁹

The Campo cemetery serves as the meeting place for the four yearly meetings of the Fraternity of American Descendancy. Established in 1954, the Fraternity is a collection of approximately two hundred individuals who can trace their ancestry back to the original Confederate immigration to Brazil. These gatherings at Campo can be broken down into three parts: the remembrance, the meeting, and the celebration. First,

as members of the Fraternity begin to arrive at the Campo site around 10am they usually proceed to the cemetery section. Here they visit and pay respect to the graves of their family members and other members of the Confederado community. They leave flowers, say prayers, and point out the graves of their ancestors to the younger generations of the Confederado community.¹⁰

At noon once most of the people have assembled at Campo, the adult members of the community will move into the Chapel where they conduct the actual business of the Fraternity. Conducted entirely in Portuguese, these meetings cover reports on the general business of the Fraternity as well as a time when the members can comment and make suggestions on the direction and activities of the Fraternity. Once concluded, the members at the meeting will rejoin their families in a social gathering. Food, both Brazilian and Southern, is served family style within the recreation area. Family friends, some of whom may not have seen each other since the last Camp gathering, sit and talk sit and catch up on each others lives. A casual and joyous attitude marks this part of the gathering which will last for a few hours.¹¹

The highlight of the Confederado social calendar however is the April meeting known as the Festa Confederada. This is an elaborate celebration aimed at remembering their heritage and raising funds to preserve the Campo cemetery. For this gathering, members come in nineteenth century period dress and participate in activities such as traditional Southern dancing, historic speech recital, a beauty pageant, and a feast of Southern and Brazilian foods. Planning and preparation for this event can take months, but it draws members of the Confederado community to the Campo site who would not normally attend the other gatherings. Allison Jones remarked that as time goes on and

they are further separated from the original immigration, this festival becomes increasingly important in teaching their children about their heritage. In addition to this, the Festa Confederada attracts tourists and other members of the Brazilian society who have an interest in the history of the Confederados and the way in which they live today.¹²

In addition to these internal activities of the Confederados at the Campo cemetery, the Fraternity sometimes performs for outside groups. For example, in 2005 Planet Idiomias held a Fourth of July celebration for its English students and a part of its young members of the Confederado community in 19th century period dress performed traditional southern dances. The Confederados have also contributed artifacts and family histories to the Immigration Museum and Memory Center in Santa Barbara. The museum, dedicated to immigration to Brazil in general, has a particularly outstanding American immigration section thanks in part to the efforts and resources of the Confederados.¹³

In regards to the Festa Confederada, the myth has been propagated in American society that the Confederados of Brazil celebrate the Fourth of July. Indeed, one of the four yearly meetings of the Fraternity is held close to July 4th, and if one assumes that it is the Festa Confederada and sees footage of it, it could be confused as a Fourth of July celebration. The origin of this misconception may be traced back to Eugene Harter's *The Lost Colony of the Confederacy*. In his preface, he comments that "one of the best ways to get a good view of the descendants is to attend one of the Fourth of July picnics in the park near the church at the Confederate Cemetery."¹⁴ Harter continues with this idea in

the book mentioning that of the first generation of settlers, “The Fourth of July holiday was the major event of the year.”¹⁵

Despite Harter’s claims, the modern day Confederados do not celebrate the Fourth of July and deny the fact that their ancestors would have once they settled in Brazil. Indeed, it would seem odd that the very people who just rebelled and lost a war against the United States, would so eagerly take up one of its most patriotic celebrations. Virginia planter J. Marshall McCue wrote that “It causes my blood to boil & tingle to look upon the Star Spangled Banner, I once loved, but will love it no more forever.”¹⁶ Within the US, some sections of the South refused to celebrate the Fourth of July or read the Declaration of Independence for up to forty years following the Civil War. An indicator of the sentiments held by the first Confederate immigrants to Brazil in regards to the Fourth of July comes from the Brazilian Diary of Ex-Confederate Andrew McCollam. In an entry dated July 4th, 1866 he wrote:

The sun rose over the mountains bright & clear. In the vale below us a dense fog hid the landscape from view. All around nature in her grandest dress presents a landscape more pleasing to the painter than the Planter. And I feel more independent here surrounded by the lofty mountains with an Imperial flag in ample folds floating over me than I could in my native land under the miserable tyring (sic) now prevailing predominant over every vistance (sic) of Constitutional liberty.¹⁷

Harter’s book along with a *Time Magazine* article from 1987 are the only two sources which describe the Confederados regularly celebrating the 4th of July. In contrast, during personal interviews with Allison Jones and Daniel Carr de Muzio they claim no knowledge of the 4th of July ever being celebrated by the Confederados. In a 1982 Associated Press article entitled “Descendants of American Confederates Skip 4th of July,” Judith Mac Knight Jones gives an interview where she too denies the idea of

the Confederados celebrating the 4th. “We keep our values and traditions but July 4 isn’t a holiday in Brazil,”¹⁸ said McKnight Jones. The fact that this article was written demonstrates that there exists a clear misconception in some minds of what the Confederado gatherings stand for, and that it is worth discussing and trying to correct.

Interestingly enough the idea of the Confederados celebrating the 4th of July may be a misconception Americans enjoy possessing. In describing the 1906 visit to Americana by then US Secretary of State Elihu Root, he describes Root’s initial uneasiness at meeting the former Confederates. In an attempt to reassure Root the US consul to Brazil related that “...these natives are friendly. They celebrate the Fourth of July faithfully...”¹⁹ This alludes to the fact that the idea of a Confederado 4th of July celebration is one of comfort. Leaving under less than amicable circumstances and separated by time and distance, the Confederados no longer seem so foreign if they partake in this American tradition. By celebrating the 4th of July they take on more of an American identity than one of an unreconstructable Confederate. A comforting thought no matter how untrue it proves to be.

If a misconception about a 4th of July celebration can serve to foster relationships between Americans and the Confederados, the issue of the Confederate flag can serve to divide. Allison Jones recounted the initial reaction of an African-American tourist to the Campo cemetery. Seeing the Confederate flag emblazoned around the grounds, the tourist was shocked and perhaps a bit fearful of the group he had come to visit. It was only after Allison explained to him the ways in which the Confederados use the flag that his initial reservations were relieved. The Confederate flag is a significant symbol in

both American and Confederate culture, and through time, distance, and historical events the flag has taken on a unique meaning.²⁰

The Confederate battle flag in American culture is both a politically and racially charged symbol. In *The Confederate Battle Flag*, author John Coski traces the roots and evolution of the flag and what it has come to represent in American society. First introduced to Confederate troops in late 1861, the St. Andrews Cross style flag was to be carried during military engagements to better distinguish friendly troops from the enemy. As opposed to flags such as the Stars and Bars, the Confederate battle flag never became a political flag of the Confederacy. However, John Coski argues that as the Confederate citizens began to lose faith in their new government and entrust their fate to the military, the Confederate battle flag became one of the most important and recognizable symbols of the Confederacy.²¹

It was during the 1940's, 50's, and 60's that the Confederate battle flag began to take on the racial overtones which it is known for today. Until this time it was used almost exclusively by Confederate heritage groups as a way of memorializing soldiers and the lost cause. However as segregation became an important political issue, groups opposed to integration and civil rights for African-Americans associated the flag with their cause. The most notable examples of this are the use of the Confederate flag by the Klu Klux Klan and segregationist politicians such as George Wallace. They choose this symbol as one of defiance against the national government and as one that most white southerners already associated themselves with.²² It became as the NAACP described "a tyrannical evil...an abhorrence to all Americans and decent people of this country, and indeed the world and is an odious blight upon the universe."²³

Given the use of the Confederate battle flag in American society it must be approached from two directions. Those who argue that the Confederate flag is a heritage symbol representing Southern history and the Confederate soldier must also recognize that it has become a symbol of virulent racism in America. At the same time however, those who oppose the Confederate flag must acknowledge that not all who support the Confederate flag and choose to display it are racist. "It is a fundamental mistake to believe...that one's own perception of the flag's meaning is the flag's only legitimate meaning."²⁴ The Confederate flag has become engrained in America's historical, political, and social culture, and will therefore continue to be a symbol of dispute among Americans.

Given the use of the Confederate battle flag in the US, it is not surprising that the African-American tourist felt uncomfortable when he encountered this symbol in Brazil. As Brazil did not go through the same experience of segregation and racial discontent as the US did, the symbolism of the Confederate flag in Brazil was free to develop under very different circumstances. In Brazil, the Confederados are the sole possessors of the Confederate flag symbol. This has allowed them to interpret its meaning without conflicting interpretations from other groups. More importantly, racial hate groups did not develop in Brazil as they did in the US and so the Confederate flag is not associated with ideas of segregation and white supremacy. This lack of racial connection is particularly important to the Confederados given the fact they comprise a mixture of races.

The Confederate battle flag as used by the Confederados represents a common ancestry. The Confederados are just one of many immigrant groups in Brazil, and the

Confederate flag is a symbol that this group can identify themselves with. Allison Jones compares his viewing of the Confederate flag to an American viewing Plymouth Rock. It reminds one of where they came from and the struggles their ancestors faced. The original immigrants brought the flag with them as it was the most popular symbol of the Confederacy at the time of immigration. Being a battle flag it also represented defiance and struggle, and these immigrants were partaking in this spirit by removing themselves from US rule. In the early years there was clear animosity between the Confederados and the US government, and the use of the Confederate battle flag reflected this. However Allison Jones points out that as the animosity has disappeared over time, the meaning of the Confederate flag has taken on a rather benign meaning. They don't raise it in hopes of continuing a struggle against the US government, but instead raise it alongside the American and Brazilian flags to remind themselves of their Southern and American heritage.²⁵

However, the Confederados are aware of the negative meaning the Confederate flag has come to represent in America, and this in turn has effected their treatment of it and their heritage. Confederado Thomas Steagall explained he's sometimes hesitant about revealing his heritage to fellow Brazilians as he recognizes that "The flag means racism in the United States, and it represents lots of bad things in the United States. And I say, we're not in the United States, we're in Brazil."²⁶ The reality is they must now contend with other groups' interpretations of the Confederate flag and the consequences that come with this. A recent example involves the town crest of the city of Americana. The crest featured a Confederate battle flag in its design, and in 1999 at the behest of the growing Italian population of the city the flag was removed. One of the motivating

factors behind the flags removal may have been to avoid Confederate flag controversies currently taking place in the US.²⁷

In order to fully understand the way in which Americans view the Confederados, it is first necessary to take a closer look at how the Confederados identify themselves. This issue of identity is taken up by John C. Dawsey in “Constructing Identity: Defining the American Descendants in Brazil.” In it he catalogs the changing sense of identity exhibited among the Confederados throughout their history in Brazil. An important aspect of the construction of the Confederado identity which has an effect on the way American society perceives them is initial purpose of the migration to Brazil. Extensive documentation has been given for the reasons of the migration including economic hardships in the American South, repression under the Reconstruction Acts, and incentives from the Brazilian Government.²⁸ What needs to be considered however is the purpose of the migration and what the settlers hoped to accomplish once they arrived.

Dr. J. McF. Gaston’s book *Hunting a Home in Brazil*, first published in 1867, was one of the most popular travel book encouraging immigration to Brazil. Gaston concluded his book by writing:

Though slavery may be destined to cease in Brazil at some future day, by gradual emancipation, yet the elements of society which have resulted from the mastery of the white man will never be erased entirely from the people. There is a dignity and hospitality among these people that correspond in many respects to the lofty and generous bearing which characterized the Southern gentlemen in former times. We find people in Brazil capable of appreciating the Southern character, and ready to extend a cordial greeting to all who come.²⁹

This suggests that proponents of immigration to Brazil were trying to create an image of Brazilian society as a place where the aristocratic ideals of the Old South could continue

to flourish. Furthermore, in an early memoir written by first generation Confederado Dr. Barnsley he comments on the attitude of the original immigrants:

...the habits that the American life at the South had for its affects a certain "individualism"... Born to command a race, inferior in every respect, the Southerner's proud spirit ill brooked the discipline of war...the English and Americans are tenacious in their ideas, manners, and religion. The Germans, French and Italians etc., with whom I have come in contact here seem soon to adopt the Brazilian customs and manner of thought. The two first or rather the one (for both are of the same race) knows no such thing as amalgamation of thought or religion. Naturally agotistical (sic) they allow no superiors, nor accept any customs that do not concord with their previous ideas, and they must be masters.³⁰

Although slavery existed in Brazil until 1888, it is clear that this was not the only draw for the Confederate immigrants. As pointed out by Gaston, slavery was on its way out in Brazil upon their arrival and few Confederados in fact ever owned slaves. What was important to the Confederados was that they could continue living in a land free from what they saw as an oppressive US government. According to modern day Confederado Daniel Carr De Muzio the original settlers "wanted to live and educate their children with the same set of values they were brought up with."³¹ This was accomplished by the continuance of Southern traditions in food, language, religion, agriculture, education, etc, once in Brazil.

Despite Dr. Barnsley's ideas of Americans being unable and unwilling to adapt to a new culture, the Confederados over time have done exactly that. This has happened to the extent that there is a fear among the older generations that the younger ones are beginning to loose their connection with their American and Confederate heritage. The Confederados of today little resemble the original settlers, and in recognizing this they have constructed institutions which serve to preserve and promote their heritage. While the Confederados have had a presence in Brazil since the late 1860's, the Fraternity of

American Descendancy was only formed in 1954. By this point the Confederados were integrated in Brazilian society, and the creation of the Fraternity was a reaction to this perceived loss of American/Confederate cultural identity.

Memoirs confirm that family picnics and BBQ's featuring Southern food and music have existed among the Confederados since their arrival in Brazil.³² The Festa Confederada, which is roughly twenty years old, continues this tradition among the Confederado community. While the earlier gatherings and the Festa Confederada both exhibit nineteenth century Southern traditions, the Festa Confederada is further removed from these traditions and therefore actively tries to preserve them. The earlier gatherings exhibited what the Confederate immigrants still were; the Festa Confederada exhibits what they once were. According to John Dawsey, the dances and clothes used as part of the Festa Confederada were not passed down within the group. Outside researches were needed to teach about nineteenth century Southern dances and create the dress and uniform patterns.³³ The Festa Confederada serves as an institution which attempts to recreate and reconnect the Confederados with their disappearing past.

This perception of the Confederados having a strong connection with the nineteenth century American South has had profound effects on the way groups within the US understand them. American white power groups have unfortunately taken an interest in the Confederados and in some cases believe their ideals are closely connected. According to these groups the Confederados live in "...a town in Brazil that is 100% white."³⁴ They hear that the Confederados moved there following the Civil War where slavery was still legal, and they jump to the conclusion that the Confederados represent the one of the last pure Confederate strongholds. Some members of the white

power groups have even looked to the Confederados for inspiration in starting modern all white communities in South America. Under these beliefs, members of white power groups have traveled to Brazil in search for Confederado relatives. One such person described his experience as:

“...a nasty lesson in dysgenic breeding...What I found down there was that intermarriage had been rampant, they had probably given up speaking English for Portuguese by WWI, and, worse, intermarried with the natives. I did find a distant cousin who was some sort of octoroon, but it was so depressing I abandoned the genealogical search.”³⁵

In addition to the white power groups, politicians have visited the Confederados on occasion and tried to interpret their culture. US Secretary of State Elihu Root recounted his 1906 meeting with the Confederados to his biographer. During his tearful encounter, he saw them as former Americans who would no longer fit in US society. In contrast, Jimmy Carter in his 1972 visit to the Campo Cemetery described the Confederados as still belonging to the South. He applauded their preservation, their love for the United States, and the fact that “... they sounded just like people in south Georgia.”³⁶ Like Root, Carter also shed a tear when he encountered the Confederados. At the time of Carter’s visit, he was the Governor of Georgia and a presidential candidate, and so his visit to the Confederados and his media reports of them upon his return may have served as a good publicity stunt. Many of the Confederados are after all descendants of Georgians.

There have also been American made video documentaries done on the Confederados. The two most accessible are *Americana: Forever a Rebel* by Christopher Brown and *The Confederate Flag Still Flies in the “South”* by Carlos Tavares. Both documentaries present the modern Confederado community, yet they mainly focus on

attempts to preserve the Confederate heritage. Tavares' documentary centers mainly on the Festa Confederada. He documents the preparation that goes into it, the actual events of it, and the meaning of it to Confederados and non-Confederados. While it is an excellent in depth look into this particular event, an American watching it may get the impression that this is what the Confederados are all about.

Likewise, Christopher Brown in his documentary interviews Confederados of all ages about what it means for them to be a rebel. This question implies that the Confederados consider themselves rebels and Americans view them this way as well. However, Confederado Daniel Carr De Muzio has said that he never heard his ancestors use the word Confederate or Rebel to describe themselves. In fact, the term Confederado was the invention of an American author and only recently adopted by the Confederate descendants in Brazil.³⁷ Clearly Americans have preconceived notions of what this group represents, and this in turn is having an effect on the ways the Confederados see themselves and interpret their heritage.

One of the most recent books published on the Confederados is *Lost White Tribes* by Riccardo Orizio. His book examines surviving European settlements around the world in places such as Jamaica, Namibia, and Brazil. Orizio's book has an anti-colonial agenda and he uses the Confederados to further it. He describes the Confederados as "lingering on" and that "Wrenchingly poor then and now, these would-be genteel planters cling to their romanticized memory of a proud antebellum past."³⁸ In doing this Riccardo Orizio portrays the Confederados as stuck in the nineteenth century and completely ignores their integration with Brazilian society and influence on it. Writing from a completely opposite perspective as the white power groups, Riccardo Orizio's

account proves to be just as false and damaging to an understanding of the Confederados as theirs.

A shining light among Confederado research is Cyrus and James Dawsey's book *The Confederados: Old South Immigrants in Brazil*. This book is a collection of scholarly essays focusing both on the Confederados historical past and their current community. The book was a product of a Confederado research conference held at Auburn University in 1992. *The Confederados* presents one of the most academic approaches to Confederado research to date and should serve as the model for future research and publication. Furthermore, to accompany the book and the conference, Auburn University has created a special collection devoted to Confederado documents and research.³⁹

Sons of Confederate Veteran Camps have also researched and commented upon the Confederados. In 1994 under the leadership of then SCV Commander-in-Chief Bob Hawkins the Confederados were given a charter for an SCV camp. Mr. Hawkins commented that "...it was an important gesture to personally visit, to show our respect and camaraderie for them and to underscore just how important it was to us to support responsible efforts to preserve Confederate heritage."⁴⁰ Daniel Carr De Muzio commented that their camp is not a typical one as its members are spread out and only meet during the Fraternity meetings, but he believes it was important to have one. Furthermore, Georgia SCV camps under the direction of Allen Trapp arranged for Confederados to visit the US and speak with them. This program lasted from 1999-2001 and sent 13 Confederados to the US.⁴¹

The various misconceptions held by some Americans can be explained by a variety of reasons. The Confederados primary language of Portuguese is one possible reason. Although American researchers who do not speak Portuguese can locate English speaking Confederados, many important documents will remain inaccessible to them. One of the most important of these documents is Judith Mac Knight Jones' *Soldado Descansa!* Jones, acting as the Confederados' historian, set out to tell the story of the Confederados from their perspective. It is a highly regarded book within the Confederado community and many use it when tracing their heritage. Although plans were made to publish an English translation, it still only exists in Portuguese.⁴²

Furthermore, the Confederados are a specialized topic not taught about in schools. According to McGraw-Hill, one of the leading history textbook suppliers in the US, they do not mention the Confederados in any of their publications.⁴³ The most likely place for a specialized topic such as this to be taught is in college, yet most Civil War classes do not mention the immigration either. It is often left for the individual to discover what information there is out there about the Confederados. Furthermore according to a 1997 report by the director of the United States Civil War Center David Madden, research on the Confederados was "Sorely missing from the Civil War bookshelf..."⁴⁴

Racial tensions and Americans' initial bias towards the idea of Confederate exiles will also play a part in the misunderstanding of Confederado culture. While many may not hold the extreme views of the white power groups, and American unfamiliar with the Confederados use of the Confederate flag may automatically assume it has a racial connotation. Similarly, upon hearing the Confederados traveled to Brazil immediately

following the Civil War to a place that still permitted slavery it may incorrectly be assumed this was their sole motivation for leaving. This idea coupled with the popular image of the Confederados dressed in nineteenth century Southern clothes during the Festa Confederada can give the impression that the Confederados are still attempting to live in the 1860's and keep the Confederacy alive.

To clear up many of these misconceptions about the Confederados more education on the topic is needed. Good scholarship on the subject such as that of Cyrus and James Dawsey's needs to be utilized in favor of books such as Riccardo Orizio's and their biased views of the Confederados. It is also important that books written by Confederados such as Judith Mac Knight Jones' *Soldado Descansa!* be translated into English. Much of the work on the Confederados available in English is the work of Americans writing on the Confederado culture. The Confederado view of their own culture is an important part of the discussion to consider and currently it is underrepresented.

Finally, an exchange program between Americans and Confederados may prove helpful in the education process. The SCV camp exchange program in 1999-2001 was successful, but it was only a one way exchange. Confederados came to US but rarely did Americans visit the Confederados in Brazil. By not experiencing the Confederado culture firsthand in Brazil, many Americans who do learn about this topic must rely on American descriptions of the Confederados and their interpretations of the culture.

Research on the Confederados is still an on going topic in both America and Brazil. Topics which still need particular consideration are material culture use by the Confederados and their relationship to other immigrant groups within Brazil. Material

culture use by the Confederados can range from objects brought with them and handed down to the gravestones they are buried with. Study of these objects may reveal further information about how the Confederados identify themselves. For example, at the Campo Cemetery a large number of the earlier gravestones have Masonic symbols on them. In fact, Masonic symbols outnumber Confederate symbols in the Confederado cemetery. This may allude to the fact that the earlier generations of Confederados associated themselves more closely with Masons than Confederates. They did after all start a Masonic lodge in Brazil, and it was these Masonic connections which separated the Confederados from other immigrant groups and allowed them to purchase land.⁴⁵ Most work focuses on the importance of Confederate and Southern heritage to the Confederados, but the gravestones suggest it may be Masonic heritage which mattered most to the early immigrants.

The comparison to other immigrant groups within Brazil is also important to take into consideration when studying the Confederados. Much has been said about the Confederados' attempts to form their identity and preserve their heritage. Is this heritage preservation unique to the Confederados, or is it done by the many other immigrant groups in Brazil? Clearly there is work still to be done in trying to understand the Confederados. What will prove essential to this ongoing research is the way in which the information is disseminated to the American public. The Confederados hold a unique place in US Civil War and immigration history and have never entirely been forgotten. What remains to be seen is whether an accurate version of their story will reach a wide audience in America. This will hopefully not only lead to a better

understanding of the Confederados, but also of ourselves and our relationship with this group.

End Notes

1. Cyrus Dawsey and James Dawsey, "Leaving" in *The Confederados: Old South Immigrants in Brazil*, ed. Cyrus Dawsey and James Dawsey (Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 1995).
2. Ibid., 18-20.
3. Riccardo Orizio, *Lost White Tribes* (New York: The Free Press, 2000), 118.
4. Personal Interview, July 11, 2005.
5. Michael Montgomery and Cecil Ataide Melo, "The Language" in *The Confederados: Old South Immigrants in Brazil*, ed. Cyrus Dawsey and James Dawsey (Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 1995).
6. Personal Interview, July 12, 2005.
7. Personal Interview, July 11, 2005.
8. Cyrus Dawsey, "A Community Center" in *The Confederados: Old South Immigrants in Brazil*, ed. Cyrus Dawsey and James Dawsey (Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 1995) 146.
9. Ibid., 148-154.
10. Personal Interview. July, 11, 2005.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid., July 12, 2006.
14. Eugene Harter, *The Lost Colony of The Confederacy* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1985), ix-x.
15. Ibid., 69.
16. J. Marshall McCue, Letter to Cyrus McCormick, *J. Marshall McCue Papers*, UNC Chapel Hill Special Collections, North Carolina.
17. Andrew McCollam, *The Brazilian Diary of Andrew McCollam. Andrew McCollam Papers*. UNC Chapel Hill Special Collections, North Carolina.
18. Michael Fraser, "Descendants of American Confederates Skip 4th of July," *Mobile Press Register*, July 5, 1982, 4B.
19. Harter, 97.
20. Personal Interview, July 11, 2005.
21. John Coski, *The Confederate Battle Flag* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), 2-28.
22. Ibid., 132-161.
23. Ibid., 189.
24. Ibid., 304.
25. Personal Interview, July 11, 2005.
26. Stephen Buckley, "A Taste of Dixie in Brazil in Americana, They Still Wave The Confederate Flag—With Some Reservations," *The Washington Post*, August 22, 1999, 30.
27. Ibid.
28. John Dawsey, "Constructing Identity" in *The Confederados: Old South Immigrants in Brazil*, ed. Cyrus Dawsey and James Dawsey (Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 1995) 155-175.

29. Dr. J McF Gaston, *Hunting A Home in Brazil* (Philadelphia: King & Baird Printers, 1867) 374.
30. Dr. Barnsley, "Foreign Colonization in Brazil." *Brazilian American* March 10, 1928, 10.
31. Daniel Carr De Muzio, February 22, 2006. Personal email message.
32. Kennie Bletz, Milton Adams, and Julia Norris *Memoirs of Confederados Families*, 1988; Sarah Bellona Smith Ferguson, "The American Colonies Emigrating to Brazil." *Times of Brazil*. December 1936.
33. John Dawsey, "Constructing Identity," 156.
34. mathdokter99. "Re: I am Mexican- or am I?" September 17, 2004. <http://www.stormfront.org/forum/showthread.php?t=78186&goto=nextoldest>. (accessed January 31, 2006).
35. "Letters 274." November 11, 2002. <http://www.vanguardnewsnetwork.com/november02/letters274.htm>. (accessed January 31, 2006).
36. Harter, xiii.
37. Daniel Carr De Muzio, February 22, 2006. Personal email message.
38. Riccardo Orizio, front flap.
39. Michael L Conniff, "Foreword." In *The Confederados: Old South Immigrants in Brazil*, ed Cyrus Dawsey and James Dawsey. (Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 1995), 3.
40. Bob Hawkins, February 8, 2006. Personal email message.
41. Daniel Carr De Muzio, February 5, 2006. Personal email message.
42. Personal Interview, July 11, 2005.
43. Maurice VanHorne, March 8, 2006. Personal email message.
44. David Madden, "For The New Millennium, New Perspectives On The Civil War," *USCWC*. <http://www.cwc.lsu.edu/cwc/fdire/millen.htm>.
45. Daniel Carr De Muzio, February 12, 2006. Personal email message.

Bibliography

- Americana: Forever a Rebel*. By Christopher Lyman Brown. 29 min. Cliff House Productions, 1999. 1 videocassette.
- Barnsley. "Foreign Colonization in Brazil." *Brazilian American*. March 10, 1928.
- Bletz, Kennie, Milton Adams, and Julia Norris. *Memoirs of Confederados Families*. 1988.
- Buckley, Stephen. "A Taste of Dixie in Brazil in Americana, They Still Wave The Confederate Flag—With Some Reservations." *The Washington Post*. August 22, 1999.
- Carr De Muzio, Daniel. February 5, 2006. Personal email message.
- . February 7, 2006. Personal email message.
- . February 12, 2006. Personal email message.
- . February 22, 2006. Personal email message.
- . February 23, 2006. Personal email message.
- Conniff, Michael L. "Foreword." In *The Confederados: Old South Immigrants in Brazil*, edited by Cyrus Dawsey and James Dawsey. Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 1995.
- Coski, John. *The Confederate Battle Flag*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005.
- Dawsey, Cyrus. "A Community Center." In *The Confederados: Old South Immigrants in Brazil*, edited by Cyrus Dawsey and James Dawsey. Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 1995.
- Dawsey, Cyrus and James Dawsey. "Introduction." In *The Confederados: Old South Immigrants in Brazil*, edited by Cyrus Dawsey and James Dawsey. Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 1995.
- . "Leaving." In *The Confederados: Old South Immigrants in Brazil*, edited by Cyrus Dawsey and James Dawsey. Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 1995.
- Dawsey, John. "Constructing Identity." In *The Confederados: Old South Immigrants in Brazil*, edited by Cyrus Dawsey and James Dawsey. Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 1995.

- Ferguson, Sarah Bellona Smith. "The American Colonies Emigrating to Brazil." *Times of Brazil*. December 1936.
- Fraser, Michael. "Descendants of American Confederates Skip 4th of July." *Mobile Press Register*. July 5, 1982.
- Gaston, Dr. J. McF. *Hunting A Home in Brazil*. Philadelphia: King & Baird Printers, 1867.
- Griggs, William Clark. *The Elusive Eden: Frank McMullan's Confederate Colony in Brazil*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987.
- Harter, Eugene. *The Lost Colony of The Confederacy*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1985.
- Hawkins, Bob. February 8, 2006. Personal email message.
- Jones, Judith Mac Knight. *Soldado Descansa!* Sao Paulo: Fraternidade Descendencia Americana, 1998.
- Kepp, Michael. "In Brazil: Echoes of the South." *Time*. November 16, 1987.
- "Letters 274." November 11, 2002. <http://www.vanguardnewsnetwork.com/november02/letters274.htm>. (accessed January 31, 2006).
- Madden, David. "For The New Millennium, New Perspectives On The Civil War." *USCWC*. <http://www.cwc.lsu.edu/cwc/fdire/millen.htm>
- mathdoktor99. "Re: I am Mexican- or am I?" September 17, 2004. <http://www.stormfront.org/forum/showthread.php?t=78186&goto=nextoldest>. (accessed January 31, 2006).
- McCollam, Andrew. The Brazilian Diary of Andrew McCollam. *Andrew McCollam Papers*. UNC Chapel Hill Special Collections, North Carolina.
- McCue, J. Marshall. Letter to Cyrus McCormick. *J. Marshall McCue Papers*. UNC Chapel Hill Special Collections, North Carolina.
- Montgomery, Michael and Cecil Ataide Melo. "The Language." In *The Confederados: Old South Immigrants in Brazil*, edited by Cyrus Dawsey and James Dawsey. Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 1995.
- Orizio, Riccardo. *Lost White Tribes*. New York: The Free Press, 2000.
- The Confederate Flag Still Flies in the "South."* By Carlos Tavares. 48 min. Mablan Entertainment, 2001. 1 videocassette.

VanHorne, Maurice. March 8, 2006. Personal email message.

Xenologicus. "Re: An American Renaissance Reader Wants to Start a White Community."
January 22, 2005. [http://www.amren.com/mtnews/archives/2005/01/
an_american_ren.php](http://www.amren.com/mtnews/archives/2005/01/an_american_ren.php). (accessed January 31, 2006).

Keebler06@hotmail.com