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Queer Epistemologies in Education

Luso-Hispanic Dialogues and Shared Horizons

Edited by
Moira Pérez
Gracia Trujillo-Barbadillo

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Moira Pérez and Gracia Trujillo-Barbadillo

This project was born from a desire to bring Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking perspectives on queer(ing) education into the English-speaking world, in order to give more visibility to the theoretical production taking place in our region, and contribute to current debates on queer approaches on education more broadly. Although there is a fertile production in Ibero-America connecting a queer/cuir[1] theoretical framework with issues pertaining to education, pedagogy, teaching and the academy, these are usually under-represented in existing anglophone publications. This is the first time that a volume in English compiles the works of scholars working in Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking contexts. Its pages offer an overview of some of the main topics, tendencies and debates currently marking the theoretical production in this field, in the hope of opening space to further exchanges and synergies.

Queer Epistemologies in Education was projected and realized through an open call for contributions, along with specific invitations sent out by

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the editors. In the selection process, apart from assessing the potential and quality of each proposal, we prioritized geographical and thematic variety, and sought to include the broadest array of topics, methodological approaches and educational levels. The resulting volume brings together the work of some of the key figures in the field along with many of our most promising scholars, including authors from Argentina, Chile, Brazil, Spain, Colombia, Costa Rica, Portugal and Mexico. Although the compilation has a number of limitations, which will be addressed toward the end of this Introduction, we still believe we have been able to provide a look into many of the key concerns and original developments in our region, and offer practical resources and theoretical developments that will also prove relevant elsewhere.

In recent times, many of the countries included in this compilation have been at the forefront of political change and activism in terms of gender and sexual diversity, but have also been witness to high levels of violence and considerable backlash from conservative sectors. In particular, campaigns against what has been called "gender ideology" have profoundly altered the game for educational policies, institutions and activism, as well as the everyday reality of teaching and navigating school/university life. Theoretical work has accompanied these tendencies with sophisticated and nuanced readings of our past, present and future realities and possibilities. The chapters that follow are the proof of how research and writing can be situated and engaged in its specific geopolitical context, while also remaining informed about current theoretical developments in the field and able to contribute greatly to global debates. It is our hope that this volume will help foregrounding such valuable production, and spark broader theoretical and practical collaborations among scholars working on Queer/cuir Theory queer/cuir theory, education and pedagogies worldwide.

Dialogues Around Queer/Cuir Epistemologies in Our (Non) Region

Organizing these pages and collaborating with its authors have given us the opportunity to reflect on the framework offered here and what it means to think queerly about education in Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking contexts. Each of the notions that articulate this volume could be—and has been—analyzed at length, and their combined choice was the result of extensive discussions. What does "queer" mean in our countries

and our scholarship? What are the gains and what the concessions involved in incorporating this term into our work, be it in its English spelling or transformed into *cuir* and other variations? Are Luso-Hispanic dialogues possible, considering the tremendous differences within and between the countries represented here (and those absent)? Is it possible to think of Ibero-America as a region? Why approach education through queer/cuir *epistemologies*? How should we understand "education", and how does it relate to institutional life? And, finally, what have queer/cuir epistemologies of education harvested in our (non) region so far, and where do we go from here? In this Introduction, we intend to share some of our reflections on these questions.

The travels and vicissitudes of "queer" as a concept and as a theoretical framework have resulted in transformations, displacements and disputes that by far exceed what can be summarized in a few lines. If "queer" is not reducible to a single meaning in English-speaking contexts, or in the academic environment that gave rise to queer theory, it certainly cannot be homogenized across latitudes in which language, worldviews, identities and theoretical production are profoundly diverse. Does "queer" make any sense as an imported term? In some Spanish- and/or Portuguese-speaking contexts, it shares the radical genealogy and significance that was reappropriated at the origins of queer theories and political practices in the United States (Trujillo, 2005, 2016); in others, its uses expose an academic route which places it in specific racial and class positions (Padilha & Facioli, 2015; Vargas Cervantes, 2016; González Ortuño, 2016; Piña Narváez, 2018; Bello Ramírez, 2018; Pérez & Radi, 2020). In this context, can "queer" maintain some (or any) of its political thrust? How should we deal with the fact that, as Berenice Bento (2017, p. 249) has stressed, "my language must go into hard gymnastics to say 'queer', and I don't know whether the person listening to me shares the same senses"? Can this be addressed by reframing it as "cuir", "kuir", "torcido", "marica", "viada", "teoria cu", "estudos transviados"[2] or other formulations proposed by local theorists/activists? After all, as an imported notion, "queer" demands not only translating and/or explaining, but also decolonizing through the transformation of its meanings and the incorporation of the specificities of each location, such as what val flores has called a "*Latinamericanization* of *cuir*" (2013, p. 61). As Manuel López-Pereyra stresses in his contribution to this volume, in this side of the world "the development of queer studies must be framed through an in-depth

understanding of the region's experiences of racism and classism, which come from a history and politics of colonization and resistance".

These and other points in relation to the term and the concept(s) behind it have been examined extensively in our region for well over a decade, as is evident in Trujillo (2005, 2008), Epps (2008), Delfino and Rapisardi (2010), Viteri, Serrano, and Vidal-Ortiz (2011), Pelúcio (2014a, 2016), Falconí Trávez, Castellanos, and Viteri (2014), and Pereira (2015), among others. Nevertheless, these issues continue to be part of the pedagogical task expected (or demanded) from scholars in the South[3] who wish to join the dialogues taking place in hegemonic sites of theoretical production. In this volume we have chosen not to focus on these preliminaries, moving forward instead toward the collective construction and dissemination of the long-standing work in our region that is not *about*, but *in* or *with* queer theory, and particularly that focusing on queer pedagogies.

Referring to a region or conceiving transnational commonalities that justified the specificity of this compilation was also a matter of debate throughout the project. To what extent can we say that the countries represented here (as well as those present through citations and intellectual lineage) constitute a region or a more or less recognizable entity? What sets it apart from others, such as North America, the English- and French-speaking Caribbean, or Lusophone Africa? Can this distinction translate into something like an identity—and if so, how should we call it? Issues such as the denomination of the Spanish State and its so-called historical nationalities (Pastor, 2014), the preferred name for Latin/Indo/Hispanic America/Abya Yala (Oberlin & Chiaradía, 2019), or the common heritage and future of *Lusofonia* (Davis, Straubhaar, & Ferin Cunha, 2016), reveal some of the complexities of these long-standing questions. In this book, far from affirming a common voice or assuming that all the authors included here speak from the same location, we have preferred to propose an open dialogue that begins with contributors from various Luso/Hispanic countries, but hopefully continues with readers, critics and other educators and scholars who may join the conversation in the future. A conversation that can bring together different realities marked not only by country and continent, but also by race, gender, sexuality and academic career, among many other factors. Such differences cut through the traits that indeed constitute a set of shared heritages, sometimes to the point of making them unrecognizable: a common colonial past mutates into a present marked by contrasting forms of *coloniality* (Lander, 2000;

Lugones, 2016; Vergès, 2019); the historical role of the Catholic Church and its influence on social life and State policies has been reduced in some locations, while in others it rapidly mutates toward a strong Evangelical presence; the whitening of society and denial of indigenous, afrodescendant and migrant communities and cultures can take the form of complete denial of their existence and rewriting of history, explicit racism and bashing, or different forms of symbolic marginalization. Contrary to approaches that see these differences as reasons for balkanization and the consequent triangulation with English-speaking scholarship, it is our contention that this interplay between commonalities and heterogeneity can serve as a catalyst for rich and nuanced exchanges. As scholars who work and teach far away from the hegemonic academic hubs (which are highly concentrated in the field of queer theory), we are united by the adversities of epistemic marginalization and silencing (Trujillo & Santos, 2014; Pérez & Radi, 2020), but are not free from also participating in our own forms of hierarchies and exclusions toward other colleagues. While our compilation was explicitly and deliberately addressed to authors working *in* (and not only *on*) Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking countries and institutions, it was not entirely successful in countering the uneven distribution of epistemic authority within our (non) region, as we will discuss toward the end of this Introduction.

Finally, why *Epistemologies?* As we have stated elsewhere, queer/cuir thought can function as an epistemology and a politics, in that "it offers us an array of tools and instruments to interpret the world that surrounds us and intervene in it" (Pérez, 2016, pp. 191–192). Queer/cuir epistemologies bring forth unique views on how knowledge is produced, transmitted, hierarchized and legitimized (or not): perspectives that call for awareness on the social construction of identities and how they affect and are affected by knowledge; that examine power relations and their interweaving with normalization through the administration of knowledge and epistemic agency; that foreground the role of sexuality, affects and embodiment in knowledge and ignorance; that work to unpack the manifold assumptions and "common sense" givens that are smuggled with our beliefs, particularly in relation to gender, sexuality, identity and the body; and that stress the various forms of individual and collective resistance "from below" and alternative circuits involved in knowledge production. Our geopolitical locations, additionally, face us with the need to encourage, in the words of Couto Junior and Pocahy (2017, p. 6), "theoretical discussions that, far from being merely incorporated from the Global

North, can be prompted by epistemologies attuned with our place of origin, which is not unfrequently recognized, socially and geographically, as '*o cu do mundo*'"—a common expression in Portuguese and Spanish that literally means "the butt of the world" but could be rightly translated as "bumfuck nowhere". This not only involves being aware of our placement at the margins of global academic circuits and how we are informed by it, but also propels us to contest this international division of intellectual labor and collaborate with others who are pushed even further away, at the margins of the margins (with linguistic justice and redistribution of privileges as key elements in this enterprise).

This volume, then, is an invitation to reflect on education from the perspective of queer/cuir epistemologies produced from the geographical and linguistic margins of the field. Here "education" is understood as something that exceeds the explicit curriculum and indeed institutional spaces, and that must and does go beyond a vertical transmission of preproduced knowledge, of the sort that Freire (2005, p. 72) denounces as "the 'banking' concept of education". Although the vicissitudes of this project resulted in a final product largely focused on middle and higher education (ranging from classroom life to State policies), we believe that queer/cuir reflections on education can gain much with the inclusion of realms that have a long history in our countries, such as non-institutional forms of teaching and learning (*bachilleratos populares*, community projects of alphabetization, formation within grassroot movements), educational activisms beyond the Academy, and student and labor organization, among many others. Queer/cuir epistemologies of education, therefore, come with an invitation not only to queer our educational practices and research, but also to contest and broaden our understandings of knowledge and of education itself.

Luso-Hispanic Queer/Cuir Perspectives on Education: Themes and Debates

Doing queer/cuir theories from "bumfuck nowhere", then, is not just "importing" something from the United States into the Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking world, as was stressed above. There has been, and continues to be, a rich knowledge production and a profusion of compelling queer/cuir educational practices in the region. Both the theoretical contributions and the experiences of educators are grounded in and have

developed from the various contexts they take up. Contributions by Brazilian scholars such as Guacira Lopes Louro, Tomaz Tadeu Da Silva and William Pinar, to name just a few, are a product of particular geopolitical and intellectual frames, which include, among many others, the influential works of Brazilian pedagogue Paulo Freire (see Chap. 4 in this volume) and decolonial pedagogies (Walsh, 2013). At the same time, the longstanding debates mentioned above on the translation of "queer", and criticisms from the South on the adoption of this concept, have not been alien to reflections and experiences in education. Many scholars and activists in this field already use *cuir*, in a gesture to mark a critical gaze while talking about sexual and gender dissidences and reclaiming to do so from the South (see flores, 2017; Rivas San Martín, 2011, and both Gutiérrez and flores in this volume). In this sense, we invite Anglophone readers to make an effort not to approach the contents of this book as just more work with queer theory and practice, but rather to understand how these contributions are put to use and transformed through its regional and national contexts. As we know, queer is anything but universal.

It is certainly not our aim here (nor would it be possible) to offer an exhaustive map of all the queer/cuir interventions in and on education in the Caribbean, Central and South America, together with Spain and Portugal. Still, some landmarks and key references can be provided, as a map in which to insert the chapters that follow. Brazilian scholars Lopes Louro (2001, 2004) and Da Silva (2000) began the debate and circulation of queer ideas on education at the end of the nineties in the Southern Cone. Their labor of translation allowed a quick circulation of some of the key articles and books, and the beginning of a post-identitarian politics for education in Ibero-America. In a more recent analysis of queer pedagogies in Brazil, Thiago Ranniery (2017) points out how they have contributed to rethink categories as central to the educational sphere as knowledge, teaching and embodiment, among others. Reappropriations of queer perspectives in Brazil have resulted in reflections and proposals on queering the curriculum ("*embichamento do currículo*"; Sussekind & Reis, 2015) and incorporating race and a "multi/intercultural" perspective into analysis of the policing and construction of sexuality and gender in the classroom (see for example Moita Lopes, 2002, 2008). Cross-pollination with the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari, of great influence in the country, has resulted in proposals of cartographic, rhizomatic and even schizoanalytic approaches to queering education.[4]

In Argentina, local thinkers such as val flores, who closes this volume, Eduardo Mattio, Germán Torres (also present here) or Francisco Ramallo share the questioning of fixed natures of bodies and identities in education, and how curricula impose heterocis normative (and racist and classist) frames by legitimating certain identities, bodies and affects while discriminating others. For these authors, some of whom build on local feminist pedagogies such as those propelled by Graciela Morgade (Morgade and Alonso, 2008; Morgade, 2011) but move beyond them, a queer pedagogy could "clear a space for a more creative forging of one's identity as well as enhanced control over one's body" (Mattio, 2014, p. 9). Combining queer and trans** perspectives, Pérez and Radi (2014, 2016, 2020, see also Pérez, 2017) have reflected on educational practices in higher education and research, and how they could be queered beyond the mere adoption of a theoretical framework. In the realm of images and representations, it is interesting to have a look at the images made by the Cordoban collective *Asentamiento Fernseh*, the early work of La Plata's *Cuerpo Puerco* (by Fernanda Guaglianone and Guillermina Mongan, 2005–2013), or the collaborations between Fernanda Guaglianone and val flores (2015–2018; see flores & Guaglianone, 2016). As María Laura Gutierrez points out in her chapter in this volume, "all of these images turn the visual process into a pedagogical gesture that makes a lesson of our own predictability, upending what we thought we knew and disarming our ready-made responses".

Education has also been the focus of queer/cuir perspectives in countries such as Chile (see Ocampo González, 2018), Colombia (Bello Ramírez, 2018) or Spain (Trujillo, 2015, 2018; Sánchez Sáinz, 2019). Also relevant are queer works carried out by scholars and activists from other disciplines, such as Carlos Zelada from Law in Perú or María Amelia Viteri from Anthropology in Ecuador, and in Puerto Rico, Celiani Rivera Velázquez. It is also in this country where Lissette Rolón and Beatriz Llenín-Figueroa have been organizing a colloquium entitled *¿Del Otro La'O? Perspectivas Queer* in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, every other year, which has become a stimulating meeting space for academics and activists working on queer issues in the region. It is our hope that volumes such as this one will spark dialogues between the continental Americas, the Iberian Peninsula and the Caribbean, a region that is absent in the chapters that follow, despite our efforts to integrate authors from its Spanish-speaking countries.

Research in the realm of queer/cuir pedagogies and education in the Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking world spins around topics such as the *different differences* in school and how to deal with them; critical debates around the curricula; dilemmas of visibility and representation; homo/lesbo/transphobic violence in the classroom; comprehensive sex education as a course, a transversal content and/or a State policy; and the possibilities and limitations of a "gender perspective" and/or feminist approaches that do not incorporate queer insights on identity and the body, among many others. Educational challenges are many in a neoliberal context of destruction of public education, regressive politics and the advance of conservative campaigns around "gender ideology" in our countries. The topics and approaches represented in this collection of essays are at the center of many theoretical and practical conversations taking place these days, including those mentioned above and extending to others such as the possibilities and obstacles of queer research at the universities, or visuality and erotics. The volume moves scholarship forward by bringing to the light theoretical production that has been largely unavailable to the Anglophone world, as well as offering novel theoretical interventions and approaches to research, as is the case with the idea of queering the law, or the proposals of a queer cartogenealogy and a queer glossary.

In the political and moral war currently taking place in our contexts (and we could add, sadly, elsewhere), "gender, sexuality and sexual diversity were transformed into weapons" (César & Duarte, 2017, p. 144). In the educational field, where legislation and programs deal with and justify approaches to matters involving difference in relation to not only genders, but also sexualities, races, ethnicities and so on, the school is seen by conservative forces as a threat to their values and privileges, and hence "our children" need to be defended from "gender ideology". As Oliveira has pointed out in his analysis of this strategy of citing children's interests in order to maintain practices that reinforce social inequalities, "the child", who is very rarely or never heard, is used as "a locus of social ventriloquism" (Oliveira, 2013, p. 72).

In the realm of queer pedagogies or queering education, there are many important references, such as *Thinking Queer: Sexuality, Culture and Education*, edited by Susan Talburt and Shirley R. Steinberg (2000), which has been profoundly inspiring for us throughout many years, and the more recent *Queer pedagogies. Theory, practices, politics* (Cris Mayo & Nelson M. Rodríguez, 2019) or *Critical concepts in queer studies and education. An international guide for the twenty-first century* (Rodríguez et al. 2016),

which inaugurated this collection, to name but a few. However, we observe that, on the one hand, these compilations do not include sufficient scholarship dealing with the Ibero-American context and/or by scholars working in this region; on the other, as we have pointed out before, the thriving academic and activist knowledge production in our countries has not been put together yet (and not with this wide geographical scope) in English. Additionally, since these works are either in Spanish or in Portuguese, in general terms, they are not read or known in the Anglophone context. This is unfortunate because it actually hinders many possible debates, comparative analysis applied to various cases and contexts, and fruitful North–South dialogues that could provide key contributions to the development of the field worldwide. We imagine this volume as a step toward bridging this gap, hoping it will open space for such dialogues and prove valuable for researchers and activists working in education from a queer perspective.

The Contents of This Volume

The volume begins with a Prologue by Jaime Barrientos, from Chile, who offers a glance of the current situation in Ibero-America arguing for the social and political relevance of reflections such as the ones represented here, and defends the importance of foregrounding the rich theoretical work produced in the region. Encouraging and circulating reflections on and for queer practices in educational contexts is vital, he affirms, particularly in view of the current scenario of conservative backlash against sexual and gender diversity and LGBTI subjects[5] in education, presented under the guise of a defense against "gender ideology".

The core of the book is divided into three sections, each offering a different approach to reflect on education. The structure we propose is somewhat arbitrary, perhaps just like any other would be: after all, the articles included here share a certain family resemblance, and many are born from common concerns or offer complementary answers to cross-cutting problems. Still, we have chosen three radial points to ease the process and orient readers, hoping each section can serve as a platform from which to project reflections toward the remaining parts of the volume.

The articles collected in the first section, *Between Theories and Practices*, offer theoretical analysis and proposals entwined with educational experiences in the region, and explore their interplays with other approaches such as Crip Theory and Critical and Social Pedagogies from the South.

In this section we seek to critically queer the distinction between theory and practice and to expand the limits of each, by offering reflections on theory through the analysis of practices, and reflections on practices in and outside the classrooms through theoretical production.

Branca Falabella Fabrício and Luiz Paulo Moita-Lopes open the section with their chapter "Perspectivizing and Imagining Queer Pedagogies Through Collaborative Interventionist Research in a Brazilian School", which revisits two educational research projects developed in Brazilian schools that aimed at imagining queer times and spaces in educational life. In sharp contrast with the current socio-political context and what the authors describe as a "turn to modernist, purist, and objectivist approaches to knowledge" based on an "epistemology [that] favors monoculturalism and avoids diversity", the projects under analysis developed in a social democratic period in the country, when it was possible to research gender, sexuality and race in schools. Resorting to the concept of scale, Fabrício and Moita-Lopes explore some of the performative effects of these initiatives by studying classroom and digital work around gender and sexuality. The experiences promoted by these two projects help the authors call into question totalitarian practices in the contemporary scenario, arguing that queering literacies may disassemble the reactionary impetus we are now facing.

In Chap. 4, "Queering Freire's Pedagogies: Resistance, Empowerment, and Transgression in Teacher Training", Manuel López-Pereyra proposes a stimulating dialogue between Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy and Queer pedagogies. While the former seeks to empower and emancipate oppressed groups by offering tools to interrogate and deconstruct social structures, and then transform them, the latter advocate for the inclusion of gender and sexualities, which have been systematically excluded from education and oppressed by hegemonic groups. In his chapter, the author invites educators to use these pedagogical perspectives to empower and emancipate oppressed minority groups navigating an environment marked by hetero-normalized and stigmatized beliefs and practices.

Exploring the encounters between different theoretical perspectives is also the exercise proposed in Chap. 5, the third article in this section: "Queer, Crip and Social Pedagogy. A Critical Hermeneutic Perspective". Here, Asun Pié- and Jordi Planella-Ribera explore the intersection of social pedagogy with queer perspectives, and that of the latter with crip theory. The authors begin by re-examining social pedagogy from a queer perspective, integrating other closely related perspectives which, in their

view, have influenced how we understand and work in education. Then, they move on to explore crip theory and its power and relation to queer pedagogy. As it is evident in the chapter, this connection between queer, pedagogy and crip opens up thought and action to new unconventional and non-hegemonic ways, and configures a new framework to address diversity and humanity as a whole.

The section concludes with María Laura Gutiérrez's article "The Pedagogy of/in Images. Notes on Lesbian Desire and Knowing How to Fuck", which brings together feminist, lesbian and queer studies in visual culture, asking how images construct norms for bodies and desires, and how well-represented and representable these desires may be for young people in the educational system. While Gutiérrez's article focuses on lesbian experiences, its explicit aim is not to reify a particular identity, but rather to draw on the capacity of such experiences to raise political questions that, when intersected with queer theory, project not an essentialized identity but its vanishing points. Therefore, far from making a case for why lesbian sex should be more visible, or presenting it as unambiguous, the article foregrounds the political force of a queer and non-essentialist gaze by rolling out the potential imaginaries of lesbian experiences.

In the second set of articles, *Queering the Classroom and Beyond*, authors apply and produce theoretical resources in the analysis of a variety of educational experiences at three different levels: State policies, higher education and middle school. Here we are interested not only in providing valuable tools for scholars working on theoretical approaches to education, but also a window into current educational projects in Ibero-America, how disciplining and normalization operate in different contexts and how queerness can and does (or should) turn into everyday practices and resistances on the part of educators, activists and students.

Chapter 7, "Gender and Sexuality in the Brazilian Educational Rhizome", discusses the production, marking and governance of difference in the context of public policies in education. Its authors, Fernando Altair Pocahy and Thalles do Amaral de Souza Cruz, focus on the case of educational governmental actions included in the *Brazil Without Homophobia* program (launched in 2004 by the Brazilian Special Secretariat of Human Rights) in order to analyze forms of governance and self-government in the face of cis/hetero/normative regimes of intelligibility. The chapter takes up the ethical, epistemological and methodological principles of cartogenealogy (an approximation of Foucauldian genealogy to

Deleuzian cartography) as a way of working through the features of public policy and some of its effects in the present.

The next contribution, by Weriquis Sales, is also located in Brazil but shifts the scale and focus from national educational policies to a group of gender and/or sexuality non-conforming high school students and their forms of individual and collective resistance. "'Diva Yes! Free To Fly!' Young Students in Queer Resistance at a Public School in the Capital of Piauí, Brazil", succeeds in giving center stage to the voices of youth, and offers a unique look into their perspectives on issues such as identity formation, friendship, discrimination and freedom. In the context of the bleak times described elsewhere in the volume, learning about the potential of youth to reinterpret themselves and build collectively when offered an institutional context open to difference is certainly reassuring.

In the last chapter of this section, "Fear of a Queer Pedagogy of Law", Daniel J. García López and Luísa Winter-Pereira explore institutional life in University in the academic sphere, and particularly in the Law School in which they teach, considering how community, power and fear play out in the specific context of higher education in this discipline, which will also be the focus of Chap. 12 (see below). After demonstrating how fear-based pedagogical practices and institutional anxieties sustain university life, the authors ask whether a Law School can be queerized and propose a variety of concrete steps toward a radical pedagogy in which teaching can be based on vulnerability and care. López and Winter Pereira work with the ideas of multitude and rhizome as powerful alternatives to traditional conceptions of hierarchy, teaching and the Law, and make a case for putting into crisis the sovereignty exercised in the classroom.

Queer Pedagogies in and for Regressive Times, the third section, examines the current conservative turn in the region and offers informed reflections on its various dimensions and workings. Conservative attacks on what is being called "gender ideology" are surfacing in Ibero-America and beyond, with particularly harsh consequences for sexual diversity and progressive educational projects (Corrêa, Paternotte, & Kuhar, 2018). "Gender ideology", "an empty and adaptable signifier" (Corrêa, 2017) that brings together varying and at times contradicting discourses, serves both "as a political instrument" and "as an epistemological counter to feminist and queer theorizations of gender" (Corredor, 2019, p. 616). Therefore, it should come as no surprise that the focus of the essays collected here is currently one of the main concerns of queer perspectives on education in our region. Queer approaches can offer key insights in this

respect, allowing us to effectively confront reactionary backlash while also resisting the essentialist, cissexist and universalizing understandings of gender and sexuality that are at the core of some feminist responses to this phenomenon. When conceiving this section and collaborating with its authors, then, our aim was to bring together conceptual and practical resources that are situated in their respective contexts while remaining relevant for others facing similar challenges or reflecting on them.

The section begins with "'Gender Ideology' in Conservative Discourses: Public Sphere and Sex Education in Argentina", in which Germán Torres, Sara Pérez and Florencia Moragas offer an overview of the backlash brought by "anti-gender groups" against the agenda of women's rights, LGTB demands and gender equality in Latin America. From a Critical Discourse Studies approach, the authors analyze the positioning of initiatives gathered around the category of "gender ideology", with special focus on their political and discursive strategies. An analysis of the debates over Comprehensive Sex Education in Argentina leads the authors to argue that "in these political and discursive disputes, what has been at stake is the reconstruction of the limits and foundations of the gendered public sphere". More broadly, Torres, Pérez and Moragas offer a critical interpretation of how the sexualized and gendered norms imposed as restrictions for a livable life, especially in educational practices, contingently shape the boundaries of inclusive education, sexual citizenship and the public sphere.

Conservative movements and their involvement in politics are also the focus of Chap. 11, "Voices, Subjectivities and Desires. Costa Rican Secondary Teachers' and Students' Discourses About Sexual Diversity". In it this piece, Daniel Fernández-Fernández connects discourses against "gender ideology" with key elements of Costa Rican identity and citizenship, such as neutrality and political centrism, thereby providing further evidence to the idea of anti-gender discourse as a collection of empty signifiers and a transnational phenomenon able to mutate from one context to another. Through an analysis of interviews with students and teachers, the article demonstrates how the school proves to be "an ideal stage of this renewed confrontation", with results that can converse interestingly with those described by Sales in Chap. 8. In line with the general proposal of this volume, Fernández Fernández understands queer pedagogy as a theoretical reading tool that allows us to display the reification of normality and to examine the limits of intelligibility of teachers' and students'

discourse. The question we need to ask, according to the author, is: what enables these actors to think what they actually think?

In the last chapter of this section, Adriana M. Pérez-Rodríguez foregrounds the challenges of research in higher education in the context of conservative institutions, through the example of the Gender Studies research group from the Free University of Cúcuta, Colombia. "'At Least They Know We Exist'. Claiming Their Right to Appear" reflects on the creation of oppositional knowledge and the exercise of the right to appear, and on the possibilities of academic activism as a site of resistance and knowledge production from the margins of institutions, or against them. When the lack of institutional support translates into concrete obstacles to conduct research and present "measurable" results, can research projects create any knowledge at all? And if they succeed in overcoming these obstacles, what are the risks of institutionalization? Once again, as in Chap. 9, Law and its definition as a central identitary aspect for institutional distinction appear as particularly challenging backdrops for queer organizing, but also as inciters for queer imaginations.

The third section is followed by two *Epilogues* that take the queering of theories a step forward, through their creative and dissident styles. First, "A Glossary of Queer", by the Criscadian collective, conceptualizes queerness in the context of a language teacher education program at a Colombian public university, with the support of data collected through syllabi, murals, in-depth interviews with members of the LGBTI community and the collective's autoethnographic data. Unlike traditional understandings of glossaries, entries are not connected to any particular passage in the volume, while remaining deeply and vitally connected to all: findings (and entries) intersect queerness with categories such as race ("Black"), identities ("Marica", "Hybris"), pedagogy ("Queer Pedagogies", "(In)visible"), politics ("Resistance", "Amphibians", "Crisis") and place ("Mariposario"). The authors have chosen the form of a Glossary as an opportunity to problematize, qualify and/or reterritorialize queerness, illustrating how hetero- and homonormative discourse-practices-spaces are (re)produced curricularly and pedagogically at the material and symbolic levels.

Finally, val flores reflects on the future and potential of queering education in "Queer/Cuir Pedagogies: Fictions of the Absurd, Writings of the Stagger", where she invites us to conceive a queer/cuir pedagogy as an analytical procedure, a writing practice and an affective methodology of conceptual and bodily dislocation. A poetics of (un)knowledge, whose

practices shake up the dualistic logics of school thought guided by non-contradiction and egalitarian fantasies of harmonious and peaceful relations. Writing as pedagogical sensitivity and staggering as an epistemological task, flores suggests, can compose gestures of inadequacy to power, methodologies of a pedagogy that occurs in the micro-politics of each event, and can never be articulated in a universal or definitive way.

This is precisely the spirit we wanted to convey through these Epilogues: both texts, we believe, succeed in avoiding closures or conclusions, and instead offer openings, potentialities and vanishing—or perhaps, and hopefully, emerging—points that can project us onto hitherto unimagined futures.

Looking Forward: Limitations, Challenges and Potentialities

These essays work together to provide an overview of some of the main concerns and ideas currently driving theoretical and activist reflections/interventions in our context. Still, the reach and representation provided in this volume is far from thorough, and the wide scope we hoped to attain when we first imagined it is far from materialized. The final line-up is lacking representativity in terms of countries (the Caribbean and the Andean regions, for example, are completely absent), of race and ethnicity, and of gender diversity. We were unable to gather articles focused on alternative and non-institutional educational experiences such as popular, grassroots or activist horizontal education; few chapters address explicitly and centrally issues of race or (dis)ability and *diversidad funcional* (functional diversity); and none deal in depth with matters such as spirituality, indigeneity or class, all of which are central in order to understand our realities. Our decision as editors to avoid the temptation of collapsing trans* into queer, and to refrain from external and objectifying perspectives on trans* issues, resulted in a lack of contributions engaging these issues on this occasion. For a variety of reasons, the authors convoked to collaborate from these different standpoints were not able to participate, which in turn must lead us to reflect on the precarity of academic life in Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking contexts (and beyond), and the multiple levels of marginalization that affect even those subjects who manage to inhabit an Academy in which they, paraphrasing Audre Lorde (1995), were never meant to survive.

These worries are common to numerous compilations and special issues that fall short of their own expectations regarding representativity and breadth of scope, and project hopes onto future opportunities to remedy it. But these shortcomings can also be taken as an opportunity to reflect on and intervene in the power dynamics that profoundly shape the academy and its produce-something that, in fact, had been at the origins of our project itself, considering the lack of attention given to non-English-speaking scholarship in our field. Which kinds of subjects have access to international networks of academic opportunities? How is epistemic authority distributed along racial, gender and regional lines? How does linguistic injustice play out in the academy, and how can we counter it? In our view, queering academic work and conceiving it from the South must also involve building against these tendencies in our everyday teaching and research practices, wherever they are located. On this occasion, we decided to circulate our call for papers in Spanish and Portuguese, and invite authors to send their proposals in their language of preference; we encouraged the inclusion of references to local authors, stressing their relevance as theoretical interlocutors, with the aim of countering the historical objectification and extractivism that canonical scholarship has granted to our region. In fact, many authors in this compilation also appear as references in other chapters, thereby proving the existence of ongoing dialogues, interaction and mutual learning.

This project and the chapters that compose it were conceived, realized and sent to press in times of hardship in our region for those trying to build different worlds in and through education. Gender and sexual non-normative subjects, comprehensive sex education and intersectional views of gender and sexuality in research are under threat in the current political landscape in most of our countries. This preoccupation is evident in many articles comprised in what follows, and has served to kindle further reflections on education as a site of normalization, organizing and resistance. The toolbox provided by queer/cuir perspectives has proven to be particularly fruitful for this task, as is evident in each of these contributions. We are looking forward to seeing how the instruments offered here are adopted, brought into play, queered and reconfigured in the search for a more inclusive and just future.

Notes

1. Some authors prefer to use *cuir* instead of queer, as a form of reappropriating the term by reproducing how it is pronounced in Spanish (see next endnote for more on this). As editors we have respected the authors' choices and will be using "cuir" when relevant for this Introduction.
2. "Cuir" and "kuir" are rewritings of the term following Spanish pronunciation; "teoría torcida" was proposed by sociologist and queer activist Ricardo Llamas (1998), following Latin etymology—torquere—because it is the opposite of "straight" in Spanish; "marica" and "viada" (reappropriated slurs in Spanish and Portuguese, respectively, that could be translated as "fag", see Chap. 13) have both been questioned as translations for "queer" because they are centered only on gay men (see Trujillo, 2008). Brazilian scholar Larissa Pelúcio (2014b, 2016) proposed dubbing "Queer Theory" as "Teoria cu" (literally "ass theory" in Portuguese), whereas Berenice Bento (2017) proposed "estudos transviados", which is nevertheless exposed to the same problems of instrumentalization of trans* experiences that have been denounced by Trans* studies in relation to Queer Theory both in our region and beyond (Radi, 2019).
3. Throughout this Introduction, and following the tradition of decolonial thought, we will use North and South not as cardinal points but as spatial metaphors (Dussel, 2015), referring to dynamic and multilayered political and epistemic locations. This implies, first of all, acknowledging that in our academic world all scholars working in non-Anglophone countries are symbolically located at the South of the hegemonic centers of knowledge production. Additionally, it allows us to understand that, on the one hand, countries such as Spain and Portugal, although geographically set in the North of the globe, are politically (and academically) marginalized in comparison to hegemonic European countries; and, on the other, that even within the countries represented here (and even more so in relation to those absent), there are evident hierarchies in terms of epistemic authority and scholarly recognition (see also Rivera Cusicanqui, 2010).
4. For an overview of queer theorizations of education in Brazil, see also Couto Junior and Pocahy (2017) and Ranniery (2019).
5. As editors, we have opted for respecting the terms chosen by each author to refer to sexual and gender diversity or dissidence and gender non-conforming subjects, and only requested authors to address this decision explicitly in their contributions and explain the reasons behind it. This policy is grounded not only in what we believe is a respectful editorial practice, but also in a consideration of the diversity of sexualities, genders, terms and forms of identification englobed under this idea of an Ibero-American region.

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CHAPTER 2

Prologue: On the Importance of Queer Perspectives on Education in and from the Ibero-American Context

Jaime Barrientos

Ibero-America is a heterogeneous region, socially and politically complex and rich in cultural traditions. We, who live here, are united by a common colonial past and a Catholic cultural matrix. Nonetheless, we are currently more than just one region: we have many regions, many languages, and different social, political, and even religious stories. So, showing a general panorama of this region may be dangerous, since this exercise could hide local idiosyncrasies and multiple contextual particularities.

This book intends to approach Ibero-America to address queer epistemologies of education and pedagogies. It is a unique book because it does not only include authors from several Ibero-American countries (Argentina, Costa Rica, Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, and Spain), something quite uncommon in the English-speaking world, but also because it is interested in thinking of "queer epistemologies of education" in the region. Although

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the concern or reflection about what is queer is not recent in these latitudes, it has not had the same level of visibility and recognition as other parts of the world. Hence another reason why this book is important. In addition, it is invaluable since it is socially and politically crucial to address what is queer, and particularly queer practices, in educational contexts of Ibero-America today. In this prologue, I will give some of the reasons why I believe this is necessary.

In the last decade, most Ibero-American countries have made a transition from rather prejudiced and stigmatizing contexts for sexual and gender minorities, to ones more respectful of our rights (Barrientos, 2015, 2016). A recent report reveals that there are important laws and regulations in the region, ensuring a minimal basis for defending and protecting lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) population rights and, particularly, children and adolescents (Barrientos & Saavedra, in press). However, although this is important, it does not effectively solve the problems that, for example, LGBT students face daily in educational contexts.

Additionally, the world and Ibero-America have recently been affected by a movement against the so-called "gender ideology", producing panic, at least in our region, mainly during the latest political elections in Latin America (Barrientos & Saavedra, in press; International Association of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Trans, and Intersex [ILGA], 2017; see Chap. 3 in this volume). Therefore, in a regional scenario where State-supported anti-gender policies escalate, in some cases such as Brazil, the actual and effective application of existing laws or regulations cannot be guaranteed, therefore detaining the advancement of rights. There are currently several conservative expressions intending to delegitimize and negate the gender approach, trying to efface it from legal and political frameworks, including the educational realm, without recognizing it as an analytical category and naming it as "gender ideology" (ILGA, 2017). Among these conservative expressions, we find VOX, the Spanish extreme rightist political party, which has recently attacked various initiatives related to sexual and gender minorities implemented in that country, or Bolsonaro's current government in Brazil, which has strongly criticized several initiatives fighting homophobia and transphobia.

This scenario is a matter of concern for sexual and gender minorities, and particularly for educational practice, which is the focus of this book. Why? Because in educational contexts, be it school or university, LGBT students may be victims of different types of violence perpetrated not only

by other students, but also by the institutional personnel themselves or the organizational and institutional models (Echagüe & Barrientos, 2018; United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2015, 2016). Furthermore, LGBT teachers could also be victims of violence by other teachers, students, or the educational institution itself.

Hence, the demand for the inclusion of LGBT students in educational contexts has gained strength in the political agenda of the last few years, and also in the educational reforms and public policy implementation in different Ibero-American countries (Barrientos & Saavedra, in press). At present, there is a greater opening toward the different manifestations of ethnic, racial, sexual, gender, and social class diversity for educational policies in several countries in the region. For example, many of them have explicitly addressed the protection of rights related to gender identity and sexual orientation in their curriculums, while others have inclusive curriculums, although their administration is in the hands of each school. There are also some countries whose educational curriculums do not mention this population at all.

In a recent report about several Central and Latin American countries, we showed that the inclusion of LGBT students in schools and the existence of inclusive restrooms and support materials are very restricted realities, at least in Latin American countries (Barrientos & Saavedra, in press). In addition, the report revealed that the factual and effective implementation of such inclusion in schools is still more associated with a specific will than with an educational policy ensuring these measures.

Furthermore, to date the interest is even less when it comes to the inclusion of teachers who are part of sexual and gender minorities in schools and universities, a challenge that should eventually be seriously addressed in the region.

On the other hand, children and youth from these populations are at a high risk of victimization, particularly at school on an Ibero-American basis. There are fewer studies on this at regional universities, although recent movements in Chile in 2018 indicated that these spaces are not safe for LGBT youth either. According to UNESCO (2015), the school is the place where children and adolescents undergo the most harassment and discrimination, with homophobia and transphobia at the basis of such violence. However, this violence does not exclusively refer to non-heterosexual or non-cis students. The least detection of a trait not fitting the

heterocisnormative system makes this type of violence emerge and be exerted against those who do not follow its norms (UNESCO, 2015).

If we analyze some of the figures available on violence toward LGBT students in Ibero-American countries, despite advances on acceptance and laws safeguarding rights, the situation is still worrying due to the levels of violence registered. For example, a national survey on school environment conducted by *Todo Mejora* (2016) in Chile revealed that 59.9% of the respondents heard LGBT-phobic comments from part of the school personnel, while in Colombia (Colombia Diversa & Sentiido, 2016), a similar study showed that 37.2% of the respondents had felt attacked by a teacher during their last school year, owing to their sexual orientation or gender identity.

How can this scenario be faced in the region? Several legal and normative actions can be found on a regional basis. There are specific OAS resolutions, and a Rapporteurship on the Rights of LGBT Persons was created. There are also initiatives such as GALE, a learning community focusing on education about LGBT-related topics, and *Red Iberoamericana de Educación LGBT* (RIE),[1] an organizational platform focusing on the promotion of respect for LGBT human rights in the educational realm, through measures aimed at improving the school environment of LGBT students and teachers (PROMSEX & Empodera, 2016). In most countries of the region, States are implementing actions in the educational system, in relation to the sexual education of youth (Báez & Gonzalez del Cerro, 2015). However, as stated above, not all these initiatives refer to LGBT children and adolescents. Additionally, there are some experiences connected to teacher training, one of the primary components for favoring inclusion, particularly that of LGBTI children and adolescents. These experiences are limited and usually conducted by social organizations, as in the case of Chile, where *Fundación Iguales* and MOVILH have trained teachers in these matters, as is also being done in Spain.

Beyond these contextual factors, academic reflection on queer practice is always welcome and necessary in educational contexts, be it applied to school or university, to students or teachers. Therefore, again, the importance of this volume.

This book was coordinated by two activist-academics (Moira Pérez and Gracia Trujillo) from Argentina and Spain, countries whose important academic production is often overlooked. Reviews of scientific production on sexual and gender minorities, for instance, are usually circumscribed to the North (U.S.A. and Northern Europe). However, Ibero-America has

reflected and generated knowledge on these matters for many years, although to a large extent it has been in Spanish and Portuguese. Writing in our own language has made our production less visible than works in English, which usually appear in various databases and search engines. In the countries represented in this volume, as well as in others in the region, there are scientific papers, master and doctoral theses, gender programs, and research groups in universities, among other academic initiatives, addressing sexual and gender minorities. Additionally, contributions of thinkers such as Paulo Freire (1970) have been essential to think about educational practice in the region and beyond.

This book is also important because it helps, by reflecting on quite specific contexts, to think about how the particularities and production from the South can also influence queer educational practices, including those related to gender and sexual minorities, in other contexts.

Finally, the relevance of this book also lies in the fact that it enables thinking about the effects of anti-gender movements on social and cultural advancements associated with these collectives, and how they may be seriously threatened by anti-gender movements. Thus, the articles collected here can bring forth relevant ideas to resist the march of anti-rights conservatism in other contexts around the globe.

Note

1. See Red Iberoamericana de Educación LGBTI (2020). The network includes 100% Diversidad y Derechos (Argentina), Colombia Diversa (Colombia), Colectivo Trans del Uruguay (CTU), Fundación Igualdad LGBT (Bolivia), Fundación Triángulo (España), Instituto Brasileiro Trans de Educação (Brasil), MOVILH (Chile) and Promsex (Perú).

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CHAPTER 3

Perspectivizing and Imagining Queer Pedagogies Through Collaborative Interventionist Research in a Brazilian School

Branca Falabella Fabrício and Luiz Paulo Moita Lopes

Introduction[1]

This chapter is a response to a bleak scenario in Brazil and in different parts of the world. Government officials and a lot of parents have been fighting against teachers in order to protect children from the influence of what has been dubbed "gender ideology". Moreover, homophobia and racism have been increasing in institutional and non-institutional contexts. This situation gives rise to many worries. What will become of the relative recent gains in relation to gender, sexuality, and race? How can they endure when the so-called "identity politics" are under attack? How does one face the flourishing prejudice in contemporary times? In order to grapple with these questions, we revisit two educational research projects developed in Brazilian schools, whose aim was to imagine queer times and spaces in educational life. Resorting to the concept of scale, we explore

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some of the performative effects of these projects by analyzing classroom and digital practices revolving around gender and sexuality.

More than ever, there is now a compelling need to consider more strongly queer theorizing in the education domain. That is not to say that the necessity for queering education was not among educational concerns before. In fact, there are myriad research projects related to queer education carried out at schools across the world and also reports on how to act in classrooms in order to queer school curricula. Moita-Lopes and Fabrício (2019) review this kind of research, especially in literacy contexts. The literature they discuss may lead many scholars into thinking that education is becoming increasingly progressive, particularly in connection with race, gender, and sexuality issues. Their basis is the fundamental works of Judith Butler (1990) and Eve Sedgwick (1990). Among many others who have written about gender theory, these thinkers prompted a political agenda including "identity" work at large. Such an agenda has cleared the ground for queer theorizing, which also includes race issues (Barnard, 2004).

Intrinsic to it are social movements in many parts of the globe, particularly mobilized by feminist, LGBTIQ+, and anti-racist activism. Their repercussions have been paramount in demanding a classroom epistemology that considers students as subjects who do gender, race, and sexuality. Although one cannot say that a queer outlook is influential in every classroom, it has animated a lot of the discussions in initial and in-service teacher education programs. It has also had a great impact on research, textbook publishing, and syllabus design in many quarters of the world.

Bringing the centrality of who we "are" as social beings into the educational realm makes the task of teaching more complex. Nevertheless, it enables teachers to connect with a world deeply transformed by social movements. Therefore, more democratic aims in education toward the construction of social justice have become crucial issues. They consider students' races, genders, and sexualities as integral to cognition and inseparable from their socially situated bodies. This orientation has contributed to education becoming forward-looking in its developments.

In spite of all these progressive changes, contemporary social life has been pointing in a different direction. We now face extremely conservative sociopolitical circumstances that have caused a widespread backlash. This perception considers different aspects. On the one hand, the world is now following neoliberal perspectives, in which the feeding of Market forces is promoted at the expense of democratic principles. On the other hand,

anti-democratic politics on the far right link up with extremist religious practices that fight against contemporary social changes.

Such a reactionary wave has reached the forefront of education, favoring a turn to modernist, purist, and objectivist approaches to knowledge. This kind of epistemology favors monoculturalism and avoids diversity. Moreover, it sees students as existing solely in terms of their cognition or in a social vacuum. It thus exposes them to standardized learning, assuming that all subjects are equal provided that they submit themselves to a white-male-heterosexual matrix. Such a view is inherent to the exercise of power, constituting a race, gender, and sexuality template against which all are compared. Consequently, one single blow erases the complexity of both learning and the social world. This perspective manages to maintain its attractiveness, as it allows one to overlook differences. Backed up by positivism—a scientific trend still very much in vogue—it produces oversimplifications that require statistical generalization, while disregarding the heterogeneity of everyday lives. It thus removes the obstacles that would weaken particular kinds of theories and their universalizing cognitivist appeal.

It is against this backdrop that, in this chapter, we draw on a scale-sensitive approach to discourse (Carr & Lempert, 2016) in order to create intelligibility about recent political and educational experiences. We call into question totalitarian practices in the contemporary scenario by comparing them with an earlier social democratic period, when it was possible to research gender, sexuality, and race in schools. The discussion of the Brazilian sociopolitical and historical environment is our concern here. We then move on to put into perspective our ethnographic research in Brazilian schools, drawing attention to two different moments. Firstly, we cover a descriptive ethnographic stage, and then we discuss an interventionist phase that focuses on queering literacies. In the last part of the chapter, we argue that our research disassembles the reactionary impetus we are now facing.

Totalitarian Scales in Contemporary Politics

Scale, as employed by Carr and Lempert (2016), is a concept referring to meaning-making phenomena at large. According to a scalar view, human existence is inseparable from semiosis. In their daily activities, humans scale their worlds around them as they deploy signs in constructing themselves, other people, and their experiences. To explain the intense semiotic

labor involved in scaling, the authors resort to an excerpt of Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, in which Ishmael, a fisherman, narrates his encounter with the colossal carcass of a whale. In his reconstruction of the unexpected event, he establishes different relations. He compares the minute size of humans to the gargantuan dimensions of the skeletal remains. He invokes the leviathan, as metaphorical of the enormity of the sea creature. He highlights the uniqueness of the episode, by anchoring his story in a specific time and space, different from the here-and-now of the narration. He also expresses his awe and bravery in dealing with a monstrous corpse. According to Carr and Lempert (2016, p. 2), Ishmael's calculations, comparisons, and narrative authority constitute an eloquent "lesson in perspective". It materializes for an audience the experience of coming across a giant being. It is this projected sign-weft that forges interlocutors' sense of reality.

This kind of activity is representative of what social actors do when signifying social phenomena. They employ signs conjointly in organizing, interpreting, valuing, and producing distinctions. They also "sort, group, and categorize many things, people and qualities in terms of relative degrees of elevation or centrality" (p. 3). Think, for example, of the State, an overarching category that encompasses many other hierarchically laminated elements, such as counties, districts, suburbs, and the like. At first sight, it is merely a neutral label describing a spatial and administrative entity. However, the naming activity does much more than simple referential work. It structures practices, social roles, geopolitics, and power relations. As such, it is a semiotic-performative achievement in that it gauges perception. In the last analysis, the State and the sub-classifications deriving from it are taxonomies that construct an optical illusion or a "forced perspective" (p. 18) interlaced with specific ways of being. They thus constitute a scalar project that operates ideologically.

This angle may shed light on the semiotic life of contemporary politics as it focuses on the sign-amalgam political discourses make circulate. Zygmund Bauman (1997/1998) had already argued that the emergence of the so-called modern state was linked to ideologies of order, cleanliness, and progress. As control strategies, these ideals would help constrain and regulate human instincts in the structuring of social formations. Therefore, scales of organization, constant development, and hygiene have always gravitated around the concept of civilized world, contributing to perceptions of stability and continuous upgrade of imagined nations-peoples-languages (Anderson, 1983; Makoni & Pennycook, 2007). The centrality

of this kind of scalar fabrication in the civilizing process (Elias, 1939/1990) is well known. So are its paradoxical consequences. On the one hand, it generated ideals of freedom, equality, and fraternity. On the other, it produced totalitarian regimes as a corollary of the expansion and toughening of state-type forms of governmentality. Investments on ways of keeping things in their right places and avoiding any kind of "dirt" have made us familiar with civilization's capacity to designate "polluting agents" and design tactics to either "repair" or "eliminate" them.

These orientations have integrated western imaginary for a couple of centuries now through what has been called the Occidentalization of the world or the colonization of what was not west (Venn, 2000). However, more recently, we have been witnessing their sharp revival in populist presidents' oratory. They all appeal to a mythical national past, recycling scales of purity and homogeneity in the projection of the "identity" of their countries. Moreover, they invoke the fundamental opposition "us vs. them" while fabricating a negative and threatening alterity. The menacing "other" is any group of individuals who transgress "normalcy patterns" concerning sexuality, gender, and race. These social divisions would guarantee an invented internal cohesion that relies on the patriarchal family. Images of the authoritarian bread-winner father who protects his wife and children tend to collapse in the character of many political figures. As scale-makers, they claim authority, moral status, strength, and maleness as positive attributes that help fathom the nation as a white and heterosexual domain of power. In opposition, people who identify themselves as LGBTIQ+,[2] black, or women and who challenge the gender or racial biases are scaled as "enemies".

In their reading of the globalized political ambience, many authors emphasize the above aspects in the discourse of world leaders nowadays in Brazil, Russia, Poland, Hungary, and the USA, among others. Timothy Snyder (2018), Jason Stanley (2018), Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2016), and Walter Mignolo (2011/2017), for example, agree that the upsurge of a nationalist rhetoric in these areas has been incrementing anti-democratic practices. Negative emotions such as hatred and abjection have been circulating worldwide, linked to homophobia, racism, misogyny, and immigrant-phobia, among other forms of discrimination. According to their diagnosis, the ideal of democracy is in conflict with systems of domination sustained by three long-entrenched ideologies: capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy. In spite of all the social gains guaranteed by democratic advancement, colonialism and patriarchy have made a comeback. The

former is based on an idea of the natural inferiority of certain human groups, and the latter is sustained by a rigid binary gender system. Financial capitalism depends on both of them. They keep social structures and social actors in place. Any deviation may bring about a sense of disorder, demanding correction. Symbolic and/or physical assaults on rebellious women, LGBTIQ+, black people, and immigrants are expressive examples of violent solutions against "the adversaries" of the capitalist enterprise.

Sousa Santos (in Machado 2016) employs the term "low-intensity democracy" to refer to this flourishing form of political life and the imaginary narrative in which diversity and mixing damage the integrity of nation states. In his view, a neoconservative fabric is being designed containing fascist overtones. Social fascism is the term he employs to refer to the colonial, patriarchal, and bigoted scales at play. In his own words, "We live in low or very low intense democracies that coexist with socially fascist societies. Hence my diagnosis is that we live in societies which are politically democratic but socially fascist" (Sousa Santos in Machado 2016, n.p.). Differently from political fascism, "social fascism is defined by a crisis in the social contract, namely, by the idea that notions such as equality, justice, solidarity and universality are no longer values" (Sousa Santos in Machado 2016, n.p.) operating in many countries.

Taking Brazil as a case in point, we can typify the country's present government as a far-right autocratic shock that contrasts with the previous 13-year-long center-left leadership. Oriented by a totalitarian mindset, the Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro has been following a dogmatic blueprint that includes, among other actions, the rejection of any form of intellectualism. He displays a despotic disposition through his recurrent downgrading of teachers, his attacks on the credibility of research and universities, and his undermining of dissident voices. Moreover, a fascist flavor can also be detected in his extremist gender politics and homophobic remarks. According to Eco (1995/2018), in his analysis of fascist archetypes, these are phallic moves deriving from power impulses transmuted into sexual anxiety. Politically, they translate as chauvinistic condemnation of "strangers" or what constitutes our eternal fascism. Or, as Silva (2019) contends, they integrate a new populist register employed as strategy to recruit voters aligned with conservative values.

Moral panic is a possible consequence of such scalar fantasy. It identifies the performance of varied genders and sexualities as a menace to the reproductive family led by a vigorous stallion, a cherished national symbol

as argued above. In view of this conservative turn in politics, there is a tremendous need for queer pedagogies to counter its totalitarian inflection.

Queer Scales in Pedagogy

The appalling rebirth of a destructive view of queer lives in many societies has been supported by the so-called "gender ideology" and "cultural Marxist principles", which Márquez and Laje (2014) dreadfully defend. In Brazil, as well as elsewhere, influential fundamentalist religious groups, linked to evangelical and other Christian credos, have been claiming this position. They overtly describe themselves as the bastions of gender and sexuality normativity. Based on firm biological assumptions that men and women have essential properties, they spell out the perils of feminism and queer theories because they defy the fundamental tenets of human reality. Men and women are born men and women. Their bodies are programed for reproduction. Their mating and forming families are taken as instinctive activities to guarantee the preservation of the species. According to them, this is a natural order that queer lives disrupt and corrupt.

Such a mindset has affected contemporary politics. In Brazil, for example, a specific law bill suggests that gender issues cannot be discussed at school, although it has not been approved by the Congress. It develops its argumentation based on a narrow and misconceived reading of Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* and social constructionism. In the perception of some politicians, this kind of literature is ideologically misleading as it distorts the crude fact that although human-beings are both culture and nature, nature always comes first. It thus comes as no surprise the present moral crusade against queer theory in order to restore Nature's harmony.

Queering pedagogy involves queering language and communication and imagining them differently. A performative view of language and identity has a decentering potential and may help us rescale meaning-making. Traditionally, socioconstructionist perspectives in connection with "identity studies" approach discourse as an instrument for fabricating who we are (Fairclough, 1992; Moita-Lopes, 1998; Moita-Lopes, 2002). More recently, a performative view of language (Pennycook, 2007; Moita-Lopes & Fabrício, 2019) has received attention. Performativity is a scale that perspectivizes meaning not as intrinsic to language. It is brought about by speech acts (Austin, 1962; Derrida, 1972/1988) that produce particular meaning effects in social encounters. Meaning emerges in interaction.

Therefore, when we use language, our words do things in the world (Austin, 1962). This is a totally externalist view since it is not concerned with traditional perceptions of language as an internal system. Rather it focuses on how our speech acts construct meanings. This view is performative since, when we engage in meaning construction, we describe what we are doing in the very act of using language: we perform meaning. And we do so by resorting to numerous signs (linguistic signs, images, videos, etc.). They index ideologies, particular discourses, and worldviews besides bringing up particular semantic effects. This perspective highlights the unstable nature of meaning-making. On the one hand, signification depends on the repetition of conventional speech acts—contextually relevant ritual acts, deriving from a general iterability of language by citation (Derrida, 1982, p. 326). On the other, because repetition is never the same, meaning construction is also constantly involved with innovation. That is why Derrida (1982) has drawn attention to how meaning is always deferred or postponed. Pennycook (2007) has suggested a very useful operational distinction between performative and performativity to account for the repetition-and-innovation matrix of language use. While the performative nature of language accounts for repetition, the notion of performativity explains the innovations it may bring about.

Relying on these ideas and on Foucault's discussion on the inextricability of discourse and subjectivity, Butler (1990) puts forward the perspective that we are called into being by language. According to it, we do not exist before discourse: we emerge in interaction. Butler developed the very influential theory of gender and sexuality as a doing. Gender and sexuality do not have to do with what we are but with the particular meaning effects we perform in the world. These effects are highly regulated by sociocultural rules. They involve us in the repetition of particular discursive games about what women's and heterosexuals' bodies, for example, do in the enactment of who they are. Butler (1990) has argued that our bodies are constantly evaluated by what she refers to as the "heterosexual matrix". It ultimately decides who fits it and who deviates from it.

However, the incessant iterability of what our bodies can do ends up producing a sense of substance to what is fictional, or a meaning effect of our practices. The fictional nature of gender and sexuality has shaken essentialist and biological understandings of our bodies and has been very influential in the development of queer theories. Gender and sexuality are both performative but, by virtue of being performative, they also instigate performativity since they are never the same. Had they been solely

repetitive processes, gatekeeping devices for controlling people in static binary positionalities would not have blossomed. There would be no need for the heterosexuality matrix that scales human subjects. By the same token, the full-time job to regulate repetition with which families, schools, and churches are involved would be totally superfluous. As meaning-making practices, gender and sexuality are always navigating the feeble and malleable line between repetition and innovation. Therefore, they cannot be explained biologically. These performative views of both language and gender/sexuality have been very productive in orienting queer scales in pedagogy.

In the remainder of this chapter, we discuss two distinct phases of our ethnographic research, focusing on how different teachers and students engage in talk about gender and sexuality as part of their school activities. The first phase, which operationalized a talk-about-text approach, detected orienting beliefs concerning the performance of social identities in the classroom. The second phase was interventionist. It sought to promote reflexive thinking about gender and sexuality through awareness-raising activities on an educational blog.

Scaling School Life as Suffering: The First Stage of Research

In this section we review the first stage of our school ethnographic research that had a descriptive nature. It was carried out with fifth graders (age range from 12 to 14) in a Portuguese-as-a mother-tongue literacy classroom in a school in the city of Rio de Janeiro, at the end of the 1990s. The teacher chose one of a series of texts related to difference to be talked about in class. One of us attended these discussions, constructing field notes related to the interactional and identity practices being performed while also audio-recording the classroom events as well as focus-group interviews. This kind of observation detected recurrent scaling practices employed by students. Frequently, the teacher projected an institutional scale. While framing her classes as the teaching of the Portuguese language, she avoided bringing up homosexuality to the front of the classroom at all costs, even when students' themselves suggested it as an interactional topic. Comments such as "If you are going to be disrespectful … I am going away" (Moita-Lopes, 2002, p. 103)[3] indicated that certain themes were not considered educational in her classes. Nevertheless,

in one of our focus-group interviews, students were projecting scales on a particular boy, who they classified as a "homosexual" or as a member of a species as Foucault (1976/1978) put it.

Such categorization of the boy came to us as a surprise since we had been in classroom for over five months at that point and the particular boy had never drawn our attention as being different from all the others. Note, however, the scaling project students devoted themselves to, while talking in the focus-group encounter. In Fig. 3.1 below, we recontextualize an excerpt of their interaction in which meanings about the classmate's deviant sexuality are constructed in contrast with a particular student's performance as a heterosexual persona. Let us observe then how Hans interactionally positioned himself as a straight male, with the help of his peers Peter and Betina.[4]

This excerpt was translated into English in a book chapter published in Moita-Lopes (2006a). Hans and his co-narrators tell a story about a boy in their class without ever referring to his name. This fact indicates they all know who he is and that they are used to gossiping about him. It also indicates that his alterity is so noticeable that there is no need of singling him out. Furthermore, this is a device Hans and the other narrators make use of that transforms the boy into "the stranger", by forging scales that make his awkwardness or "homosexuality" obvious ("he spoke like a woman"; "this guy must have a problem"; "This is not normal!"; "He

Hans: My goodness! This is not normal!

Hans: Like this boy in our class. He speaks in a totally different manner, do you get it?

Peter: Walks in a different manner.

Betina: He wiggles his ass.

Hans: … to me this is wrong. The chap is 12 years old. I am 14. But when I was his age, I wouldn't go somewhere and use that funny tone of voice and wiggle my ass.

Betina: And the worst thing about it is that he is a gossip!

Hans: Right! Right!

Betina: He tells everything to everybody. We can never rely on him.

Hans: He can never see anything that [he gossips about]

Peter: He is that kind of mad queen.

Fig. 3.1 Focus-group interview (Moita-Lopes, 2006a, p. 303)

speaks in a totally different manner", "Walks in a different manner"; "He wiggles his ass"; "he is a gossip"; "He is that kind of mad queen"). The scale exercise goes in a crescendo of vehemence up to the point when Peter characterizes the boy as "a mad queen" as if he were given the chance for the final evaluation. Meanwhile, the co-narrators performatively project themselves as "heterosexual" or as doing the "right" gender and sexuality. Such "identity" scales consistently positioned interlocutors at the "hegemonic" angle through which the "margins" are constructed and naturalized—femininity and homoeroticism in the case at hand.

Our research in this field involved educational ethnographies that explored how gender, sexuality, and race intersected in daily discursive practices (Moita-Lopes, 1998, 2002, 2006a, b). This research drew attention to the amount of suffering involved in school life, on the part of students who did not fit in with a (white) heteronormative matrix (Butler, 1990). Furthermore, it indicated the difficulties teachers faced in dealing with otherness. Although these insights were generated many years ago, they point to hardships and to a social dynamic that is very much alive nowadays, echoing a socially fascist organization toward difference. Its recurrence in the different school contexts we have researched has prompted us to move into interventionist research.

In order to illustrate possible actions in literacy educational contexts, our focus now changes to ethnographic collaborative interventionist research conducted by Fabrício and reported by Fabrício (2012, 2017) and Fabrício and Moita-Lopes (2015, 2019). We show how a researcher in collaboration with a teacher and students can performatively queer essentialist views of social subjects by negotiating queer scales.

Scaling School Life as Action: The Interventionist Stage of Research

In this section, we recontextualize one of a series of educational encounters generated in our fieldwork at Admiral School—an institution located in a densely populated urban area in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The interactions took place in a digital space produced cooperatively by a History teacher and one of us to be used with four groups of high school students.[5] The virtual encounters ran parallel to classroom interaction and were always related to the discussions carried out in the History classes. The blog was discursively constructed as a debate forum, as made explicit

on its presentation page. As shown in Fig. 3.2 below, the website invited participants to engage in scalar work as a strategy to approach historical processes.[6]

As stated in previous work (Fabrício & Moita-Lopes, 2019), the blog idea was designed as a space to promote reflexivity concerning recurrent practices of racism and homophobia in the institution's past history. The teacher wanted to confront them with pedagogically oriented activities. The blog was thus conceived a reflexive environment meant to complement the institution's official syllabus. The conversation these two interactional spaces established encouraged scalar projections that ended up queering normative expectations concerning gender and sexuality. As an example, we briefly explore how students' scalar work may disrupt naturalized perceptions of social performances. The stretch of online talk we recontextualize below was triggered by a task posted on the blog[7] during the first term of the school year (March–April).

According to our field notes, the official syllabus indicated the "Enlightenment" as the theme for that period, according to which students were supposed to reflect on two simultaneous processes: the production of democratic ideals and the promotion of social annihilation. With the cooperation of one of us, she elaborated an assignment titled "Enlightenment, reason, and freedom". This task was the first discussion proposed to students, functioning as an inaugural address, so to speak.

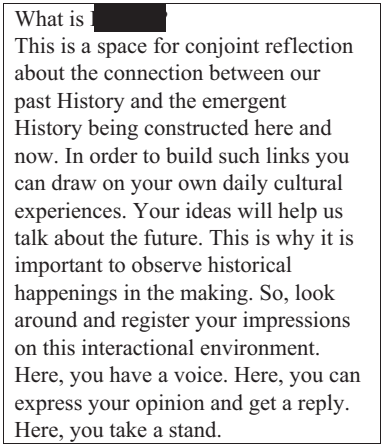

Fig. 3.2 First page of an educational blog

Enlightenment, Reason and Freedom
Published on 5 March 2015

The Age of Enlightenment also known as the Age of Reason are terms that describe literary and philosophical trends in 18thcentury Europe, just before the French Revolution. Thinkers of that period employed the light metaphor to counter obscurantism and ignorance toward a new era oriented by rationalism, science and respect for humanity. New scientific discoveries, Isaac Newton's theory of universal gravitation and the idea of cultural relativism trigged by the Great Navigations influenced the outbreak of the Enlightenment.

Fig. 3.3 Task on an educational blog

HAVE YOU FINISHED READING? YOU ARE THEN READY TO POST A COMMENT

1. Which piece of news struck you most? Why?
2. Is the news you have selected close to or distant from the ideals of the Enlightenment period?
3. Can you think of any other example that may help us think of the Enlightenment ideals in the contemporary world?

Fig. 3.4 Questions on an educational blog

Our main concern was the existence of terror and violence within an allegedly democratic apparatus, as Fig. 3.3 indicates.

Following this explanation there were 12 news headlines from different media sources, dealing with a variety of social issues, such as racism in Brazilian soccer, abandoned patients in public hospitals, schools in precarious conditions, crimes against animals, terrorism, and the recognition of homo-affective relations by the Supreme Court, among others. Three subsequent questions encouraged students to take a stand, as shown in Fig. 3.4:

Four different groups of students debated the suggested topic. For the purposes of the present chapter, we will focus on one of them whose participants made 64 comments. In Figs. 3.5–3.8, we briefly explore four of such posts that considered the headline "Homosexual couple spanked by about 15 men on a subway train in São Paulo". We focus on students' scale labor and the meaning effects it fashions.[8]

In Fig. 3.5, Gina recontextualizes the news about homophobia, projecting a position of indignation against "people's prejudice" and

Gina,on 12 March 2015 at 22:45:

the news that struck me most was the one on the homosexual couple beaten by 15 men, I was outraged to think of the magnitude of people's prejudice nowadays, people have the right to choose what they want to be, I think other people have to respect their choices (...)

An example I can provide is what happened to a friend of mine, she had no friends, she was mocked at, she was isolated simply because she has AIDS, everyone was afraid to come near her, they also offended her.

Fig. 3.5 Gina's post

Joice, on 12 March 2015 at 23:41 :

(...) I was really shocked by the aggression towards homosexuals ... I can't explain why, but this kind of thing always moves me … how blind and thoughtless people are toward individuals that are fellow human beings, I don't understand .. I think what drew my attention most is the fact that people don't understand that we live in the 21st century, that things have changed, that normality is different now and that people seem unable to accept difference in society (...) that news is both close to and distant from the Enlightenment.. it's close to it cause what homosexuals look for is exactly that, people using their reason to understand they are normal human beings, equality and more respect .. but I also agree that it is distant from it, because the men who have done such barbarism don't use reason let alone a sense of respect for others. As I have mentioned in today's class, the case of the boy who was beaten simply because his parents were a gay couple. In our school too there was a case, I haven't experienced it, but some classmates have told me about it .. about the boy who came out of the closet and his father made him quit school, because the father blamed the school for influencing his son.

Fig. 3.6 Joice's post

highlighting "respect" as a mode of resistance. She also shares with her interlocutors an example of violence and exclusion experienced by a close friend.

In her comment, Gina highlights the notion of respect, which reappears in Joice's post in Fig. 3.6. The student seems to frame it as a strategy to deal with difference. Interlacing different scales (translocal, local, and personal), the participant projects multiple time-space references: the time-space of the "Enlightenment", the time-space of her history classes

at school, the time-space of another news report, and the time-space of the news at hand.

Joice's multidimensional construction characterizes as barbarian, violent, and irrational actions that loathe difference. Although the student essentializes rationality almost as a saving grace, her scalar projections are critical of the idea of normality. Such reflexive stance seems to influence other contributions. Ema and Paula (see Fig. 3.7), for instance, expand the idea of respect as they reconstruct Joice's example about "the boy who was spanked simply because his parents were a gay couple".

Having tracked the news Joice had cited on the web, Ema shares the link to the report with the whole group. Besides replicating the concepts of respect and acceptance employed by Joice, Ema broadens it to the scale of "humanity". Going in a similar direction, Paula positions herself in agreement with her classmate, addressing the questions she poses straightforwardly. She calls forth a biblical time-space, incorporating the acceptance of people's choices and opinions to the notion of respect. As she does so, she resorts to a personal scale that transfers the authority of religious discourse to the realm of people's individual choices.

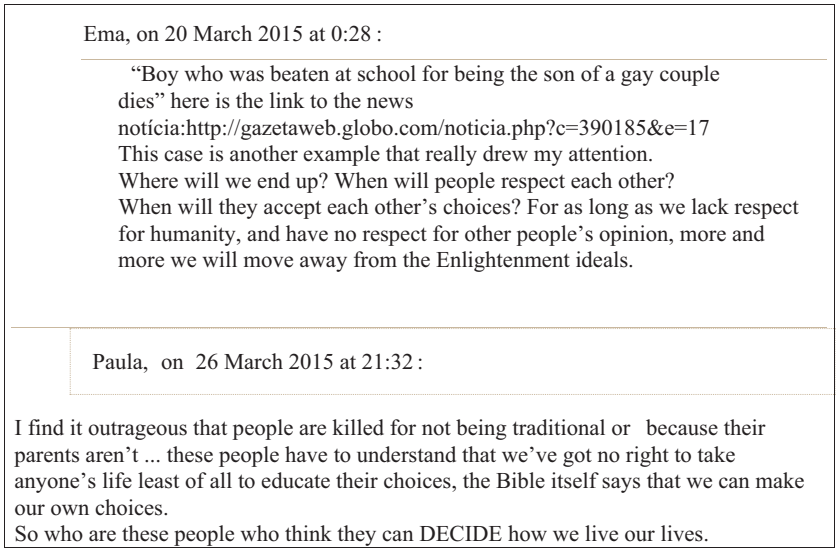

Fig. 3.7 Ema's and Paula's post

Joana, on 28 March 2015 at 23:45 :

I will tell you a story about my uncle who was a man and now is a woman, my family didn't accept this situation very well because my family is traditional, from a small town in the countryside of Pernambuco State, my grandfather did not accept my aunt (aunt, guys, please she doesn't like it when I refer to her as he) cause she was different from other people, he didn't treat her well and stuff, he wouldn't even look her in the face. She realized that she was "different" after one of the frequent parties in the country house where she lived, my other aunts and uncles, my mother and my grandmother accepted her well, the problem was my grandfather. At the age of 17 my aunt left home and moved to sao paulo, she went through many hardships there, was homeless and sleeping on the streets for one year, but she had a purpose in life, one year later, God knew what to do, he introduced her to a very important person in her life. after they had been living together for 10 years He gave her 2 gifts that would change her life forever, the much-dreamed sex reassignment surgery and more, the most beautiful, He gave her 3 kids, 2 girls and 1 boy who are now the heart of the family. today my aunt owns 3 businesses and is very happy with her kids who are 3-year olds and are the cutest things. you know what happened to my granddad, he fell at home and my granny couldn't take care of him on her own. my father couldn't help her cause he worked a lot and was constantly travelling and my other aunts and uncles couldn't care less. my aunt left sao paulo and moved back to pernambuco to take care of him, left her husband in charge of her businesses and took the 3 children with her, thank God my grandfather has recovered, today he lives with my aunt and is really grateful to her. prejudice starts at home and this part of aunt[redacted]'s story.

Fig. 3.8 Joana's post

Joana proceeds the conversation (see Fig. 3.8), engaging in an unexpected narrative performance that functions as a significant confessional moment.

Enacting a personal scale, Joana produces a narrative articulating "out-of-place" discourses, bodies, and spaces (Scollon & Scollon, 2004) that conflict with the parameters regulating the traditional educational order. The topicalization of trans identities, the experience of a family member who has undergone sex reassignment, the student's positive evaluation of such experience, and her ratification of her aunt's new identity decenter the binary gender and sexuality matrices that have been banning "abnormal" subjects and their bodies from official curricula—as identified in the first stage of our research.

It is noteworthy that the "exceptional" discourses Joana shares with the bloggers emerge amidst other surprising discourses that, while favoring diverse ways of being human, are utterly critical of our socialization into

ways of dealing with difference. Their precipitation in the focused digital environment frames educational action on an unusual basis. Working as a group, students shared authority for their own textual production, considered the contributions of conversational partners, and promoted the development of the discussion, without the teacher's interference. This was accomplished by the association of the official History curriculum and the blog's reflexive task. Their dialogue promoted students' responsibility for interactional work, making room for the negotiation of different scales, involving time-space contextualization, evaluation, narrative production, and a mixture of institutional and personal anchorage. Such scalar activity helped interlocutors to question dualistic views of gender and sexuality. It is thus fair to say that these young bloggers have enacted a possible form of *critical resistance* (Pennycook, 2012) to contemporary social fascism.

Toward a New Scalar Imagination

In this chapter, we have argued that queer pedagogies are paramount in reimagining social life and in rehearsing a future that does not legitimize social fascism. We have done so by drawing on a performative view of language and identity. Furthermore, we have also associated this notion with a scale-sensitive approach to discourse and social life (Carr & Lempert, 2016). The former asserts that humans come about as a result of the repetition-innovation language games they play. The latter encourages the surveillance of the complex semiotic work comprised in what we name "reality". From this dialogue, a theoretical-analytical framework emerged, one that incites us to scrutinize the way we interlace discourses upon scaling our daily experience.

Firstly, it has helped us delineate the present sociopolitical moment in different countries according to a receding scalar project whose orienting credos recycle modernist tenets and fascist practices. Within a configuration of this sort, emotional scales such as fear and hatred are returning in the organization of affective responses to difference. The scalar sociopolitical portrayal we have designed encouraged us to revisit two different stages of our research.

Using scales as an analytical tool to deal with stretches of data, we have shed light on how signs in use project meanings about who we can be. Therefore, stimulating students to observe and reflect about their semiotic labor and its interactional effects plays a central role in schools. The first part of the research we discussed showed that students, as early as 12 years

old (in fact, much younger), are experiencing difference and learning to do gender, sexuality, and race performatively in schools. This happens even when teachers do not want to talk about it, as a response to either the way they were educated or to the constraints of official school boards. Or as a reaction to the "gender ideology" religious movements we have referred to earlier. We have hence pondered that teachers need support from queer pedagogies and moved on to the second part of our research in which the collaboration of a History teacher and a researcher managed to operationalize queer scales in the classroom.

We focused on an interactional activity on a blog that featured discussions about sexuality-based identity-difference dynamics. Students were able to move away from habitual thematic agendas, repetitive interactional routines, and time-space-content confinement. Moreover, they overcame binary scales toward more performative perceptions of social life. The reflexive work about queer lives they put forth indicated that crystallized discourses may be reassembled in educational environments through small-scale initiatives like the digital project implemented at Admiral School.

Students' ability to question deep-seated meanings about gender and sexuality was enhanced by the critical scale that frames the blog activity. Its overall construction invited bloggers to observe different layers of historicity and to understand how locally situated actions are embedded in wider historical processes. We argue that the blog configuration and the way participants were encouraged to mobilize different scales created an agentive context that rescaled what we defined as traditional schoolwork. It made room for new perspectives about social life to emerge. The scalar trajectory the group reconstructed suggests that social fascism in the contemporary historical context may be disputed at schools.

Schools therefore are fundamental social spaces for imagining different worlds or for confronting students with social justice and social rights. These may be harnessed by a theoretically informed apparatus that entwines queer pedagogies with scalability.

Notes

1. We are grateful to our research grants (CNPq 302935/2017-7 and CNPq 302989/2013-7) that have made the investigation reported on here possible.
2. In order to challenge modernist all-encompassing categories such as "homosexual", which standardize the multiple ways of experiencing human

sexuality, we employ the abbreviation LGBTIQ+, the initials for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, and + (to include other diverse possibilities such as asexual, pansexual, etc.).

3. It goes without saying that we are not criticizing the teacher but the kind of modernist and positivist education she had, which prepared her for dealing with homogeneous idealized students while sexuality, race, and feminism were being loudly voiced, already on those days, by the media and discussed by the students, as shown below.
4. We have used fictional names in all excerpt transcriptions to preserve the identity of research participants (the institution, the teacher, the students, and the blog).
5. The age group ranged from years 14 to 15.
6. The guidelines and students' posts were written in Portuguese and were translated into English for the purposes of this chapter.
7. Different groups worked on the task in several areas of the blog. Each group had a specific password to access the pertinent interactional space.
8. This stretch of data is part of a longer conversation analyzed in Fabrício (2017).

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CHAPTER 4

Queering Freire's Pedagogies: Resistance, Empowerment, and Transgression in Teacher Training

Manuel López Pereyra

Introduction

In this chapter, I propose a dialogue between Freire's critical pedagogy and the Western concept of queer pedagogy. In practice, Freire's pedagogies are meant to empower and emancipate oppressed groups, by offering tools to interrogate and deconstruct social structures, and then to transform them. In this sense, queer pedagogy advocates for the inclusion of gender and sexualities, which have been systematically excluded and oppressed by the hegemonic groups from education. Thus, the pedagogical frames offered by queer and critical pedagogy can potentially embody new ways to understand the relationships between gender, sex, and sexualities, and oppressed social and cultural groups. By embracing the two approaches, educators might use these pedagogical perspectives to empower and emancipate oppressed minority groups living within

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hetero-normalized and stigmatized beliefs and practices. Then, teaching queerly means to disturb and deconstruct power structures, to explore new ways of knowledge, and to challenge assumptions about how we should behave.

Undoubtedly, the work of teachers in Latin America requires a commitment to the fight for social justice and equality, as well as a political responsibility to give voice to groups living under the shadow of a traditional, hetero-normalized hegemony. In the process of teaching and learning, queering Freire's pedagogies is a form of political resistance in the educational context; these new perspectives on teacher training, corresponding to the construction of transformative and transgressive approaches, are linked to feminist, queer, critical, and social justice theories in education. This approach to teaching and learning advocates for a more inclusive society; the way we prepare teachers has to be queer, deconstructed, and decolonized; and at the same time, we have to lead education with hope and love, as Freire suggested. For Freire (2010), "the teaching task is a professional task that requires capacity to love, creativity, scientific competence…it requires the capacity to fight for freedom, without which the teaching task becomes meaningless" (p. 26). Understanding pedagogy as a political, social, and cultural concept allows us to queer Freire's work and to embrace intersecting diverse identities such as gender, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, and others in our teaching practices.

Freire's Pedagogies

Freire (2010) acknowledges that the relationship between thinking, language, and reality is a fundamental part of a critical transformation of the subject; in other words, when the subject has the opportunity to create dynamic spaces between what they think, the way they express it, and how they live out that experience, then different pedagogical processes capable of transforming the subject appear on the scene. Castro (2016) argues that in order for teaching to be successful, "not only respect, but a significant degree of tolerance, student freedom, and teacher-student equality had to permeate the whole educational experience granted to the learners" (p. 83). In this sense, critical thinking is born when the teacher is not the only one with the ability to legitimize knowledge, but is merely part of this dynamic process.

One of the principal tasks of Freire's pedagogies is to develop students' critical thinking by encouraging them to develop agency within their

context. In the educational context, for Freire it is necessary to create a horizontal dialogue with students, where knowledge is characterized by creating a critical and constant reflection as part of the teaching-learning process. In order to know ourselves and each other, we must recognize and know our history and our culture; we must be critical of our contexts:

> Consciousness about the world, which implies consciousness about myself in the world, with it and with others, which also implies our ability to realize the world, to understand it, is not limited to a rationalistic experience. This consciousness is a totality—reason, feelings, emotions, desires; my body, conscious of the world and myself, seizes the world toward which it has an intention. (Freire, 2016, p. 50)

Reflection implies an encounter between reality and the latent possibilities for transgressing and transforming our environment. Castro (2016) argues that students achieve consciousness once they are able to understand their social reality. As educators, we can help students generate historicized and politicized reflections and positions based on the situations they experience.

To do pedagogy is to do politics; it is to understand the forms and processes that are taking place; it is to understand that our attitudes, feelings, desires, and bodies are connected through subjective teaching-learning processes. However, these processes are still mediated by the dominant hegemonic and heteronormative culture, which has been perpetuated by a colonizing position. This dominant culture has condemned and decontextualized the knowledge of the South [*el Sur*], as well as our identities as indigenous, mestizos, and Latin Americans.

In Latin America, social reality is framed by symbolic and systematic violence, where aspects of social inequality, discrimination, racism, and classism are normalized. According to Pierre Bourdieu, symbolic violence is represented by a dominance of the oppressor's power through processes that illegitimate "otherness" (Gil & Morales, 2018). From this perspective, it is necessary to rethink teacher training, to be able to train teachers who do not reproduce or legitimize the dominant, hegemonic culture that seeks to homogenize our experiences, knowledge, and rights as the protagonists of our own history. Teachers are responsible for leading the way to a more democratic, liberatory discourse: a discourse that is inclusive of all. Similarly, school spaces must be places to break these dominant social barriers, stigmas, prejudices, and discriminatory discourses.

Within this framework, Freire's pedagogies empower subjects to deeply reflect on how our lives have been defined, for example, by our social class or by our ethnicity. By being conscious of who we are—understanding ourselves, understanding our social, historical, political, and cultural reality—we can place ourselves in the world. We can know ourselves, and the world, from a perspective that does not limit feelings, desires, hopes, and our own bodies (Freire, 2016). Therefore, being critically aware of our place in social reality is a pedagogical process, which can allow teachers to link teaching-learning situations with possibilities to transform social reality.

For Freire, the educator is a social agent that permeates and is permeated by their context; therefore, the educator must act with a sense of empowerment and transformation. According to Gil and Morales (2018), Freire's pedagogy allows for a deconstruction and reconstruction of the subject's unique lived experiences. They invite us to build a subversive learning-teaching mode—and model—that breaks the meanings of the dominant culture. The premise, then, is that the teacher is a subject capable of critically decoding the demands and needs of their environment, thus creating a transformative, liberating pedagogical space that empowers and gives responsibility to the students.

Social realities must be understood from an epistemic and ontological position of emancipation, where learning spaces are constructed and reconstructed according to the unique reflection-action dynamics of the subjects in struggle (Walsh, 2014). In this sense, for Freire, the teacher is a facilitator who consciously seeks the liberation of individuals through praxis. Freire proposes elements that allow teachers to be agents of change, which requires them to constantly reflect on the social changes they seek to achieve by emphasizing the voice and inclusion of others (Abustan & Rud, 2016, p. 18).

Queering Freire's Pedagogies

For Freire, then, in order for teachers to act as social actors, they must have a sense of intellectual autonomy that allows them to observe, reflect, and act on their reality. They achieve this through the pedagogical category of conscientization (Gadotti, 2002). Freire's critical pedagogies offer the possibility of creating a teacher–student relationship where subjects get to know each other and analyze situations from different angles, based on their experiences, their desires, their bodies, and the problems and

situations they face. Leonardi and Meyer (2016) understand that this pedagogical process must stem from students' experiences and their historical and political situation, as well as from their social reality.

The construction of our daily lives is influenced by language and meanings related to sexuality, corporeality, and emotions related with our Latinx's identities. School spaces are sites of homophobia, harassment, bullying, discrimination, and exclusion, which must be challenged with critical and reflective discourses (Meyer, 2010; Ramírez, 2010). Experiences of sexual and gender diversity are an important part of the social and cultural knowledge of Latin America; hegemonic heteronormalized educational spaces perpetuate the roles of gender and sexual stereotypes, requiring pedagogical approaches that transgress and transform the dominant cultures; therefore, the recognition of sexual diversity in teacher training is essential.

Freire's pedagogies allow the marginalized voices of the LGBTQA+ community, whose lives have been silenced, to be heard. The cultural codes that define us have been constructed in a historical, cultural, discursive, and relational way; I use the term "queering" in this context to break down these complex and ambiguous constructions, conceiving the subject as an agent that transforms and transgresses (Fonseca & Quintero, 2009; Talburt, 2005). Thus, queering the experiences of oppressed groups means to deconstruct, to reinvent and transgress the subject position, in order to empower and transform these groups beyond a hetero-normalized, patriarchal, and colonized vision of our Latin American identity. In this way we can deconstruct the binary man/woman, hetero/homo, white/mestizo, European/Southern identities.

According to Freire, the task of teachers is to deconstruct the conceptual structures established by the dominant historical, political, and social processes. For Freire, the teacher must draw from their historicized situation in the politics of the social and cultural realms; through dialogue and discourse, we can understand how social representations are reproduced, and education represents the field on which we can reconstruct and transform culture and society.

Pereira (2019) makes an important reflection on the term *queer* in the context of the geopolitics of the South, arguing that the term has transcended its original conception in the English language; the form and the meaning of the term have been adopted by oppressed minority groups, as well as communities facing constant oppression. This adaptation of the term *queer* within the geopolitical context of the South requires an

understanding of the dynamics and dimensions of the different "Global North/Global South" structures of power, identity, ethnicity, and race (Pérez & Radi, 2019). As Pereira (2019) states, queering has been identified as a Euro-centric term that needs to be revisited by the South; however, the terminology can be embraced by the LGBTQA+ community as a statement of resignification and deconstruction of sexual identities. The word *queer*, then, can help us break dichotomous and hegemonic representations that privilege the Global North as the source of legitimate knowledge; it is possible to create knowledge that incorporates multiple epistemic and ontological dimensions, including those that stem from the experiences, bodies, and desires of the South. Pérez and Radi (2019) reflect on how knowledge is produced in the South, including the situated characteristics and conditions that allow us to generate social and cultural critiques that position our experiences as valid and legitimate in the world at large.

To be *queer*, then, is a political act. Pedagogy is politics, being *conscious* is politics. Oppressed groups face a continuous struggle as they attempt to critique conservative hegemonies, dichotomous visions, and hetero-normalized and authoritarian positions of social and cultural spaces. Thus, the agency of these groups is threatened by the constant greed of power systems that see social subjects as merely objects without identity, "a generic, universal subject without gender, without race, without class, without sexuality" (Lino cited in de Sousa Santos, 2019, p. 14).

The *queer* approach allows us to approximate the experiences and voices of different bodies, affections, agencies, and knowledge, thus enabling us to create networks of resistance. In this sense, reappropriating words such as *maricón*, *marimacha*, and *puto [fag, butch, faggot]* represents a form of resistance. Undoubtedly, in Latin America the development of queer studies must be framed through an in-depth understanding of the region's experiences of racism and classism, which come from a history and politics of colonization and resistance. Queer pedagogy is about questioning our identities. It represents resistance to normalization and to the continuous production of inequalities. It cuts through the hetero-normalized social and cultural fabric; it is to be aware of social reality.

Pedagogías críticas del Sur and Queer Pedagogy

Pedagogías críticas del Sur seek to break with Euro-centric understandings of knowledge by pointing to a decolonization of knowledge. De Sousa Santos (2011) reflects on how the relations between theory and practices take on different characteristics when constructed from a Eurocentric approach. For Santos, epistemologies and ontologies in the South are different, as they originate in the weaving together of intercultural strands and worldviews beyond Western individualism, where "beings are communities rather than individuals" (de Sousa Santos, 2011, p. 27). Based on this idea of thinking in *communities rather than as individuals*, critical pedagogies of the South [*Pedagogías críticas del Sur*] must be considered: these pedagogies do not homogenize individuals and social groups based on a Northern mindset, where the State creates hegemonic heteronormative mindsets. In this sense, this State mindset might create a conflict in the context of the skills, knowledge, and ethnicities of the South.

For Freire, through education we can deconstruct and break hegemonic systems of domination and power in Latin America. In his account of Freire's teaching reflections, Vásquez (2018) describes a pedagogy that presents the experiences of the South through its unique historical and political positioning. Freire invites us to fight for our sources of wisdom, for the legitimization of our knowledge and openness to otherness; "we must fight so that we are not paralyzed by fear" (Vásquez, 2018, p. 133). For teachers, it is essential to build critical thinking that allows us to transgress the dominant culture that permeates social reality. We must develop "pedagogies that strive to transgress, displace, and influence ontological negation—existential, epistemic, cosmogonic, spiritual, as it has been—and is—expertise, end and result of the power of coloniality" (Walsh, 2014, p. 31).

The use of language and the symbolic elements in the word *queer* may bring with it new social and cultural oppressions. For instance, Vargas Cervantes (2016) suggests that the use of queer terminology is limited to a social sector with the necessary cultural capital related to the Anglo-Saxon academy. Queer terminology could represent yet another form of colonization if it is not employed by people who are fully conscious of its origins in Northern academia. In other words, the question we encounter is how the use of queer theory can criticize and evoke the challenges of gender and sexualities that are unique to the Global South:

> The problem lies in taking these theories to be simply "applicable" to other realities that they do not produce, thereby decontextualizing them from their places of enunciation. And the great provocation is how to avail ourselves of their concepts while still subverting them based on shared and interwoven histories from our (post-) colonial context. (Pereira, 2019, p. 7)

In this sense, we should reflect on whether constructs such as *queer* should be part of negotiations of epistemologies of the South. De Oliveira and Candau (2010) employ the term "epistemic fetishism" as a reflection on the use of colonialist knowledge and ideas as evidence of cultural imitation (p. 282). De Sousa Santos (2014) reflects on the epistemological knowledge that must emerge from Latin America: "Rather than importing foreign ideas, one must find out about the specific realities of the continent from a Latin American perspective" (2014, p. 53). From this point of view, it is necessary to reflect on whether we need to decolonize a term like queer that relates to a dominant colonizing culture.

Why, then, is it helpful to recognize a *queer* concept based on epistemologies of the South? Queering allows for the deconstruction of heteronormalized and normative preconceptions that develop in school spaces. The queer concept proposes, as do Freire's ideas, recognition of the historicity that permeates the political, social, and cultural acts of our society. Our social agency as teachers also allows for the creation of resistance that creates moments of empowerment and liberation among our students. The proposal to adopt queer pedagogies offers visibility and accountability for the processes of colonization we have experienced in Latin America.

Nichols (2018) argues, "by proposing a decolonial queer escape pedagogy that asks teacher-scholars to ally with Native claims to sovereignty in order to challenge the invisibility of alternative sexual identities and histories in the settler classroom" (p. 40). Thus, resistance to colonization can be viewed as the creation of alternative knowledges that pose dialogues about justice, inclusion, and the right to be. As a collective identity, being queer from the South is a subjective expression of stigmatization by an oppressive culture. When visible, queer culture transgresses the normative. *Queering the South* means a possibility of revealing that otherness is found in all spaces. It can also allow us to break dichotomous and hegemonic notions of knowledge that emanate from the Global North. Queering can not only represent both the Global North/South in particular ways, but it also brings the possibility of weaving a new worldview.

Teaching Freire Queerly

Teaching queerly refers to the possibility of transgressing and transforming social and cultural spaces that are normalized by the heteronormative hegemonic representations that perpetuate gender stereotypes and allow for the exclusion and discrimination against minority groups (hooks, 2003). Leonardi and Meyer (2016) suggest that being reflective from a critical position of our privileges is the beginning of the transformation of a society.

Critical reflection must be part of each subject and class, and of educational training itself. For Andrade, Ayala, and Cajamarca (2016), scholars and teachers have a responsibility to participate in a critical interrogation of the ethical and political processes that dominate us (p. 34). Therefore, educational spaces must recognize the need to explore the individual and collective experiences of students, always from a historical and political approach.

The experiences of the LGBTQ+ community are an essential part of the recognition and visibility of otherness. According to Britzman (2002), queer pedagogy must transgress normalized representations, which are based on social and cultural meanings that are limited and mediated by social–historical moments. This relates to Freire's reflections (2000) that education can transform these meanings by empowering groups that need to be heard. As teachers, we have the task of transforming and transgressing educational spaces. The question is: how can we develop a pedagogy that allows us to break with the historical and political paradigms of the dominant culture, which ignores the daily needs of *others*?

Thus, I offer the phrase *teaching queerly* as an opportunity to normalize ruptures that take place in educational spaces. Liberatory discourses must permeate teacher training and all educational spaces, integrating elements that enable teachers as social agents to create spaces of justice and freedom. Breaking assumptions and boundaries is not an easy task, and it requires formative and transformative experiences. In particular, I propose the interrelation between Freire's pedagogies and queer pedagogy as a step towards transformation. The concepts of sex and gender are based on a "dichotomy between nature and culture" (Córdoba García, 2005, p. 35); therefore, breaking up these terms requires a change in cultural meanings and appropriations, as well as the transformation of the binary notion of male/female. Teachers can build other dimensions that will re-signify the social and cultural constructs of their environment:

> dialogue, equality, freedom, and tolerance should orient teachers' practice not because they are ethical or virtuous in themselves, but on account of their educational efficiency vis-à-vis the specific pedagogical problem posed by the phenomenal forms. (Castro, 2016, p. 67)

In order to achieve these dimensions of *dialogue, equality, freedom, and tolerance*; Freire (2001) argues that love and consciousness are necessary elements for the autonomy and empowerment of the communities in a teaching-learning process; meanwhile, Moreno (2004) refers to the construction of these forms of expression and affections as part of a resistance against the normative and binary training of education. Castro (2016) poses a critical pedagogy that sees the potential to change social phenomena through educational agency.

Definitively, teachers can create dialogues that help to develop people who can fully and equally exercise their freedoms, with respect for otherness. Bennett (2018) argues that critical pedagogy must challenge the conventional practices of the teaching-learning process by: (1) creating a critical dialogue with the students; (2) seeing students horizontally, as creators of knowledge and possessors of knowledge; (3) seeking solutions to the problems in their context; and (4) encouraging students to be aware of their environment and able to transform it (pp. 49–50). In other words, it is necessary to weave new relations between educators and learners.

I suggest that queering education can transgress the normalizing processes that stabilize the dominant culture and erase otherness. Instead, otherness must contribute to the construction of knowledge. According to Trujillo (2015), queer knowledge is based in discourses of subjectivity, of affections, of desires: "queer knowledge resists the desire for authority and definitive certainties; it resists knowledge without contradictions, without doubts" (p. 1538). In this sense, the author proposes that queer pedagogy is not only for members of sexually diverse communities, but for all communities. Therefore, these transgressive pedagogies must influence teaching practices, which will allow us to build empowered school spaces and resiliency in our students.

The Praxis of Queering

In my attempt to think through queering pedagogy, I have arrived at the following questions: How can we free ourselves from a norm that has made us hate and persecute each other? How do we empower ourselves in

the teaching-learning process? How do we train responsible citizens? How can we negotiate different Latin American contexts? How can we understand the intersectionality of our bodies, experiences, and affections based on queering pedagogical practices? My interest in these questions is guided by Britzman (2002), who asks: "What it is that makes normality so present in educational thinking?" (p. 198).

Queering seeks to break sex and gender dichotomies, while giving voice to sexual nonconformity. Queer pedagogy seeks to break the norms, as well as the social and cultural hegemonic constructions that reproduce discrimination and the exclusion of the otherness. Teachers have the responsibility to destabilize the normalized binary experiences of teaching-learning. Queer pedagogy is one powerful way to intervene and break the social and cultural production of normality and morality.

Freire (2010) introduces the liberating praxis, where we find ourselves at the border of being and knowledge as a form of utopian empowerment that allows for human liberation outside the conditions of identity. Being aware of this process of empowerment and transgression requires the teacher to open a path of agency and reflective action.

Thus, in the search for who I am as a teacher and the ways in which I seek to narrate my class, I must recognize the intersectionality of my own diversity, inclusive of ethnicity, religion, sexuality, geography, and culture. Waite (2018) argues for the need for *embodied* teaching that combines a theoretical and practical perspective: "I often find myself asking questions about the narrative that leads to the classrooms I shape now. What is the story of this teacher I am? What is the story of the person who searches for a queer pedagogy?" (p. 217). Teachers must be recognized for their bodies and desires; the recognition and respect of teachers' sexualities allows them to be free and, consequently, their praxis becomes revolutionary and freeing (Trujillo, 2015). It develops our identities, creates spaces of freedom, and helps us to visualize processes of critical consciousness in different spaces.

Since education is a right for all, it represents a fundamental dimension in the search for access to opportunities. The task of teachers, then, is to enrich the views we have of our society; we must incorporate knowledges from the South in our work with students, weaving a world of love and hope, just as Freire did.

Conclusions

In Latin America, we need to develop a pedagogy, a queer pedagogy, that reflects the historical, political, and social processes of the South. As educators, we must adopt educational practices that make the knowledge we already possess visible for a new generation. We must enact a revolutionary, freeing body of people, thereby creating a community of hope. This queer pedagogy must decolonize and deconstruct the hegemony of culture and power that vulgarizes our knowledge as Latinx people. This involves reclaiming sex, gender diversity, sexual non-conformity, and a plurality of sexualities. Thus, teachers must take their life experiences and stories as the starting point for expanding their social agency. Therefore, teacher training must allow trainees to know themselves, and to give them the autonomy to emancipate themselves from dichotomous and heteronormalized hegemonic constructs that keep them from participating in a more diverse and inclusive life. Resistance, empowerment, and transgression in teacher training will also open up a critical consciousness of the world in students; it will enable them to create new forms of dialogue that allow them to understand otherness.

By queering Freire's pedagogies, we intertwine the knowledge and wisdom of the North and the South. It is a step towards building decolonized and deconstructed epistemologies by breaking the dominant social and cultural stigmas. When we talk about teacher training, let's think of the importance of a queer praxis. Let's put dialogue and consciousness as the preamble to our teaching narratives. Let's embrace our identities through recognition, visibility, and respect for all narratives. Teaching must be embodied; it must be filled with our emotions, desires, and affections. As Freire (2016) states, "reason, feelings, emotions, desires; my body, conscious of the world and myself, seizes the world" (p. 50). Teaching is a space of resistance, empowerment, and transgression, which can transform our society.

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CHAPTER 5

Queer, Crip and Social Pedagogy. A Critical Hermeneutic Perspective

Asun Pié-Balaguer and Jordi Planella-Ribera

Introduction

Queer perspectives have had a significant influence on the theory and practice of contemporary pedagogy, reworking part of its backbone. This hints at an unbridled power in queer applied to the field of social education, a power which goes beyond the diverse sexuality issues of its subjects and one which could open up endless perspectives of our understanding of human diversity itself. In this chapter, we re-examine social pedagogy from a queer perspective (first intersection), taking into account other closely related perspectives which have an influence on the way we understand and work in education. We go on to explore crip theory and its power and relation to queer pedagogy (second intersection). The aim of our approach is to break with certain normative frameworks in education which are in fact heteronormative and rely on the normativization of their subjects. Continuing in this direction, we are interested in how queer and crip came to touch down in the specific field of social pedagogy. Adopting

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various positions and via a number of routes, we attended epistemic academic gatherings perpetrated at the heart of activist movements, outside the proverbial closet of the educational establishment, to reveal different ways of thinking about pedagogy in the real world. In essence, the connection between queer and pedagogy, and later on with crip, enables us to think and act in unconventional, non-hegemonic ways and propose a new framework for diversity and for humanity as a whole.

Queer Pedagogy: (Re)Signifying a Symbolic Universe

We agree with Ricardo Llamas that thinking about the world from the perspective of queer theory has to do with what can be defined as "twisted theory", a theory situated at the convergence point of authors like Fernand Deligny (2015) and Michel Foucault (2018), and which sees this intersection as a rupture space, a narrow strip from which it is possible to think in a different way (1998, p. 23). Over the last twenty years, the connection between queer theory and pedagogy has become clear, resulting in what is now termed queer pedagogy. This marriage of terms, which generates a symbolic universe beyond the semantic dimensions, has not always been evident and has frequently been viewed as something strange, dangerous and undesirable. The mix of sexual diversity and education can be threatening to some, especially the ultraconservative and the narrow minded, who feel that placing the word "queer" in the hands of educators is to pervert or twist education and those who benefit from it.

In recent years, the investigations that link queer theory with education are increasingly present in the Latin American context. We especially highlight the role of Felipe Rivas (2011) "Diga queer con la lengua fuera"; Inés Munevar (2020), *Ecos anticapacitistas de nuestra co-labor investigativa*; Aldo Ocampo González (2018) *Pedagogías Queer*; Fidel M. Ramírez and Maricel M. Lopes (2014) "Aportes desde la perspectiva queer para la reforma curricular de la escuela"; or Norma A. Vázquez´s work (2017) "¿Pedagogía queer/cuir en Latinoamérica? Reflexiones en torno a los niños trans". What happens in the mechanisms of education is a clear reflection of what happens in society: those who use, think about or define their body in a way that some consider unnatural are stigmatized, labelled and condemned. Gracia Trujillo suggests that:

> to be queer is to be strange, different, escape from heteronormativity, from gender and sexual binary. An 'effeminate' boy who likes to play French skip-

> ping with the girls in the school playground, or a 'tomboy' who whiles away the hours kicking a ball, does not conform to the behavior expected of a boy or a girl. (2013, authors' own translation)

The manipulation of bodies—and what they represent or may represent—gains particular momentum in pedagogical practices. The scope of educational policies related to difference is astonishingly limited. How do these policies understand difference? Who decides, grants, classifies, distributes or redistributes education to those considered different?

This chapter, from a Latino research context (we use this classification to indicate the subject community of Spanish-speaking countries), has led the authors to take part in congresses, master's and doctoral classes, thesis supervision sessions, field work and travels in Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, Argentina and Spain. As flores puts it, it deals with "a chasm with the contours of Latin America and Spanish-speaking countries, territories with decolonization disputes in the fabric of their histories, their experiences, their bodies and their epistemologies" (flores, 2013a, p. 183, authors´ own translation). And on these journeys, first initiated in a paper entitled *Transgender Pedagogies* (Planella & Pié, 2017), we came across something situated at the heart of humanity, in the mechanisms that govern the parameters of those anthropologies which exclude difference: normalism. Normalism as a phobia towards bodies not considered normal or normative—a phenomenon too widespread in contemporary society—has caused irreparable damage, since it has been the standard which has ordered and established what is permissible and what is not, the standard which has set the pace for the classification and organization of groups and societies. We can emphatically state that normalism is a deeply rooted element of our societies, and is in fact what orders, guides and manages them. If we agree with the notion that sexual orientation and gender identity are essential aspects of people's lives, we can understand the importance of introducing this perspective into educational policies and practices (CLADE, 2014). It is important because it is precisely during childhood, in institutions and educational mechanisms, that negative perceptions of difference are engendered and consolidated. Direct or indirect discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is the order of the day and one of the principal causes of distress and suffering in children with "excessive" corporeality.[1]

Ricard Huerta, teacher, professor of the teaching of art and LGBTI (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual and Intersexual) activist, says that "by coming out of the closet we defend the rights of people, especially

minorities, who until very recently (and even still today) have been treated with aggression by a sector of society reluctant to overcome old traumas and complexes" (2015, p. 25).[2] This also happens, and to an even greater extent, in the field of educational practice, where an education professional who is open about their sexual diversity is not always welcomed. Unfortunately, this negative way of thinking about and understanding queerness in educational practices continues to shape many agendas and programmes in our country's educational centres. It is precisely in this radical pedagogical position that we can place the thinking of val flores.

We came across val flores, almost by chance, in a book by Alejandra Castilla (*Ars Disyecta*, 2014), in which she affirms that:

> Opposed to all hygienism of language, the proletariat is contaminated by the most turbulent winds of the imagination. Deformed creatures, monsters, polyform sexualities, hilarious vegetation, inaccessible fauna, all lurk in the scenery of language. Every dreamlike liquid perfumes the earthly environment and attacks the docility of the day. A collage of imagined things enhances their lewd vocation. (2010, authors' own translation)

We asked ourselves, who could valeria flores be? Why had we never read anything by her? We began to investigate and found that she was an Argentine teacher—but not from Buenos Aires, from Neuquén, in the deep south. A biography that accompanies one of her publications reads: "Teacher of primary education who works in a primary school in the city of Neuquén (Neuquén province, Argentina). She is the author of many articles on sexual diversity" (flores, 2008). This is one of the key elements we analyze in this chapter: analysing how a teacher—who specializes in sexual diversity issues, and from an embodied perspective—thinks about and experiences queer pedagogy.

As we explored her writings more closely, one of the things that surprised us was the way she worked to produce knowledge: by asking endless, incessant questions, flores deals with the question of queer pedagogy in a remarkable, embodied manner. The following questions illustrate this:

1. What social—and sexual—secrets does school perpetuate? What secrets does it specifically engender? What silences flow through our educational practices? Whose desires are disrespected by the igno-

rance these secrets create? Which elements of acquired knowledge lead to this ignorance? (2008).

2. Is it possible to imagine a staffroom in which conversations among teachers about gay sexuality or trans identity are not the object of continual derision, and lesbian identity is not consigned to an unbreakable silence? (2015).
3. How is the heterosexual knowledge regime connected to a teacher's own identity as a teacher? In what way do hegemonic constructions of school knowledge by bodies of teachers who identify as lesbians play a part? (2013a).

These writings by flores, with their focus on queer pedagogy, which we can classify as "a thorn in the side of pedagogy", are incisive proposals that seek to influence discussion on critical issues and wedge their way into global hegemonic ways of thinking and practising pedagogy. And this investigation/reflection is radically embodied. flores bases her writings on her own life (which she describes as precarious, sexually dissident and with inappropriate gender expression), her own body, her day-to-day practice in a classroom with children, and the positions and resistance activities she engages in to be able to practise as a teacher while identifying herself as she does. This is how she expresses it:

> On the basis that queer theory is not a homogenous and coherent body of content, but rather a set of rules and dynamic methodologies useful for reading, thinking and incorporating into everyday life, for me the practice of teaching has been—and continues to be—an incessant movement of reflection and construction, of working against my own thoughts. (2013, p. 216, author's own translation)

The themes that run through her work and her mode of understanding are directly linked to sensitive, embodied pedagogy. It deals with questions about childhood distress in pedagogic mechanisms, the pathologizing and medicalizing of those childhoods, the desertion of children by education professionals, the absence of passions in schools, the non-existence of sexual diversity in the pedagogic practices of schools today, the infantilization of pupils (where the attitude is that they're too young to know about sexuality, much less sexual diversity), heteronormativity as the prevailing classroom culture and so on. As she proposes:

> Schools cannot be hostile to reflection that promotes other modes of thinking and inhabiting this world. The promotion of ignorance, the lack of knowledge as a discursive industry, is an essential element of any exterminatory regime. We cannot continue to consent to all this, feigning ignorance, or pretending that nothing's going on. (2008)

And it is right that, as part of that "we cannot consent", we must join in from our position of subordinates, take the floor, stand up and shout out who we are with pride.

Queer pedagogy, therefore, is opening up and renewing itself by introducing these other modes of thinking and inhabiting the world. This new sensitivity (including new corporeal cartography) mounts an attack against the divisions generated by modernity and, in particular, against Western definitions of self. Schools and pedagogical institutions as a whole continue to focus on the privileged subject of modernity, justifying the productivity and profitability of bodies. Crip theory can be used as a tool to continue to think about these other possible paths of resistance to normalization and openness to other modes of being in the world.

Queer–Crip Intersection

The second intersection of queer pedagogy presented in this chapter focuses on what some authors have defined as crip theory. These include McRuer (2006), who denounces the alleged neutrality of *ability* (able bodies), in the sense that not having a disability is conceived as the natural state. For this reason, we have what the author calls able-bodiedness, a concept inspired by Adrienne Rich's original contributions on "compulsory heterosexuality", which draw attention to heterosexuality as a system. Thus, able-bodiedness can also be understood as a system that feeds and fabricates ability as desirable and disability as undesirable. This system supports the tragic model of disability, benevolent policies, eugenics, incapacitation and sexual repression, to name but a few widespread practices. Queer theory provides crip theory with strong epistemological support for detecting the modes in which this able-bodiedness is engendered. McRuer uses the gender performativity of Judith Butler to understand how reiteration and repetitions are part of our compulsory ability, another ideal which is never perfectly produced. His ideas on compulsory able-bodiedness are associated with this, and even more so because able-bodiedness is the antechamber of the dominant forms of gender and sexuality, but what's

more because the embodiment of that ability is heterosexual. Like Butler, McRuer also seeks to show how non-normative bodies and minds are oppressed within a system of compulsory able-bodiedness. We could also add that normative subjects also suffer the demands of ability throughout their lives.

According to García-Santesmases (2017), queer–crip or crip–trans-feminist alliances are the protagonists of a change in the repertory of activism in Spain. Between 2012 and 2015, the *Yes, we fuck!* project inspired this meeting of political affinities that later resulted in other common projects. The primary focus of these alliances was sexuality and desire. Today, these projects have made visible the sexuality of non-normative bodies and helped to reverse the sexual denial and repression so entrenched in the disabled sector. Undoubtedly, the field of social practices has changed in favour of other considerations regarding sexuality and disability. Erotic and sexual companionship services have proliferated, along with greater professional priority being given to providing a satisfactory institutional response. The controversies stirred up by certain segregated services, and the need for further, more extensive ethical, aesthetic and political work on disability, are another question. All of this far exceeds an exclusively sexual approach and aspires to a much broader labour of social transformation, which we will examine below.

The Postanthropocentric Approach of Crip Theory and Social Pedagogy

Following Britzman (2016), what is needed to reject the silenced and obstinately silent heterosexual educational curriculum? Or, in terms of crip, what do we have to do to reject the silent able-bodiedist educational curriculum? If the world is divided according to gender binary, it is equally divided along able/disabled lines. The problems that ensue from this binary division (in terms of expulsion from the world that defines itself by what it is not or by what it lacks) are crying out to education to overcome these boundaries and limitations, some of which have divided humankind, internally and externally. Relating queer theory to pedagogy is a project with a broader scope than the mere inclusion of gays and lesbians in the classroom. It is part of an ethical and aesthetic project that assimilates difference as a basis for policy and community, and addresses the denial of the

body in the metaphysics of Western philosophy, understanding that this denial stems from an injurious relationship with human vulnerability.

We cannot address this question without considering the peripheral and problematic place occupied by the body in Western modernity. In an interesting paper entitled *Crip Posthumanism and Native American Indian Postanthropocentrism: Keys to a Bodily Perspective in Science*, Moya and Bergua (2018) present a comparative analysis between Native American Indians and Westerners. The essence of this work is that, while the scientific naturalism of our world teaches us that humans and non-humans are physically very similar, and that this similarity can be represented objectively by science, the Native American Indians' belief in animism means that, for them, humans and non-humans are physically very different. Perhaps immeasurably different forms of knowledge emerge from these distinctions. These opposing modes of conceiving the human body (*körper*) in relation to that of other animals condition our concept of the human soul and its transactions.

The Western construct is that we have the same physical nature with culturally diverse origins; the Native American Indians, on the other hand, propose a single culture with numerous different physical natures. Thus, if "cultural relativism" and "multiculturalism" were invented by Westerners to enable them to coexist with human diversity, the Native American Indians developed a "multinaturalism" with their "perspectivism" (Moya & Bergua, 2018). In essence, the West conceived a common biological base and a distinction of souls. At the same time, the body is understood as an isolated thing. The body is nothing and has no importance, among other reasons because it is precisely what makes us no different to animals. Our need to distinguish ourselves from animals nourished our denial of the body and our conception of it as a mere receptacle. The problem for us, then, is one of communication. Since the body does not communicate with anything and is not a channel for union with others, the tendency is towards homogenization as a way of resolving this lack of communication. For the Native American Indians, however, the body communicates and is a channel for connecting with other souls. The problem is, then, the distinction or non-confusion of the soul. For this reason, the body is fundamental to all members of the community, serving as a reminder of what they share and what they are. This centrality of the body, conceived as a communicative bridge, connects with life and the universe. It is easy to understand how this produces completely different world views of the

human and the non-human, the routes to resolving the two problems being entirely different.

The challenge presented is therefore how to connect souls which are completely separated from each other. This preoccupation is what explains in part the tendency to culturally homogenize through uniformity. In other words, the homogenization mechanisms used in education are designed to conduct the souls of pupils to a common cultural place, at the same time controlling them and erasing their differences (Moya & Bergua, 2018). From this emerges the denial of some radically different bodies in a rejection of the communicative impact they may have on others. This denial of the body at the same time enables the similarity with other species to be obscured.

What is interesting about this question is its ability to help us understand the origins and the educational and social consequences of the oblivion and denial of the body. Crip theory has contributed to new thinking on the centrality of bodies and their role in the transformation of the world. Equally, it contributes to breaking down a certain notion of humanity, perpetuated in the West, of what we are in relation to the rest of the natural world. Recovering the centrality of the body enables us to review our connection to life, vulnerability and others as a whole (Pié, 2014; Planella, 2017). Placing the body at the centre affords an opportunity to review basic human principles and, in particular, to understand how the denial of vulnerability (by denying the body) has led us to the natural and human disaster we are currently confronted with (Pié, 2019). In this respect, it is no exaggeration to say that we have the opportunity to construct a posthumanism which goes beyond technological references and which the postulates of crip theory contribute to. Nor is it a coincidence that these crip postulates emerge from a certain conception of disability and that this gives still more impact to the centrality of the vulnerability we invoke.

If the social model of disability is part of the journey towards crip postulates, these postulates exceed the social model itself by aspiring to have an impact that is revolutionary as opposed to merely reformist. In the words of McRuer:

> Crip offers a cultural model of disability. As such, crip theory is opposed to both the medical model, which renders disability inseparable from the pathology, the diagnosis, or the treatment/elimination; and the social model, developed to a great extent in the United Kingdom. The social

> model suggests that 'disability' is to be understood as situated, not in the bodies or minds of people, but in an inaccessible environment which must be adapted to them […]. With the focus on excess, defiance and extravagant transgression, crip offers a model of disability more culturally generative—and politically radical—than a social model that is more or less purely reformist—and not revolutionary. (McRuer interviewed in Moscoso & Arnau, 2016, p. 138, author's own translation)

The social model does not fully overcome the binary conception it has of disability itself, leaving the deficit tied to the body (understanding the body as a material, given, natural thing) and the disability to the social world. It is crip theory that truly enables us to give a different resonance to the body and a different way of expressing that body. In this regard, we are thinking about the exercise of revealing these modes, these ways of experiencing that do not reduce bodies to a particular way of inhabiting them; rather the opposite, the ability to appreciate the plurality of ways of being-in-the-world and inhabiting bodies, and therefore their complexity and irreducibility. On the other hand, as we were saying, we are also interested in giving an account of the connection/communication between bodies that the use of abjection illustrates in its social impact.

In response to the medical model of disability, geared towards what is considered the universal ideal of a healthy and able body, where the emphasis is on the enormous disparities in the social model (which treats disability as a social category irrespective of group, diversity and multifunctionality), in the 1990s, the crip movement began to generate a body of criticism of corporeal standards. If disability is merely the result of social and environmental restrictions that incapacitate certain organisms, and a deficiency is a simple, aseptic statistical deviation from a naturalized standard, vulnerability can no longer be included in a list or catalogue of naturalized characteristics (Moya & Bergua, 2018). The link between disability and deficiency is broken, and autonomy, believed to be inherent to human beings, no longer finds categories to which to anchor itself. This is taken a step further by feminist works that highlight vulnerability as a universal condition of existence, rather than one solely associated with certain groups. The result is an understanding of humans as radically interdependent beings. If the construct of naturalized disability no longer stands up to scrutiny, neither do those of autonomy, independence and the association of vulnerability with a select few.

The understanding of disability or deficiency as social constructs does not mean treating the body as a mere social body. Rewriting deficiency, illness, suffering and disability is not a denial of these; it simply means the generation of meanings (or non-meanings) not based on ignoring them. The simple fact of rewriting them makes it difficult to deny them. Crip therefore makes it possible to re-examine the direction taken in the West with respect to our management of the body, suffering, illness and vulnerability. And it is no exaggeration to say that overcoming the current denial of these issues could have an explosive effect on capitalism. The pedagogical value of the rewriting of bodies as a gesture of generation of new meanings is therefore overwhelming, not only from a position of abjection, but also from symbolic overtures to plurality that enable awareness of different ways of inhabiting our bodies (experiencing, enduring or enjoying them).

The difference between queer theory and crip theory can be seen in the transversality of the body. While crip theory and queer theory both remind us of the denial of the body, crip theory broadens the significance of the body because its work goes beyond sexual and gender boundaries. Queer theory recognizes the body as fundamental to the identification of identity issues, but has not so far viewed the body as a gateway to the understanding of individual and collective existence as a whole. Although the crip movement emerged from the context of discussion about the autonomy of the disabled, it is strongly influenced by queer theory's discovery of the body. Crip's principal achievement is the dismantling of the socially constructed framework of dependency, deficiency and disability, proposing the construction of other connections and deploying other rationales. It has also contributed to dismantling the notion of autonomy, highlighting the interdependence of the human condition. Notwithstanding, its most important contribution has been its commitment to corporeality. The problem is that our civilization lacks the habits needed to put it into practice. Moreover, though functional differences magnify corporeality more than sexuality, many corporeal dimensions still remain unattended (Moya & Bergua, 2018).

Final Notes on Crip–Queer Pedagogy

Essentially, both queer and crip highlight the centrality of the body, but the former does so fundamentally in the sexual terrain. The centrality of the body in crip culture could lead us to understand the world, relationships and ourselves without creating so many ruptures and divisions. This

is the urgent, revolutionary postanthropocentric worldview we are invited to share. Education cannot be restricted to the cultivation of the soul, but must be about placing the body at the centre in order to deconstruct the binary notions that divide humankind, discussing how we have defined ourselves up to now (same body as animals, different soul) in order to address alternative notions (same soul as animals, different bodies, the body as a vehicle to transform the soul), and continually reviewing how we define ourselves without affirming what we are. The education of the future should be called upon to embrace all of this.

Crip perspective is a cultural model of disability[3] that recognizes disability as a site of phenomenological value, but which is not synonymous with social disablement processes. In other words, the stakes are different in crip culture. Moreover, as McRuer (2018) reminds us, crip adequately describes what we might see as non-normative or non-representative disabilities (disabilities, let's say, that would never fall under the umbrella of the universal disabled access symbol); bodies that fall outside the hegemonic designation, causing it to break down. These are undocumented disabilities (Mollow, 2014) or "boundary" cases: threshold personality, anxiety, chronic pain, HIV, transgender identity and a variety of other forms of embodiment that fall outside the normative designation of disability. Crip is able to address forms of embodiment or states of mind that may be superior to the disabled/able-bodied binary commonly used in the construction of dichotomous realities. This also means that "crip is a critical term that, in various times and places, must be displaced by other terms" (McRuer, 2018) such as queer, trans and freak. For McRuer, we are still collectively discovering what crip could be and what the verb *to crip* could mean. The term is therefore better defined by what it can potentially provoke (as a process) rather than by what it is in itself.

Notwithstanding, we encounter two profoundly subversive questions in crip. On the one hand, as we have already indicated, we find the centrality of the body; modes of inhabiting the body; and rewritings, meanings and openings, particularly in terms of pain, illness and vulnerability. On the other, we find radical criticism of able-bodiedism and, consequently, of neoliberal capitalist social organization. This leads us to question the centrality of work currently favoured by schools and other educational institutions geared towards the promise of employability. From this will emerge a critical pedagogy opposed to this centrality of work that will opt for a change of course in favour of life and caring for life.[4]

All of this shows us how the crip approach intersects with and feeds back into weakness and vulnerability. McRuer proposes the following: "Crip and cripping can certainly be positioned alongside a range of terms that represent the need for new or multiple languages for thinking about disability" (McRuer, 2018). Embracing weakness and vulnerability involves recovering an element of disability denied by the social model, but without succumbing to biomedical semantics. Weakness and vulnerability are also key when a concept that addresses a broad range of experiences of chronic illness, senectitude or dependence is still needed to enable us to produce unedited narratives about bodies and affliction (Pié, 2019). Weakness has been denied to the whole of the population, and this denial has produced multiple aggressions. In reality, the concept of disability itself is a by-product of this generalized denial. Crip enables discussion of precisely this denial of weakness, and of the appropriation of the management of vulnerability by the biomedical and commercial models. By reappropriating human vulnerability in its entirety, we are able to give it other resonances, with a greater connection to life and with the body at the centre of the lives of humans. In reality, crip enables us to discuss a number of erroneous principles maintained in Western human civilization which are profoundly destructive of diversity (both human and non-human) and of life altogether. Ultimately, crip perspective enables us to discuss the fundamental principles of Western civilization and dismantle able-bodiedist, commercial and normative educational institutions.

> I am dreaming the biggest disabled dream of my life—dreaming not just of a revolutionary movement in which we are not abandoned but of a movement in which we lead the way. With all of our crazy, adaptive-devised, loving kinship and commitment to each other, we will leave no one behind as we roll, limp, stim, sign, and move in a million ways towards co creating co-creating the decolonial living future. I am dreaming like my life depends on it. Because it does. (Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018)

Notes

1. This situation explains the existence in Spain since 2015 of the OASIS Project, a space in which adolescents with diverse expressions and identities of gender and sexuality can meet and socialize. Its objective is to create a safe recreation space where young people can enjoy their condition of diversity

without being subjected to normalizing pressures. The project enjoys the collaboration of TransFamilia and AMPGIL and receives funding from official institutions including Barcelona City Council, Barcelona Provincial Council and the Government of Catalonia. This is a segregated space for the exclusive use of LGBTI young people who need to navigate their adolescence without denying their sexual condition. The idea is for young people to spend a few days of relaxation in a safe place where they don't have to think about what they say and do to fit in with the norm. Heteropatriarchal and normalization pressures were countered with the building of parallel spaces in what is now a historic initiative within the LGBTI movement. In other areas—disability, for instance—initiatives like these have been strongly criticized and opposed. It is argued that LGBTI young people choose to inhabit their bodies in a diverse way, but that people with disabilities do not choose, just as they do not choose segregated spaces like these. Self-segregation and imposed segregation are among the typical paths used in social pedagogy to manage difference. In our opinion, these do nothing to break with binary notions and institutional divides, though they can sometimes respond to an inescapable need for survival and dignity; utterly inadequate if we aspire to transform the world we live in, but undoubtedly needed for greater well-being until we achieve that transformation.

2. There are many perspectives and senses to think starting from LBGTBI (Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay, Transsexual, Intersexual), LGTB, or even LGTBIQ + (Queer and the + symbol). The acronym has evolved from its origin as LGB to the most recent LGTBIQ +, and this evolution has the purpose of influencing all the groups that may feel grouped under the terminological and conceptual umbrella that defined them. This, in part, could lead to a certain controversy with the queer term, which perhaps could be recognized and used by those subjects who prefer to live without labels (without the acronym LBTBIQ +).
3. Integrated dance projects, cripple porn documentaries, performance and participatory cabarets in collaboration with other activist networks are just a few examples of crip dynamics in Spain, particularly in Catalonia.
4. Thus, a feminist schools project recently launched in Barcelona includes a queer-crip declaration of intent to reform the Catalan educational system. One of its intentions is to place the value of care and life at the centre of educational panorama, to the detriment of capital, accumulation, exploitation and the instrumentalization of the body.

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CHAPTER 6

The Pedagogy of/in Images. Notes on Lesbian Desire and Knowing How to Fuck

María Laura Gutiérrez

Eroticisms, CSE and Lesbian Imagery. First Points of Friction: Why Even Say You're a Lesbian?[1]

This paper started with questions put to me by teenagers and children in various educational settings. On many occasions over the last few years, I've been invited in my capacity as "lesbian activist" to give talks on Comprehensive Sex Education (CSE).[2] Other times, being "the lesbian teacher", I have asked to talk about or bring to bear my own experience as an educator, whether in high schools or undergraduate classes in the university where I work.

Whatever the context, one question would come up again and again without fail, with only the slightest of variations: at the end of the class, a group of students would approach, hushed, in confidence, almost stricken with embarrassment by words that when they finally came, despite their simplicity, were barely audible: "*profe*, how do lesbians have sex?" A

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question not exclusively limited to teenagers, it's true, but even then I couldn't overlook the genuine curiosity behind this not knowing, not to mention the dearth of imagination it spelled.

Answering something like this isn't easy in a school environment convulsed by sexual panic (Rubin, 2018 [1989]) and dire moral warnings concerning "children's sexuality"—panic that, inevitably, leads us to proceed with a caution we'd never show in other spaces, where facing down that gaze is, rather, stigmatized bodies' unqualified gesture of revolt.

My response, which I learned thanks to trans activists and scholars, is, first of all, to *devolver la cortesía*, or *return the favor* (Radi, 2015). More often than not, my irony autopilot kicks in and I shoot back: "well, how do you reckon heteros do it?" Sometimes, this mirroring brings home the marker of difference, creating the conditions for a possible response; at others, faced with awkward tittering and silence, I make do with remarks laced with eroticism and affect with a view to conjuring up the sexual reveries CSE seems unable to satisfy.

Although in this instance I'm only referring to how this framework manifests itself in cis lesbian experience, of course this question comes up just as often for trans, travestis, intersex and, to a lesser extent, cis gay colleagues. And I ask myself, what does this persistent need for a confession of otherness hope to achieve? And to what extent is the mystification on the part of these young people, this desire to know how lesbians fuck, interwoven with genuine doubts, doubts that go unanswered in their conversations with adults in educational institutions?

Countless texts and analyses have come out in recent years on the role of CSE in educational institutions, with all the disclosures and disavowals they suppose. CSE is, after all, less a uniform program of action than a contested field that has raised several of the problems under discussion here. One of CSE's current gambits is to point out, over and over, that talking about sexuality with young people necessarily involves talking about things beyond sex, too—a premise we understand and even sympathize with even as we wonder why such insistence on (not) talking about sex and, especially, what sexes, what sexualities and body practices we're talking about here. And when we don't discuss them, what gets blotted out?

This is where CSE's potential for cultivating erotic imaginaries crosses paths with the power of images and queer theory, as reflected in the experiences of local thinkers such as val flores, Eduardo Mattio, Germán Torres or, from Brazil, Guacira Lopes Louro: an assortment of interests and positions, to be sure, but who "all question what other positions take as the

starting point: the nature of the body and the fixed nature of identity" (Mattio, 2014). Following Torres (2009; 2012), Mattio highlights how all CSE curricula impose some degree of sexual education that, whether implicitly or explicitly, shores up the heteronormative contract by dint of legitimating certain identities, bodies and affects while undermining and sidelining others. "Given this situation", the argument continues, "a queer pedagogy would point up the arbitrary and violent conditioning that regulates and limits subjects, and, hence, could clear a space for a more creative forging of one's identity as well as enhanced control over one's body" (2014, p. 9).[3]

Yet here I'm assailed by the question, à la Butler, of what it means "*to be* a lesbian and *speak as* a lesbian" in educational contexts, "what, if anything, can lesbians be said to share? And who will decide this question, and in the name of whom?" (1993, p. 309). Which is to say, what can I bring to the table, a lesbian who considers herself an activist for sexual disobedience and who seeks to use lesbianism to politicize reifications of identity, including lesbian ones. Firstly, for me, embodying an identity calls for political action; it mobilizes a desire for a possible genealogy, for an alternate future of collective spaces.

The queer gaze no longer supposes employing lesbian identity for what we might call didactic or instrumentalist purposes, and is particularly sensitive, in fact, regarding the dangers of pigeonholing lesbian sexuality and eroticism. Still, I'd go so far as to argue that even if we can't say for certain what's common to the erotic and sexual dimension of all lesbians' lives, we do know that these lives' customs and practices have been marked by absence, by what's been barely intelligible, and that even when they *have* been represented, more often than not it has been under the sign of slurs, shame and self-hatred (Love, 2007) or as a scenario staged for the male cis hetero gaze and desire.

While these circumstances have changed greatly for the adolescents we're talking about here, I'd like to focus on the scars silence has left. We may not quite know what leads this or that image to touch and speak to us of lesbian experience, yet perhaps in that very resonance there endures, indelible, an image of the scope and capacity of desire.

Starting from here requires us to try out—drawing on queer pedagogies—alternate means of intervention, ones that press and refine how images are used, those that would keep identities squarely fixed and self-expression strictly confessional. It's a question of creating various means of re-signifying alongside critical subversions that would allow us to think

through images of the erotic (or their absence) so as to extend the horizons of desire and the possible—not only to bring to light what has historically been kept from view or silenced, nor solely to take cognizance of the diversity of human sexuality, as would be politically correct, but, above all, to articulate queer pedagogies of the image with a view to buckling heterosexual education, skewing it, in a kind of fugue, toward its vanishing point.

When I refer to a queer reading of lesbian images, I'm thinking, as Pérez (2016) outlines, in political and epistemological uses, not in essentializing what a queer identity is. That is, queering a lesbian image does not mean portraying a lesbian as a subject of queer representation *per se*. I'm arguing that it is not possible to assume such a representation without losing the political force queerness entails. Rather, I wish to highlight that working on the framework of (in)visibility the veiled presence of lesbian images supposes (even given the privileges it, too, entails) could enable lives livable beyond sex-gender-desire framework of identity. "Lesbian" doesn't just name a desire or a type of sexual practice, then, but implies a political position and a flaw in the very criteria of legibility that capitalizes on the silence echoing round the educational system.

Thus, the lesbian political stance we've committed to is a strategy of enunciation capable of constructing its own critical, reflexive, theoretical and epistemological domain. To do so, we must be wary of essentializing that identity. "Lesbian", as an anti-essentialist and queer position, doesn't denote a specific subject who fucks some particular way and has to justify the specific ways this *saber-coger* ("sex-knowledge") arises in the pedagogical imaginaries of images; "lesbian" is a relation that makes of the policies concerning knowledge of the body and its pleasures a politics of sexuality, of knowledge, of affect and of bodies; "lesbian" as a means of doing, thinking, enduring and producing an epistemology up to the task of rethinking the situations both liberal attitudes to identity and neoliberal economic policies repeatedly condemn us to, as well as the bodily, sexual, gender and racial violence that mark our daily existence.

We mustn't forget, either, how the Southern Cone has read queerness on its own terms, as we can see from developments such as the concept *cuir* and the debates over sexual disobedience and dissidence. I'm not going to reopen the longstanding polemic over the concept and translation of "queer". While I continue to use the category more or less freely along with *cuir* and sexual disobedience, I should point out that my

thoughts, as well as my theoretical positions and political stance, are closer to the latter.[4]

That the question "How do lesbians have sex?" returns so persistently, then, doesn't just point to something missing, an absence, or doubt; rather, to paraphrase Britzman (1995), it shows up how straitened and impoverished our erotic fantasies have become. Beneath the question lies the view that the only thing that counts is the cis hetero genital penetration espoused by mainstream pornography, which is, after all, implicitly and explicitly, the most accessible sexual pedagogy there is right now—a repeated "production of ignorance" and an extension of the same logic of distribution that determines which bodies and behaviors are sexually desirable.

Faced with these reifications, we would do well to turn to other eroticosexual imaginaries by deprogramming various bodily practices, find other forms of caresses on other parts of the body just as sensuous and just as excitable, turn to protheses, whispers, moans, silences, anything that blows sky high habit's received patterns of pleasure and unknowing. A sexual and bodily redistribution that would charge our own politico-pedagogical conversations with enough voltage to engender a fissure, by way of sexual policy, in hetero- and homonormatized pedagogies.

Queer Theory and the Possible Eroticies of Images

In recent years, both feminist and queer studies have led to a great increase in the production and circulation of images in cultural and visual studies. Traditionally, art history thought of itself as a discourse without a body, without desire, sexless and genderless, despite having played a foundational role in shaping the *establishment of the sexual gaze* (Parker and Pollock, 1981) in sexo-political technology, or what Preciado (2009) might call "somatic fictions". These critics' efforts have been key to, on the one hand, revising and rewriting the history of art in feminist code, which undermined prevailing hierarchies and powers, and, on the other, reconsidering the ways knowledge is constructed and ways of seeing legitimized, how possible bodies and ways of being are represented or imagined. Together, all of these studies have helped redefine the validity and relevance of potential research questions around the analysis, production and circulation of images.

This is why searching for and consolidating others' images of LGBT[5] communities/activists is an important strategy to restore the *archives of*

feeling (Cvetkovich, 2003; Love, 2007) they bear within them. Lesbian studies have to be thought alongside queer theory so as to avoid their readings becoming a repertoire of themes or a catalogue of identitarian content, as opposed to a transformation of why we see what we see.

I agree, with thinking of images not as systems of representation but, rather, as producers of knowledge and subjectivity; that is, as a "technology of gender" (De Lauretis, 1987) or a "technology of sex" (Butler, 2007) that produces what it claims to represent, that sets the limits according to which sexuality will become visible or not.

I've been struck, then, by this ongoing reconfiguration in images' capacity to explain, stage and "represent" LGBT subjects as a means of offering a blanket solution to history's "debt of silence". While in recent decades "those silenced voices" have found a place on the platform of enunciation, the flipside is that women's and LGBT bodies have generally been encouraged, in the name of "inclusion", to align themselves with a narrative that, for the most part, shuns their own strategies of enunciation and dissidence. As trans pedagogue Lucas Platero points out:

> Inclusion underlines the fact that acceptance of otherness is predicated on and requires the other's illegitimacy, bringing about two apparently contradictory but similar maneuvers. On the one hand, normality propagates itself uniformly and indistinguishably, synonymous with the everyday, and thereby produces otherness as a means of recognizing itself. On the other, difference requires the presence of those already considered subaltern, who are always imagined as subjects lacking in something. (2018, p. 30)

This is why I find myself reflecting on how we can go about creating a space to engage with the question of what, how and whose images circulate even as I see "feminism" and "queerness" (both contested signifiers) increasingly called upon to assume a demure place in the same cultural history whose cis hetero-centered grounding continues, I insist, to hold firm.

By way of example, let's take a look at two cases from contemporary mainstream cinema and TV, each of which has given rise to interesting debates regarding the visual pedagogies of lesbian sex: *La vie d'Adèle* and *The L Word*. I'd like to pick up on the debate Preciado highlights surrounding the movie *Adèle*, where cinema critics and French lesbian activism discussed the "truth" or otherwise or the film's depiction of lesbian sexual experience. For some, the film captures the "truth" of these

experiences and brings them to a wide audience; for others, the movie is just a visual dodge that fails to portray real sex between women. Again, the idea of the truth of lesbian sex obscures the significant question: how successfully does the movie put on screen the kind of visual fictions required to expand the imaginary of lesbian desire? As Preciado points out:

> The decisive matter, therefore, is not whether an image is a true or false representation of a particular (feminine, masculine, or other) sexuality, but who has access to the collective editing room in which fictions of sexuality are produced. That which an image shows us is not the truth (or falsehood) of the picture, but the ensemble of visual and political conventions of the society that views it. (2019, p. 98)

Perhaps, then, the question should turn on those *counter-fictions* (Preciado) that lead us to examine "visual justice" (flores & Guaglianone, 2016), on the possibility of shifting the codes that have for so long shaped our gaze. Ways of seeing that would put a crimp and a quirk in our acclaimed representations of inclusion.

This presents us with two central questions: how can we modify and shift the visual codes in educational settings given that images of LGBT subjects are already so widely used to present and represent their bodies, desires and sexualities? But also, how is it that, even despite these criticisms, the call to identity remains the only way of reading those same subjects, which is to say, as a fixed and stable identity that certain bodies might be expected to represent? To delve further into this last question, I will focus on how mainstream narratives construct their horizons of possibility either through existences based on the assimilation of lesbians to the heterosexual universe or through historical queer/lesbian failure (Halberstam, 2011; Love, 2007).

In addition, this way of seeing probes how affects around ideals of success and failure are built up, constructions key to the invention of queer children and adolescents' imaginaries. As Mattio (2018) rightly points out, educational trajectories tend to foreclose any criticism of the imperative to be happy; they are designed to guarantee a path to success and, as regards CSE, "achieving these social goals demands producing the requisite bodies, viable identities and healthy affective bonds" (p. 2).

As Love highlights, in queer communities desire has long been associated with failure, impossibility and loss, with homosexuals and homosexuality in general serving as scapegoats for the failures and impossibilities of

desire itself. I will come back to the possibilities negative affects allow, yet for now I'd just like to point out how frequently such representations recur in assimilationist and capitalist depictions of failure.

Halberstam singles out the series *The L Word* as emblematic of this process of assimilation, one which would leave behind connotations of failure. He argues it sought to "redefine *lesbian* by associating it with *life, love, leisure, liberty, luck, lovelies, longevity*" (2011, p. 95)—in other words, by staging a rehabilitation of lesbian existence according to a heteronormative model of vision and desire. Halberstam underlines the fact that the butch character is reduced to an almost "ghostly" presence.

The number of studies of queer childhoods has grown enormously in Latin America over the last decade, thanks to the diffusion of queer pedagogies, trans studies and the affective turn. However, the analysis of feminine masculinities and childhood dissidence remains unexplored despite the challenges it poses regarding what other images of childhood, and the failure of the gender- and heteronormative project, we could produce and/or bring to light. In this regard, we must highlight fabi tron and val flores' compilation *Chonguitas* (2013), where photos and autobiographical texts give voice to *chonga*s' experience of childhood in the Southern Cone. The photography in *Chonguitas* "exhibits without presenting an authentic masculine ego; instead, it reveals subjectivity as an imaginary construct. Gender, sex and sexuality are visual codes operating as discontinuous series of representations, copies and falsifications" (p. 189).

It's a call to action to the *chonguitas*, our schools' butch lesbians, who fissure the attempts at assimilation and stabilization inherent in these depictions of success. What representational universe are those uncomfortable and ghostly identities going to invent, apparently unrepresentable as they are, their mainstream presence restricted to cautionary versions of abject failure? A call to action pursuing images, concealed for now, that would allow, as Keith Moxey says, "the word to struggle with the obduracy of visual gestures toward their own opacity" (2013, p. 79).

On *El Buen Coger* and Repressive Contexts

Picking up on some of the questions we asked earlier on ways of dismantling received ideas of comely sexuality, or *el buen coger*, let's recontextualize the question of how we invent sexual and political imaginaries in times of a conservative reaction fueled by stories of sexual panic, which, without fail, go hand in hand with draconian moralizing on sexuality that deploys

childhood and adolescence as screens for the status quo (Arduino, 2018). Responses have come in several different forms: some demand a critical appraisal of reactionary conservativism in Latin America, where so-called "gender ideology" has been targeted repeatedly by those who wish to reestablish the primacy of heterosexist traditions such as the nation and the family (Arbuet Osuna & Cáceres Sforza, 2020); others have called for renewed critiques of the current state of the erotic imaginaries of both feminism and queer activism (Cuello & Disalvo, 2018). In both cases, sexual and moral panic constitute the mechanism that legitimizes or makes viable what can be said, how it's said and who says it, even within our own feminist movements.

For Vance, "sexual panic"[6] denotes and examines public conflicts and controversies on sexual matters. According to this framework, the supposed need to protect children is a placeholder for diverse ideas, such as obligatory heterosexuality, a particular conception of the family, and an aspiration to a national community under threat from "gender ideology" and, in particular, CSE spaces—as public forums for creative, affective and collective educational projects.

In this context, CSE spaces have to negotiate shifting sands, with the effect that even as they open up other worlds, the threat posed by contemporary strands of fascism can lead to overly-rigid conceptions of *el buen coger* and *amor bueno*. This effacement can have a particularly detrimental effect on the behavior of, and relations between, sexual dissidents already cast to the margins of sexual respectability.

Far from advocating teachers undertake heroic individual projects or expose themselves to institutional and pedagogic sanction, I'd simply like to underline how our emotional context is shot through by fear, punishment and accusations. Sex is perceived as a danger (Daich, 2013), an impression not even we are safe from. I agree with val flores' (2018) characterization of many recent CSE proposals as having undermined pleasure as a political end in its own right by focusing on "prevention, danger and risk, such that it seems there aren't even any sexualities to think through or explore, no questions without preformulated answers, even in the most discerning critiques" (flores, 2018).

The advance of these punitive attitudes to sex must be taken into account in the context of changes in contemporary feminist movements, where they have even had an impact on collective political action. For example, in the years since the Gender Identity Law (2012) was passed in Argentina, we have witnessed a seachange in the horizons of what lives can

and deserve to be lived, possibilities that are kept afloat by an extensive support network among collectives of dissident sexualities, especially those of transgender and transvestite activists. And yet, these same last few years have seen a violently biologicist turn that, far from stemming from "old school feminism", as it's dismissively referred to, has found support among some young people who, worryingly, have grounded their sense of identity in solely biological justifications of "femininity and women's experience".

Taking this into account, it bears repeating that the pedagogy of lesbian imagery is restricted by the scarcity of images in circulation and the assimilationist or watered-down version of lesbian experience they provide. Seemly forms of desire and sexual know-how, or *el buen coger*, continue to prevail because of the legitimized forms of love liberal rhetoric allows and an equality in name only that ignores more existential forms of impoverishment. Such images fail to even articulate scenes of pleasure or sexuality, and this vacuum of sexuality stymies our capacity for erotic creativity and the ramifications of desire, just as other erotic expressions are grayed out from the educational experience and rights of adolescents and children. Skewing such readings may well be just what a queer gaze can bring to these experiences.

Lastly, I can't not highlight the situation CSE spaces currently find themselves in given the brazen carelessness of current state policy. While in the first decade of the 2000s public debates led to legal recognition of alternate modes of sexuality and affect, the conservative administration[7] of the last few years has been more inclined to ignoring such projects, or letting them lapse, than with making specific threats to row back on rights won. (The twisted image gazing back at us from Brazil is an ever-present threat.)

Turning to flores once more: "what kind of sex does CSE allow? Which sexual behaviors does it render intelligible and which remain opaquely undesirable, ostracized as perverse, outcast as abject? What do CSE's sexual reveries look like?" (2018, p. 2). Yet also, how might we go about rubbing these frameworks of visibility up the wrong way, against the grain of both the fascistic reactionary attitudes of "don't mess with my kids"[8] and the fallacies of any feminist discourse that warns against and seeks shelter from erotic desire out of fear of sexual anguish?

Toward Possible Images of Pedagogies of (Lesbian) Erotic Justice

As we've seen, I'm drawn by images that question their own conditions of possibility by asking what images do (to us), how they experiment with potential imaginaries for our frames of knowledge and erotico-sexual and affective relations—especially with regard to lesbian experiences. To paraphrase Britzman, how they organize "bodies of knowledge and knowledge of bodies" (1995, p. 151) so as to help fissure the architectonics and thought processes of established knowledge regarding the representation of desire and sexuality.

To that end, let's turn to a local thinker, Beto Canseco, who defines eroticity itself as the possibility "to question the norms that regulate bodies' public desirability, to question why we see certain bodies and not others as erotic, and what social factors give rise to these apprehensions" (2017, p. 197). The author takes up Rubin's notion of erotic justice and approaches it from two converging angles: the right to sexual pleasure and the right to protection from sexual violence; in this way, challenging the hegemony of the erotic not only fissures recognized norms of sexuality and paths to pleasure but "invites us to continue exploring new means of representation" (p. 218).

Talking about sexuality and sexual imaginaries in classrooms with adolescents as we'd like to is difficult enough already, we know, given the fear of institutional sanctions and disciplinary measures, despite being well aware that sex and sexuality are everywhere. At the same time, we're also aware that most young people's sexual pedagogy today is still mainstream pornography, which, as Gall remarks (2019), "is lacking in imagination", is utterly misleading and promotes a sense of jeopardy and danger around sex.

Given the level of pushback and scrutiny, at least some spaces must be secured for erotic imagination and creativity on the part of children and adolescents, spaces receptive to the corporal dispositions of lesbian educators. We need spaces where we can bring to bear visualization technologies that broaden the scope of the visible, resting not only on the question *what do we see?* but *why do we see what we see?* An approach that, by means of a close reading of our experiences (Bal, 2016), constructs a possible mode of seeing opposed to the reification of images, bodies and queer desires.

It's not about telling others how, when, where and who to fuck, and still less about telling them how lesbians fuck. If the figure of the lesbian still constitutes a ground of possibility, of invention, it can't be as the stamp of a neat, representable biological identity exclusive of, and excluding, our bodies, desires and pleasures; rather, as Halberstam suggests, it should be as "new forms of memory that relate more to spectrality than to hard evidence, to lost genealogies than to inheritance, to erasure than to inscription" (2011, p. 14).

In so doing, I'm keener on forging a space for endless questioning than hitting on the right solution (Luhmann, 1998), on enfranchising the experiences of lesbians condemned to the margins of intelligibility. Instead of locking them up in the laws of biology, why not let them chafe and flame as a vanishing point? Let that gaze be queered burn, for example, as in the erotic images of butch lesbians, so persistently "anachronistic" (flores, 2019), recover the negative capacity of lesbian affect for melancholy and self-hatred (Love, 2007), annex pessimistic skepticism to counteract the prevailing injunction to happiness and success (Ahmed, 2010), or dance, with notoriously bad taste, to the rhythms of melodramatic kitsch (Preciado, 2017). With this in mind, I invite you to sharpen your tongues on the (un)familiar images made by the Cordoban collective Asentamiento Fernseh, on the early work of La Plata's Cuerpo Puerco (by Fernanda Guaglianone and Guillermina Mongan, 2005–2013), or Fernanda Guaglianone and val flores' collaborations (2015–2018). All of these images turn the visual process into a pedagogical gesture that makes a lesson of our own predictability, upending what we thought we knew and disarming our ready-made responses.

Though we still may not be entirely sure what makes our body a body and legible a desire, we can still contest the economies of sensuous surfaces not only in the face of mainstream pornography but also some of feminism's own limitations. Images that turn questions of sexual pleasure into forerunners of a collective political strategy, notwithstanding the waves of violence our bodies and existences resist.

Notes

1. Translation: Daniel Fitzgerald: dannyfitzgerald@gmail.com.
2. In Argentina Law 26150 introduced Educación Sexual Integral (ESI), which created the National Program for Comprehensive Sexual Education

(CSE) in October 2006. It guarantees the right of students at all levels of the education system, private as well as public, to receive comprehensive sexual education. Its implementation, however, has been resisted as much by principals, parents and teachers as by various social groups, often religious or conservative. Some teachers have barely implemented CSE, while in other schools, it has been relegated to the status of sporadic workshops, and lacks consistent application across the grades and in the educational materials used.

3. Translator's note: our translation. Unless otherwise stated in the bibliography, all quotations from non-English texts are the responsibility of the translator.
4. For further discussion in this line, see Rivas San Martín, 2011; flores, 2017a; Pérez, 2016.
5. Although so far I've focused on lesbian imaginaries, here I am referring to the historic role played by LGBT communities and activists in solidarity campaigns in specific contexts. While recognizing that within each of these communities normalization and *cuirization* take on distinct forms, the archive of feelings aims to reflect on the experiences that made it possible for the political and affective alliances between these collectives to coalesce around queerness. By way of example we could cite the alliances built in the USA in the wake of the "AIDS crisis" or, in Argentina (in particular, Buenos Aires), of the mobilization to overturn oppressive police edicts and criminal codes in the 1990s.
6. Vance takes his lead from the idea of moral panic developed by Stanley Cohen, namely that which describes certain societal events whereby one social group and its practices are publicly demonized and condemned (see Daich, 2013).
7. I'm referring especially to the scrapping of CSE programs during the presidency of Mauricio Macri (2015–2019).
8. *Con mis hijos no te metas* was the slogan adopted by a conservative social group in Lima, Peru, in order to oppose the implementation of various educational projects projected to be state policy and which included gender perspective and sex education in the Peruvian education system. It quickly spread to different social and religious movements in Argentina, Chile and Brazil as part of the opposition to sex education and gender "ideology" in general. In Brazil, in fact, it featured prominently election campaign of the current president Jair Bolsonaro, who declared his rejection of what he dubbed "gay kits" in schools.

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CHAPTER 7

Gender and Sexuality in the Brazilian Educational Rhizome: A Cartogenealogy of Production, Marking and Governance of Difference

Fernando Altair Pocahy
and Thalles do Amaral de Souza Cruz

News from an (Im)Possible Country[1]

Our article problematizes the production and the fixation of difference in forms of governmentality of populations and of self-governing (Foucault, 1984/2012) stemming from the proposition of public policies. Therefore, it analyzes something around the gender, sexuality and education discursive fabric generated from the Program Brazil without Homophobia (launched by the Special Secretariat for Human Rights of the Presidency of the Federative Republic of Brazil in 2004), taking into account the

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terms that it set forth in its scope or where it allowed the negotiation of new forms of fixation of difference, as well as of tutelage of popular participation.

The recent history of Brazil has been greatly defined by a military dictatorship that began with a coup d'état in 1964, when a government with strongly held leftist ideas for Brazilian politics was deposed. The dictatorship lasted for 21 years (1964–1985), and democracy was only reinstituted with the advent of the current Constitution in 1988. However, the subsequent governments did not have as their primary focus the lessening of social inequalities The arrival of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva to the Presidency of the Republic in 2003 brought with it a closer dialogue between the Federative Republic of Brazil and social movements (black, *quilombola*, LGBT, feminist, small farmers and people with disabilities, among others), in the elaboration and management of public and social policies, assuming the principles of a popular and participative democracy. It was within this shift that, after months of discussions between public managers, academics and militants/activists, the Federal Government defined the elaboration of its plan to combat discrimination against what has become known as the LGBT[2] population.

In May 2004, in compliance with this determination, the Special Secretariat for Human Rights fulfilled these intentions in government public policy, launching the Brazil Without Homophobia—Program to Combat Violence and Discrimination against GLBT[3] and Promotion of Homosexual Citizenship, with the objective of 'promoting the citizenship of gays, lesbians, transvestites, transgender and bisexuals, through the equalization of rights and the fight against homophobic violence and discrimination, respecting each one's specificity of these population groups' (Brasil, 2004, p. 11).

In order to achieve this objective, several bodies and agencies of the Federal Government were involved, such as the Ministries of Education, Health, Culture, Employment and Justice, and the Secretariats for Human Rights, Racial Equality and Policies for Women, among others. This allowed the objectives of the Brazil Without Homophobia (BSH) program to be incorporated into the policies of governments in various states and municipalities of the federation more institutionally and effectively years later, giving rise to programs such as, among others, 'Rio Without Homophobia', created in May 2011 in the state of Rio de Janeiro; the Center for the Fight against Homophobia of the City of São Paulo, in 2008; the Rio Grande do Sul state government program 'RS Without

Homofobia', created in 2011; and the 'Betim Without Homophobia' program implied by the City Council of Betim, in Minas Gerais State.

However, even before the state programs were implemented, actions by social movements were established and/or strengthened, such as the human rights reference centers initially set up to assist LGBT victims (Pocahy, 2008). Likewise, teacher training courses were also implemented,[4] some of which extended existing actions by social movements. Therefore, we see that the actions of the Brazilian state began in conjunction with those of the social movements, in particular through non-governmental organizations. However, the displacement of actions already run by organizations in favor of management from within the equipment and broad structure of the State did not come without some tension—despite being part of the political horizon and notwithstanding that part of the function of these entities is to guarantee the rights of all through their equipment and programs. These tensions were linked both to conceptual aspects and also to interpretations that the State was not well-equipped to manage actions for hitherto invisible populations and which, according to some arguments, should be objects requiring specific knowledge (and wherein the privileged spokesperson should be from the social movement and, in some situations, academic militants).

However, this is not the main focus of our analysis, although it does reflect the dispute concerning who is authorized to regulate (the marking of) difference and thus redefine it (which now falls to technical and state competencies, and with far less participation, or even no participation at all, from the social movement—except in the nuclei of social control—that is, monitoring of public policies by various representatives involved in this area). We simply add that this dispute has taken place in firmly conceptual/epistemological and cultural terms, often producing a split between theory and practice. This ancient epistemological quarrel has important effects on the interlinking of thinking about identity and difference in social movements and in university, and has almost always been in conflict.

The analysis we undertake is mainly concerned with regimes of cis/hetero/normative intelligibility,[5] where difference is produced, marked and attempted to be governed, taking the view that relationships of knowledge and power are modified and redefine the (dis)positions of subject and collective expressions of a given demand or social criticism. From the *carto-genealogical* ethical and epistemological disposition, which approximates genealogy (Foucault, 1995) to Deleuzian cartography (according to Rolnik (2006/2011) and Preciado (2017))—we therefore

analyzed certain elements of a series of initiatives aimed at training teachers, especially those in charge of the institutional engendering of state and civil society and focused on sexual and gender diversity.

This cartographical encounter with the genealogical approach enables us, therefore, to observe flows in the production of subjectivity—or more broadly processes of subjectification; because we are interested in the systems of assertions and social practices that inform how subjects are constituted (such as how they are governed and how they govern themselves), taking into account the games of truth that produce meanings for the body and gender, sexuality, race and age and, above all, how we are affected/positioned in the contemporary agonistic of a human termed (non)viable or (im)possible.

Our main contention is therefore to assert that the greater the ballast of participatory democracy and social protection (in its openness to meanings of expansibility and popular participation), the greater the production of forms of self-regulation within the dimension of expanding practices of freedom (ethics). Even more so when they stem from social contributions, processes of differentiation are constituted/established in day-to-day educational life (i.e., of curricular experimentation)—and in other instances of life experience (equally susceptible to a curricular reading, based on post-critical perspectives in education and especially in cultural and post-structuralist cultural studies).

Through this analysis, we also take the view that public policies operate as subjectification technologies, in terms of a (social) agonistic of difference, which can be expressed in the expansion of differentiation or determination processes (whose lethal capture is expressed in the precariousness of life and/or also in processes of identification that are more closely related to normative cultures (Pocahy, 2016)).

We will cite the main initiatives of the BSH Program, as a way of beginning our discussion, while seeking to situate the terms and conditions of (im)possibility in the design of the production and governance of difference (Pocahy, 2018). As an opening statement, we cite the BSH Program document, which offers policy and strategy guidelines for management, implementation and monitoring:

a) Support for projects to strengthen public and non-governmental institutions that promote homosexual citizenship and/or combat homophobia

b) Training professionals and representatives from the homosexual movement who defend human rights
c) Dissemination of information on rights, on the promotion of homosexual self-esteem
d) Encouraging the reporting of breaches of human rights in the GLBT segment (Brasil, 2004, p. 11)

It should be noted that in this federal public policy there is a series of initiatives in more wide-ranging areas (justice, health, education, culture, security, etc.) that in order to achieve their objectives, that is, to address homophobia (an expression that defined the terms of political action, equally disputed among its participants, mainly between the social movement, university and government, mainly because this public policy was not aimed at gays and lesbians), the Ministries had to act in a coordinated manner.

This coordination did not, however, entail homogeneity, since each Ministry had to act in relation to the subjects of their respective portfolios and according to agendas that did not always reconcile representations aligned with the directions and partnerships undertaken by the government, especially in the face of pacts with affiliated parties that had fundamentalist religious backgrounds. This, from our point of view, has hugely opened up opportunities for the current scenario, with the emergence of fundamentalist and ultra-conservative parliamentary groups.

A School for All,[6] an Education in/with Difference?

In education, the focus of this paper, the aim of its policies was to 'promote values of peace and non-discrimination based on sexual orientation, by stimulating the production of educational materials on sexual orientation'; 'to support and disseminate the production of materials for teacher training'; and 'disseminate scientific information on human sexuality' (Brasil, 2004, p. 22). In this sense, it is understood that the Brazilian Government considers school as a producer of key meanings regarding practices and people who are, to some extent, on the margins of the narrow regulatory framework of heterosexuality, as constituted according to heteronormativity.

However, the first initiatives in the educational field were proposed by the Department of Continuing Education, Literacy and Diversity—SECAD,[7] linked to the Ministry of Education, with specific edicts for teacher training. The first was in 2005, the second in 2006, with initiatives carried out by non-governmental organizations, unions and some state government departments. In 2011, the School Without Homophobia Project was created, financed by the Ministry of Education (MEC). It was conceived and implemented jointly with civil society organizations such as ABGLT (Brazilian Association of Gays, Lesbians, Transvestites and Transsexuals), the international network *Global Alliance for LGBT Education* (GALE), the NGOs Pathfinder of Brazil, ECOS (Communication on Sexuality) and Reprolatina (Innovative Solutions in Sexual and Reproductive Health), under the guidance of SECAD/MEC. In an official communication, ABGLT and the NGOs referred to above stated that the aim of the Project was to:

> contribute to implementing the Brazil Without Homophobia Program by the Ministry of Education, through initiatives to promote political and social environments conducive to guaranteeing human rights and respecting sexual orientations and gender identity in Brazilian schools. (ABGLT, ECOS, Pathfinder of Brasil and Reprolatina, 2011)

In addition, according to the official communication, in order to achieve the stated objective, the Project established two lines of action. In the first, five seminars were held; one in each region of the country, with the participation of education professionals, managers and organizations within the educational field. Research was also carried out into homophobia in 11 capitals covering the 5 regions of Brazil, in which more than 1400 people participated, including students, teachers, heads of department and school communities. In addition, a series of recommendations were made to review, reformulate and implement public policies to tackle homophobia in the areas of public education administration in Brazil. The second line of action was the development of a way of communicating the topic of sexuality with a bias closer to everyday life and the language of the target audience, to young Brazilian students from public schools, in the 6th to 9th years of elementary school (around 12–15 years old) and high school (around 16–18 years old). To this end, educational material was created, and education professionals and representatives of LGBT movements were trained in how to use it.

The educational material of the School Without Homophobia Project—which has become better known as the 'Gay Kit', 'Anti-homophobia kit' or simply 'Kit'—according to the official communication from the organizations responsible for producing it[8]—consists of a theory textbook, six reports, a poster, an introductory letter and three discussion guides on the three videos from the DVDs: 'Torpedo', 'Doll in the backpack' and 'Fear of what?' ('*Torpedo*', '*Boneca na mochila*' and '*Medo de quê*?'). This material was vetoed in government spheres in the face of pressure from conservative movements in parliament, impacting on the (left-wing) government's decision to scale back distribution of the material, a pernicious bargain in exchange for continuing in government.[9]

Note that the initiatives focused on the discussion of sexuality only began to take shape from 2004 onward. In spite of these initiatives specifically focused on LGBT issues, previous experiences, mainly in left-wing governments, had already been attempted, as was the case with the initiatives of the Municipal Education Department of the city of Porto Alegre during the Workers' Party administrations, mainly in the early 1990s. Nardi and Quartiero (2012) reported that:

> The sexual orientation (term chosen to replace the term 'sex education') project of Porto Alegre's SMED was implemented in 25 schools in the system in 1991. The proposal's guiding principle was that work should be carried out in a systematic and ongoing way in the school curriculum, specifically a weekly period, with students' participation being optional, and offered at alternative timetables to regular study. One of the responsibilities of the sexual orientation teacher was to propose meetings with teachers, parents, officials and the school community. In several schools in the municipal system, workshops on sexuality were held for a few years, and discussion groups/meetings with the school community were in fact carried out. (Nardi & Quartiero, 2012, p. 67)

Thus, in recent decades, since the last Brazilian re-democratization process, a series of regulations in the field of public policy—through laws, plans, programs, state and/or government directives, conferences and international acts[10]—have been not only attempted to regulate bodies and populations linked to legal, legislative and diplomatic discourse, but also as part of what Stephen Ball referred to as the context of influence (Mainardes, 2006; Mainardes & Marcondes, 2009).

This context is embedded in the policy analysis method referred as policy cycles, in which there is certain circularity in decision-making. Ball (in Mainardes, 2006) subdivides this context into five interrelated contexts: influence; production of the political text; practice; outcomes (or effects) and political strategy. All of these are understood as spaces for negotiations and disputes between the various social agents involved, and do not have a sequential or linear dimension. Thus, in an approximation with the Foucauldian perspective, the author (op. cit) suggests analyzing micropolitics, negotiations and clashes between the various groups in relation to political projects until attaining effects and political strategies by the members of the school community (the subject of our analysis), rather than interpreting everything based on a power monopolized by state action or by the forces of de-nationalization (expanding regulation from the neoliberal episteme, which governs without a commitment to the entities involved).

We join Foucault (2001) and Ball (2012) in not denying the importance of state initiatives, nor do we consider the state to hold absolute regulatory power. We point, however, to the need for this authority to negotiate with other bodies such as the official opposition, school communities, academia, civil society organizations (social movements), national, regional and cultural traditions, in multiple arenas of micropolitics. To this end, we refer to analysis of global policy networks (Ball, 2012) in order to examine how certain discourses became hegemonized in the educational field.

These networks are understood as 'decentralised political communities, articulated around common social problems, with a view to their solutions' (Macedo, 2018, p. 5). In addition, according to Ball (2012), the political agents of these global policy networks, or even these political communities, 'are constituted in relation to, and in this process, retroactively produce, the scenarios in which they are situated' (Macedo, 2018, p. 5).

It is in these contexts and networks that the conditions of possibility are opened up that contribute or will contribute not only to the justification, but also to the emergence of 'a discourse and a terminology that aims to legitimise the intervention' (Lopes & Macedo, 2011, p. 25), creating and implementing government public policies, for example. Thus, whether these normatizations are seen as texts, where they are understood as representations that have several possible readings, due to the wide range of readers, or seen as discourse where it is established which voices will be

legitimately authorized to speak (Mainardes, 2006), the normatizations interfere in some way (conditions of possibility or in the emergence) with regimes of truth (Foucault, 2001).

We consider it important to emphasize that conquering these legal substrates that enable the creation of the most diverse public policies demanded institutional political efforts that involved action not only by federal, state and municipal governments in the last decades with their respective parliamentarians and political parties, but also important action by other political agents such as social movements, the academic field, the media, religious institutions and groups, the national and international business community and various other social agents. However, it should also be noted that in Brazil, despite epic efforts to achieve the minimum legislative/institutional victories that run counter to the interests of the conservative wing of Brazilian society, in practice, unlike in other regions of the world, the strength of legislative normalization is not as intense as in many other countries. Thus, it is not because there is a law or because they are a signatory to an international convention or declaration endorsed by the National Congress that certain practices are inhibited or encouraged. In spite of this, it is these victories that facilitate institutional advances that legitimize many public policies to combat social inequalities. Therefore, in addition to the idea of legislative bills (as 'dead bills') in roles[11] that do not necessarily alter social reality, there is in Brazilian culture the habit of not reiterating the law as something mandatory.

We would like to point out that if there have been fiercer clashes in Brazilian society, it is because disparate social projects have been disputing modes of social intelligibility which we (albeit informally) can express as hearts and minds. We consider, therefore, that choices, affectations, subjectifications, emotions, objects of study, party or institutional politics occur in a rhizomatic way and explain why modes of production of subjectivities are in fierce dispute by disparate biopolitical governance mechanisms. In this sense, we reassert the idea of a rhizomatic system for thinking about public policies and their agents in Brazil.

Furthermore, like Pinar (2007), we believe that 'our pedagogical work is both autobiographical and political' (p. 21). Thus, in the streets, in parliaments, social networks, schools and in any social interaction environments, what is disputed are productions of subjectivities, modes of government over groups, governmentalities (Foucault, 2008) that defend and/or attack certain practices and social identities, which try to perpetuate or transform social norms or regimes of truth.

We take the view that the various public policies to promote equality and combat breaches of human rights that aim to build a society where education (but not just education) is a right truly for all, which help in the construction of less discriminatory relations, practices and environments, and with fewer social inequalities, are based on decades of studies, research, debates, conferences with civil society in Brazil and beyond. These public policies are understood, therefore, as examples of technologies that simultaneously exercise biopower and disciplinary power in the field of education.

Beyond this legislation, we also consider academic production for difference, mainly feminist studies in all their variations, and the constitution and performance of social movements that demand sexual citizenship, gender and race/ethnicity, among many other similar demands, as important factors for the emergence of the conditions of possibility of such public policies.

Public Policy, Brazilian Style: Modes of Governing in/the Difference

Among the studies that address the intertwining of education, sexuality and LGBT phobia, there is a degree of consensus on the understanding of the school as prime arena for disputes over meanings that play an intense role in the construction/deconstruction of identities. Mello, Brito and Maroja (2012) moved in this direction by stating that the school is a space where diverse conceptions of the world are in dispute, besides being 'a deeply significant space for the construction of subjectivities in our society'. Oliveira and Santos (2010) stated that both (cultural) pedagogies and schools (with their pedagogies) should be analyzed as a specific normative mechanism where certain policies are developed in dialogue with the broader social context.

It was with these understandings in view that in 2006 the Lula Government created the Gender and Diversity in School (GDE) course: teacher training in Gender, Sexual Orientation and Ethnic-Racial Relations. This course was a partnership between the Special Department for Women's Policies (SPM), the Ministry of Education, the Special Department for Policies to Promote Racial Equality (SEPPIR), the British Council and the Latin American Center for Sexuality and Human Rights at Rio de Janeiro State University (CLAM/UERJ). It aimed to work on

gender, sexuality and ethnic-racial relations issues in a coordinated manner, with the aim of contributing to the continued training of education professionals in the public education system. In 2008, in partnership with the Diversity Education Network, the GDE course was expanded to 19 institutions that offered 13,000 places. In 2010, the GDE was also offered as a specialization. Among the specializations, the EGeS (Specialization in Gender and Sexuality) was created in partnership with the Latin American Center for Sexuality and Human Rights at Rio de Janeiro State University (CLAM/UERJ) and the Special Department for Women's Policies of the Federal Government (SPM), with its in-person components taking place at Rio de Janeiro State University.[12]

In addition to the interventions mentioned above, the Federal Government (under the Workers' Party administration, and part of the governing coalition) held several national conferences on a wide range of topics that defined the anxieties and struggles of a society that was intensifying democratization. In April 2008, the National Conference on Elementary Education was held in Brasilia, with the participation of relevant field representatives from all the states and from the Federal District, as well as teachers and education workers responsible for students and civil society groups. The idea was to debate the construction of the National Coordinated Education System through five focus areas. Among them was a so-called Inclusion and Diversity in Elementary Education debate around education, focused on the black and indigenous population, people with special needs and sexual diversity.

In relation to the GLBTTT[13] population, these policies were to:

2. develop and expand initial and continuing education programs on sexuality and diversity, aiming to overcome prejudice, discrimination, sexist and homophobic violence in the school environment;
4. ensure that the production of all teaching and pedagogical materials incorporates the 'gender' category as a tool for analysis, and that it does not use sexist, homophobic or discriminatory language;
5. incorporate gender and sexual diversity studies into the curriculum of university degrees. (Brasil, 2008, pp. 78–79).

Also in June 2008, the First National GLBT Conference convened by President Lula was held in the country's capital. In the final plenary session, dozens of resolutions were approved in relation to the education focus area, many of which refer to the curriculum as 'stimulating and

including themes related to sexual orientation, gender identity and race/ethnicity in university curricula', 'incorporating into the school curriculum issues of diversity/difference, equality/equity, with an emphasis on gender issues (…)', 'reviewing the contents of textbooks that cover sexual diversity, giving positive visibility to LGBT people in texts and images', 'Producing educational and informative material on lesbian women and bisexual women' (Brasil, 2008, pp. 186–193).

The National Conference on Education was held between 28 March and 1 April 2010, also in the federal capital, with the central theme of 'Building the National Coordinated Education System: The National Education Plan: Guidelines and Strategies for Action'. The members of this Conference were to prepare the ninth National Education Plan (NEP) for the period 2011–2020. The final document was divided into six focus areas, the sixth of which was called 'Social Justice, Education and Labor: Inclusion, Diversity and Equality', which covers our theme. It contains 25 resolutions, of which we highlight three these:

k) To stimulate and expand the national production of materials (films, videos and publications) on sex education, sexual diversity and issues related to gender, in partnership with social movements and HEIs, in order to ensure that the prejudice that leads to homophobia and sexism is overcome. […]
q) To guarantee that the MEC provides, through the creation of a budget line, the necessary resources for the implementation of the School without Homophobia Project throughout the education system and the public education policies present in the National Plan for the Promotion of Citizenship and LGBT (…) Human Rights. (Brasil, 2010, pp. 143–146).

These documents were produced based on a global policy that arose after the Second World War that aims to make human rights a global tradition. In this way, such documents produced and implemented together with academic output and social movements on the topics mentioned here contributed to the construction of the conditions of possibility (Foucault, 2001) so that policies such as the BSH Program and its actions and guidelines for education could feature in debates over modes of governing.

We take the view that such legal substrates can be viewed through their contributions to the production of an ethical or moral discourse justifying the approach to issues linked to difference in the educational context, as

an attempt to create a new, more diverse and democratic, pedagogy and normatization through an intervention in the actions of formal education professionals (primarily teachers and managers), more specifically of public-school education in recent decades.[14]

The choice of these initiatives for our analyses was due to the fact that their objectives included the intention, to some extent, to regulate educational practices in the formal school setting regarding issues involving social markers of difference. We understand these actions as government/public curricular policies, establishing and implementing pedagogies for the promotion of equality—because we understand them as examples of government initiatives that sought to implement proposals impacting on the field of formal school education present in several of the documents cited, as a form of biopolitical interference in the sexist, racist, macho and LGBT-phobic culture of Brazilian society.

The direct target of this technique of governmentality[15] in the educational field was the teachers, who should incorporate a new, non-heteronormative, non-sexist and non-racist normalization, causing them to self-regulate, internalizing values and practices that would contribute to breaking of the cycle of teaching homophobic, racist and misogynistic subjectivities and practices. Thus, more lives could then be considered 'livable lives' (Butler, 2010) in this space of 'unchosen cohabitation' (Butler, 2017) in which humanity finds itself.

These actions were largely a counterpoint to the naturalization of stereotypes 'established mainly in the context of the biology of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that played a decisive role in the social disqualification of people, social segments, societies, countries and even continents' (Minella & Cabral, 2009, p. 21). The racism, patriarchalism, sexism and LGBT-phobia that have taken shape since then, in addition to simple practices of exclusion and discrimination of groups and subjects considered abnormal/inadequate, are true forms of biopolitical extermination of those sections of the population through the immobilism of public power.

Reflecting on the effects that actions such as School Without Homophobia sought to produce as curricular public policy, while at the same time pointing to the exercise of a capillary disciplinary power, we take the view that it can also be understood concomitantly as having a biopolitical character, acting based on a set of pedagogies of its own (also with the intention to regulate difference, certainly with a greater margin of freedom, but still, inserted into a mode of guiding behaviors).

That is, these policies (even if opposed to a norm) aimed to make their* participants internalize values that would allow a significant portion of the Brazilian population (blacks, indigenous peoples, LGBT and women) not only to live in society in a less discriminatory and stigmatized way, but above all to stop being killed simply because they are part of these marginalized groups. In addition, the creation of a non-discriminatory environment could offer less violent social bases for the entire population, also extending to other social groups that were not the initial focus of such a policy.

It is in this sense that discussion around a new governmentality in the educational field (César & Duarte, 2017) has become one of the prime targets of the anti-gender agenda that accuses schools of being spaces of indoctrination against traditional values, against a supposed natural order of things. This norm of a supposedly natural order of things is so fragile that a weighty daily, familial, educational, religious, medical and legal investment is required to constantly reiterate it, for it to continue to exist. In addition, the questioning and historization of signifiers such as 'natural', 'normal' and 'universal' so used in these clashes by all sides of the conflict must not occur, because the subtler these arbitrary processes are, the more effective their substantialization and naturalizing effects will be (Butler, 2008).

As César and Duarte (2017) point out, in this political and moral war 'gender, sexuality and sexual diversity were transformed into weapons' (p. 144). In the educational field, where policies, programs and legislation point to and justify approaches to matters involving difference not only in relation to gender, but also sexualities, races, ethnicities and so on, the school is then seen by these conservative wings as a place that has become threatening, and it would therefore be necessary to 'defend the children' from these attacks.

Finally, we highlight that, in this same vein, the mechanism of childhood and the defense of the family are used as one more way to canvass support against school practices that aim to combat discrimination, exclusion and social inequalities rooted in Brazilian culture. Moreover, these groups continually play with inversion tactics. In defending censorship of the free manifestation of scientific and artistic thought, and the free exercise of the teaching profession, they claim to be defending families' freedom of expression and belief.

Remnants and Traces of a Moment in the Experience of Brazilian Democracy: Notes to Carry on Queering

To live-educate-research in a country (and in a state and city such as Rio de Janeiro) with a degree of institutional, economic and social instability, where a large part of the population assumes an (ultra)conservative position to some degree and, furthermore, a small part of the population within this conservatism occupies the wealthy socioeconomic stratum, for fear of losing their privileges, applauded (banging pots and pans on windows and balconies and/or displaying gestures of hatred for difference) the dismantling of democracy, of policies that combat social inequalities, and the implementation of a deepening of neoliberal policy and rationality (Macedo, 2017) or a neoliberal biopolitical rationality (Sierra, Nogueira, & Mikos, 2016) is a painful and uncomfortable experience for us, mainly for those who gravitate toward questioning inequalities and norms, some under the queer-feminist sign. Thus, we sought to analyze in this text, from a post-structural perspective, elements that enable us to understand the current[16] scenario of regression (Carreira & Gonçalves, 2018; UN Women, 2016).

We understand the growing manifestations of sexist, classist, racist, gender-focused and LGBT-phobic hate discourse as also being a reaction, as effects of public and governmental policies that somehow made people and groups that throughout the history of Brazil have always been in a position of dominance feel that such privileges (arising from this position of dominance) were being threatened by such policies.

We have assumed discomfort and consternation with this scenario and turned to the trajectory of egalitarian policies, particularly educational policies, aimed at gender, race/ethnicity and LGBT population issues, and what we believe to be their potentialities. In this sense, this paper aimed to observe, from a micropolitical perspective, a set of public and governmental educational policies that were proposed to tackle social inequalities in Brazilian public elementary school education. These social inequalities being created and maintained from intersecting social markers of difference.[17]

Having started from the understanding of Mouffe's policy (2007) as being a 'set of practices and institutions through which a certain order is

created, organizing human coexistence in the context of conflicts derived from the political' (p. 16), we suggest that this set of public and governmental policies has been (or was?) an effective way of producing subjectivities more aligned with the perspective of implementing political initiatives as an attempt to intervene in the 'biopolitical conditions of life' (Taylor, 2018) of some minorities, impacting on values and discriminatory and exclusionary practices in Brazil, in addition to provoking the (ultra)conservative reactions referred to earlier, among many other things.

We believe, together with a wide range of researchers (Furlani, 2005; Lopes Louro, 1999; Meyer & Soares, 2004; Ribeiro & Camargo, 1999; Torres, 2010), that addressing (or not addressing) with these topics in education constitutes an attempt to control how behaviors, modes of regulating others are guided, but not without those others reacting (regulating themselves). We do not therefore analyze the public policies listed here as the solution to conflicts and social disputes, but rather we associate ourselves with the ideas of Prado and Toneli (2013), considering conflict and dissent as constitutive of democracies. These characteristics are constitutive, but do not mean that they are immutable.

Here we do not seek to evaluate these initiatives, as public policy, as being solely state administration. Our focus is on the potentiality of these policies and on what they offer in terms of guaranteeing new pathways in the infinite agonistic of difference (but to be experienced and practiced with some margin of freedom, so that subjects can experience some possibility of ethical reflexivity). We have been/are interested in observing the flows of resistance to a given knowledge–power relationship in the face of the production of and attempts to determine ethno-racial-sex-gendered positions, but also from where dissidences emerge.

We are more or less sure of this assertion, because the first author of this book was active for about 15 years in an organization that champions free sexual expression (nuances[18]), and thus experienced the main tensions around the production, marking and regulation of difference, and because the two authors are today at the forefront of the production of research in the educational field focused on gender and sexuality relations in their intersectional expressions. In addition, because we position ourselves explicitly as activist subjects in our everyday educational practices, analyzing and intervening (in a certain way) in the game of objectification and subjectification practices. We understand that the knowledge-power games involved in the production, determination and regulation of difference will not be resolved in terms of an emancipation (toward a utopian or

idyllic experience), as position free from regulation, but occur in constant dispute and imply the lowest possible level of domination.

On the other hand, we consider that these disputes redefine the terms by which we mobilize, affect and are affected by the agonistic of the (non) viable and (im)possible human, particularly attentive to the episteme of our time, which is marked by ultra-neoliberalism. Once difference is understood here as a relationship and not as an object, as a materiality or fixed signifier, we can appreciate that its representation (marking of power), which we refer to as identity, is often experienced as lethal (Pocahy, 2018), as is the case with the experience of gender, sexual or other dissidences that meet with discourses of racism, cis-sexism, ableism and ageism. This is, for example, reflected in the extermination of Afro-Brazilian youth, in feminicide, in the extermination of trans people and the indigenous poor, among others.

We have opted in our analyses to work with the broad field of the forces of resistance, particularly based on the interlinking of the social movements that produced important contributions in proposing an LGBT and anti-racist agenda during the Workers' Party's time in government,[19] and we have almost always allied ourselves with them, in almost all their movements. However, we position ourselves from a post-critical and *queer* standpoint, considering above all that these disputes, whatever they may be, will not find a route of salvation—and we leave revolution to the metatheories. We can nevertheless, with some agency, expand the margins of freedom (ethical reflexivity) and, in this exact moment, understand that other social arrangements may arise, making the dissidence a becoming and not a fixed meaning. Rebelling is necessary, rebelling is not necessary.

Our analysis and in(ter)vention with this text come at a time when democratic forces are being attacked in the streets and on social networks (Butler, 2017) under the accusation that they are implementing 'ideological indoctrinations' by the defenders of censorship that demand the end of 'gender ideology' and 'political correctness' in Brazilian education and the defense of 'traditional family values'. This makes it even more urgent to reflect on the pathways constructed in Brazilian politics, and more specifically in Brazilian education policy, which in anchoring themselves to national and international legislation addressed topics through the creation/implementation of public policies that have now been more vigorously attacked.

If this legislation is understood here as regulatory norms, or even as the historical effects of a technology of power centered on life (Foucault,

2001), they cannot be separated from their daily and micropolitical effects, because it is in this arena that the new contours of the agonistic of the contemporary (non)human are defined, precisely in terms of difference as process and not as materiality. From the residues of these disputes, it remains for us to subject ourselves or subjectivize ourselves in new (dis) positions, many of them unknown and still nameless, and perhaps with no desire for such a name. Precisely because the knowledge-power games are constantly being unraveled/challenged, where we are situated in this dispute over some degree of intelligibility, we already need to escape. After all, the risk of all of this is that one step further and someone can become normalized as a condition to continue living.

Notes

1. This paper has financial support from CAPES/Print—UERJ. Translation: Sarah Rebecca Kersley.
2. We will keep the acronyms and terms as they appear in the official documents that we analyze in this chapter.
3. This order of identities was used in the official documents at the time. It was contested during the 1st National GLBT Conference in 2008, when the acronym was changed into its present form—LGBT—in order to allow more visibility to the lesbian identity.
4. The first author (Pocahy), at the time a member of the policy and projects coordination team at nuances—a group championing free sexual expression—developed the first version of the 'Educating for Diversity' course, as well as being a teacher in this group, together with teachers invited from other associations and from the local public university (UFRGS). In the rest of the country, other similar compositions were also implemented.
5. Cisnormativity is perceived here through the maintenance of privileges for persons seen as being consistent with the sex-based gender (anatomic-gendered) system. The regulatory and hierarchizing effect of this position would be the abject interpellation and pathologization of transsexuality—and more broadly of transgenerity.
6. One of the slogans of the governments of the Workers' Party administration was *Brazil, a country for all.*
7. In 2011, this department was renamed SECADI (Department for Continuing Education, Literacy, Diversity and Inclusion), and its objectives included celebrating differences and diversity, and promoting inclusive education. In 2019, in its first year, the Bolsonaro Government abolished this department.

8. *Associação Brasileira de Lésbicas, Gays, bissexuais Travestis e Transexuais* (Brazilian Association of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, *Travestis* and Transsexuals—ABGLT), Pathfinder of Brazil, *Comunicação em Sexualidade* (Communication on Sexuality—ECOS) and *Reprolatina—Soluções Inovadoras em Saúde Sexual e Reprodutiva* (Reprolatina—Innovative Solutions in Sexual and Reproductive Health).
9. For a more detailed analysis of the materials making up the Kit, and the political blackmail in the Brazilian parliament that led to the suspension of the material's distribution, see Cruz, 2014.
10. For a more detailed analysis of these regulations, see Cruz, 2019.
11. We refer to 'legislative writings' specifically, since other writings such as those present in the Bible that had and have strong influence on the population's behavior, cannot be identified, therefore, as dead bills.
12. The second author was a student of this course.
13. The abbreviation was kept as it appears in the document, meaning a reference to Gays, Lesbians, Bisexuals, *Travestis*, Transsexuals and Transgender people.
14. Also documentary markers that are not specifically directed toward formal school education, but that also deal with this topic, such as the National Human Rights Programs, the Brazil Without Homophobia Program and the National Plan for the Promotion of Citizenship and LGBT Human Rights.
15. Governmentality was understood by Foucault (2008) as the encounter between the techniques of domination exercised on others and the techniques of oneself, in addition to marking the calling into question of the state in the field of analysis of micropowers.
16. It is important to point out that conservatism did not cease to exist at any time during the analyzed period. Even at the height of egalitarian policies, there were difficulties, for example, in bringing this type of policy into the MEC. And once inside the institution, it was difficult to make it move forward because of resistance from bureaucrats who did not agree with the values defended by such policies. In the academic field, the situation is the same. No researchers focused on conservatism have emerged even in recent years.
17. It is important to stress that intersectionality is understood in this paper not as the intersection of social markers of difference seen as reality in the ontological sense, but as axes of forces, as power relationships that create traditions aimed at naturalizing and substantializing certain meanings that contribute to the emergence of sub-alterities, of social hierarchies of varying intensities. Thus, we sought to move away from merely applying oppressive logics where 'a conception of power that considers only its repressive character, without taking into account its relational dimension

and punctuated by conflicts and resistances' would be present (Piscitelli, 2008, p. 267). We adopted a (discursive-)constructionist approach to discussing intersectionality (Brah, 2006; McClintock, 2010; Pocahy, 2011), seeking to focus on the dynamic and relational aspects of social identities (marking of difference), besides considering 'the categories of interlinking of differences and systems of discrimination [as] distinct things' (Aguião, 2015).

18. nuances—group for free sexual expression, organization in Porto Alegre, Sul region of Brazil, since 1991. The association, since its foundation, has chosen to write its name in lowercase letters, as well as to operate according to the notion of free sexual expression instead of the LGBTQ+ insignia. In the same way, it uses everyday expressions such as *guei* (rather than gay), *bicha* (queen), *travas* (*travestis*) and *sapatas* (lesbians) as political expressions of local daily life.
19. Particularly regarding the initiatives of the BSH Program.

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CHAPTER 8

"Diva Yes! Free to Fly!" Young Students in Queer Resistance at a Public School in the Capital of Piauí, Brazil

Francisco Weriquis Silva-Sales

The relationship between school and sexuality is permeated by disputes related to various stances regarding which kinds of sexuality can be expressed in the practice of individuals, throughout their educational process. Regarding the bodies that are in conflict with heteronormativity, this ratio is even more marked by meticulous surveillance and discipline.

Inside the school environment, as a socio-cultural space, the individuals that compose it build meanings for their actions and those of others, on what is or is not done, expressed and experienced, producing relationships between individuals who share sociability, expressing their ways of perceiving the world and the various social contexts they navigate. It is a space of ambiguities, situated between reproductions and ruptures of normative and/or subversive processes. Many of these processes are aimed at erasing differences, producing a homogenization of these subjects' identities, while they anchor in identities, practices and discourses assumed as

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hegemonic and universal. Sexuality cannot be considered in isolation from other factors, however, and racial issues for example come forth as central to this scenario, as will be evident in the experiences and discourse of one of the individuals participating in this research, who reports how race and sexuality interface in his everyday life. As these intersect, forms of perception are generated by other subjects toward him, and by him toward himself and others.

What are the forms that make this policy of normalization effective at school? How are intelligible bodies and existences built and instituted in such environments? Queer perspectives can assist us in questioning the ways in which power challenges the relations of individuals among themselves and with the institutions that mark their path, in an attempt to understand the relationships that take place in the school environment, and the dynamics of gender relations, sexuality and other forms of embodiment that take place in this space. Thus, this article deals with the school experience of young gender and sexuality dissidents, with the aim of understanding how regulatory devices are established that circumscribe subjective experiences within the limits imposed by binary normativity.

The discussion presented here is related to the master's survey conducted in 2018 at a mid-level, full time public school of Teresina, capital city of the state of Piauí, Brazil. Data was constructed through experiences with Caetano (18 years old, white and homosexual), Elliot (17, white and gay), Ennis (17, white and bisexual), Linn (16, gay and black), Ney (18, black and gay) and Pablo (15, gay and black), who narrated their everyday experiences and life stories.[1] The school, located in the city center and seen as a traditional institution, targets students from different areas and districts of the city and other cities.[2]

Ethnography at school was adopted as the main methodology, with participant observation, conversations in everyday life, and workshops inside and outside the school environment. Observations were carried out in the hallways and school yards, understood as the spaces of greater sociability and interaction among youth at school, where they express more freely, as they are with their peers, their equals (and unequals), brought together by the "youth condition" lived in this phase of life. Some observations also took place in the classroom, during artistic and cultural activities, recreational activities and sport events.

This perception of the school environment as a research possibility originates in my experience in the Initiation Scholarship Program for

Teaching (PIBID) during the undergraduate studies in Social Sciences, in which I had the opportunity to experience the school reality. This then turned into a positive interest in teaching practice and its construction as a field of relations among social agents and, therefore, of power relations. Contact with the school studied here was established through the teaching practices that took place during the fifth semester,[3] which provided an enhanced perception and concern about sexuality, gender and education.

Data analysis was carried out through the perspective of theoretical discussions in Gender and Feminist theory, Queer Theory and Sociology. As for the selection of respondents, it was built in the field, according to the interactions held with the subjects, built relations and the interlocutors' availability to participate in research, in addition to the authorization obtained by the school administration and their parents. Data analysis and construction were done focusing on the meanings given by the subjects about themselves, their relationships with other subjects and spaces, and their perceptions regarding the discourses of others about them, especially about their sexuality and gender performances.

Production of Senses of the Self in the School Environment

In a workshop, Linn says that at school there is a distinction whereby "Being gay is accepted, being effeminate is not". For him this is prejudice, and he presents the rationale: "It is not my fault. I was born that way. I am that way. It's something natural in me". When reporting on the importance of gender discussion at school, Paul writes "Acceptance of sexual choice", which immediately triggers a discussion of possible explanations for their own experience and identity:

Caetano: […] I did not have the option to be born gay, just like someone straight did not choose to be born straight. The best term to use is orientation.
Linn: Nobody is oriented to being, either …
Pablo: No …
Elliot: It's not in the sense of orienting, it's in the sense of your leading your feelings, what you feel …
Pablo: What is a gay [person], a lesbian, what is it then? It's an option, then.

Ney: It's an option.
Caetano: It's [each] man's taste.
Linn: I think these terms are very wrong. I was going to mention that they are very cliché. This thing about "orientation." In the language itself, the word itself, the root of the word, orientation, choice, it's like, like suggesting that the person has a choice, and that this can be changed …
Elliot: It's like I said.
Linn: Then open the head of heterosexual people, who can change …
Elliot: Exactly!
Linn: Who can end up… whatever … end. And you cannot, cannot. Because, just like someone straight is born straight, I was born gay and I have always, since childhood, seen heterosexual couples kissing and I was never influenced by it. Since childhood, the most normal thing in the world was to see heterosexual couples hand in hand, heterosexual couples kissing, in soap operas, always. And I'm here. I like males.

Subjects characterize their experiences, (re)appropriating the naturalized and essentialized character of their performances and identity as a political tool to legitimize their existence as effeminate gays.[4] That is, they use to their own benefit the very justification played out to validate the heteronormative model and to delegitimize them as dissident subjects of gender and sexuality.

Their arguments have a political character, as they show a concern that the ideas of "orientation" and "choice" can be used against homosexuals themselves: when they entail an idea of something "produced" or something that is "chosen", they may indicate that there is a possibility of producing it differently, that is, of orienting them to become heterosexuals. Throughout modern history, various proposals have purported to reverse the desire of homosexual individuals, through religious and "scientific" practices within a logic that only sees homosexuality as a problem to be solved and something to be researched on, target of meticulous investments (Trevisan, 2000).

"In Our View, This is About Happiness", "It's About Freedom"

Throughout the workshops, participants exposed the meanings that "being effeminate" has in their experience and in the way they live their sexuality. They stated:

Caetano: In our view, it is happiness, you know? In our view, it is happiness. […] We, for example, we gather, we stay up late and such, chatting, talking, but like that, between us. […] It's a thing between friends.

Ennis: It's because, well, we think it's even kind of funny, because by doing that, we're kinda showing our happiness. It's among friends there, it's just to have fun, not to draw attention.

Linn: I'm happy that way. It's like Caetano says.

The discourse on the meanings socially assigned to femininity is associated with the ability to experience their "freedom" in a symbolic operation that, for them, marks their place in the world, their subjectivity and their belonging. It is an expression of what they "are", it affects the representations they build about themselves, the emotions they construct around expectations and the processes they wish to experience. Here femininity is materialized through the body, since, for them, being effeminate is making use of instrumental devices such as clothing, decorative accessories and bodily gestures, that, in the eyes of hegemonic representations of gender, are feminine.

Another student, Peter, says that the use of femininity was important in confronting prejudices faced in previous experiences at another school:

> at my old school, there were six effeminate people in the same classroom. And we fought prejudice ourselves. We began to mock—because they don't like it, we will start to be even more effeminate.

In this discourse, the act of mocking is built using an exacerbation of femininity. Thus, the use of male femininity is given by necessity and convenience of the moment, as a self-affirmation strategy in the school environment and possibly in other ones as well. As an element that marks a difference with other forms of masculinity, it integrates those who are

subjugated, providing opportunities for the construction of affection and sisterhood.

In the discussion around what young people thought about being "effeminate" and affirming this with pride as a positive aspect of their identity, Ennis referred to the group as "You", with the sense of exempting himself from the statement. I refer to this, and question it:

Researcher: You went, "you." Why? […] someone said so: "[…] we are effeminate." You [Ennis] went, "You."
Ennis: It's because, well, they are like that, the biggest mushy with everybody, and the two of us [Ennis and Ney] are quieter, minding our business.
Ney: That's right.
Ennis: We rarely mix [with other people], only when it's really just the six of us, because we don't like to be so exposed.
Elliot: It's a matter of ways, each has his own.
Ennis: It is.

Ennis builds his self-image from the denial of what the other friends are, that is, as effeminate, "scandalous", that interact with more people at school, they call attention with their body, whether through their bodily performances, or through their style, clothes and gestures. He and Ney are more "reserved", exempting any trace of femininity that may arise. According to him, his behavior is "more restrained, quiet, reserved". Since they are required to show a masculine bodily aesthetic in their everyday lives as a strategy to go "unnoticed", not revealing their homosexuality and bisexuality, the use of femininity is restricted to the moments in which they are in this group and in a reserved, private area. It is thus in the group that they build their space for freedom to "make visible their sexual orientation", which is associated with a gender performance understood as female, forbidden for men in their experience of public space. Sexuality should be lived in the private space, or as stated in Brazilian culture "in the closet". Between breaking the sexual norm and breaking the binary gender construction, the latter is less accepted; therefore, they must continue living and performing the hegemonic model of masculinity.

Regarding issues of identity, at the workshop, Ennis, when asked about his sexual orientation, states he is bisexual. Throughout the activity, he referred to this self-declaration, explaining his self-recognition process. He reports that, until he had his first relationship with another man, he had

not felt desire for another person of his same gender, but all of a sudden, through "play" he began to build a desire for his classmate, until the day they exchanged the first kiss, still in school. He narrates that it was only after this episode that he began a process of self-recognition as bisexual and started to interact with gay boys through his boyfriend, who was already "out" and had built a network of sociability at school with other gay boys. It was clear that Ennis searches elements to mark a distinction in relation to his peers in the group of homosexual boys, most of whom are "effeminate". He thereby marks a position that denies any element of his experience and reality that enables identification with a gay identity, because in this context being gay is synonymous with being effeminate.

Research shows that in Nic's and Ennis' experience, living sexuality is marked by a life trajectory that breaks the boundaries of sexuality and identities, and that dodges attempts to normalize them through identity categories, by realizing their experience outside of such classifications. His accounts indicate a questioning of his own heterosexuality, when he places it as something that is used or not used, practiced or not. In this respect, we can think of a post-identity context (Lopes Louro, 2008), since these individuals do not perceive a need to self-define or to fix an identity. In contrast with Ennis' and Ney's experience, Linn and Pablo declare:

Linn: It's because, like, me and the others ["*outras*", female gender in Portuguese]... Me, Pablo, Ari, Caetano. Mostly me, Pablo and Ari, we speak with all the straight people from school. We hug, there's that thing, we throw ourselves on top of each other, they hug us, there's all that meshing. There's that. They keep aside, they're reserved.

Pablo: And like, we go around like we want, we go around in shorts.

Linn: We go around in shorts, we, we shake it. We parade around school, we put the uniform right here [above the navel, tied in a knot] to do *cropping*, we do everything, and that's it.

For them, what marks their difference with respect to Ney and Ennis is the practice of publicly exposing their sexual identity, their desires and affections. Like this, interactions built with the "the straights", in which they acknowledge their orientation, are perceived as freedom, popularity and respect, and they may even insinuate or declare desires for them. In their declarations there is praise for their practices, which imply "confronting", or facing up to norms that attempt to regulate their experiences, that

do not accept their sexuality and try to render them invisible in the school environment. This is the way they found to say "we are here and we exist". For them, subversion takes place within the power game itself, with the instruments that are used for oppression since, considering that being "effeminate" has a negative connotation, they acknowledge they use it increasingly as resistance and protest.

In the search for loopholes to minimize violence, students eventually internalize and incorporate the discourse about themselves by naturalizing it, interpreting it as jokes, minimizing and ignoring it. At the workshop they commented on the association between femininity and homosexuality, since in common sense, the first serves as a "hint" that the subject carries out homosexual practices. In this sense, to the question of what being gay is, they respond:

Pablo:	To like men.
Linn:	[…] People think that in order to be a fag, one has to be effeminate. If you're not effeminate, you're not a fag.
Elliot and Caetano:	It's in the ways.
Researcher:	I don't understand.
Linn:	For example, me, in their view, I'm a real gay. Because I'm effeminate ["*effeminada*", word in female gender], I have feminine mannerisms and such. Now Ennis, in their view, is not.
Elliot:	It's in the ways.
Linn:	It's a trend, because he's all masculine.
Researcher [directed to Ennis and Ney]:	Have you heard this, referring to you?
Ney:	I have seen people talk like that, even yesterday a girl said on the bus that she's a lesbian. Everybody was there, and she pointed at me "That one has the face of an active." That's it.
Linn:	The little active one. Then she told me "this one here is a fag."
Pablo:	The effeminate is like, being a woman. Like, wearing …
Linn:	No, not being a woman.

Pablo: No, like, because there are others who never … like Ney, who the hell thinks that Ney is gay. And you? Look at you. You are a woman.
Linn: I am. And why is it only me that's a woman here? You, lady, you're a travesti.
Pablo: He's masculine.
Ney: It is a matter of taste, isn't it?
Linn: If I am a woman, you, lady, you're a travesti.
Pablo: I'm male, darling.
Elliot: Why is it a matter of taste?
Ney: Because like, if he likes to be the way he wants, the way that makes him happy, they will be his way. If I like to be more reserved, I will be more reserved. But I will not stop being gay because I'm not their way.
Elliot: That's it, to each his own.

Here we can see that being gay is not being "a man", but it is not being "a woman" either; it is being at the margins, being an "other". As a possibility of building oneself at the margins of accepted experiences of gender and sexuality, being "travesti" is the least desired and recognized dissident possibility, it is the most disqualified. These reflections show that gender is something produced, not essentialized, much less natural, but naturalized in discourse as a defense mechanism, even to blend in with the group, to justify their practices, actions and behaviors. They acknowledge a gay identity for themselves, but insofar as they claim the ability to experience sexuality outside of femininity, they try to break the link between male homosexuality and femininity.

During an everyday conversation at school, Caetano tells me how important it was for him to "come out" in that space. He narrates that in his first year at school, at the beginning of the first semester, he was all "boyish", "stuck to straight" and that he was "depressed", just walked crying around school, he was "sad" due to matters related to his sexuality, because he had to "hide from everything and everyone", forging a masculinity that, he says, was not part of how he wanted to live: "that was not me there; it was a lie", but he did this because of his family relations, for fear of being punished and abandoned.

The process to reduce his suffering developed as he built personal relations at school, "making friends", especially as he perceived the freedom that other gay students had at school, declaring themselves "gay", and as

he realized that "the straights" dealt with this "well". He thus perceived this space as favorable to "acknowledge himself", he "came out of the closet" and became a "[…] cheerful, happy" Caetano, who "goes 'scampering' around school, who speaks to everyone, who smiles".

Having an experience marked by "hiding" their sexuality and forms of affection, and performing practices and discourses that do not match what they really want, can cause various harms and frustrations throughout life. This is acknowledged by Caetano, when he points out how important it has been for him to "come to terms with himself". "Coming out" is making public something that chokes, perhaps due to all the social pressure that comes from heteronormativity and hegemonic masculinity, which the subjects feel they cannot attain, to the point that he relates a pattern of masculinity with his own suffering. The visibility of other gay students at school became important in Caetano's subjective process and in his own understanding of his desires and his sexual orientation.

"Study, Because You're Already a Fag, and Black!"

Speaking to Linn and Peter, at a moment when they had stayed outside the classroom, I asked them about their experience as homosexuals and blacks. Linn says that there is a certain weight when the identity marker "homosexual" is accompanied with the race marker, which is expressed by him several times in the phrase "Being a fag… and black!" as something doubly reproached by society. He explains:

> I see it. Because a person is gay and black, prejudice is much stronger. Muuuuch [he emphasizes] stronger. There's even that saying "that person is fag and black", some people say it, right? Right, like "study, because you're already a fag, and black!" many people say this, to one that's homosexual.

He continues his story, stating that he has heard the sayings expressed above, and that there is a higher weight when sexual orientation and race are related. I ask if he has ever gone through a situation in which he perceived prejudice toward him related to race and sexual orientation, to which he categorically answered: "Not that I've noticed, maybe because if someone said it I don't care much, I do not give them this trust. But surely someone must have talked behind my back. Also because I stand

out". I ask what that "standing out" would be, and he says "effeminate!", thus marking femininity as a trigger for discrimination.

I ask him how he identifies racially. He says: "I'm extremely black. I love my color!" He states that the prejudice involving race is more difficult to manifest, but that it appears in subtle moments, although it is naturalized and is taken as "jokes". He tells a story:

> There was a little boy, a little dark boy […] but I think for them it sounded like a joke, but for me this is no joke. The girl said that … she said "Faaag, you better study because a fag, and black, and dumb, doesn't live, for sure!". Then they all started to smile, even the boy. Like, I couldn't believe it! […] Inside, the person who was the target of that joke must've been feeling bad. Because it's a fact, right, because society does not recognize these things [prejudice].

I ask him if race was ever used as a target of discrimination against him, and Linn says "Caetano has those things, he calls me blackie ["*neguinha*"] and stuff, but for me it's an affectionate nickname. Good thing I never realized, but I don't rule out having had that, no". A distinction can be seen here, in Linn's understanding, on the use of terms to refer to him. The sense assigned to the terms is different, as it is built when they are uttered, according to the context and who is involved in it, that is, according to the speaker's discourse. Thus, the same term may gain different connotations depending on who states it. Linn, in his speech, always presents himself as someone who circulates around several groups at school, has a positive "status", since he "speaks to everybody". Perhaps denying the violence that comes from his student peers is a mechanism to mitigate conflicts and to avoid putting his position in school at risk.

Subjects sometimes naturalize discrimination through their actions, or they do not confront a situation of violence when they see it. Peter holds a different position than Linn's: "The prejudices of homosexuality and race walk there together and when you have them both, it gets worse. But this school here is good, it's very liberal; real prejudice one can see in those schools lower than this one". In his view, there is a sum of prejudices, which enhances discriminatory processes of violence. As social subjects, we must realize that these subjects, besides facing attempts to impose the heterosexual matrix, are expected to constitute themselves through work, through access to education—in short, through the pedagogy that

constructs human beings. The social class from which they come and the color of their skin also interfere with their path (Pereira, 2014, p. 116).

"This High School is a School of Gays"

As we were talking about the school environment, Peter explains how he perceives these processes within his current school, as an area with greater freedom in comparison to others, which, in his words, are "lower" schools, that is, they are at the outskirts of town and do not have the social status that his school has. Interviewees assess this from their experiences in other schools, especially those institutions located in the neighborhoods where they live which, in their opinion, have a "bad reputation" among public schools because there are "rumors" of students' involvement with drugs, crime, violence and so on.

These young students assign meanings to the school space, meanings built by them according to the possibilities of experiencing their sexuality. Speaking to Iara, she says that at school she is not ashamed to talk about her sexual identity and that most people know. About school, she says: "I like it here because of the diversity of options here, more than in other schools". The use of the word "options" here refers to sexual diversity.

For Linn, the importance of school is given by the fact that it is the space in which he built friendships and coexistence with people who respected him, because he did not have this at the school where he studied before. About the current school he declares "I'm free to be who I am". Ennis shares similar thoughts, saying: "[…] in high school it's already like a school with more freedom".

Elliot, when talking about "coming out", says that school is, for him, the only place where he could do it, because it was away from home, from the control of his neighbors and the people he knew. Linn confirmed this, saying that the location of this school contributed to this, since it was far from his neighborhood and thus from the interference of the people who live there, who knew him. He says that if he had studied at his neighborhood school, "[…] gossip would run loose, everyone would say that the son of so-and-so is a fag" and family would "hold me up" about his "feminine" mannerisms and about being gay.

These meanings attributed to the school mark the subjects' discourse and can be perceived in the process of observation, as well as at the workshops. During the workshop, I ask Ennis about the rate of cases of

violence motivated by homophobia at school, and he replies that "At school, we almost don't have much. There is some, but little, because this high school is already, well, a school with more freedom". Asked about the school's characterization as a "liberal" space, Linn and Ney say it refers to the possibility of "exposing oneself" without "feeling ashamed", that is, of making their sexual identity public, affirming it at school, without insecurities. I ask them about the construction of this image of the school, since they reported that it is already known for "being different". According to Pablo, this is

Pablo: Because everyone knows. Every fag on Facebook, if you see there, he studied in this high school. […] This High School is a school of gays.

Linn: I think it started because many homosexuals came here, and they saw that the authorities, they saw that the teachers accepted. It was more liberated, then I think one gay told another, until the others … (Moves hands as if calling someone)

The above excerpt expresses the current importance of social networks for the circulation of information on institutions and how much they influence the search of individuals when they need their services. Another important element is the greater self-affirmation of homosexuality that individuals show on virtual space, and the network of interactions that stems from there, motivated by the issue of sexual diversity. So when these young gender and sexuality dissidents get to school and find a space that is less hostile compared to others, they circulate the information among outside groups on social networks. Another factor listed by Linn is related to the identification of non-heterosexual professionals in school, a fact that for Pablo "[…] gives kind of an inspiration, a … a certain sense of freedom". For Elliot, the school's geographical location also collaborates in this construction of freedom for identity self-assertion at school:

Elliot: There is also the question of the school being in the center of town, away from the neighborhood, from all of that. Then a person, because they're gay, looks for a school far away, a good quality school, and far, far away, far from your habitat, from your region. Then that thing is harder "Ah, but my relative lives nearby, they'll talk." That whole thing. I can be myself, without

> fear that the neighbor could talk, because I'm away from my neighborhood, so there's no danger. I can be me, myself here, because there won't be any danger that someone finds out, someone speaks, the whole thing.

For him, the school location is important because it is far from the "inquisitorial" looks, from the "surveillance" and control of young people's sexuality, performed by members of the community. In the neighborhood, people circulating in the space outside of school have deeper and more continuous links, enabling discourses to reach the family environment with a higher speed and more intensely. For Elliot, the school serves as a refuge against the processes of violence that they experience more intensely in other spaces. Linn agrees with Elliot, but adds that that was not the main factor that made him look for this school. For him and Ney, the most important factor relates to its high rates of admission into universities. Elliot, while he agrees with Linn and Ney, establishes a relationship between the school's quality of education, along with his argument on its geographical location, which allow him to live a freer experience of his sexual identity:

> Elliot: That's what I said about the school being good and far away from home; that will, apart from your embracing, creating your mental training, you'll be away from what hurts you. Like I, for one, me in my home, where I live, I do not feel comfortable to be who I am. And like, I do not feel good. And being at school it's different. I have a more open mind, I have more … space to express myself. Not that, "Oh, at home I'll hide because of this, and all of that…" but it's just that, at home I'm more closed, not because I want to be closed. It's automatic, I arrive, and I close up. (…) which prevents you from being who you are at home. At school, it's the question of acceptance, of education that is good and all, that makes it easier.

Ennis shows through his experience that the geographical location, which produces a distance from the physical space of the family, assures him more possibilities to experience the freedom that is so important to him, given the conflicting relations he encounters in the family environment. This does not mean that at school there are no cases of violence, but that there are less compared to the domestic sphere. Leo said:

> Here at the Lyceum there's something different from other places that happens, because we don't see and don't have cases of violence, prejudice, against LGBT people at school. At least we don't see any. Perhaps this is one of Weriquis' research contributions, showing us that. But here students relate to each other well, peacefully, harmoniously.

The sense constructed by these words was propagated in several other groups, always emphasizing the alleged aspect of "non-violence" against sexual diversity in school. In the focus group, when talking about the importance of gender discussions in school, Elliot and Paul declared how important they perceive education to be as a mechanism to overcome gender inequalities and rates of violence against gender and sexuality dissident population:

Elliot: Discussing things is important. Because I believe that it's through dialogue that one can understand, let's say, "This world". And avoid certain … it's … let's say tragedies, because through dialogue I can know myself and even put myself in the other person's shoes. The question of knowledge, really. Knowledge can take you far. I believe that having knowledge, it's through dialogue that knowledge comes. And if I have the knowledge, then as a consequence I don't have those things you have in the middle, like aggression, exclusion, in short, those things.

Pablo: […] when we speak about it in school, I think it's kind of, for those people who still don't accept, to be able to have a more open mind for this, and also to be able to accept, a family that does not have an open mind, for it to accept this as well.

Elliot's statements agree with a view that sees in education an engine for social change. In this sense, students' discourses in relation to their sexual identity show an expectation in a process of education and experience of the school environment, which goes beyond the contents taught in the syllabus, but allows mechanisms for a better construction of the self, respecting their identities and ways of becoming citizens in the spaces they occupy. It even highlights education as a way to conciliate the conflictual relations they experience at home. When asked about how this process can be, they offer clues that demonstrate their expectations:

Pablo: Like, I do not know, I guess … Lectures, these things on like, these things… ah, I don't know…

Elliot: I believe that, like, in our days, my school… that I'm a kid and my school will have lectures, will have an education that will show reality as it is and such. It will teach me to see the world in a certain way. I believe that in the future I will be an adult who has a trained mind. So, this might not happen because at my school …

Pablo: Taking people who, like, how can I say? That have an overcoming in life, that even being homosexual, have an overcoming in life, who are educated, or something like that, that encourages the family to accept. Oh, like that.

The expression "even being" acts as an element of denial. There is an association between homosexuality and a difficulty "to get around in life", that is, to improve the material conditions of survival, achieving a higher social status. Regarding the elements that make up this meaning of school as a space of freedom, the relationship with their student peers gains center stage.

Concluding Remarks

The experiences of Caetano, Elliot, Ennis, Linn, Ney and Pablo as dissident youth in relation to their gender and sexuality show us just how challenging it is to live "outside the margins" in a heteronormative society that tries day after day to imprison subjects in a binary gender logic, which is not what actually happens in the real world, in the dynamics of social relations. Meanwhile, they also realize subversion processes of the norm itself; they open cracks and breaks, and produce possibilities of having the recognition of their existence legitimized as dissident subjects.

They perform these processes, often adopting the very mechanisms used in the devices that disqualify and exert violence on them. These young students re-conceptualize categories used to oppress them, from the construction of other ways of life for them and their peers. Through oral and body language, which must be understood as a mechanism of power, they reaffirm themselves as "effeminate", giving a connotation of belonging and pride. In their representation and self-representation, these performances are linked to an idea of greater freedom, compared to other

gay men who live their sexuality within the binary and hegemonic representation of masculinity.

The case considered here is important as further evidence that within power relations there is room for resistance strategies. School contexts have historically been effective sites of policing around sexuality (particularly non-heterosexual) and dissident embodiments of gender and sexuality. Beyond noticing and studying this fact, it is also vital to highlight the forms of resistance produced by subjects in order to support each other, build social networks or outsmart the processes and norms that deny their existence as valid forms of social conduct. And, additionally, this study provides an opportunity to appreciate what happens when an educational space provides a certain degree of freedom for youth to express their gender and sexuality, and representativeness in the adults working with them.

Students interviewed for this study pointed at the resistance strategies secured for survival and self-affirmation. They denounce naturalizing and essentializing perceptions of gender, showing to what extent it is actually dynamic, fluid, contextual, historical and political. At the same time, they also show how these same naturalizing constructions of gender are used as defense strategies against moments of tension. In addition, interviewees highlight how the experience of gender is made and remade through other social markers of difference, enhancing processes of violence and inequalities, and requiring other sets of instruments to resist them.

They express a reflection on how their sexual orientation and gender expression act as agency-building factors in the relationships they develop at school. Through their words, we can perceive the complexity and ambivalence of a dynamic where sexuality and gender act at times as mechanisms that limit their experience of space, their relationships with certain subjects and experiences and at times manifest as sites of self-affirmation and freedom of expression of their sexuality. It is constituted, therefore, as a space of ambivalence, located between reproductions and ruptures of regulatory and/or subversive processes. Many of these processes are aimed at erasing existing differences, producing a homogenization of identities of youth, while they are anchored in identities, practices and discourses assumed as hegemonic and universal.

The reflections shared by interviewees elucidate the mechanisms they build as practices of resistance against the processes of abjection they experience. One is the use they make of naturalizing constructions of gender as defense strategies against moments of tension, as these same discourses are used as instruments of violence against them. Re-signifying male

femininity, they consolidate it as a powerful expression of resistance against heteronormativity and gender binary, building spaces of empowerment and self-assertion of identity in the educational process, thus making this place "their" space.

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Notes

1. These are pseudonyms given by the author, following subjective characteristics of the research partners. They refer to characters in filmic and musical works.
2. All respondents are cisgender men. The characterizations given above for their sexuality (homosexual, gay, etc.) and their race, as well as their forms of speaking and life experiences, are those with which the interviewees identified themselves in the focus group conducted with them, after the process of participant observation in the school space, when asked about their identity.
3. In Brazil, undergraduate courses are conducted in semester modules. For undergraduate courses, focused on teacher training, internships in educational public institutions are required in the course curricula. However, how the stages of this module are carried out varies from institution to institution and from course to course.
4. "Effeminate gay" is a category used in Brazil to refer to gay (generally cis) men whose main bodily expressions are closer to what is expected from women within a binary conception of gender and hegemonic patriarchal rules. This category is used also as distinguishing mechanism in groups and among groups of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people. In this sense, gender is used as a category that would refer to public expression and/or identification of the individual and their sexual orientation. Therefore, from this perspective, the closer they are to hegemonic models of masculinity, the more gay men could hide their sexuality, because they would not fall within mainstream representations of what a gay man is. Meanwhile, the experience of more "effeminate" gay men includes others talking about them, exposing themselves and becoming subjects of depreciation and negative valuation, especially by individuals who make use of hegemonic representations of masculinity and femininity in order not to be identified as non-heterosexual.

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CHAPTER 9

Fear of a Queer Pedagogy of Law

Daniel J. García López and Luísa Winter-Pereira

Introduction: University of Fear

Not Rousseau, but Hobbes. Because the latter does not hide power, nor fear. That is why it is not Rousseau's thinking that lays the foundation for the modern community. It was Hobbes who articulated the triad community, power and fear: the ideas of union, sovereignty, war and security are enunciated by him on the basis of the fear of mutual destruction among human beings, which produces the union in the body politic. Therefore, the solution to this capacity to give death is the elimination of the relationship itself. It is what is known as the modern sacrificial paradigm based on the idea of the contract.

And community, power and fear are also found at the University. In this chapter we aim to reflect on how the academic space is built on this sacrificial paradigm. To do so, we will focus on our experience as students and then lecturers in a Westernized Law School—and therefore

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interchangeable, to a certain extent, with other Western Law Schools—and on an area of study that in principle seems to be critical of the *status quo*, such as the Philosophy of Law and the Theory of Law (subjects taught in the first and last years of the Law School degree). The ultimate purpose is to sketch out a university community other than one in which fear is a founding factor. To this end, a queer approach to law and its teaching opens up a path to counter-hegemony. As Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2002, p. 466) writes "it is one thing to use a hegemonic instrument in a given political struggle. It is another thing to use it in a hegemonic fashion". The counter-hegemonic acts that we will discuss here are framed within an idea of teaching law studies as an alternative thinking of alternatives (Santos, 2018) as opposed to a pedagogy of fear.

Salus populi suprema lex. This is the first law of the community, and it is the first task of the sovereign: the preservation of the body politic (Hobbes, 1650). If sovereignty is absolute and perpetual power (Bodin), only a great monster can display it; the most powerful and eternal being. The terrestrial monster attains the unconditional obedience of his subjects through fear in exchange for security and peace.

In *De cive* (1642), Hobbes raises the various internal causes of dissolution of the State. Perhaps the most important is found in the conflict between *people* and *multitude*. The first is understood as unity with one will and one common action. The people is One, uniformity, homogeneity. On the contrary, the multitude corresponds with the multiple, with the plural, with the singularities, with the disordered and violent mass, with the unrepresentable. The multitude is the absence of transfer of sovereign power. The "people" is the only entity that can participate in sovereign power. The State dissolves itself when the multitude (*multitudo dissolutionis*, *multitudo dissoluta*) confronts the people, when the multitude calls the State into question by refusing to become people. Outside the State, there is no freedom. Hence, it is not that fear is *at* the origin of politics, it *is* its origin (Esposito, 2010). Fear is the presupposition of the social contract, the engine and guarantee of the functioning of the State. Thus the community settles on the basis of immunization: "to preserve individuals through the annihilation of their relation" (Esposito, 2010, p. 29), because the relationship carries a mortal danger, therefrom "the only way to escape is to suppress relations through the institution of a Third with whom all relate without any further need of relating among them" (Esposito, 2010, p. 29).

If this is the origin of the modern State, we can bring Hobbes to the University. This is nothing more than a political community whose objective is the *salus populi suprema lex*. Power, community and fear form a triad in University classrooms. The European Higher Education Area has come to confirm this through the myth of "*Corpus iuris*", at the *Scuola bolognese dei glossatori* in eleventh-century University of Bologna, Italy. The myth has been recovered: there is a European culture, a set of institutions and values crystallized (and christianized) since the dawn of time. In Bologna the *Ius commune* was taught, the generator of an original identity, of a violent identity: the University of Bologna produced an economic and political elite. Such a *Ius commune* never existed: it was pure mythology at the service of the elite and their reproduction (Fernández-Crehuet López, 2006).

What role do university lecturers play? Bologna has not yet been forgotten. Teaching Law consists of socializing the future jurist to comply uncritically with the system (legal, economic, social or political), turning the law into a totem to idolize and a taboo that cannot be questioned. One should teach to reproduce the codes, without knowing why. Here is the voluntary servitude, support and foundation of tyranny because the dominant pedagogy is the pedagogy of the ruling class. *Students enter the School believing in justice and leave it believing in law*.

The School of Law resembles a hospital, a prison or a factory. It is a space of enclosure (Foucault, 1975) that produces a type of subjectivity, of subjectivation or of subjection to power: scrupulous control of class attendance; non-ideological presupposition of the educational program, axiological neutrality (its evaluation is not possible, only its technical application) and adaptation to the social and geographical environment (teaching focused on the needs of the market); apparent modernization of teaching methodology; and memoristic exams. In short, hierarchy, sovereignty or fear. Each member has a role to play in the body politic without questioning it, like the image of the Leviathan frontispiece. Hence, jurists perpetuate the dominant ideology through the repetition of legal categories and manuals. What jurists *teach* allows the reproduction of their own legitimacy. The dominant legal ideology silently pierces the unconscious of the jurist, creating a solid base within discourse. As pointed out by Onfray (2008, p. 58), "there is nothing but the simple and plain recycling of ideologically formatted, politically interested and intellectually degreased discourses. The first speaker could hear the echo of their voice one or several centuries after they had delivered their speech".

Rhizomatic University[1]

In opposition to Hobbesian negative conception of the multitude, Spinoza (1670) observed the positive in it: it is the basis of civil liberties. Law would be defined by the potency of the multitude. To cite Virno, the multitude is:

> a *plurality which persists as such in the public scene*, in collective action, in the handling of communal affairs, without converging into a One, without evaporating within a centripetal form of motion. Multitude is the form of social and political existence for the many, seen as being many: a permanent form, not an episodic or interstitial form. (2004, p. 21)

The creative potency of the multitude lies in its *becoming-minor* in relation to the represented majority and minority. In this way, it escapes the majority–minority dialectic of the Form-State, since it is located at the transverse boundary, at the edge, in the void that remains at the heart of the empire. Therefore, it is removed from the majority and without being a minority, in a process of deterritorialization, this is, a line of flight or elusion that allows us another way of inhabiting, a form of subjectivity-other. The multitude is the power that neither aspires nor needs to be an act, and it is the irreducible constituent power to the One of sovereignty. A pure potency that exceeds and cooperates among its singularities. The multitude is a counter-power, since if power needs life, then life itself is power as potency (Negri, 2006). The multitude presents itself as the new subject of radical democracy (Hardt & Negri, 2004).

If the University as a Hobbesian political community is based on fear, what would a Spinozist University be like? Perhaps we can understand it from Deleuze and Guattari. In their work *A Thousand Plateaus*, they pose the idea of rhizome. Against the verticality of the tree, the underground horizontality of the tubercle. If at the top of the first lies the truth (that radiates from top to bottom), in the tuber any predicate can affect others regardless of their position. The rhizome has been characterized with six principles (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005):

1° and 2°) Principles of connection and heterogeneity: unlike the tree and the root that always situate a point and an order, in the rhizome any point can be connected with any other point. That which connects can have any nature.

3°) Principle of multiplicity: rupture of the relationship with the One as subject or as object. The rhizome is not reduced to the One, nor to the Multiple. It is not made of units, but of dimensions.
4°) Principle of asignifying rupture: "A rhizome may be broken, shattered at a given spot, but it will start up again on one of its old lines, or on new lines". (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005, p. 9)
5° and 6°) Principle of cartography and decalcomania: if the logic of the tree is that of the decalco and reproduction (articulates and hierarchizes decals, as if they were leaves of the tree), the rhizome is a map whose logic is experimentation: the map is open and can be modified, altered, dismantled, constantly performed.

Consequently,

> [a] rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo. The tree is filiation, but the rhizome is alliance, uniquely alliance. The tree imposes the verb "to be," but the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction, "and… and… and…" This conjunction carries enough force to shake and uproot the verb "to be". (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005, p. 25)

How would a rhizomatic University work? Perhaps the answer lies in Foucault:

> I think the modern age of the history of truth begins when knowledge itself and knowledge alone gives access to the truth. That is to say, it is when the philosopher (or the scientist, or simply someone who seeks the truth) can recognize the truth and have access to it himself and solely through his activity of knowing, without anything else being demanded of him and without him having to change or alter his being as subject. (2005, p. 17)

What Foucault calls the *Cartesian moment* (the *cogito ergo sum*) has destroyed what in Greece was known as *épiméleia heautou* (what Foucault named *caring for oneself and others*). It shows how for the Greek world the only way to access truth was by previously going through ethics. Unlike the Cartesian moment where the truth can be known even though the subject who knows it is immoral, in the Greek world this was not possible: first there had to be an internal work of ethical order. In so doing, an art of existence was unfolded focused on the care of the self, where the important thing is not the subject of true knowledge, but the subject of ethical

action. Hence the subjectivity arising from the care of the self is closely linked to the continuous relationship with the other: the care of the self involves the care of others.

The university education model works on the basis of the Cartesian–Hobbesian moment: one should know the truth first in order to immunize the body politic. That is why violence is the way to unite, to constitute that people subjected to the sovereign. An epistemic violence, in the case of the University, that will produce "the denial of the epistemic agency of certain subjects, the unrecognized exploitation of their epistemic resources, their objectification" (Pérez, 2019, p. 82). This violence will produce the idea of an *otherness* over which to exercise the sovereignty of *us*.

What is proposed here, following the rhizomatic logic, is that access to truth is not possible without a care of the self and others, without an ethical attitude, without an aesthetic of existence that eliminates fear. This rhizome is no longer a tuber, but a thicket: "we might go with the thicket of subjugated knowledge that sprouts like weeds among the disciplinary forms of knowledge, threatening always to overwhelm the cultivation and pruning of the intellect with mad plant life" (Halberstam, 2011, p. 9).

The Leviathan tries to control and normalize the multitude: "This multiplicity of abnormals is the potency that the Sexual Empire tries to regulate, control, normalize" (Preciado, 2003, p. 19). This multitude becomes queer in its effort of deterritorializing heteronormativity as a political regime, appropriating the device of production of subjectivity: "[s]ince the *queer* multitude carries in itself, as a failure or residue, the history of the technologies of normalization of the bodies, it also has the possibility to intervene in the biotechnological devices of production of sexual subjectivity" (Preciado, 2003, p. 21). The queer multitude, as a multitude, is not unified in the One of the Leviathan:

> It opposes the universalist republican policies that allow for "recognition" and impose the "integration" of "differences" within the Republic. There is no sexual difference, but a multitude of differences, a transversality of power relations, a diversity of the potencies of life. These differences are not "representative" since they are "monstrous" and thus call into question not only the regimes of political representation but also the systems of production of scientific knowledge of the "normal". In this sense, the policies of *queer* multitudes are opposed to both traditional political institutions that present themselves as sovereign and universally representative, like heterocentred

> sexopolitical epistemologies that still dominate the production of science. (Preciado, 2003, p. 25)

The University is also an institution that presents itself as sovereign and universally representative that reproduces heterocentered sexopolitical epistemologies. It is a device that needs to be re-appropriated, queerized.

Methodological Cruising

How can a multitude-queer, a rhizome-thicket and caring for oneself and others be achieved in a University that is still Hobbesian–Cartesian? This concept of a university, on the other hand, also has its risks. One of the ideas that have been raised from decolonial theories and from the epistemologies of the South is that colonization does not end when the legal-administrative structure of the colony disappears, but extends toward knowledge (Lander, 2000), power (Quijano, 2007) and being (Maldonado-Torres, 2007) from three axes: capitalism, racism and heteropatriarchy. This form of colonialism produces the maintenance of a hierarchy, of a submission or of a systemic violence that produces an abyssal line between here and there, between those who exist and those who are produced as not existing (Santos, 2015).

Queer bodies are also under colonialism. The abyssal line separates the bodies into normal (licit, good, beautiful, healthy, moral) and pathological (illicit, bad, ugly, unhealthy, immoral), occurring even within the so-called Global North. Intersex bodies, for instance, will be denied (coloniality of being), the knowledge produced by a trans* body will be declared illegitimate (coloniality of knowledge) and the access to the civil registration of a non-binary body will be impeded (coloniality of power). Here we consider the synergies, the meeting points or the methodological cruising that we can find between epistemologies of the South and queer theories. Here is a *queerepistemology of the South.*

When talking about a queer pedagogy of law, we can be taking two bridges for granted: (1) between pedagogy and queer; (2) between queer and law. Our contention is that, in principle, both bridges exist *sui generis.*

Queer pedagogy can be understood as a way of deconstructing, degenerating or perverting educational practices that break with normalization devices, that re-appropriate devices to degenerate them, to hack them. The reasons justifying queer pedagogies can be found in the systemic violence that goes through our subjectivity, our educational, health, legal,

and social systems. It is this violence that constitutes us as subjectivity and that finds the tip of its iceberg in the different phobic versions that are manifested both in the texts used and in the behaviors of those who educate and those who are educated. In this sense, in Schools of Law, we train future jurists, people who will work in the judiciary, prosecution, civil registries, the legal profession and so on. All these people will be those who encounter a trans* minor, a case of homophobic bullying, an adoption by lesbian mothers. And in the School of Law these realities are taught in two ways: through their omission or through their pathologization, by understanding them as "ficción de hembra" (female fiction),[2] as a medical issue or a desire without transcendence in the field of rights. At best, they are told that by positive discrimination they must help them, that is, they create an inferiority–superiority relationship. We can explain this form of omission or teaching by means of pathologization through what Hocquenghem (2000) referred to as *anti-homosexual paranoia*[3] which results in fear of endangering the privileges of heteropatriarchy. It is precisely the fear of that non-identification, of that non-homogenization or of that multitude that makes the academic Leviathan react by generating more fear.

In order to break with this fear, an impertinent performance must be proposed:

> an interest in thinking against the thought of one's conceptual foundations; an interest in studying the skeletons of learning and teaching that haunt one's responses, anxieties, and categorical imperatives; and a persistent concern with whether pedagogical relations can allow more room to maneuver in thinking the unthought of education. (Britzman, 1995, p. 155)

It is widely known that Britzman proposes three studies: on limits, on ignorance and on reading practices. In the first one we are going to confront normality, with what makes something to be considered normal, excluding and eliminating, therefore, everything that does not conform to that norm; a mechanism that, as Agamben (1995) states, can be defined as inclusive exclusion: it is excluded from normality to be included in the exception. And it is in this exception that sovereignty is exercised (Schmitt, 1922). But this limit, this normativity or this logic of exclusion–inclusion is naturalized, as if it had always existed, hampering the imagination of other realities. For example, it is common in Schools of Law to produce in students the mantra *Ubi societas, ibi ius* (where there is society there is

law). It is naturalized in such a way as to avoid imagining societies not mediated by law, establishing the need to link society and law as if it were something natural and not artificial (Capella, 2006). *Ubi societas ibi ius* is followed by heterosexuality, binarism, able-bodiedness, adulthood and so on. In the end, what is naturalized is that through the mediation of the law society immunizes normalization devices. The law and its teaching are thus constituted as universal, maintaining the colonial domination.

Hence the need, following Britzman, to stop reading *so straight*. It is necessary to approach readings as performances, in order to be able to unsettle "the sediments of what one imagines when one imagines normalcy, what one imagines when one imagines difference" (1995, p. 165).

The second postulate is the possibility of a bridge between the queer and the legal. In a nutshell: a queer law is a contradiction in terms. Queer anti-normativity clashes head-on with the order of law. Therefore, what queer theory brings to the field of law is a way of denaturalizing the norm (García López, 2016a), a form of pure violence, as Benjamin pointed out from other spheres:

> If mythical violence is lawmaking, divine violence is law-destroying; if the former sets boundaries, the latter boundlessly destroys them; if mythical violence brings at once guilt and retribution, divine power only expiates; if the former threatens, the latter strikes; if the former is bloody, the latter is lethal without spilling blood. (1986, p. 297)

Against the mythical violence of the law, it opposes a divine, destructive and bloodless violence. Thus, the mythical logic of law as a human work is interrupted. As Agamben points out:

> the rupture of the nexus between violence and law opens two perspectives to the imagination (imagination is naturally a praxis): the first is that of a human action without any relation to law, Benjamin's "revolutionary violence" or a "use" of things and bodies that never has the form of law, the second is that of a right without any relation to life –law not applied, but only studied, of which Benjamin said it is the door to justice. (2005, p. 15)

Is it possible to trace a subjectivity unrelated to law, a revolutionary violence or a use of the body? Can we think-practice a destitute power capable of subtracting itself from sovereignty and law? Is a *queer reine Gewalt* (queer pure violence) possible, one able to shake the University?[4]

How to *invent*, *experiment* or *build* counter-spaces of resistance against the exclusionary and proprietary community? In contrast to the idea of the community as it has been understood so far, is it possible to have a policy without sovereignty in a form, without presupposition of anything, lacking any proprietary character, that escapes the immune logic of identity? How to imply a queer pedagogy in a School of Law where violence is constitutive of its classrooms?

Not Hobbes, but Butler. One of the main problems our students have is fear. This feeling is produced in a space of enclosure such as the university classroom. Is the classroom space neutral, static or innocent? The simple arrangement and size of the objects already produce a concrete type of subjection to power (subjectivity). The structure already indicates to us who exercises sovereignty in the classroom and who are subjected to it. Why these relations of power and command in a university structure where there is supposed to be equality and democracy? Why can the lecturer penalize the student who is late? What student reproaches the lecturer when the latter is late? Who dares to question sovereignty? Lecturers may be late because they are within and outside the law. That space that configures the class dominates us. Because knowledge is not democratic. Space is not innocent. The classroom reproduces power relations. Space configures hierarchical social relations. That is why the classroom space is historical and historically configures power relations.

Queer Law Praxis: An Evaluation Proposal

How can we break with this hierarchical and violent community? Is pure queer violence possible? The main problem to eliminate is the fear of evaluation. An attempt has been made to articulate a mechanism that at least softens it. That is why the first and most important task we carry out in the course is to agree on equal conditions for the evaluation system. To a certain extent, we get rid of the *educational program* as a social contract that produces the hierarchy and positions of Leviathan and subjects, to become multitude from horizontality. In this way the hierarchy is broken, the sovereignty, while the voice and vote of the lecturer count the same as those of any student in the classroom. The question is simple: which evaluation system causes less fear?

A final exam in which the whole syllabus is played out in one day is the most fearful model, that unfortunately prevails in our University. So having discarded this fear, the first reaction of the students is uncertainty. To

this must be added that the Theory of Law course, where we have implemented this system, is the first one of the degree in Law. Students are newly arrived at the University with all the mythology that surrounds it. Thus, when whoever should represent the authority suggests them to break precisely with this authority and to elaborate an evaluation system among all of them, it causes a shock. Once this first moment has passed and their decision-making capacity has been seriously taken, they are asked to think about it for a few days. In the next class, the evaluation systems that they have thought about are proposed and one is agreed among all of them. In the last three years at the University of Granada, we have *constructed* this evaluation system:[5]

1. A written individual assignment on two films: it consists of answering a set of questions about two films and a series of readings (press releases, court judgments, texts by Agamben, Foucault, Deleuze, Kafka, Weil, Benjamin, Hobbes, Beccaria, Rousseau, Plato, Debord, but also Davis, Fausto-Sterling, Butler, Halberstam, Anzaldúa, Preciado, Sáez, Vidarte, Cabral, Muñoz, Platero, Dauder, Carrascosa, Edelman, Wittig, Haraway). These years we have been working with the movies *XXY* (Puenzo), *Django* (Tarantino), *Cannibal* (Martín Cuenca), *Teorema* and *Salò or the 120 Days of Sodom* (Pasolini), *The Purge* (DeMonaco), *Tomboy* (Sciamma), *White Bear* (second season of the *Black Mirror* series), *The Last Summer of La Boyita* (Solomonoff), *The White Ribbon* (Haneke), *A Clockwork Orange* (Kubrick), *Bad Education* (Almodóvar), *Blade Runner* (Scott) and *Tales from the Citadel* (third season of the *Rick and Morty* series).
2. Individual research work: exposition of a research question from a literary work. The work must have the format of a paper, although the normative structure of the academic essay can also be broken. It is a question of reading the course contents (language of law, validity of norms, types of norms, effectiveness, legal system, iusnaturalism-iuspositivism, etc.) in a literary work that apparently has nothing to do with it. Literary works we have analyzed are *The Trial* (Kafka), *Los satisfechos* and *Retablo Incompleto de la Pureza* (Cortés), *Blood Wedding* and *The House of Bernarda Alba* (Lorca), *The Lost Honour of Katharina Blum* (Böll) and *The Left Hand of Darkness* (Le Guin).
3. Presentation of a collective project: performed by groups on the last section of the educational program (Theories of Justice: communi-

tarian, liberal, Marxist, feminist, utilitarian, decolonial, queer-crip, etc.). It consists of a 30-minute *exposition* of the theme. Both the originality of the exhibition and the use of *elements other than normal* (e.g., theatre) are very much taken into account.

None of these exams is mandatory, but they all add up and pass when 5 points out of 10 are reached. At the time of choosing the evaluation system, the percentages that each assignment will have on the final grade are also established.

What is the ultimate purpose of establishing as the first task of the course the production of an evaluation system? Žižek gives us the key:

> in contrast to the "normal" subject, for whom the Law functions as the agency of prohibition which regulates (access to the object of) his desire, for the pervert, *the object of his desire is the law itself*—the Law is the Ideal he is longing for, he wants to be fully acknowledged by the Law, integrated into its functioning… The irony of this should not escape us: the pervert, this "transgressor" *par excellence* who purports to violate all the rules of "normal" and decent behavior, effectively longs for the very rule of Law. (1997, p. 14)

The perverse work is the one that allows transgression without questioning authority. And what happens the other way around? What happens if what is done is to question authority as the first element to create community? If the transgression of content does not necessarily lead to the questioning of authority, what happens if we twist the structure? An example: *Acéphale* (Bataille, 1993). In contrast to the fascist State that sought homogeneity in the unity of the whole under the gaze of the *Führer*, an acephalous society was proposed, without authority (García López, 2016b).

This is the acephalous community that seeks to occur in the classroom when our first task is to eliminate the notion of authority by establishing a common evaluation system. It is true that authority does not disappear completely, because in the end the one who evaluates is the person who possesses *auctoritas*. And here arises the classic conflict between those who possess knowledge (at least formally) and those who have *potestas* to enforce. The potestas is diluted among those who form the classroom in this system that we have been explaining. All the decisions that concern us are taken by consensus. In this way, the conflict between *auctoritas* and *potestas* is reduced: we agree not only on the evaluation system, but also on its execution.

Care, Caring and Performance

As we mentioned, our first duty is to destroy the idea of authority. Only in this way it is possible to transgress the contents of the subject from the beginning. And from the beginning the teaching activity must be understood from Butler's performativity: *how to do things with the body* (1990, 1993, 2015).

An example of performative teaching was conducted on the first day of class in the academic year 2016–2017 in the subject Theory of Law. Upon entering the classroom, the lecturer took a chalk and wrote on the blackboard: "Literature has not always existed" (Rodríguez, 1974, p. 5). They began a one-hour lecture on literature. After that time and in the absence of any complaint from the students, they decided to unveil the mystery. We were effectively not in the Hispanic philology course, but in the School of Law. Why was nobody able to question the person on the dais? Why did students assume that the person speaking to them was their lecturer? Again we return to the intersection between space and power.

This performance helped students understand how the idea of authority/sovereignty works. From this, there was already a first element to deconstruct (the fear of being sanctioned, ridiculed or of failure made them not point out that the lecturer might have had the wrong class). Aside from that, the performance also brought up the first topic of the educational program: just as literature has not always existed, law has not always existed either. From the first year of their studies, they are taught that old Latin aphorism *ubi societas, ibi ius* mentioned above. This dogma of faith that is present in Schools of Law can be transferred to other structures: heterosexuality or binarism. And in this naturalization, a narrative coherence of the bodies is demanded. In such a way that an "ought to be" of the bodies is established according to which a person with XY chromosomes must possess penis and testicles with a certain shape and size, generate testosterone in certain quantities, express themselves within masculinity and have affective-sexual relations with a person with XX chromosomes that must have vagina, uterus and ovaries with a certain shape and size, generate estrogens in certain quantities, manifest from femininity and have affective-sexual relations with a person with XY chromosomes and so on in this vicious circle. However, if someone disrupts this narrative, they will be placed in the space of the correction to be normalized, so that little by little they cross the dividing line and are placed on the side of normality,

but maintaining the scar that reminds them (and us) that at some point they belonged to the *erroneous* side.

The three devices, law, heterosexuality and binarism, are historical constructions that the modern ideological matrix exposes as natural, as if they had always existed, demanding coherence and thus deactivating the possibility of questioning them. That is why this strategy must be unveiled from day one. And as we pointed out earlier, Law and its teaching reinforce colonial domination. As Maria Lugones notes (2008, p. 7), "sexual dimorphism has been an important characteristic of what I call 'the light side' of the colonial/modern gender system. Those in the 'dark side' were not necessarily understood dimorphically". Hence, sexual binarism is naturalized colonially on the visible side of modernity, while intersexuality, as an example, is placed in that beyond, in the darkness.

And in this attempt to imagine other worlds and practice care and caring, comes the following proposal. We have already initiated the removal of fear at the beginning of the course to build a community, but what happens at the end of the course? If the evaluation generates fear and it is softened by the model explained above, how can students be assured that what has been agreed is being adhered to? If at the end of the course it is necessary to put some grades in a report card and sign it, and this act can only be performed by the lecturer, why not profane the sacredness of the academic report? We have already carried out an act of profanation in the choice of evaluation, what is now proposed is to extend it until the moment prior to the signing of the act, a form of becoming *academic caringzenship* (Winter Pereira, 2020). This would be a performance in which students would participate on a voluntary basis (for reasons of personal data protection) by witnessing the live correction process. They would be summoned to a classroom, and those students who wanted to would be evaluated in front of everyone. A camera would film the student's work and project it on the screen, being able to see what corrections the lecturer does in real time. Once the correction is finished, a review of the corrections would proceed. In this way, it would be possible for lecturers and students to *meet* and *listen* to each other.

Conclusion

Why use the term profanation? In Roman law, the sacred things belonged to the world of the gods and were removed from the use and trade of human beings. The act by which, for example, a chalice ceased to belong

to the human world and passed into the kingdom of the gods was called consecration. On the contrary, the act by which the consecrated object ceased to be part of the world of the gods and was returned to the space of human beings was called profanation: "to open the possibility of a special form of negligence, which ignores separation or, rather, puts it to a particular use" (Agamben, 2007, p. 75). To a certain extent, the teaching experience recounted in this chapter tries to profane the heterocentric, racist, capitalist, consecrated and far from the terrestrial University. A profanation of the juridical structures that essentialize and naturalize artificial constructions, from heterosexuality to binarism. But it comes at a price.

Behind our attempt to perform University lies another fear: *fear of a queer pedagogy of law*. One that is transversal to both students and faculty, as it constitutes the university community. That is why a process of decolonization and queerization must put an end to this fear. Trujillo expresses it as follows:

> How can we talk about sexuality, and try to do it in another way, escape from straight (and identity) thinking and not lose your job, in a context in which we lecturers are—we continue to be—very alone with these issues, while public university is suffering unprecedented attacks that are reflected, among other things, in the cuts, the layoffs, the precariousness, even more, of teaching? How can we think from another place in this context without fainting in the attempt? (2015, p. 1530)

We will provide three examples that have happened to one of the authors of this chapter. The three facts show how the academic Leviathan eliminates difference, the multitude, to ensure uniformity. The first was produced at the University of Almeria, Spain, in 2011. For several weeks, a queer theory public seminar was organized horizontally. This was only able to hold three sessions: when we were about to hold the fourth session, the School of Law did not allow the seminar to continue, prohibiting it from being held in its classrooms. The reason was given verbally: "we were teaching pornography". Four days later, the Indignados Movement (15M) commenced in Madrid.

The second of these events took place at the University of Granada in 2019. During the last three academic years, we have taught the subject Theory of Law at the School of Political Science. The student profile allowed us to introduce queer topics more easily and to experiment with horizontal forms of teaching. A few weeks before deciding what courses to

teach for the following academic year, the Department management team prohibited us from continuing to teach the subjects in which we carry out this *queer praxis*, since, textually, "they were not teaching what the Rule of Law is", but was rather concerned with "fags".

The third of the facts comes from the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA: Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación), a Spanish institution in charge of evaluating the CV of lecturers in order to accredit their possibility of promotion. In this case, it was an accreditation as University Senior Lecturer. The candidate objectively possessed the requirements, but the commission decided to refuse the accreditation justifying (briefly): "their scientific production is excessively focused on a subject only tangential in the field of research in the area. It is recommended that they increase the extensive publications on nuclear materials of their speciality". The commission understands that working on human rights from queer theory is a tangential subject.

Among these three episodes, there is a lot of violence that has been exerted by the subjects investigated, tackled in the classroom and by the way they are carried out. Nevertheless, the revolt continues. A queerized University implies new forms of life and new practices of thought. The strategy is to produce antagonistic subjectivities from the materialism of our bodies. A University where time collapses and where a queer apocalypse (Bernini, 2013) breaks with chrononormativity. This is a point on which we still have to work in dialogue with the proposals for decolonization of University (Santos, 2017; Mbembe, 2016): to construct a set of practices, experiences and sensations that escape the hegemonic way of understanding time in the University, of organizing it or of valuing it, which also implies understanding bodies in another way, from an emancipatory-other vision. This time must be a time outside the clock. And this from the interruption caused by identities, as strategies against essentialism, the notion of progress or the teleology of closed, monolithic and unidirectional identities. Our pending work is situated here.

Notes

1. Castro-Gómez (2007) has already discussed the idea of a *rhizomatic University* as opposed to a *Universidad como hybris del punto cero* (what we point out as *Hobbesian-Cartesian model*). The decolonization of the University he raises is based on transdisciplinarity and transculturality. To a certain extent, in our chapter, we develop this idea.

2. This was reflected in the judgment of the Spanish Supreme Court of 2 July 1987 (García López, 2015) in which, after the authorization for a change of sex in the national identity document, the term *fiction* is used to reinforce the idea of a sovereign power that grants the change of registration but stresses it stems from a lie.
3. Extensible to all subjectivities that do not conform to the norm of heteropatriarchal binarism.
4. Since 2016, a group of lecturers from the University of Granada and secondary education, under the coordination of Stef Barozzi and Kim Pérez, are delivering courses within the University on *sexual, gender and body diversities* (Barozzi, 2018).
5. Since not everyone wants/can participate in this system, there is always the possibility of the traditional system of a final examination, for which questions are delivered at the beginning of the course.

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CHAPTER 10

"Gender Ideology" in Conservative Discourses: Public Sphere and Sex Education in Argentina

Germán S. M. Torres, Sara I. Pérez, and Florencia Moragas

Introduction

Latin America has recognized in recent decades a marked period of re-politicization of sexuality, promoted by feminist and sexual dissidence movements. Their political demands moved the boundaries between the private and the public, toward the equal recognition of rights (Barrancos, 2019; Corrales & Pecheny, 2010). This reconfiguration of the public sphere brought to the scene of common discussion issues that had been restricted to the "intimate" or "private" sphere, such as sexuality and gender relations. In the face of this, a series of actors, arguments and strategies

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came into circulation in a renewed political move of religious and non-religious conservative groups (Vaggione & Mujica, 2013). These conservative and anti-gender groups[1] have resorted to different communicational and discursive devices and strategies that have allowed them to gain presence in the public sphere: strong participation in social networks, street mobilization, academic dissemination or influence against the discussion and definition of laws and State policies regarding the legalization of abortion, reforms on sexual health and sex education, as well as projects on gay marriage and recognition of trans identities, among others, in the region.

The rhetorical resource of "gender ideology" is currently presented in many countries as a category of perception, mobilization and action for these groups. This new form of transnational discursive construction has involved the production of a compact "enemy" against which to measure up symmetrically (the "pro-gender") by building a polarized field; the establishment of alliances between religious and secular actors; and the insistence on a "moral panic" in order to influence the definition of public policies (Garbagnoli, 2016).

Our purpose in this chapter is to analyze, from the approach of critical discourse analysis, the positioning of anti-gender groups, with special focus on their political and discursive strategies. On the one hand, we will characterize their discursive interventions in the public sphere through a brief analysis of their presence in social networks, including the academic and scientific dissemination of this kind of discourse in the Latin American region. On the other hand, we will analyze as an outstanding example the positioning of catholic educational discourse against Comprehensive Sex Education in Argentina, within the last decade.

Although the Catholic Church is not the only actor, it is known that it works as a machinery, both religious and political, that builds identifications and frontiers which circumscribe political communities (Vaggione, 2017), so their mobilization is particularly relevant for an understanding of the current anti-gender backlash. In addition, it should be noted that this conservative reaction constitutes a complex and heterogeneous political phenomenon, which contains renewed forms of activism that articulate different types of public interventions and argumentative strategies. They make visible and mobilize religious elements in different ways: some have an organic bond with certain churches (especially the Catholic one and evangelical churches), while others displace the religious, approaching

more secular arguments but always in defense of conservative sexual morals (Morán, Peñas, Sgró, & Vaggione, 2019), as we will detail below.

Discourse around gender and entities such as "gender ideology" will be briefly reconstructed here from a systematic analysis carried out on texts in specific and wider investigations on gender, right-wing discourse, religion and sex education that we have previously developed. This universe of actors is broad and fragmentary, so it was necessary to delimit the groups whose discourse would be studied. Methodologically, we established as selection criteria the public appearance of these conservative and anti-gender groups, associated with demonstrations and repudiation against policies of sex education, equal marriage or legalization of abortion in internet social networks and other relevant edited publications.

Transversally, we understand that in these political and discursive disputes, what has been at stake is the reconstruction of the limits and foundations of the gendered public sphere itself, as well as the intelligibility, and therefore, the legitimate participation and exercise of rights for feminist, dissident, non-heteronormative and/or queer identities, desires and practices in multiple social spaces, including educational ones.

Our hypothesis is that one of the main effects of these conservative discourses on gender and sexuality has been the delimitation of a cultural framework of possible identities, which may or may not enter the legitimate space of social intelligibility, marked by the imperative of a gendered symbolic violence that is assumed as normality criteria. As we have pointed out elsewhere, questioning the norms that govern intelligibility in educational discourses from a queer perspective implies considering the constitutive exclusions on which they are built (Torres, 2012). Thus, we take as our own Guacira Lopes Louro's contributions, when she proposes as a queer pedagogical perspective the task of demonstrating how necessary the constant repetition of regulatory social norms is, in order to guarantee legitimate sexual and gender identities (Lopes Louro, 2001). We intend then to trace a critical path that dismantles contemporary devices for the (re)production of normality by analyzing actors, strategies and discourses that shape the sexualized and gendered public sphere.

Critical Discourse Studies, Gender and Livability

Our approach to the conservative anti-gender discourse is framed by the theoretical principles developed by Critical Discourse Analysis—CDA (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Fairclough, 2003). CDA aims to study

how the construction of events, social relations and individual and collective identities is carried out through discourse, and analyzes the social implications of this process. From this framework, the relationship between language and social reality is considered to be one of double determination: social reality shapes discourses and texts, and these in turn constitute social reality. CDA studies how certain discourses participate in the construction and maintenance of the social order, including certain parameters of what is understood by "normality". Thus, the critical analysis is focused on how representations that ensure dominant positions in social practices are constructed and reproduced through the conformation of certain *discursive orders* (Martín Rojo, 1997), and in the same way the power of discourse over the transformation of society is critically emphasized. In this sense, language is studied as an element of social practice; just as every social practice has a linguistic dimension, language is inherently a social practice. Discourses are realized in texts, understood as the semiotic materialities that express meanings, and that emerge in specific social practices. In the linguistic analysis of texts, every text is considered as a unit with respect to a complex intertextual network in a dialogue with other texts that precede it, succeed it, evoke it, contradict it and so on.

On the other hand, queer as well as feminist perspectives have emphasized the key role of discourse in the continuous, iterative and active accomplishment of gender (Lazar, 2018). Then, we propose to heuristically combine the constructive view of identities and social intelligibility, anchored in the social order of discourse proposed by CDA, with Judith Butler's conception regarding gender, performativity and livability. Both highlight the idea that identities are constructed, but not from independent, voluntary and free will acts. Rather, the social orders of discourse and hegemonic representations and identities put into play are the devices that summon and recognize socially interacting subjects as intelligible ones. Butler's conception of gender as a regulatory fiction that is achieved through sustained social performances also points at intelligible genders as those which recreate the coherence between sex, gender, sexual practice and desire imposed by the heterosexual matrix (Butler, 1999). As a consequence, those who do not live gender and sexuality in those intelligible ways are at greater risk of violence and harassment, undermining their possibility and right to live a *livable life* (Butler, 2009).

"Gender Ideology": Actors, Discourses and Strategies in Latin America

New Organizations and Anti-gender Groups

A shift in the public presence of religious leaders toward a growing "pro-life" or "pro-family"—as they call themselves—movement has been recognized in recent decades (Vaggione, 2018). "Pro-life" or "pro-family" NGOs are mostly visible in the region and have begun to take center stage as part of conservative activism, operating in the arena of civil society in ways that transcend the religious senses, identifications and practices. Without replacing traditional conservative religious actors, especially catholic ones, they have managed to build a contingent political convergence. The opposite extreme of contemporary sexual politics, thus, can be seen as a dispersed and fragmentary network of religious and secular actors who actively defend a conservative sexual order defined exclusively by reproduction, monogamy and heterosexual marriage (Morán, 2015), against policies linked to the advancement of women's rights, sexual diversity and gender equality.

Among the groups with the greatest impact in the region in the last three years, we find the Mexican organizations *Con Participación* [With Participation] and the *Frente Nacional por la Familia* [National Front for the Family], in Paraguay the so-called *Movimiento por la Vida y la Familia* [Movement for Life and Family], also *Padres en Acción* [Parents in Action] and *Con Mis Hijos No Te Metas* (CMHNTM)[2] in Peru. The latter organization has also extended at least to Argentina, Ecuador, Colombia, Panama, Bolivia and Chile (González, Castro, Burneo, Motta, & Amat, 2019). In the case of Chile, it is an organization that is actively involved in debates related to education and gender identity. In Argentina it has had a striking role since August 2018, with the revived debate on Comprehensive Sex Education, after the truncated parliamentary discussion on the legalization of abortion. In Peru, it actively participated in the demonstrations against the incorporation into the national curriculum of the category of "gender", since 2017.

Also in Argentina, *Argentinos Alerta* [Argentines Alert] and the *Frente Joven* [Youth Front] organizations have played a central role in shaping networks such as *Unidad por la Vida* [Unity for Life], particularly in the debate on the legalization of abortion. Although some of these organizations appeared in the public sphere between 2016 and 2017, others

register activities since the beginning of the decade. On the other hand, some of these organizations are, in turn, smaller networks of organizations. As previous research has shown, many of these associations are interrelated, although the links are not always formal or public, or have close links with international organizations such as the Spanish *CitizenGo*, *HazteOir* or the French *La Manif pour Tous* (Shameem, 2017).

Three of the most important characteristics of these groups, which are observed in their discursive productions, are:

1. Their regional and, in some cases, global character, such as *CitizenGo* and *Frente Joven*, *CMHNTM*, among others.
2. Their relationship of cooperation and recognition (in particular those that participate as civil society organizations in the OAS and the UN), especially in the networks of organizations such as *Frente Nacional por la Familia* (Mexico) or *Movimiento por la Vida y la Familia* (Paraguay).
3. Their strong discursive articulation in terms of reuse of materials, reproduction of audiovisuals and recurrence of speeches, which strengthens and legitimizes discourses and subjects as reliable sources. Such is the case, for example, of the use of materials produced by *Manif pour Tous* (France) by Chilean groups, the close contact of rulers and legislative representatives in different countries with figures such as Agustín Laje, the circulation of interventions by anti-gender referents in the debate over abortion and sex education in Argentina, the coordination of discourses against the inclusion of a gender perspective in the peace agreements in Colombia, or the campaign support and celebration of Jair Bolsonaro's triumph in the presidential elections of Brazil, in 2018.

The identification of anti-gender discourse in social networks (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube) reveals the emergence of new institutional actors, with anchorage in professional, community, non-governmental and secular organizations, convergent with the consolidation of traditional actors of the religious field, under various denominations.[3] The denomination chosen to appear in society on behalf of some of these groups enables a reconstruction of some of the core strategies of their discourse.

Citizen organizations and groups that have become more relevant during the past years adopt self-presentation strategies for the construction of their identities that characterize them as civil society groups, and do not

reveal religious beliefs. The implicit or explicit reference to the family, however, is a common factor in several of them. Thus, for example, when signing a press release on an OAS meeting held in 2017 in Mexico, the *Frente Nacional por la Familia* (FNxF) presented itself as follows:

> About @FNxF: It is a permanent civic movement in favor of the family, the right of parents to educate their children, formed by tens of thousands of parents, youth and civil society institutions organized throughout the Mexican Republic.[4]

The choice of a word or phrase to name or refer to an organization implies a categorization, allowing the person who interprets the speech to assign a meaning to that expression, placing it in an "image" or "scene" that is evoked. Thus, for example, in the case of the organization *Padres en Acción* from Peru, we can observe that the group is identified, functionally, by the belonging and position that those who make up the organization ("Fathers") have in the *family*, as a known and shared concept.

A relatively different case, from the point of view of their self-presentation strategy, and particularly interesting for being present in more than one country in the region, is that of the #*ConMisHijosNoTeMetas* collective. In this case, the form chosen for self-presentation is not that of a nominal or substantive phrase, but a statement pronounced by a person and destined to another person: *Con mis hijos no te metas* (see endnote 2).

In this phrase, the enunciator is a person who has children (*mis hijos*, "my children") and therefore integrates a family. And that person speaks to an individual addressee—"you mess" (*te metas*)—with whom he/she has a symmetric relationship. The use of denial "don't you mess" (*no te metas*) leads to infer that this "you" is somehow "messing" into something that has to do with the speaker's family. Finally, the verb chosen "mess with" (*meterse con*) also contributes to the representation of the proposed scene. In Spanish, "mess with" is a pronominal form, whose common use is to bother or criticize someone. This colloquial use also evokes, metaphorically, the idea of someone who enters or engages in something or some place where he/she should not. Thus, the addressee of this phrase would be introducing him/herself in a subject—for example, education—or a space—for example, the family—that does not belong to him/her. If we reconstruct this form of self-presentation, we can see that a whole political program can be inferred through the narrative it evokes. It is a scene in which a parent defends his/her children from an

"other"—mainly State policies and actors, but also what they conceive as radical feminism—who wishes to get involved in some subject.

Through a strategy of building collective identities, taking as a reference the denomination of the groups and the self-presentation speeches in the web pages they use for their political action, we can see that they introduce themselves as citizen organizations concerned for the common good in issues related to family, children and their education, and willing to pressure their rulers to perform specific tasks. Convergently, they also present themselves as organizations of professionals concerned with developing activities of a more academic nature, leadership training or intellectual production.

"Gender Ideology" as a Discursive Object

It is necessary to distinguish the contents or topics from the argumentative and discursive strategies that appear on a recurring basis. Both converge in the construction of known conceptual and narrative frameworks, which reconstruct specific discourses around gender. One of the central achievements of conservative and anti-gender groups has been the operation of construction of that entity which they call "gender ideology" as a sign that structures the discursive and political field, and whose existence is today recognized by various actors and questioned in its definition by others.

Deployed in different political-discursive strategies, it should be noted that "gender ideology" is not a new discursive construct. As a category, "gender ideology" can be recognized in the ecclesial discourse as a response to the advancement of the struggles of feminist groups in the public sphere. Pope Francis, as well as his predecessor Joseph Ratzinger, since the times when he led the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith under the papacy of John Paul II, defined and spoke out against that "gender ideology", as did some Episcopal Conferences in different countries such as Spain or Peru. It has been a systematic denunciation of the culturalist and constructivist bias that has been assumed as monolithic and dominant in discussions of the public sphere on gender equality and sexual rights, in Latin America as well as in Europe. The preponderance of such a "gender ideology" in the orbit of the UN had already been emphatically indicated by the Catholic Church, especially in international conferences such as those of Population and Development in Cairo in 1994, or the 1995 Beijing Conference on Women, where social issues related to women were discussed from a rights and equality perspective (Corrêa, 2018).

From a discursive point of view, the questioning of "gender ideology" as a theoretical body puts the very notion of gender at the center of the debate. The definition of gender as a social and cultural construction, attributed to what these sectors call "radical feminism", is opposed to an allegedly biological and natural "sex". This emphasis on the contrast between what is "real" and what "gender ideology" claims is then constructed and reinforced discursively.

The volatility of sexual characteristics, as a property that "gender ideology" would assign to the sexes, is extended by these groups to sexual identity, in general. Hence, for instance, Comprehensive Sex Education is questioned and associated with the promotion of homosexuality, understood as a negative and unnatural characteristic. The sense constructed around "gender identity" and the elimination of differences result in a complaint regarding the psychic instability supposedly generated in children who are educated from a "gender perspective".

On the one hand, their strategy is consolidated, semantically and communicationally, with messages on social networks—for example, pages or groups on Facebook such as "*No Más Ideología de Género*" [No More Gender Ideology]. In the same sense, videos are published and disseminated on YouTube explaining this corpus of ideas. And finally, with the repeated use of hashtags as a mechanism for linking messages and legitimizing discourses, as well as a resource for identifying and aligning readers with the evoked ideas (Zappavigna, 2012). Among the most productive rhetorical operations in social networks and street demonstrations are the systematic and performative use of colors traditionally associated with feminine and masculine identity (pink and blue), and the emphasis on the reproduction of binary comparisons of opposite characteristics between men and women. This appeal to what is socially known rests on the most entrenched common-sense assumptions, to which they attribute an unquestionable and shared status.

On the other hand, they have produced papers published in journals that circulate in the academic field, as is the case of Aparisi (2009), which presents "gender ideology" as a "field of study" or "stable" object of study. Similarly, the academic journal *Antropología y Cultura Cristiana Humanitas* edited by the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile dedicated a full issue to this topic in 2017. What we want to point out is that one of their relevant communication strategies has been to grant legitimacy to the same discourses they promote, through the generation of academic texts or activities such as conferences or seminars.

From the field of dissemination, but with scientific pretensions as well, we find *The Black Book of the New Left* by Nicolás Márquez and Agustín Laje (2016), whose analysis will be briefly explained by way of example. This volume is one of the best-selling books in the Spanish-speaking community. Its authors, an attorney and a political scientist respectively, are both Argentine, graduates of catholic universities and also trained at the Center of Hemispheric Defense Studies of the National Defense University at Washington DC (Elman, 2018). In 2016, with this publication, they began to position themselves politically and academically as authorities on the antagonist position to feminism. Since the release of *The Black Book* Laje achieved a main participation in conferences, academic and dissemination events. In many cases, he got the chance to influence politicians of different levels, such as judges, ministers or presidents.

A critical reading of their book accounts for how this and other discourses are inscribed in an anti-gender intertextual web. The first part of the book, "Postmarxism and radical feminism", is organized in explanation sequences, which enable access to a wide audience. They seek to include their speech in the academic order of discourse, consequently it acquires status and legitimacy over other discourses. This procedure is possible as the regime of an academic discursive practice is complied with, where explanation and argumentation are the two main sequences that organize this type of texts.

Facing the advance of the feminist movement, we understand that Márquez and Laje seek to *frame* (Lakoff, 2004) that movement as an undesirable moral expression that, in the end, claims to impose neomarxist ideas. They draw up a discursive strategy aimed to delegitimize feminist vindications assuming them as a form of manipulation. Laje also developed this thesis as one of the main speakers at the 1st International Conference on Gender, Sex and Education, held in February 2018 in Madrid, organized by *HazteOir* and *CitizenGo* among other European organizations, which resulted in the so-called *Madrid Declaration for Comprehension, Respect and Freedom*. Since the document is openly addressed not only to parents but to mass media and citizenship, it is an example of the circulation of this anti-gender discourse in the international arena against what they call gender ideology activism.

Sex Education and Anti-gender Discourse in Argentina

The inclusion of issues around sexuality in public education policies has been an open and explicit field of debate in recent times in Latin America. When analyzing the production of public policies in this field, we observe specific laws, programs and the production of curricular documents that underpin their implementation. The widespread inclusion of the notion of *comprehensive sexuality* and the perspective of sexual and reproductive rights are highlighted, as well as the incorporation of a gender approach in the texts of such regulations and programs (Báez, 2015; Báez & González, 2015). However, focusing on singular national processes allows us to see that there are heterogeneous and unequal realities in the region regarding sex education policies, given in part by a context marked by the change in the political sign of governments and by the presence of conservative and religious actors in the field of discussion and application of such policies (Báez, 2018).

In Argentina, since the passing in 2006 of the Law on Comprehensive Sex Education (*Educación Sexual Integral*, named as ESI), a discussion was reinstated in the public sphere about, on the one hand, the educational responsibilities of the State and families and, on the other, the legitimate presence of religious elements in the national curriculum (Torres, 2019). In addition, the *ESI* provided a common language that made issues of gender and sexuality intelligible for the educational field, opening a critical approach against sexist violence, homolesbobitransphobia and medicalization of sexuality, within a process of feminist politicization of students and teachers and the generation of a new and heterogeneous pedagogical movement (Colectivo Mariposas Mirabal, 2018).

In this scenario of definition of public education and its symbolic horizon of possibilities for teaching, student formation and family participation, different political-discursive strategies were put into play by religious, non-religious and State actors. Within the first ones, it was mainly the Catholic Church to intervene as a central actor that has historically played a key role in the configuration of the educational system in Argentina since its constitution (Torres, 2014). And in recent years, new collective actors emerged in a multiplication of the production and circulation on anti-gender discourse.

From an interdiscursive and critical perspective, the national State's positioning on sex education was built on a recurring emphasis on two issues, which collided with catholic principles: the scientific nature of sex

education and the gender perspective, both against those reductive senses of heteronormative, biomedicalized and/or moralized traditions and experiences identified in many normalizing sex education proposals in schools (Morgade, 2011; Zemaitis, 2019). In other words, a new discourse was organized around secular senses regarding sexuality and gender. This proposal was also based on human rights and respect for diversity as its explicit conceptual framework.

Catholic educational discourse then became configured as an autonomous space of resistance against the prescriptions of the *ESI* curriculum. The axes that supported the catholic positioning before the discourse of *ESI* referred to:

1. The place of the family as an educator *vis-à-vis* the democratic authority of the State
2. The definition of sexuality based on catholic precepts
3. The discussion against "gender ideology"

For the Argentine Catholic Church, discursively updating their position on sex education meant a dispute with political actors around a semantic, religious and political domain that troubled the border between private and public issues (Torres, 2019). It has been a dispute between an understanding of sexuality as an intimate and moralized issue or as a politically and collectively debatable issue; between definitions of sex education as strictly a family responsibility or as a public policy; and also between conceptions of identity and the body as phenomena ordered by nature, or as cultural issues subject to social transformation, discursive patterns and historical conditions.

The set of texts edited between 2011 and 2014 by the Higher Council of Catholic Education (*CONSUDEC*) under the Argentine Episcopate for catholic schools and families openly questioned the documents prepared by the Ministry of Education for teacher training. The critical comment from the CONSUDEC meant moving away from the contents of those materials, openly defined as "indoctrination" of "gender ideology". For example, the 2013 text *Contributions for the implementation of the comprehensive sex education program* indicated:

> Beyond what the Sex Education Law prescribes, and aimed at teachers, these "notebooks" presented by the Ministry of Education of the Nation constitute a download of curricular guidelines to the classrooms, full of

> gender ideology and concepts that offend the modesty of students and teachers; with a clear indoctrination of children around the confusion of sexual roles. (CONSUDEC, 2013, p. 51)

In line with the strategy in other discursive spaces, the response of the catholic discourse was an accentuation of the "natural" and "complementary" place of man and woman in an order of social life that also rebuilt the moral imperative of heterosexuality.

The marked confrontation of catholic discourse with what was defined as "gender ideology" highlighted as negative adjectives its constructivism and secularism. The dispute against the gender perspective in the *ESI* curriculum meant not only its questioning—based on its qualification as "ideology"—but a discursive counteroffensive that naturalized unequal cultural senses about gendered identities.

In an explicit discriminatory questioning, definitions that associated homosexuality with pathology and abnormality were reproduced in the educational materials proposed by *CONSUDEC*, without reference to any valid scientific criteria or even doctrinal religious principles. In one of the sections titled "Heterosexuality and homosexuality" within the document *Comprehensive Education of Sexuality*: *Orientations for Parents*, the origin of homosexuality was explained as something different from a "healthy psychosexual development":

> in a healthy psychosexual development, women identify with mom, and boys with dad. (…) The origin of homosexuality has presented great disagreements and discussions (…) The most accepted is that there have been disorders in psychosexual development at key moments of maternal and paternal identification. It can also be related to traumatic situations such as sexual abuse or violence. (CONSUDEC, 2011, p. 19)

The definition of "homosexuality" not only as a pathology, but as a curable or reversible phenomenon, went against a whole set of political struggles that have sought to break the normalizing and exclusionary definitions of gendered identities, sexual desires and corporalities. The cleavage between heterosexuality/normality *vs.* homosexuality/pathology re-updated the proclamation of the catholic doctrine opposed to the recognition of non-heteronormative identities, while openly confronting the official version for sex education, as indicated in the current *ESI* law.

The parliamentary discussion on legalization of abortion in Argentina during 2018 updated the discussions about sex education as a prevention tool for autonomous decisions, and its pedagogical possibilities and limits within religious schools. At this political juncture, the *CMHNTM* collective appeared on the Argentine public scene, with street demonstrations and an intense presence in social networks. Although they also opposed the so-called gender ideology convergently with catholic discourse, their arguments included and exceeded the religious, as they have also pointed to political and cultural elements that would seek the subversion of social and natural orders:

> This ideology is supported by different postulates: radical feminism, egalitarianism, anti-Christianity and homosexuality, ethical relativism and hedonism. Doubting the science and empirical evidence exerts political and economic pressure through the mass media, legislation and education. (CMHNTM Argentina, 2019, p. 7)

This heterogeneous set defines a key refutation strategy that anti-gender discourses construct against State policies, rights, identities, practices and ongoing cultural struggles. Explicit forms of cultural exclusion have been uncompromisingly legitimized against the current legal and inclusive framework and the cultural change that had advanced toward the recognition of non-heteronormative identities and gender equality within the public sphere, including the educational system.

Conclusions and Perspectives

Since normality can be conceived as an "hegemonic social relationship" (Britzman, 2002, p. 208), we have taken its production as a problem to critique, dismantle and analyze. We have highlighted some relevant elements toward the understanding of how the strategy of conservative and anti-gender groups has been politically and discursively articulated in Latin America around the device of "gender ideology", against the advancement of women's rights, recognition of sexual diversity and gender equality in our contemporary democracies. This analysis is part of a broader task of speaking up against those sexualized and gendered norms that seek to impose discursively as obligations and restrictions for a livable life, especially in educational practices.

From the examples presented we tried to contribute, without claiming exhaustiveness, an analysis of the contemporary sexual politics in Argentina in which "traditional" actors such as the Catholic Church converge with new collective actors not necessarily anchored in explicit religious values. Our specific focus seeks to contribute to a wider critical interpretation of the senses around gender that are disputed in the public sphere, as these tensions contingently shape the boundaries of the public sphere itself.

Our theoretical and methodological perspective has focused on the forms of production and circulation of these anti-gender discourses, and their growing influence against the democratization and pluralism of sexual citizenship and inclusive education. The heterogeneity of spaces, resources and strategies shows that they not only seek to influence the definition of laws and public policies, but also seek to reach a social audience as wide as possible, in a contested construction of common sense of culture. Therefore, we are faced with the double challenge of, on the one hand, consolidating a critical analytical perspective that allows us to study the specific nature of the renewed political and discursive interventions of these multiple and heterogeneous actors; and, on the other hand, articulating and mobilizing collective efforts to defend and recreate the symbolic spaces and rights already conquered and yet to be conquered.

Notes

1. For a discussion on the use of alternative terms such as "religious fundamentalism" or "heteropatriarchal activism" in Latin America, cf. Vaggione (2010) and Morán (2018).
2. The expression could be literally translated to English as "*Don't you mess with my children*".
3. To analyze how they build their self-presentation, we identified the forms chosen by the same groups and the texts that make up their pages of institutional presentation, in terms of the discursive strategies of reference, predication and perspective (Wodak, 2016).
4. It is the entry that appeared as a footnote in the official press releases of the organization in 2017 and 2018.

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CHAPTER 11

Voices, Subjectivities and Desires. Costa Rican Secondary Teachers' and Students' Discourses About Sexual Diversity

Daniel Fernández-Fernández

Introduction

The analysis proposed in this chapter is part of the research project "Sexual diversity and functional diversity. Analysis of the discourse of high school teachers and students",[1] developed at the Research Institute of Education of the University of Costa Rica. This work specifically seeks to analyze the experiences of LGBT+[2] Costa Rican high school students,[3] as well as some rhetorical resources present in the discourse of secondary school teachers about sexual diversity. Another important objective is to outline some points that overlap with key imaginaries of the Costa Rican society.

In an anthology recently published in Chile under the title *Pedagogías queer*, Lucas Platero, one of the authors of the compendium, ends his article by formulating some questions that he considers relevant to think queerness in the educational scenario, among which he highlights: How

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to combat the global conservative turn that asks us to do a neutral teaching, that is, traditional and conservative? (Platero, 2018). The present chapter takes up this question and explores its turns in the Costa Rican educational context.

In Latin America, as Figari (2014) points out, queer readings and their re-elaborations have served to establish another paradigm of theoretical analysis in the social sciences, a lens from which to observe and deconstruct the relationship between sex and gender, identity politics and the essentialist view of sexual diversity. We inscribe the analysis of the educational context within the field of queer studies, as a way to question the prevailing conceptions of sexuality (Careaga, 2010), with special attention to school institutional role.

During 2017, Costa Rica consolidates the implementation of a sex education program at the secondary level, which has as one of its objectives the understanding and awareness of different family and gender settings. Within the framework of an electoral process for the period 2018–2022, religious conservatism took an unprecedented force through violent diatribes against what the conservatives call *"gender ideology"*. This historical moment is the epitome of a process of struggle between secularism and religion that has educational institutionality as the center of the confrontation.

The heteropatriarchal visions that take hold in this context reinforce a binary structure that creates a discursive hierarchy around sexuality, in which one of its components ("traditional" sexuality) occupies a more privileged place than the other (sexual diversity). Faced with this situation, we agree with the approach of McInnes and Davies (2008), for whom instead of inverting or extending these terms, it is more fruitful to make transparent the normative power relations that such categories reinforce.

In the last 20 years, there has been a large number of initiatives in the country in order to transform educational institutions into spaces that incorporate sexual diversity. *The National Policy of Sexuality 2010–2021* is perhaps the most emblematic example in this line. This policy states that:

> In accordance with the respect for sexual diversity, it should be considered that, in relation to sexuality, nothing is finished or defined, and it is necessary to be flexible in relation to the *standard* (the known), and to be respectful of the *different* (the unknown), be willing to discuss and accept the human right to choice (for those who choose to link erotically and lovingly

> with people of the same sex), and respectful to difference and diversity. (2011, p. 11) [translation and highlights my own].[4]

In the same way, the *Program of Education for Affectivity and Integral Sexuality*, included in the *Science Program of the Third Cycle of Basic General Education* (2012) of the Public Education Ministry (MEP, by its acronym in Spanish), provides relevant reflections regarding sexual diversity and its importance in the educational process. However, despite the relevance of this regulatory framework and the legal tools currently available, there seems to be a considerable gap with respect to the reality that occurs in schools.

As is evident in many chapters included in this compilation, Latin America is now experiencing a *global neoconservative turn*. According to Blanco (2014), the current scenario between evolutionary and fundamentalist impulses is intensified with the drift toward right-wing of certain governments in the area. In the Costa Rican context, this turn came to be the vortex of furious political struggles, especially on occasion of the presidential elections. In this context, the moralist conceptions that gained position in the country strengthened a binary rhetoric of "good" and "bad" sexuality, where all the bodies, desires and subjectivities that do not fit into the tight margins of normative heterosexuality and cissexuality become a privileged discursive target of violence and discrimination, with schools as an ideal stage of this renewed confrontation.

Taking into account this context, our attempt is, by using some analytical tools of *queer pedagogy* and certain aspects of the Foucauldian notion of discourse, to outline a reading proposal around the tactics and strategies of power concerning the discursive space of Costa Rican high school that have an impact on students' desires and subjectivities. In this paper, "pedagogy" is not conceived as a professional field nor as a scholarly discipline, but as a *reading device* that allows us to analyze the sociocultural ground that organizes a certain number of issues that we could call the *school concerns*. According to that perspective, our proposal is to consider, following Foucault (1978), the discursive field in which these *concerns* take form, around the instantiation of "issues" that have to do with sexual diversity. In this way, we will try to capture some of the effects that stabilize and strengthen the sense of reality of discursive practices in the school context.

The school scenario subtends a complex system of power relations that produce important divisions concerning race, gender, social class,

ethnicity and mind/body functionality, and our interest to bring *queer pedagogy* to the school space is, as expressed by grammar in the form of the "present progressive", to describe what is happening now, that is to say, how those divisions operate within pedagogical presumptions about being in a convergent analysis of the present. One way for doing so is, as Britzman (2013) notes, through the study of limits. According to the author: "The study of limits is, in a sense, a problem of where thought stops, a problem of thinkability. It begins with que question, 'what makes something thinkable?' as opposed to explaining how someone thinks" (2013, p. 216).

According to the Deleuzian analysis of Foucault's conception of subjectivation:

> the struggle for a modern subjectivity passes through a resistance to the two present forms of subjection, the one consisting of individualizing ourselves on the basis of constraints of power, the other of attracting each individual to a known and recognized identity, fixed once and for all. The struggle for subjectivity presents itself, therefore, as the right to difference, variation and metamorphosis. (Deleuze, 2006, p. 106)

In addition, and going a step forward, "within contexts of education, the pointing to normalcy as exorbitant production allows one to consider simultaneously 'the unstable differential relations' between those who transgress the normal and those whose labor is to be recognized as normal" (Britzman, 2013, p. 218).

If, as Talburt (2005) points out, one of the keys to queer theory and research is that it can help us understand how queer things can happen in our work and our relationships with others, addressing the factuality of the narrative of teachers and students is an essential way to apprehend the place occupied by alterity in the educational scene. Elsewhere (Fernández, 2016b) we have stated that since the universes of body and desire are refractory to the attempts of ordering or normalization—which, given their historical configuration, have been a prerogative of family and educational institutions—it becomes necessary to outline the interstices that enable the existence of alter-subjectivities in the educational space. In our opinion, to carry out this delineation process, it is necessary to locate the points of (in)stability in the discourse that give rise to allegedly problematic conceptions around identities, desires and sexualities.

Methodology

Method

The present study used a phenomenological qualitative research method. It is a descriptive and analytical exploratory study. In this article, the data obtained from the interviews conducted with the group of students and teachers from different Costa Rican high schools will be presented. This methodological proposal is justified by the need to explore experiences and perceptions about sexual diversity in the Costa Rican public educational system. Our interest in this perspective is that qualitative research privileges the analysis of microprocesses, such as the study of social actions, that in this case correspond to the experiences and perceptions of students and teachers (Eberle, 2013).

Participants

In the period from March 2018 to November 2018, 20 interviews were conducted, 10 corresponded to students and 10 to teachers. The teachers belong to two public schools of the metropolitan area of San José, capital city of Costa Rica. One of these schools was of working class, while the other was middle class. The specific choice of the five teachers in each school was random. All of them had university studies and more than five years of experience.

In the case of the students, their choice was made by a convenience sampling, due to the difficulty of access to this population. They belonged to eight different schools, six of them were from the capital city and two of them belonged to peripheral areas. In relation to their sexual identity, one student identified as a non-binary person and another as a transgender boy, while the other four were identified as cis boys and four as cis girls. Regarding sexual orientation, in the case of cis boys, all identified as gay, while in the case of cis girls, three identified as lesbian and one as bisexual.

As with the teaching staff, in the case of the students who were interviewed, there are different points of view related to their intersectional characteristics and their corresponding subjective positions; however, an important difference between the two groups refers to the temporality from which they enunciate their discourses. In the case of the teachers, they were all high school professionals at the time when they were interviewed. Whereas in the case of the students, although the majority were

still students at the moment of the interview, some of them had recently finished school. This precision is necessary because offering a look at a circumstance that is conceived as current (being in school), with respect to a retrospective look in which this circumstance refers to a past time ("when I was in school"), entails important differences that should be taken into account in the process of reflection and analysis.

Instruments

Semi-structured individual interviews were conducted in order to develop a deep analysis of the participants' discourses. In the case of teachers, the following topics were part of the interview: knowledge about diversity, working experience with LGBT+ students, approach to sexual diversity and the rights of sexually diverse people. In the case of students, the questions revolved around their experience as LGBT+ students and their assessment of the approach to sexual diversity in school. Thus, the interviews aimed to know the position of both of them about sexual diversity, as well as their experiences with this topic in the educational context of which they are part.

Procedures

In the case of teachers, the first approach to the population studied was through a contact with the Department of Environment and Health of the Ministry of Public Education, with whom the admission to schools was established; subsequently, the coordination was carried out with the principals of each institution. In the case of students, the contact was made through a LGBT+ group called "Out of the Closet" using the snowball technique. At the time of the research process, this group was an emerging and self-managed initiative, involving young people—most of them of high school age—with the voluntary support of persons from the civil society interested in the issue of sexual diversity (among whom was the author of this paper). The majority of the participants had no previous political formation, so this collective was the first space in which they shared their experiences and perceptions about sexual diversity.

People interested in participating in the study signed an informed consent form. The execution of this research was approved by the Scientific Ethics Committee of the University of Costa Rica. All interviews were recorded and lasted an average of 20 minutes. Subsequently, the

information was processed with the program *Atlas ti 8*, through which categories of analysis were elaborated and the interviews were coded. We selected those quotations in which the codes of idiosyncrasy and conception of diversity coincide, by means of the procedure of co-occurrence of codes. For this chapter we chose only those citations that met this condition of code co-occurrence and that reflected the widest variety of identity designations. We sought to ensure that the quotations selected represent this relationship in the most iconic possible way, respecting at the same time the criterion of variety of participants. This selection process was carried out through the participation of two research assistants.

Information Analysis

The methodological approach is close to what Denzin and Lincoln (2005) call a patchwork, that is, a montage in which different images are juxtaposed or superimposed one over the other to create a picture. Following this proposal, the researcher can be seen as a bricoleur, as quiltmaker. In this case, the material with which the bricolage is formed is made up of discourses that converge around an interview, which in itself is an enunciative formation of a discursive nature. Foucault (1972) pointed out that if a proposition, a phrase or a set of signs can be called "enunciated", it is not to the extent that there has been, one day, someone who uttered them, or left somewhere their provisory trail: it is to the extent that a subject position can be assigned.

In the present text we start from the Foucauldian conception of discourse, which consists of a supra-individual reality, in a type of practice that belongs to groups rather than individuals and is always located in various areas or social fields. Discourses, however, have a strong impact on individuals, while they are the ones who build them and who, reflexively, constitute themselves discursively (Diaz et al 2007).

This approach cannot be understood without taking into consideration the field of archeology, which, in Foucault's terms, constitutes its referential framework. The archaeological approach implies a comparative analysis that is not intended to reduce the diversity of discourses, but rather to distribute its diversity into different figures. The effect of archeological comparison is not unifying, but multiplier (Foucault, 1972).

Analysis

Student Voices

In general terms, the *coming out* of sexual orientation or identity is until now a very complex decision for young people in Costa Rica, one closely connected with privileged conditions of class, race and body-ableness. In this way, it is necessary to question how convenient it is to understand the *coming out* as a simple personal determination, given that this kind of assertion requires a particular ground of recognizability that enables its enunciation, a condition that is not always affordable for all. Indeed, it is still almost unthinkable for those people situated in what decolonial theorists call the zone of non-being (Fournier, 2015). In this sense, a question that must be posed is, what is necessary for someone to emerge as a conceivable human being? And more precisely, what is necessary in order to emerge as a recognizable student in the context of high school?

As follows, sexual affirmation is embedded in a myriad of constraints that involve the process of socialization and its institutions, notably family, school and community. The interviewed students have different opinions about their permanence in Costa Rican high schools as non-heterosexual or non-cissexual persons. For some students, high school, as well as their homes, represents a threatening place due to their sexual identity or orientation, whereas for others, school was a fostering one, in contrast to the adverse environment of their family homes.

A significant aspect in various interviews is that, in terms of their sexual choices, the first years in high school seem to be more difficult than the last ones. This condition appears to be understandable, if we consider that the beginning of secondary school coincides with the adolescence, a time when many conflicts around identity usually arise. And certainly, as Rivera (2007) points out, the beliefs and significations about sexuality in adolescence tend to be linked with the interactions within groups of young people, including those that take place in educational environments.

Nevertheless, we must be aware that in this identification pathway, schooling is not a neutral process in a historic genealogical way. On the contrary, we will argue that school actively works to desexualize students to a large extent, and according to a particular hierarchy, what we will call an *age axiomatic*, that is to say, that age becomes an index of body's sexualization potential, determining as well the legitimacy of certain forms of pleasure. As Rubin (2011) stated, sexual hierarchies function in a similar

way of ideological systems of racism, ethnocentrism or chauvinism. In this case, the power structure corresponds to the ideological system of adultcentrism.

As we pointed out in our theoretical framework, the study of limits entails elucidating what is thinkable and what is not in the landscape of high school—in other terms, what are the limits of enunciability. The next passage is the answer of a student to the question: do you have any kind of support from representatives in school concerning your sexual orientation?

> Support, no, I mean it's not like, no, no, no, it's like there is no, how can I say it, is that, I mean, *I didn't have any problem with the institution*, but they didn't help me either, I mean, they haven't helped me at all, it isn't like I could say that the administration helped me or something like that, no (Gay Student).[5]

This extract lays out different elements concerning the limits of young people's enactment of sexuality in high school. It seems striking when the student affirms that he did not have *any problem with the institution*, given that he reiterates all along the sentence, that he never had any kind of *help* (a word that evokes the idea of a risky or dangerous situation) during his permanence in school. In addition, the hesitations in the student's discourse about his perception of the role of high school (an aspect that becomes clear with the circumlocution expression mode) reflect how ineffable it becomes to refer to the complete lack of support of the institution.

This apparent contradiction makes it necessary to ask: what could it mean to have a problem with the institution? And what is the expected role of an educational institution that could imply an authentic problem for a LGBT+ student? It would not be far-fetched to state that, in this context, "having a problem" is equivalent to being abused or rejected, and especially in a violent or outrageous way. In this sense, the absence of such material action is conceived like a non-action; nevertheless, it is an action in itself, that clearly entails micropolitical effects related to the use of bodies and the location of desires.

The mere opportunity of counting on an adult in school to talk about a problem or to intervene in a conflictive situation could be the key to avoiding sexual minority students from suffering some types of violence like bullying or sexual harassment, to reduce the number of school dropouts or even to prevent suicide attempts. To this extent, we must consider

the fact that not having the possibility to express one's own sexual choices gives rise to different subjective consequences, especially those related to the constitution of the self.

In Costa Rica, political centrism and the imaginaries of neutrality, pacifism and tolerance are very important features of the country's idiosyncrasy. In accordance with these ideological coordinates, omission is a fundamental axis to understand the setting of limits to sexuality in educational contexts (Jiménez & Oyamburu, 1998). In such a manner, "don't do anything" becomes a depiction of the phrase "do not take sides", a maxim that configures a political positionality that reinforces the cultural chimera of impartiality (see the analysis of the teacher metaphor of "don't stick your nose" below).

If it is true that "don't do anything" is a fairly normalized position in the Costa Rican educational scenario, it is far from being the only one, nor is it the most prominent path in the institutional arena. Although there is a significant number of authorities from the MEP that promote equality and respect of differences, it is clear that in everyday interactions there is a persistent contrasting view of student behavior according to their sexual choices, as the following excerpt reveals:

> First, I began to come out of the closet with myself, and everything was so narrow-minded there [in high school], so it wasn't allowed to see people holding hands on the corridors, or, if you said bisexual, homosexual or something like that, it was an explosion [a scandal], you didn't find support anywhere (Lesbian Student).[6]

Here, the absence of support is again a central subject in the student's perception of high school, an aspect that reaffirms that students hold high expectations toward the institutional stance. In conformity with that fact, in this case, we deal with two important issues that are part of the everyday life of all teenagers in their spaces of sociability: the physical demonstration of affection and the public enunciation of their sexual desires.

Having in mind the Foucauldian approach about the *conditions of possibility* (2005), we should inquire how feasible it is to attain, in a context that is essentially elusive to sexual diversity, these elements of daily life previously mentioned in a propitious way, that is to say, without a systematic and insidious feeling of fear and shame. In addition, the student points out a very important aspect at the beginning of the sentence. When she is talking about her coming out process ("with myself"), she immediately

makes reference to schooling space by the means of the deictic "there", settling in this way a tight connection between subjectivity and social context.

Whether it is the corporeal manifestation of affects or the affirmation of a particular orientation of desire, the body is the point of convergence of this relation. What is implied when the student claims that *everything was so narrow-minded* in high school, what is actually at the core of this narrowness, is a specific modulation of the way of looking at bodies. This particular angle of the glance implies a reification of gendered paths that reinforce the somatopolitical binaries of men/women, male/female that constitute, following Wittig (2007), a tool to endorse the social heterosexual contract.

When it comes to the body, almost in the form of a Mobius strip, the distinction between the apparent "inside" of subjectivity and the "outside" of social interactions becomes blurry. In a similar way, Merleau-Ponty points out that, "rather than a mind and a body, man [sic] is a mind with a body, a being who can only get to the truth of things because its body is, as it were, embedded in those things (…) all external objects: we can only gain access to them through our body. Clothed in human qualities, they too are a combination of mind and body" (2004, p. 456). Consequently, if the body is embedded in things, external bodies are also embedded in the body, that is to say, that we gain access to them through our own body, and the substance of this rooting is made of our own subjective impressions of the world. As we shall see in what follows, the body is a privileged ground for the constitution of subjectivity and the instantiation of desire.

With the purpose of exploring the nature of this phenomenological ground, in the next passage the interviewed student—who identifies as a non-binary person—narrates their experience about wearing a uniform in high school.

> I remember the girls could wear pants and skirts and I didn't have permission to wear short pants, that I wanted to, only long pants, so there are these tiny things that… sometimes you say, maybe it's just clothes or a stupid thing, but I feel that it doesn't, I mean, people always want to see each other in some way and one's feeling or criteria shouldn't be annihilated or mutilated, or anything like that (Non-Binary Student).[7]

In Costa Rica, wearing uniform is a mandatory measure usually justified with the argument that thanks to this, it is possible to erase the social class differences—a logics that is not only fallacious, but also self-defeating, since, as Leck (2005) notes, in the same way that the aspirin hides a headache, the school uniform hides the necessary exhibition of the existing differences at the level of social position and cultural norms, and going a step forward, for the author, the mask of uniforms is actually an impediment for the eradication of inequity.

As Le Breton (2018) indicates, talking about the rituals of bodily inscriptions in different societies, the sociocultural marking of the body can be accomplished through a direct writing from the collective on the subject's flesh, which can be made as a subtraction, as a deformation or as an addition. We will argue that clothing, as the addition *par excellence* of the body in Occidentalized cultures, is a direct writing registered not on the flesh of the subject, but over it.

In this case, we want to draw attention to the fact that, beyond the evidence that there is an overwhelming gender dichotomy that assesses differently those bodies encoded as "boys" and "girls", in order for such sexual vivification to occur in this educational stage, school must function as a gender visibility device. Hence, the recognition of bodies is embedded in a visual field where sexual ambiguity is prohibited, excluded or marginalized. There is no doubt that school is not the only entity that exerts this kind of effect, but it is certainly among the most significant ones, in view of the complex period of life represented in adolescence. Furthermore, as the student mentions: "people always want to see each other in a certain way", such a precise assertion when we talk about young people's expectations.

The next, and final, student intervention displays in a diaphanous way the incursion of this visibility device of gender at the level of subjectivity.

> I basically lived a mask, I lived with a mask during high school, because of them, of my family, because everybody in my town [a town located in a peripheral province] knows my family, because it's a "small town, big hell", so because of them, of their friends, I can't, I can't, I can't (Trans Man Student).[8]

This interview extract corresponds to a transsexual man, who, at the moment of the communication, was at his first year of university. Although in Costa Rica there is not enough research on transphobia in the

educational system (Carvajal, 2018), the transition process is often very threatening at the school stage, so many trans youth decide to delay that step until they reach university (Acuña, 2016). This indication clearly corresponds to the student's approach, which states that, for him, permanence in high school was a "big hell" in a "small town".

The simile of the mask displays a characteristic enactment of young LGBT+ high school students in Costa Rica, especially when it comes to sexual identity. Concealment behavior turns out to be a common alternative, in some cases to the unwillingness, and in others to the impossibility, to affirm a non-cissexual identity in front of the gender panoptic logics. As Puche et al. (2013) observe, for many trans teenagers, invisibility and violence are closely linked. The absence of real-life referents to look up to, the silence at school regarding the diversity of sexual and gender options, and the fear of rejection by family and the surrounding environment are some of the forms of silent violence that trans boys and girls suffer before recognizing themselves as such and becoming socially visible.

In this sense, to be within the scope of a gender visibility device is to place the body in a zone of inclusion–exclusion, similar to the Derridian notion of ontotopology (Derrida, 1994), which links the ontological value of being with a certain *topos*, locality or territory. Accordingly, school would function as a collective apparatus that carries the task of imprinting some gender values, which therefore deterritorialize those forms of being not corresponding with the cissexist ideal of body.

Teachers' Voices

In the previous section, we analyzed the way in which some students with a non-heterosexual orientation or a non-cissexual identity conceive their permanence in high school, paying attention to the study of institutional limits, in particular those concerning the modeling of bodies and the restrictions on desire. And another important aspect was the way in which students subjectively apprehend this kind of constraints. In the present section, we will handle the discursive constructions of high school teachers about sexual diversity.

Tropes are rhetorical figures that express ideas with figurative meaning, and are a common resource in the discourse of interviewed teachers. Metaphors constitute a particular type of trope that entails a tactical comparison that allows an idea with a clear sense to be passed to another one with a figurative sense. According to Lakoff and Johnson (2003),

metaphors permeate our daily lives—not only our language, but also our thinking and actions. Next, we will present some fragments that use metaphors that are part of Costa Rican idiomatic heritage, and that are also decisive regarding the position of teachers in relation to sexual diversity.

> About that topic [sexual diversity] there is no talk [in high school], although one could see it in… for example we already know which person's behaviors correspond to a gay or lesbian person for the parameters or stereotypes if we could say, but it is a completely taboo subject, and I never *stick my nose into this kind of business*, because I feel I could look bad if I *stick my nose* on it (Teacher 1).[9]

Starting from the principle according to which discourse is a type of interaction (Van Dijk, 2004), this approach is largely evocative of the interactions of many teachers in the face of sexual diversity. "Sticking one's nose" implies assuming a clear position, which is precisely what is tacitly eluded in this statement. Taking into account the fact that situations of harassment due to gender identity and sexual orientation reported an increase throughout the country in the context of the last election campaign (Chacón, 2018), this posture is quite pernicious. In addition, as the preceding section shows, the need for support on the part of school representatives is a very important issue for students.

Returning to the previous teacher intervention and placing ourselves within the framework of queer pedagogy, it becomes necessary to ask the following questions: Who do we decide to ingratiate ourselves with? And who do we decide to partner with? "Don't take a position", "don't do anything", could be as diversophobic as any action in itself. Queering school means that we need teachers willing to make a "bad impression" and who will ally with diversity. Besides the imperative of avoiding taking sides, there seems to be some kind of alleged deontological rule, which would imply that being a teacher means not getting into personal matters, and that is just the opposite of a *queer* approach.

"Do not stick your nose" is also an illustration of the Costa Rican imaginary of neutrality, historically related to the idea of pacifism and iconically symbolized in the linguistic formula of "puravida".[10] To be "puravida" reinforces the idea of "impartiality", generally understood in the country as a plausible cultural value.

The following fragment combines a periphrasis that entails another key metaphorical allusion in regard to the reactions toward the

implementation of programs on *Sexuality and Affectivity* of the Public Education Ministry.

> What I feel, is that *not so much attention should be paid to them*, because I actually feel that… what *paying so much attention to them* does is that the others [students] want to experiment, then, what that has done, is that so many people come out with gender diversity, it means that, *so much attention is paid to them*, that nobody is afraid to explore, nobody is afraid to try other things (Teacher 2).[11]

By transferring meanings, metaphors create and recreate a common sense, configuring a general sense from which an aspect of reality becomes observable, totally visible for everybody (Roman, 2007). Just like with "do not take sides", the phrase "do not pay attention" represents a key axis in the dispute over the social Costa Rican imaginary around the status of citizenship, but also around the students' status.

The explicit approach on the part of the teacher shows that the granting of rights to those who historically have not had certain rights becomes a potential danger of decomposition of the cissexual and heteronormative imaginary, which once again turns out to be disruptive with respect to the configuration of the signifier of "peace". It is common to hear in political speeches in Costa Rica that the exceptional nature of the Costa Rican national civic character is proudly raised thanks to the absence of an army. Concomitantly, it is often said that "our army is our students", a phrase pronounced, not by chance, only with the Spanish masculine grammatical gender.

Conceiving the student body as a symbolic surrogate of the armed forces, certain requirements become necessary to accomplish this kind of permutation. It is evident that fear is used as a biopolitical instrument of coercion, much like the proposals stated in Michel Foucault's *Discipline and punish* (1977). What we want to highlight here is that this proposition becomes full of meaning insofar as it is uttered to account for the role of educational institutions and what their function is supposed to be.

A crucial aspect of the intervention is when the teacher points out what for him represents a danger in relation to "paying so much attention" to LGBT+ students. His conception carries a fundamental stigma: that the attention devoted to the students' needs is a gateway to sexual experimentation. Thus, experimenting is equivalent to "gender diversity", and it becomes in the teacher's discourse a kind of experience that students should be afraid of.

As Gilman (1994) notes when referring to stereotypes toward gay people in the context of HIV, stigmatization defines the boundary of contamination, limiting the risk of pollution to a minoritized group and thus confining the fears of the majority about their vulnerability to the spread of the alleged danger. In Costa Rica, this type of approach was strengthened with great intensity from the moment that conservative groups popularized the notion of "gender ideology", an empty signifier that serves to oppose anything that resonates with sexual freedom.

Schools are not a simple agent of knowledge transmission as the logic of *banking education* presupposes (Freire, 2015); they are also spaces of socialization and therefore of experimentation. The next set of interventions shows an apparently less taxative positioning on this point, but ends up reproducing the same logic. One teacher, talking about the subject of sexual orientation, states the following:

> It is an intimate, PRIVATE choice, I mean, I tell the kids, tell me something, do heterosexuals have to walk with a sign that says I am heterosexual? I say, why do gays have to say it? (Teacher 3).[12]

And regarding the actions that should be taken in relation to sexual diversity:

> That society should be educated ↑ and they [students] should be educated as well, many times I want to explore and as it's commonly said. I come out of the closet and I come out dancing, and it is not about that, it is about behaving accordingly (Teacher 4).[13]

It is clear that here we are facing a fallacy that consists of putting at the same level the ascription of heterosexuality, a validated and hegemonic sexual orientation, against any other pattern of sexual bonding. As Serano (2007) notes, in general we only identify with those aspects of ourselves that are marked, because those are aspects we have to deal with all the time, because of the prejudice of other people.

In both cases, in addition, there is a logic of attenuation of behavior that operates under the coordinates of "to be but not to be". "Be gay but don't say it", "Come out of the closet, but not as fairy" ("without feathers", in Costa Rican Spanish), so it doesn't look exactly like you came out at all. The visibility/invisibility opposition is one of the main reiterations in teacher discourse and perhaps also one of the most persistent aspects in

the idiosyncratic configuration regarding neutrality that we referred to earlier.

If we take into account the fact that the teaching staff has an important role at the formative level, either as authority figures or as agents for the establishment of a certain discursive order, we will argue that according to their enactments, the margins of possibility of many LGBT+ students are considerably reduced in the context analyzed before. In this sense, it is also worth asking: How possible is it that those subjectivities marked by subalternity are recognized? Spivak (2003) draws attention to this point, in stating that it is very dangerous to assume that the subaltern sectors have a voice and possibility of agency, since the essential subjectivity of these others is determined by the hegemonic discourses within which they were built.

Conclusions

Although it is true that in Costa Rica the imaginary of tolerance is just that an imaginary that does not correspond with social reality—given that there have been numerous systematic violent manifestations against different social groups—it is also true that, at the level of discourse, being tolerant represents a symbolic threshold that historically has not been easily exceeded. In the last two decades, these imaginaries have begun to give up. Alongside the exacerbation of social conflicts, some populations become a special target of discrimination, and the breakdowns of discourses of peace and tolerance become more and more frequent. As an example, we have the diatribes against immigrants (Dobles, Fernández, Fournier, Bolaños, & Amador, 2012) and against members of the LGBT+ community. With the proliferation of neo-pentecostal churches, moralist conceptions are gaining position in the country, strengthening a binary rhetoric of "good" and "bad" sexuality, where all the bodies, desires and subjectivities that do not fit into the tight margins of normative heterosexuality and cissexuality become a privileged discursive target of violence and discrimination.

Beyond the individual posture of each teacher or student, we will argue that there is a structural logic that tends to expel from the educational scenario those corporalities and subjectivities that don't fit in the cissexist and heterosexist perimeter. We propose that the factor that subtends this positioning is the so-called "hidden curriculum". According to Gimeno (2007), we conceive that understanding the curriculum in an educational

system requires paying attention to the political and administrative practices that are expressed in its development. These practices range from the structural, organizational and material conditions, to the baggage of ideas and meanings that shape it in successive steps of transformation.

There are a number of practices, both political and administrative, which establish coordinates that set the expected characteristics of a body in the field of education. Following Lopes-Louro (2004), bodies considered common and normal are produced through a series of cultural artifacts, accessories, gestures and attitudes that a society arbitrarily established as adequate and legitimate. The Costa Rican school curriculum is not exempt from such production and, quite the contrary, we will argue that it works actively for its endorsement. If the normalization of the body has historically operated as a biopolitical regulator, it is convenient to try to unravel the threads that tie the curriculum to the bodily existence of students.

Thinking about the forms that violence takes and the ways in which it impacts on certain subjectivities requires looking beyond the concrete actions in which it materializes, trying to pay attention to the power relations that mobilize, as well as the different forms of oppression that converge on it. Addressing gender violence always requires a situated way of thinking that implies considering subjective particularities in the historical plot to which they belong.

In Costa Rica, especially in the last 20 years, there have been a series of significant efforts with a view to converting educational institutions into spaces that incorporate sexual diversity. The *National Sexuality Policy 2010–2021* is perhaps the most emblematic example in this line. However, despite the importance of this regulatory framework and the policies currently implemented, there seems to be a considerable gap with respect to the reality that occurs in schools.

To build the materiality of bodies and thus grant legitimacy to the subjects, the regulatory norms of gender and sexuality need to be continually repeated and reworked (Lopes-Louro, 2004). Under this situation, everything seems to indicate that within the biopolitical mapping of the school, the fate of the student is none other than that hetero and cis normativity. However, the very fact that the materiality of the bodies can never be given beforehand is an indication that it is possible to influence the conditions of possibility that (de)legitimize certain subjects as (un)thinkable.

Recognition, as Butler and Athanasiou (2013) indicate, designates the situation in which one is fundamentally dependent on terms that one can

never choose, in order to emerge as an intelligible being. And it is precisely in the negotiation of these terms that teachers have a decisive role due to their status as representatives of the symbolic order in the educational field. Contrary to the idea of "tolerance", in recognition, one's own being is disrupted by the other, an aspect that we conceive as an essential way to envision in another way the organization of the social and its intrinsic structures of power. This change in positioning should empower us to make visible our collaboration in the different scenes in which multiple forms of symbolic violence converge, which enables, following Lugones (2008), an inescapable recognition of that collaboration in our maps of reality.

Revisiting those places that have become "common" around the different forms of violence that occur in the high school space requires precisely a certain ascesis of common sense and a certain estrangement before the paths of collective action that allow us, the people who have the responsibility to train others, to critically and continuously transform the school spaces.

Notes

1. This project is part of a research line initiated by the author of this chapter at the INIE in the year 2014, in which two dimensions have been considered, sexual and functional diversity. In this chapter we will concentrate on sexual diversity; for more information on functional diversity, see: Fernández (2016a). And for an approach that combines both perspectives, see: Fernández (2019).
2. LGBT+: Acronym of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and other groups. We use the acronym LGBT+, since it represents the identity designations used by the participants in the research process presented here. The plus sign is used to indicate that people with other identifications are considered, and in the case of this study, it specifically refers to non-binary people.
3. In Costa Rica, the period of mandatory schooling has an extension of 13 years, organized in three levels: Preschool Education (5–6 years), Primary School (7–12 years) and High School (13–17 years). In this paper, we will use "high school" and "secondary school" interchangeably. The literacy rate of the country's adult population is about 98% (Gutiérrez & Madrigal, 2011).
4. In Spanish: "En concordancia del respeto a la diversidad sexual se debería considerar que, en relación con la sexualidad nada está acabado o definido, que es necesario ser flexibles ante lo conocido y ser respetuosos ante lo

diferente, lo desconocido, tener disposición para discutir y aceptar el derecho humano a la elección (para aquellas que si eligen vincularse erótica y amorosamente con personas del mismo sexo), y el respeto a la diferencia, a lo diverso".

5. Apoyo no: ↑ (.) o sea no es como que: (.) [ac]no no no↑[ac] (.) es que no hay como: (.) cómo le digo (-) es que: (.) o sea *no tuve ningún problema con la institución* pero tampoco es como que me ayudaron (.) o sea no me apoyaron ni nada no es como que yo dije ay si como (.) la administración me ayudó o algo así, no (Estudiante Gay).
6. yo: empecé a: (.) a salirme del clóset conmigo misma primero (.) y todo era muy cerrado ahí ↓ [en el colegio] (.) entonces no se permitía ver en los pasillos agarrados (.) de la mano o usted decía bisexua:l homosexual o algo así y era (.) un bum↑ (.) no encontraba apoyo usted por ningún lado↓ (Estudiante Lesbiana).
7. Recuerdo que las chicas podían usar pantalón↑ y enagua (.) y: a mí no se me dejó usar pantalón corto que quería usar (.) sino solo pantalón largo (.) entonces son cosillas que (.) diay a veces usted dice como (.) es quizá solo ropa o es una estupidez pero siento que no (.) o sea las personas siempre quieren verse y sentirse de alguna manera (.) y: no debería aniquilarse ni mutilarse el sentir ni el criterio propio: ni nada de eso (Estudiante No Género Binario).
8. Básicamente viví una máscara ↓ (.) viví con una máscara todo el colegio (.) por ellos (.) por mi familia (.) porque todo el mundo en mi pueblo [un pueblo ubicado en una provincia periférica] conoce a mi familia porque es un pueblo chico, infierno grande (.) entonces por ellos (.) por sus amistades (.) no puedo (.) no puedo (.) no puedo (Estudiante Hombre Trans).
9. De ese tema [diversidad sexual] no se habla [en la escuela] (.) a pesar de que uno sí ve: (.) ciertos (.) ya sabemos cu:ales son los comportamientos de una persona (.) ya sea: (.) este: gay o lesbiana verdad (.) uno ve (.) verdad los: los: parámetros o los estereotipos podríamos decir que uno podría ver en (.) pero es: completamente (.) un tema: (.) un tema tabú (.) y *yo jamás meto la cuchara* verdad porque yo soy (.) porque uno ve como: como: di.- por ejemplo (.) *podía (.) quedar mal si metía la cuchara* ↓ (.) (Docente 1).
10. An expression that literally means "pure life", but lexically has different meanings. Nonetheless, the phrase is frequently used to refer to a particular way of life, that usually symbolizes the idea of being happy and enjoying life.
11. Lo que yo sí siento es no *darles como tanta pelota*, porque yo siento que *al darles tanta pelota lo que se les (.) siento yo verdad (.) que lo que hace es que los demás hacen como a experimentar* (.) entonces eso es lo que ha hecho que salgan tantas personas eh: con diversidad de género (.) o sea (.) *se les*

da tanta pelota (.) entonces ya a nadie le da miedo explorar (.) a nadie le da miedo (.) probar otras cosas (Docente 2).

12. Es una elección íntima (.) PRIVADA es decir eso (.) yo les digo a los chiquillos díganme algo (.) el heterosexual tiene que andar aquí con un papel que diga soy heterosexual (.) digo *¿por qué el gay tiene que decirlo?* (Profesora 3).
13. Que se eduque a la sociedad ↑ y se eduque a ellos como (.) muchas veces quiero explotar y como se dice vulgarmente (.) *salí del closet y salí bailando (.) y no se trata de eso (.) se trata de (.) tener una conducta acorde* (Profesora 4).

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CHAPTER 12

"At Least They Know We Exist". Claiming Their Right to Appear: The Gender Studies Research Group in Cúcuta, Colombia, as Maker of Oppositional Knowledge

Adriana M. Pérez-Rodríguez

Introduction and Methodology

This chapter aims to evaluate the creation of oppositional knowledge (Hill Collins, 2013) and the exercise of the right to appear (Butler, 2015) by marginalized groups within the academic space as an act not only of defiance but of igniting doubt within the norms that control the production and legitimization of knowledge, which are the basis of queer pedagogies as described by Assis César (2012). The study explores the experience of the Gender Studies Research Group in the School of Law, Political and Social Sciences[1] of the Free University of Colombia. The Gender Studies Research Group was founded by students and I in late 2016, while working as adjunct professor in the university, with the purpose of researching about gender relations within the academic space. Since its beginning, the

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project has had low institutional support due to conservative values upheld by the institution. Although this has negatively affected its visibility within the university, the group has taken advantage of being in the margins in order to create alternative circuits of knowledge where "academic activism" is born with the purpose of questioning and transforming how institutional knowledge is created.

Students interviewed for this research mentioned the existence of alternative circuits for knowledge creation used in opposition to institutional knowledge in order to question the gender hierarchies that structure the university and the tightly guarded definition of Law, as a central identity aspect of institutional distinction. It is under these circumstances that the research group claims its right to exist in order to make different realities possible, interrogate institutional definitions and transform the academic space into one that follows the values of equality, difference, respect, democratic dialogue and inclusion. Such struggle has seen the support of other research groups and students' associations from different universities and the civil society, enabling the creation of alternative spaces for recognition and knowledge exchange. Participants concluded that, because of the institutional attacks to difference, the research group has to be a formative space for "academic activism" within and outside the university.

The data was collected through two group interviews with members of the research group, all of them students of the Law program; two cis males (gay and heterosexual) and one cis female (heterosexual) answered the first interview and three cis females (one heterosexual and two bisexuals) participated in the second one. They were asked about their interests in, motivations for and contributions to the research group, about institutional and local support, the group's research projects and the thoughts provoked. All the interviewees, except one, were present in the research group since its creation, and their active participation has depended on different factors, such as study load, the perception of hostility and the fear of institutional repercussions or differing interests. Most of them were not active at the time of the interview since they are finishing their undergraduate degree in Law and were afraid that their visibility in such space would have negative consequences for its completion. Nevertheless, they were very vocal about the importance of its existence and reflected on the renewal of their commitment to the processes left in pause.

Theoretical Framework

I use the term "knowledge", as employed by Patricia Hill Collins, as a field of conflict for the redefinition of realities. According to her, oppositional knowledge results from the constant and committed struggle to dismantle the norms that create inequality and violence, where resistance "aims to build new knowledge about the social world in order to stimulate new practices" (2016, p. 135). Such knowledge comes from outsider-within positions: complex spaces on the margins of unequal power relations, where new interpretations are generated to fracture dominant powers (Hill Collins, 1999). Oppositional knowledge has two key aspects: firstly, it is not the attribute of a social group but a diligent exercise to build new knowledge that transforms current relations of domination; secondly, it aims to seek points of convergence with similar projects so as to expose how norms of oppression work interconnected, examine challenges and enrich strategies of change (Hill Collins, 2016).

The tension that arises from such liminal spaces channels creativity to express a newly critical conscience in diverse modes. Black Feminist Thought, for instance, has proliferated in several ways: commitment to varied political projects, construction of alternative black communities, production of several fields of study and the generation of artistic proposals such as female blues. Hill Collins warns about the interest of dominant norms to commodify resistance, emptying it from its radical potential and deploying it uncritically for the benefit of dominant powers, so it must resist to academic tendencies of "deconstruction": "doing engaged scholarship from within outsider-within spaces means considering not only the content of our ideas but also how they might affect existing power relations" (2013, p. 71). Hence the production of ideas must be suspicious of institutional favorability and insist on its radical potential to prevent depoliticizing appropriations.

Such intellectual activism must aim at the redefinition of a "We" under self-chosen frames of visibility. For Judith Butler (2015), the public exposure of abject collectivities contests the normalizing power of dominant norms by introducing their demands and aspirations to the realm of visibility and revealing the shared precarious and unjust conditions they are expelled to. The author speaks of the plural right to appear, the exercise of which "does not exactly presume or produce a collective identity, but a set of enabling and dynamic relations that include support, dispute, breakage, joy and solidarity" (2015, p. 27). This is a rebellion against norms and

institutions that organize society in hierarchical and exclusive manners because, as identified in a past paper: "performativity does not consist of single, isolated acts but of repetitive invocations that create and publicly regulate social bodies that also have the potential for redefinition and reconstruction" (Pérez-Rodríguez, 2019, p. 101).[2] The normalizing power of norms can be put into question, and they can be redefined, fractured and have escape lines. It is under these conditions that the right to appear acts as a shared exercise, not as the adding up of different identities but as a "social movement, one that depends more strongly on the links between people than on any notion of individualism" (Butler, 2015, p. 66), aiming to change unjust social arrangements that define institutions, public space, circulation of bodies, language and the possibility of assembly.

All of this is at stake: public space is a strongly guarded contestation field, structured by exclusions and censorship, making groups of people unable to freely appropriate it and turning them into suspects or expelling them to the edges. Such situations do not mean, however, that these groups are depoliticized, since the margins are sites for specific embodied political agency that, through alternative knowledge and practices, disrupts the public space in several ways, questioning the legitimacy of dominant powers, expressing shared conditions of vulnerability and the right to exist under just and chosen conditions (Butler, 2015).

Data Analysis

Firstly, more needs to be said about the Free University of Colombia in Cúcuta, where this research took place. The history of the Free University dates back to 1890 with the foundation of the Republican University, known for upholding liberal values, and came to be popularly referred to as the Free University. Although the institution officially began to work in 1923 in Bogotá, it was not until 1973 that a campus site opened in Cúcuta with the purpose of "widening teaching, research and outreach actions in the Norte de Santander department" (Universidad Libre de Colombia, n.d., p. 31). This university holds wide social recognition in Cúcuta due to the favorable reputation of its School of Law and for catering to students from local families with stronger social and economic capital,[3] which brings prestige for those who study or work in the institution.

This form of distinction was very attractive for the interviewed members when deciding what university to apply to in order to pursue Law

studies and obtain the social and cultural capital required for social mobility in the local context. However, within a space they expected to be organized under liberal principles, they found a continuation of the gender education experienced in their families and schools, notable for the promotion of violence against women, the constitution of aggressive masculinities and the discrimination against diverse gender identities and sexual orientations. A student recalls:

> Once I had a big argument with a professor and I thought 'well, what stops him from saying things like that in class?' There were no institutional programs to prevent that from happening, and he would say very nasty comments such as: 'well, are we gonna do class or should I bring that female professor with the big ass? Because I am sure you'll pay attention to her ass.'[4]

Most of the interviewees were rapid to mention experiences like that: men said it was common to hear the terms "faggot" and "girl" (used against men by other men and sometimes women) while women mentioned the terms "easy", "feminazi" and "butch" (used against them by women and men alike). Students and professors alike employed such terminology in and outside classrooms, reminiscing similar memories from before their university years as occurring within their families, schools or social groups. However, contrary to those times, they refused to be isolated and met other students with similar experiences and thoughts regarding the reproduction of gender norms in the university.

Many of them mentioned the lack of adequate spaces within the education institution to be themselves, individually and collectively, under self-chosen definitions, where they could feel identified, free and protected. The Gender Studies Research Group was founded with the support of students and young professors in late 2016 after identifying the need for such space; its opening event was a debate forum about the need for gender neutral or mixed gender restrooms in the university. Other students soon expressed their will to join the group, sharing thoughts about the power dynamics that pushed them to the edges while recognizing that the existence of this group could not be taken for granted:

> We realized that this space had to be strengthened and looked after because the group could end if we didn't contribute with our own experiences. So, having this chance, which still is not much, and in a university where these issues are not discussed, we realized like 'hey, let's learn more, let's study

> more about all this' and, in my case, 'let's put into practice what I learnt'. Here we contribute from our personal experiences, everyone listens and feels identified and that is an incentive to go on.[5]

The Gender Studies Research Group has faced several institutional obstacles such as the impediment to use physical spaces in the university for its activities, the lack of financial support to present papers in congresses and the lack of information about institutional processes when requested for research purposes. Moreover, several professors use their authority in class to discredit its existence, ridiculing it and denying students the chance to be informed about it. Such attitudes coincide in affirming that, unlike other research groups, the Gender Studies Research Group does not contribute to the study of Law which, in turn, makes it more difficult for members to reach out to new students. Such situation is similar to that lived by black female academics in higher education institutions, as mentioned by Hill Collins (1986, 2013) when speaking of the outsider-within as people who stand in the edges pushed by unequal power relations and discrimination systems, allowing them to develop a different and opposing way of seeing and interpreting the social realm. As the author mentions, that position stimulates creative tensions in order to dispute the arbitrary organization of society.

Just as the last extract expresses, a critical conscience about oppression and about the fragility of the new space resulted from constant dialogues about individual and collective experiences among members. Self-definition was the first act for them, not as "faggots" or "feminazis" anymore but as a group that claims their right to appear under chosen frames of recognition. Butler (2015) reminds us that public assembly has the potential to question the power of norms that make life precarious, making visible the unjust shared social conditions; this happens not only in the streets but also within smaller sets such as education institutions. In order to cope with professors who mock the existence of the Gender Studies Research Group in the classes, members covered the walls of the university with posters about the relevance of feminism in the academia. In order to deal with the university governing body not allowing them to use the facilities for a debate forum about women's political participation in the city, the research group used a public space for the event, attracting local media to cover it. In order to face systematic sexual harassment in the university, the members held open talks in the canteen about identification of gender-based violence and offer legal advice. In order to handle

systematic erasure, the group painted a wall mural near the canteen to shout their existence to the academic community. It is under such complex scenario that the research group develops its own political agency which, as Butler puts it: "sometimes it is not a question of first having power and then being able to act; sometimes it is a question of acting, and in the acting, laying claim to the power one requires" (2015, p. 58), demanding with their presence the principles of freedom and equality in the academic field.

This agency demands the apparition of a self-chosen "We" under just living conditions in academia, creating dynamic relations among the members who see the research group as a site for learning but also for complicity, solidarity and happiness that soften the impact of the stigma, discrimination and violence received while completing their degrees. Butler recalls:

> so these plural set of rights, rights we must see as collective and embodied, are not modes of affirming the kind of world any of us should be able to live in; rather, they emerge from an understanding that the conditions of precarity is differentially distributed, and that the struggle against, or the resistance to, precarity has to be based on the demand that lives should be treated equally and that they should be equally livable. (2015, p. 67)

Their embodied presence exposes how the projects of knowledge that favor institutional expectations and interests count with the support and the confidence of feeling assisted: finance for congress participation, provision of institutional spaces for events, public recognition of their work, among others. On the other hand, by hindering the work of the Gender Studies Research Group, the university seems to question its place in the School of Law and, also, its place in Law:

> I remember that many professors encouraged us to be part of research groups but they never mentioned the Gender Studies Research Group, they would only mention the Criminal, Procedural or Administrative Research Groups, also saying that so and so participated in congresses. They would only pay attention to that. Once, I said that there is also the Gender Studies Research Group and the professor answered 'uh huh, and what is that?' Just like that. He then told me to be quiet and sit down but, well, at least I said it so that they know we exist. They only want to see what concerns them.[6]

This excerpt not only makes explicit how recognition is selective but also begs the question about what type of knowledge is recognized as such in and by the School of Law of the Free University in Cúcuta. The knowledge produced by the research group embodies the aspects mentioned by Hill Collins (2013, 2016) as oppositional knowledge, not only because it survives despite difficulties but also because it fights to make visible and challenge the authority of the normative frames that determine what and who is accepted, respected, unrecognized, mocked or unthinkable in the School of Law, while striving to create bonds that enable new ways of being individually and collectively. The open talks to discuss LGBT experiences in campus, the leaflets to help identify gender-based violence, the research to create a protocol to prevent, assist and monitor gender-based violence in the institution and the education campaigns for professors to integrate feminist perspectives in their courses are the evidence of the generation of oppositional knowledge and alternative pedagogies to resist and eradicate discrimination and invisibility. Students who feel under attack find in the research group a place of relief and self-knowledge, similar to feminist consciousness-raising groups where awareness is built by reflecting on experiences of oppression and employed to design strategies to dismantle patriarchy:

> I've also felt that people from the university, who are struggling with different sexual orientations or gender identities, come to the research group. Not long ago, this transgender boy was very interested in attending because he felt he could be himself. He is considering transitioning but his family does not accept it and also the university community has made it very difficult for him because of the constant criticism. So yes, I believe the research group is important because troubled students come to us for support in order to not feel lonely.[7]

Moreover, the research group has found allies in a few young professors who are concerned about questioning dominant thoughts regarding gender relations, and they have included feminist and gender perspectives in their syllabi, promoted the use of non-violent language and created alternative spaces for discussions about feminism in academia and its relation to Law. Although this is a victory, the research group must be wary that the institutionalization of their interests may result in emptying their proposals from its radical potential, as warned by Hill Collins: "people who claim outsider-within identities can become hot commodities in social

institutions that want the illusion of difference without the effort needed to change actual power relations" (2013, p. 73).

A member calls this radicality "academic activism" as an exercise that goes beyond specific activities and aims to publicly dispute the frames of visibility that define their presence as undesirable or irrelevant. Academic activism is then a radical way of presenting oneself before others, challenging also the institutional monopoly over the definition of Law: what is worthy to be included in its body of knowledge, what its truths are and through what procedures they are defined, what is conceived as insignificant or unteachable. The borders of visibility, strongly policed by the institution, not only define bodies that matter but also which knowledge is considered legitimate and which is denied from any possible consideration. This dominant set aims to be universal since: "it denies the rational character to forms of knowledge that are not adhered to its epistemological principles and methodological rules"[8] (de Sousa Santos, 2009, p. 21). If queer means abject in relation to norms, activism in the academy, as defined by them, would be a way of queering the university by bringing forth knowledge considered abject by the institution and using it to question normative orders, while striving to create new spaces for being and doing Law under self-chosen frames.

Based on the individual responses of professors, students and the institution alike, it seems as if the mere existence of this research group was considered a threat to the dominant way of "doing and teaching Law": assuming that Law is the result of the study of white heterosexual cis men, as they are the sources of epistemological references and the legitimate representatives in the subjects taught; making use of that privilege to teach women how to do Law,[9] based on the sexualization of their bodies while denying them professional and rational abilities assumed in men; rendering areas and practices of law invisible (such as research in relation to gender, feminism and law, among others) while privileging a few (such as criminal law and litigation) and creating one Subject of Law as the legitimate subject that does Law: the heterosexual cis-male, since women and people with different gender identities and sexual orientations are constantly mocked, harassed or censored by professors and students alike. All of these practices, which are systematic and normalized, as warned by members of the research group, recall the definition of compulsory heterosexuality as the creation of sexual difference through binarism and exclusion, through the demand for coherence between sexualized body organs, gender and desire, and through the persecution of subversive

multiplicities with domination, regulation, elimination, appropriation and exclusion exercises of power (Butler, 1999). Carrera-Fernández et al. (2018) define queer pedagogies as educational practices that denounce the role of education institutions in the creation of a hierarchical gendered order; what the research group's queering pedagogies stand for is the questioning and displacement of the legitimate Subject of Law in order to introduce abject voices, desires and bodies to define the subject of study, while exposing the policies of naming within the institution that work upon inflicting violence. Although a larger research would be needed to confirm the compulsory heterosexuality of Law in the Free University of Colombia in Cúcuta, this signals a possibility based on what has been found and opens the question for future studies.

So it seems that oppositional knowledge also strives to question the dominant norms that define, through exercises of inclusion/exclusion and the possible establishment of compulsory heterosexuality, what Law is and who is the Subject of Law, its bodies of knowledge and interlocution, its legitimate practices and methodologies. The extent of its power is such that members of the research group have often been pushed outside the premises to execute events, implying that the institution does not recognize them as valid interlocutors. To this imposition of silence, they answer by creating a stronger support network, seeking new points of convergence with student groups from different universities, civil society organizations, international cooperation and government institutions:

> I definitely believe that we have better reception outside the university, especially with the Francisco de Paula Santander University. We have been part of events where we create bridges, we introduce the research group to many people and that allows us to connect to groups with similar interests. This is the case especially with student groups.[10]
>
> I was gladly impressed when asking for resources from the Secretary of Woman (a departmental government body). They didn't ask for anything in return, they didn't make any questions, I asked them what we needed and [told them] what for and they provided. The support was immediate, quicker than in the university. How ironic. We have been able to win recognition in different spaces, we are more visible outside than inside the university.[11]

Conclusions

Reading Butler I find: "the term queer does not designate identity but alliance, and it is a good term to invoke as we make uneasy and unpredictable alliances in the struggle for social, political and economic justice" (2017, p. 70). Queer pedagogy is, then, a pedagogy of uneasiness that aims to make worthy lives and social justice possible for everyone. If education institutions operate through normalizing powers to create and dominate subjects, knowledge and relations, they are also sites of conflict, narratives of resistance, production of queer subjects and knowledge. For the students of the research group creating oppositional knowledge means queering the university, refuting the norms that render them invisible or abject and bringing their interests forth to define the field of Law and its legitimate subject. They also seem to queer the university by bringing themselves forth as legitimate agents of knowledge within a space that aims to erase them, expanding and transforming the idea of what the institutions of education are, although this can only be an outline for further research.

According to Couto Junior, "pedagogy inspired by queer theory seeks to disrupt heterosexual regimes by problematizing the already recognized and legitimate social settings based on heterosexist ideologies" (2019, p. 601), raising the question of the compulsory heterosexuality of Law in the Free University of Colombia, Cúcuta. If oppositional knowledge from the Gender Studies Research Group points towards a new definition of Law and the Subject of Law, the emerging questions are as follows: What is the dominant definition of Law? Who is the dominant Subject of Law? Why is there a dominant version and who benefits from that? How? There are not answers yet, but only the outlines for incoming research on the matter. Abya Yala lesbic feminism has identified the relation between heterosexuality as a political regime and nation-building through a central legal element: the political constitution (Curiel, 2013). Their concerns regarding heterosexuality and Law are similar to those exposed by members of this research group: Law as creating power of sexual difference within universities. If that is so, then education is a place for queerness.

Notes

1. From now on, it will be referred as the School of Law. The shortening of the name serves the purpose of briefing the reading but also highlights that Law is the dominant degree in this School where only two programs are offered to applicants: Law and Corporate Communication & Public Relations, where the latter is shorter and newer compared to the former that was developed in 1973. The webpage of the University often mentions the relevance of the Law degree in the history of the School of Law, Political and Social Sciences, while it does not acknowledge the presence of the Corporate Communication & Public Relations degree. For more information, please see: http://www.unilibrecucuta.edu.co/portal/historiaderecho.html
2. Our own translation from the original in Spanish.
3. That being said, generally students from the upper class in Cúcuta migrate to universities from different Colombian cities, mainly Bogotá or Medellín. So, for those who stay, students of the Free University (generally middle class) become top of the local social hierarchy.
4. Excerpt from a female interviewee of the Gender Studies Research Group on February 18, 2019.
5. Excerpt from a female interviewee of the Gender Studies Research Group on February 18, 2019.
6. Excerpt from a female interviewee of the Gender Studies Research Group on February 18, 2019.
7. Excerpt from a female interviewee of the Gender Studies Research Group on February 18, 2019.
8. Our own translation from the original in Spanish.
9. One female student mentioned that it is common for professors to say comments such as: "'to win a court case, you have to go with short skirts and speak gently to the judge'. That means that I, as a woman, have not the same ability as men to succeed in the courtroom, to make a good defense statement, a professional lawsuit and a strong legal answer; instead, I have to use my body". Excerpt from a female interviewee of the Gender Studies Research Group on February 18, 2019.
10. Excerpt from a male interviewee of the Gender Studies Research Group on February 11, 2019.
11. Excerpt from a female interviewee of the Gender Studies Research Group on February 18, 2019.

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CHAPTER 13

Epilogue: A Glossary of Queer by The Criscadian Collective

Andrés Valencia, Cristina Arenas, Camila Arredondo, and Diana Buriticá

A

About the Glossary

This is a queer glossary written in the first-person plural by the Criscadian Collective, four individuals engaged in language teaching education.[1] As a queer glossary of the queer, it challenges even the basics of this format : it includes pictures, poetry, and written text. Besides, it is produced in the absence of the main text so that the characteristic to and fro movement between the main text and the back be open to (re)link other texts and bodies, yours, ours, a song, a bird, the world. As a queer glossary of the queer in us, in our language teacher education program and our university, it includes its ghost and closet—though pedagogic and roomy (Price, 2013). This glossary is (also) about the production of the

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heteronormative space in a Colombian public university (Universidad del Valle). It engages with pictorial forms of resistance at the material and symbolic levels, by intersecting the categories of women and language learning with those of race, internal colonialism (Rivera Cusicanqui, 2012), "bloodless violence" (Restrepo, 1996), and curriculum (Deng, 2010). The entries of this glossary are rhizomatic (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). You can read in the order you prefer. Enter and leave at any point in the glossary, it is not intended for any particular, academic, feminist, sociocultural, or queer type of reading. It has chewy tentacles that stem from the depths of our bodies to touch/own you. This is not a story, this is a body.

To immerse ourselves in the queer, we developed a double-lensed framework. Through one lens, the queer is reterritorialized as relational, transitive, creative (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2012), and Ch'ixi (Rivera Cusicanqui, 2010, 2019) symbolic and material practices, that is, as a mediating process within the LGBT[2] community. Through the other, the queer is mobilized as a set of bodies and discourses that challenge or reinscribe hetero- and homonormative practices at the curricular, cultural, and political levels. This kind of double approach works in tandem to operationalize the queer at the intersections with hetero- and homonormalcy, race, pedagogy, decolonization, and language learning.

Are You Still There?

If you have decided to stay (and remember you can leave whenever you want), you may be interested in knowing more about the content —or the parts of this Leviathan we have created; you could even say that *we are* this big animal. You can knit, have supper over some of the entries you can find here, but we are not responsible for the consequences of interacting with it: we can touch, caress, bite, hit; we may want to destroy and then rebuild. These entries are the findings of our research on the latent queerness at Universidad del Valle (Cali, Colombia): We interrogate (1) colonial structures, institutions, bodies, knowledge, and practices; (2) the sex/gender matrix that has structured queer theory in general and queer pedagogies in particular; (3) all forms of the hetero-: heterosexuality, heteropatriarchy, heteronormalcy; (4) homonormalcy; (5) and phallo-logo-ocular-verbo-centric (after Cixous & Clément, 1986; Álvarez Valencia, 2018) teaching/learning practices.

Amphibians

What is it like to be queer? It is to be amphibians, wet, and slippery beings, who can breathe in and out of hetero- and homonormative/homosexual material and symbolic landscapes. Queer/amphibians are, as other scholars ranging from sociology, education, psychology, language learning, to literary and cultural criticism have termed, *sentipensantes* [feeling-thinking] (Fals Borda, 2015), mediators, translators/*lenguaraces*, fork-tongued (Anzaldúa, 1987), and barbarians (Hardt & Negri, 2000) but, above all, cyborgs (Haraway, 2016): Organism/machine hybrids, animal/machine creatures of

> a postgender world; it [the cyborg] has no truck with bisexuality, pre-oedipal symbiosis, unalienated labor, or other seductions to organic wholeness through a final appropriation of all the powers of the parts into a higher unity. (Haraway, 2016, p. 8)

Cyborgs as oxymoronic, paradoxical monsters—gay/lesbian, trans-, black, non-Christian, non-native English/Spanish speakers—are

> resolutely committed to partiality, irony, intimacy, and perversity. It is oppositional, utopian, and completely without innocence. No longer structured by the polarity of public and private, the cyborg defines a technological polis based partly on a revolution of social relations in the *oikos*, the household. Nature and culture are reworked; the one can no longer be the resource for appropriation or incorporation by the other. (Haraway, 2016, p. 9)

Queer/amphibians are not vexed by any "origin story", particularly those which "depend on the myth of original unity, fullness, bliss, and terror, represented by the phallic mother from whom all humans must separate" (Haraway, 2016, p. 8). The nature of the Queer/amphibian is not hinged anymore on the *naturanaturata* vs. *naturanaturans* divide posed by philosopher Baruch Spinoza (Nadler, 2016). The former term of nature as passive is what enabled the colonial project in the Americas, for it conceives of nature as inert and, therefore, able to be appropriated, owned, negotiated, sold, and exploited. When taken up as such, the queer person/body is apprehended inescapably along the sex/gender lines, being experienced as the defect of the [White-mestizo,[3] male or gay, Christian, middle-class, able-bodied] heterosexual and/or homosexual person, incomplete, "burst apart" (Fanon, 1986, p. 109), in need of "fixing".

Whereas, when the queer person/body is taken up as the latter conceptualization of nature, that is, nature as living, as productive, then the queer/amphibian is apprehended away of the sex/gender, normal/abnormal lines, as a full, creative (able to give birth) being.

B

Black

> "Acercáos huellas sin pisadas [come closer untrodden footprints[4]]
> fuego sin leña [woodless fire]
> alimento de los vivos [food for the living]
> necesito vuestra llama" [your flame I need]
> *Sombra de mis mayores.* (Manuel Zapata-Olivella, 1992)

How can one have a sense of belonging in a society where legitimacy belongs to the Other? How is it possible to feel peace when you feel inadequate, judged, looked down upon, feared, (hyper)sexualized, and in danger at the same time? Isn't it a little bit psychotic? Where am I safe? That's why for black communities collectivity and territory carry great importance: they are fundamental for the construction of our identity, as well as the basis for coexisting with others without the limitations of ethnic identification. Collectivity is about finding ways to connect with others regardless of sex, age, or religion; like ubuntu philosophy states: "I am because we are."

Sombra de mis mayores [shadow of my elders]: A call to those ancestors who saw the birth of a new population of black people on the American continent, who, taken from Africa, are now part of a community called the diaspora: heirs of a process of enslavement and colonization that was characterized by mechanisms intended to take away our status as human beings and erase our identity forever. Yet, through struggles, *cimarronaje [maroonage]*, resistance, and blood, we survived the oppressions to construct our own realities. The building of *palenques* was key: it was based on "uma resistência coletiva, de vários indivíduos, homens e mulheres, os quais agiram, com uma consciência étnico-racial, com o objetivo de derrocar o sistema escravista e estabelecer-se em comunidades livres ao redor do território"[5] (Arenas, 2015, p. 241).

Nowadays, being black is a decision. It's not taking for granted what the media or what legitimacy tells you; then, you start questioning those ideas that associate blackness with ugliness, dirt, and darkness. The European-white colonized way of thinking associates the black person with an inferior being, for their idea of race caused that "la sociedad blanca se proclamara como la raza superior y afirmara su humanidad negando otras humanidades, especialmente la africana"[6] (Mosquera, 2016, p. 10). When you are black, you know that you are not inferior, that you feel-think-live as any other human being, but due to all types of intricate actions and deliberate oppressions, you have to endure discrimination in every aspect of your life.

Being black is recognizing not only our recent history, but also the ancient one—that history from which we were detached with our uprooting but which, nevertheless, can be reflected in some cultural practices of the diaspora—that history about the civilization being born in Africa, about the black-Egyptian creation of architecture, writing, painting, and medicine. Being black is wanting to know more despite the colonialist campaigns to destroy and hide black advancements (Williams, 1986). Being black in the current times is re-discovering but also daring to defy the hegemonic narrative. It's identifying the power of words, images, and symbols in a society in which "Prevalecen estas imágenes estereotipadas e hipersexualizadas de la mujer negra"[7] (Santiesteban, 2017, p. 189). After all, being black is about decolonizing the mind, it's about queering the white-mestizo racial profiles of our teachers, our white classrooms (as spaces), and our republican curricula.

The black queer body is overrepresented as a racialized, hypersexualized, historicized body/myth. As if it were amputated from Africa. As if always-already intersected by ready-made categories of class, language, religion, age, or sex/gender. It works in a non-synchronic way (Hicks, 1981), objectified under the gaze of the white-mestizo man (after Fanon, 1986).

Queering the black women's body in a white-*mestizostream*[8] society at large and in a teacher education program in particular would mean to dismantle that hypersexualizing gaze that cannot conceive black women out of the erotic, exotic, and sexually exuberant. Their bodies are "orientated" (Ahmed, 2006) in a historical-racial-sexual capital schema (after Fanon, 1986, p. 111).

C

Crisis

The queer body is conceptualized within a phallo-logo-verbocentric logic (after Cixous & Clément, 1986), othered, saturated, outcast, and seen as a deficient and incomplete body to be discursively and pedagogically appropriated, and then "straightened" (Ahmed, 2006). When the queer person/object/practice is thematized as deviant or abject, it is because s/he threatens the very fabric of the colonial matrix of power, being, and knowledge (Walsh, 2008); a threat that invokes, on the one hand, "a right of the police," "…inscribed in the deployment of prevention, repression, and rhetorical force aimed at the reconstruction of social equilibrium" (Hardt & Negri, 2000, p. 17); and, on the other, the re-assertion and fixing of hetero- and homonormative disciplinary/corporeal/instrumental/spatial/affective boundaries to hold things and people "in place."

Crisis, as a modern project, hinges on a reaction[9] that *marica* and transgender scholar Alanis Bello terms transpedagogy:

> una pedagogía capaz de cachetear con sus tetas de silicona a Comenio, a Rousseau y a todos los pedagogos modernos que pensaron el cuerpo como una cosa que debe ser sometida a vigilancia para evitar su desviación, y como un "objeto de manipulación y experimentación pedagógica que se interviene con la imperiosa necesidad de hacerlo devenir natural y universal"[10] (Hincapié, 2009, p. 102 as cited in Bello, 2018, p. 115).

H

Hybris

The queer body is incommensurable to the heterosexual gaze. It is apprehended from a flawed reading, reducing it to abnormality for it does not fit the pre-established male/female dichotomy. Nevertheless, queerness defies the norm from a different, unique, and "*contra-natura*" standing point (Echeverría, 1997). *Queerness* are the behaviors of those who are seen as not belonging to the status quo, that have been rejected by the majority, bound to live in an alternative reality that allows them to transcend the classic opposition between feminine and masculine (Echeverría, 1997). As sexual and gender dissidents, queer bodies feel like not hiding

their stigmatized identity. As Kiesling (2017) states about black queer women in a reflection on race, queerness, and transgressions "[they] disrupt the normative gender expressions and sexualities of a dominant heterosexual majority at the same time as they challenge normative ideas about queerness" (p.15).

Indeed, the queer lies in the liminal space between centripetal and centrifugal discourses and performances, opposing "naturalism" or the idea of a fixed, social, and natural order. It is a move to escape—at once—stratification, centralization, unification even in the boundaries of the LGBT domain. We are natural transgressors, ours is an existence that "remains in process, unfinalizable" (Bakhtin, 1994). We become insofar as we keep (re)existing and (re)inventing ourselves. By claiming queer identities as "artificial" (Echeverría, 1997), what straight and gay people lose sight of is the excess (the hybris), the ooze that permeates the sex/gender matrix reterritorializing it, rewriting it, not in divide/binary key but as a porous, rhizomatic, *Ch'ixi* body-existence, both gaze and movement capturing/modifying one another at the same time.

As we reflect on the queer identities, we understand that the act of declaring oneself (consciously or unconsciously) out of the norm does not come without wrestling. As children, the queer body and soul are chased by the ghost of public opinion because growing sideways implies challenging the imposed white-middle-class-boy as the only possible legitimate narrative (Stockton, 2009). When the *queer child* (Cortés, 2016) becomes the *queer adult*, the battle transforms into overcoming the system that not only made us victims, but that required us to victimize others out of it. Heteropatriarchy has made us think of others and ourselves narrowly through the imposed dichotomies of the modern/colonial gender system (Lugones, 2007). In our resistance to white-mestizo heteronormativity, sometimes we can only be different within the limits established by the norm as if there were *norms* to exist outside the norm. Queer identity is a constant fight toward those limits, not only to win the right to *decide* who we are but to validate and recognize our story as existent and possible within the spectrum.

I

(In)visible

We are there, we can see the rest of us in the hallways, in the cafeteria, even sitting next to us in class; in fact, we know who we are, no matter how subtle we are—or try to be. I know who are like me, and yet we do not raise our voices beyond the daily chatting with our friends or that classmate we need to borrow some notes from. We can see each other every day, but we do not see each other. We lose any kind of identity in both the physical and non-physical space we share, the remaining traces of ourselves fade in the eyes of the professors and classmates, in the eyes of *our* people and, sometimes, in our own eyes. Ironically, where most of us claimed feeling freer than on the streets, in one of the most open-minded programs on campus, we have to force our way to be seen, to become visible.

In fact, professors from the language teacher education program, and even from the Humanities Faculty, do not dare to see us through the fog that has prevented us from looking at each other straight in the eyes. Nevertheless, this obstacle has been created because no one has ever considered necessary to include us, to render us visible because doing so would feel as something forced, as if being part of what is explicit and programmed, telling what we have lived and how we think would not be natural. Yet they forget that the same curriculum as it is right now was forced into us, so well disguised that most of us would not dare to second-guess it.

Thus, the curriculum, both explicit and hidden, is the scene of the perpetuation of privileges (Sánchez-Saínz, 2019) that masks our identities: our gender, race, sexuality, beliefs, ourselves. For it doesn't matter that the people in the program are open-minded and willing to listen to us, to learn, and to share, *we are simply ignored*. Themes related to the LGBT+ community are absent both at the institutional and the programmatic curriculum planning levels (Deng, 2010), but it could be expected that in its third level, the classroom curriculum, professors would transform what has been stipulated in the programmatic one, be it because of their own decision or through a dialogue with students.

When analyzing the syllabi of each course, it could be noted that these topics are not included unless students propose them: in the Sociolinguistics course, in which students have the opportunity to decide what type of research they want to carry out, one student chose "*Las maricas de la*

Valle" [the faggots of the Universidad del Valle] (a characterization of the way of speaking of people perceived as *maricas* in the University; see entry below) and it was accepted regardless of the efforts of the professor to change the name. Cases like this are abundant in the program, and even after someone dares to speak up and tries to make these topics included, they have to survive the voting of all the students of the class and the professor's decision to actually include them in the planning. It's here that hegemonic white-mestizo and heteromasculinity is presented so subtly that students don't ask why the authors we read are mostly men, white men; why, despite being a program that has indigenous languages studies as one of their research lines, none of the texts depict a worldview different from the Anglo-Eurocentric one. Why are stories of non-heterosexual people present only in Literature courses, and yet there's always this hetero-homosexual binary? Why are our feelings and bodies not included in the academic context? Why do we lose ourselves in order to gain "knowledge" we are not given the possibility to refute, reject, destroy, and (re)build?

As a consequence, not all professors succeed in fighting it; the topics—always centered in *understanding and respecting cultures*, oh, so well written on paper—are far from including elements related to sexuality, gender, and race transversally and rhizomatically (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) to those of culture, politics, economy, and power, to the matter of education itself. The lack of inclusion is excused by the difficulty to connecting these themes with what is proposed by the program. Issues related to gender and sexuality are not addressed in the classroom because neither professors nor students understand how to articulate them with the explicit topics of the official curriculum, with the particular context of the class or with the broad social, cultural, and political context. And since professors "are supposed to follow closely the standards, frameworks, and guidelines laid out in the programmatic curriculum" (Deng, 2010, p. 3), there is no room to expand what is taught in the classroom. Therefore, with no representation or inclusion or visibility, whatever is not included in the privileged curriculum will be Othered. Then, in a language teacher education program, what type of inclusion are we offering to students? And what type of teachers are we forming for the ones who are still to come?

M

Marica

There is a word in our slang that resonates in the mouths of most young folks: *Marica*.[11] The term is used as a pet word in conversations. Yet, *marica* neither intends nor causes any harm. But as unnoticed as it may pass between whispers and jokes, its intention to ridicule men who do not conform with the roles of masculinity that they have been called to fulfill persists. Still beyond the pejorative term, would it not be better to ask ourselves: on what criteria is "*Mariquismo*" [faggotism] based?

According to one of the students in the language teacher education program, being *marica* is expressing feminine behavior, and the word is a resignification of the affectionate denomination of María (one of the most common names in Hispanic America) that intends to stereotype homosexual men as delicate, a concept frequently associated with women. Therefore, to call someone *marica* is a way of thinking the feminine as invalid (Colina, 2009). That is, an attempt to categorize those features associated with women as deviant, but also a way to deprive women of being the subject, rather than the object of representation. The women that appear in conversation are not the *beings* whose legitimacy is denied (Owens, 1983), but a *topic* that serves men to describe their experience with manhood.

Though there is much to explore regarding women's recognition and representation, there is an interesting phenomenon emerging from the realization of the connection between the *labels "feminine"* and *"marica"* [faggot]. Until not so long ago, the term was there in a way that we couldn't see, *porque el insulto estaba dado por sentado* [because the offense was taken for granted]. According to Ahmed (2006), it lacked a background that allowed new interpretations, new possible futures, "which might involve going astray, getting lost or even becoming queer" (p. 555). So far, the outcome of this re-semantization of *mariquismo* is to take the term as a banner (Trujillo, 2015, p. 1533), a self-appointment that does not feel imposed or, in the words of one of our interviewees: "*cuando la gente me insulta con la palabra marica, yo no me siento ofendido porque ser mujer no es una ofensa*" ["when people insult me with the word faggot, I do not feel offended because being a woman is not an offense"].The power of *marica* as a self-identification category stems from its self-labored, self-inflicted nature. It is part of a person's desire to

become, not from someone else's (the heterosexual, or even the homosocialized man) desire.

Mariposario

You may ask anyone in the University: *Idiomas* or the Foreign Languages Program is known as el *mariposario* [*butterfly house*], called like that in a euphemistic attempt to obscure the general prejudice held against those who study languages. The term is quite subtle and even cute if one ponders on what's hidden in it. Not everyone in the program or the *Escuela de Ciencias del Lenguaje* [School of Language Sciences] knows the term, mostly used in a pejorative way, classifying all students of the program as part of the LGBT+ community, a generalization that also deprives them of their right to define themselves.

However, during the interviews and through our own reflections, we realized that there are mixed feelings and perceptions about the designation the language teacher education program has received. Indeed, being considered the *mariposario* of the University and knowing that the word is another way to say *marica* without saying it, most of us would feel offended immediately. In fact, we still do when the term is used derogatorily. The origin of the term, even though it is untraceable, represents perfectly the view of hegemonic masculinity: whatever is opposed to the heterosexual white-mestizo man is the target of attack and mockery. Therefore, butterflies, as a cultural symbol of femininity, will be the representation given to the non-heterosexual man because, as Colina (2009) stated, they are usually identified with *women*, and women and homosexuals are seen as the inferior Other.

Notwithstanding, we have decided to break the word to the most natural of its meanings and take advantage of what it can represent to us: butterflies are beings of *transformation*, going from larvae, caterpillars, to beautiful and colorful forms, gaining wings to fly, animals that people accept, a symbol of beauty. Despite having a negative connotation, *butterfly house* is not a word that incites violence or hatred; consequently, it can be reclaimed and resignified from the outrageous meaning some others dared to give it.

Q

Queer PedagogieS

Not every pedagogical practice that critiques/reverses the hetero/homo divide, or that acknowledges the centrality of the body (its over representations, its hypo/hypersexualization) in the construction of the Other/of knowledge, or that questions the "production of normalization" (Britzman, 1995, p. 154; Sánchez-Saínz, 2019) in its wider senses and materializations, or that "codifies subversion and deviation" (Bello, 2018, p. 110), or that challenges hegemonic gender identities/sexual practices and aesthetics, or that fights against any form of violence (sexism, racism, capitalism, ableism, cisgenderism, heterosexism, etc.) *is* a queer pedagogy. Not all forms of exclusion are inherently bad, just like not all forms of coercion are oppressive. Queer pedagogieS as a field/body of knowledge (Trujillo, 2015, p. 1536), as aesthetics, as toolkit (Pérez, 2016, pp. 191–195), and as method/political stance (Bello, 2018; Sánchez-Saínz, 2019; Trujillo, 2015)/political praxis, that is, as pedagogy in its relational sense (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2012), should be premised on the ethical imperative of the *Ch'ixi* (i.e., coexistence, after Rivera Cusicanqui, 2010, 2012, 2019). Otherwise, as many scholars and political activists are embracing and operationalizing the notion of *queer*, in queer pedagogies—both in academic (schools/universities/teacher education programs) and non-academic sites—to engage such a wide range of practices/experiences (the ones listed above), they are rendering the terms (queer and pedagogy) not only elusive but also pedagogically and ethically meaningless.

As Valencia Mafla (2018, pp. 51–52) explains, *Ch'ixinakaxutxiwa*[12] or *Ch'ixi* (pronounced as /'ʧɛhɛ/) is an embodied conceptualization of how Aymara people deal with Otherness, difference, and assimilation, both during the colonial period and in the present time. For Aymara, *Ch'ixi* means coexistence. It is a space, identity, mindset, aesthetics, politics, ethics, and bodily disposition where multiple, differing, heterogeneous, and oppositional political, linguistic, racial, aesthetic, and cultural realities coexist in parallel, antagonizing, complexifying, problematizing, and complementing one another. Indeed, as a social construct, it seeks to engage internal colonialisms as well as the colonial horizon (Rivera Cusicanqui, 2010, p. 56), by unleashing the oral, the pictorial (image), and performative potential of Indigenous epistemologies. Unlike other constructs, like

that of hybridity, *Ch'ixi* hinges on the notion of the "motley society" (*sociedad abigarrada*), one that reproduces itself from the depth of the past and is related to the others contentiously (Rivera Cusicanqui, 2010, p. 70).

By adopting the ethical imperative of *Ch'ixi* as one of the cornerstones for queer pedagogieS, we mean to tap into:

> la descolonización de nuestros gestos, de nuestros actos, y de la lengua con que nombramos el mundo. El retomar el bilingüismo como una práctica descolonizadora permitirá crear un "nosotros" de interlocutores/as y productores/as de conocimiento, que puede posteriormente dialogar, de igual a igual, con otros focos de pensamiento y corrientes en la academia de nuestra región y del mundo. La metáfora del Ch'ixi asume un ancestro doble y contencioso, negado por procesos de aculturación y "colonización del imaginario", pero también potencialmente armónico y libre, a través de la liberación de nuestra mitad india ancestral y el desarrollo de formas dialogales de construcción de conocimientos.[13] (Rivera Cusicanqui, 2010, p. 71)

Accordingly, on the one hand, any queer pedagogy should begin by acknowledging the hierarchical structures that codify/amplify the pedagogical encounter/experience among students, teachers, pedagogical spaces, and knowledge/cultural-aesthetic-political practices/materials. On the other, it should also acknowledge the intersectionality of gender, sex, class, ethnicity-race, class, language, religion, (dis)ability, and so on that characterizes/positions the encounter/experience generating contingent, differential systems of oppression. Coexistence is always already premised on this political "economy of the gift" (de Certeau, 1984), dealing with precarity and limits (Britzman, 1995), where limits are not containers but "orientated spaces" (Ahmed, 2006) and "epistemic landscapes" (Wittgenstein, 1992) inhabited, amputated, symbolized, or simply conceived of to be "pushed against" (after Gaztambide-Fernández & Arráiz Matute, 2014), to be expanded, smuggled, blurred, mingled, resymbolized, regendered, and reversed.

Coexistence is not implicated in change or transformation; therefore, it recognizes the "impossibility of teaching" (Todd, 2001), the anti-essentialist view of identity as the sole purpose of education. It is not premised on monolingual language policies, welcoming the bilingual, the "fork-tongued" (Anzaldúa, 1987). It is not premised on Western white-mestizo epistemologies, challenging the very foundations of the academy,

the written academic paper as the "high watermark of human cognitive achievement" (Robinson, 2006), what counts as knowledge, and how to represent it. Coexistence does not vie for hybrid or third spaces, for this would imply that every difference (and therefore, every different person) would have to occupy its own space, amputating them from the social fabric.

Coexistence stresses "that being only emerges through and with others, [and] Ahmed (2000) pushes us to think about how these meetings do not necessarily assume two already discrete beings. Instead, the concept of separate beings is produced through the encounter, not before" (Gaztambide-Fernández & Arráiz Matute, 2014, p. 61). Queer pedagogieS are pedagogies of coexistence, co-creation, reciprocal, political, and cultural production movements that acknowledge the asymmetry with which students and teachers enter the pedagogical relationship, for

> What is at stake is not, in fact, the possibility of moving past the categories that structure inequality, but of a subjectivity that relieves the anxiety of being responsible for, and even benefiting from, the production of an other who must, as Ahmed points out, be allowed to live "as that which is beyond 'my' grasp, and as that which cannot be assimilated or digested into the ego or into the body of a community" (p. 139), whether human or posthuman. (Gaztambide-Fernández & Arráiz Matute, 2014, p. 61)

By proposing coexistence as the ethical imperative underwriting queer pedagogieS, we problematize the very [Anglo-Eurocentric, heteropatriarchal, anthropocentric, and verbocentric] foundations of education and pedagogy. So, even within the frame of a queer, dissident, transgressive, transformative pedagogy, the begged questions are: "Whose silicone tits" (Bello, 2018), values, worldview, desire, body, politics, culture, language(s) are being inflicted or forced upon as *the* norm, and to what ends?

R

Resistance

There's a right to be and to have safe spaces that have been denied to us. There's a historical inequality and different constructions that come from a misogynistic and racist western narrative. There's a story spoken and written by men. And there is resistance and revindication. We as women—black, mestizas, queer—are now coming forward, not only to denounce

but also to propose by acting upon our desires, organizing ourselves, and unapologetically existing, *sans* the man's gaze.

For instance, the places we inhabit carry our brand and our struggles for equality: in a place like Universidad del Valle, which has not been alien to heteropatriarchal practices, we find murals, paintings, graffiti, and written expressions representing women, because we are not present in the names of the buildings, labs, libraries, or auditoriums; there is not even one sculpture dedicated to us. Would this then be a way in which the physical space tells us that (the) legitimacy continues to position women and everything feminine below? In a need to look into this question, we found a vast number of murals and graffiti that depict women and images alluding to femininity (Fig. 13.1) across the Meléndez campus of the Universidad del Valle in Cali.

The artistic works (Fig. 13.2) we found tell stories about the defense of the body and the land, about ethnicity and connection with nature as well as the deconstruction of beauty. This practice of reflecting about ourselves

Fig. 13.1 Mural 1. E10 building, School of Integrated Arts

Fig. 13.2 Mural 2. E10 building, School of Integrated Arts

comes from the time of the origins of our species when we used artistic, symbolic, and conceptual representations of anthropomorphous and zoomorphic designs to make sense of who we are (Angulo, Eguizabal, & García, 2008).

We may still find artistic representations where femininity is associated with simulation, deception, and seduction (Owens, 1983) while masculinity is the positive, the idealized. But now we are reaching an era in which there is no talk of a single conception of the world but several cosmovision/worldviews. Thus, the voices of diverse ethnicities, cultures, and genders appear on the scene. There is no longer talk of a dichotomy but pluralism since there is no longer a dualism opposing fiction-reality, meaning-significant, or dominant-dominated (Mbaye, 2014).

The murals of the Universidad del Valle show androgynous (Fig. 13.3), sexless, and symbolic images that reflect on how we resist against the impositions of language that somehow limit, beginning with the classic duality of homosexual-heterosexual labels that are not enough to define people's sexuality among the wide number of variations that can be found. Some seek to fit into new categories such as pansexuality or bisexuality,

Fig. 13.3 Mural 3. D5 building, Graphic and Industrial Design Program

while others show resistance to those labels because they feel they have been imposed on them or because, in some way or another, they do not feel the need to "label/brand" themselves.

In the same way, we observed that although some murals recreate (hyper)sexualized images of women, the representations that predominate go beyond a phallocentric view (Fig. 13.4). They are artistic, political, and subversive expressions that aim to tell who women are from the different roles that we carry out, in an attempt to represent the stories and identities that inhabit our bodies. Likewise, the murals fulfill a function of visibility of social processes such as recognizing the fundamental role of black women and indigenous women in the struggle and resistance processes of our peoples (Figs. 13.2 and 13.4). They represent racialized women, the ones who have been marginalized and that through resistance question hegemonic identities (Viveros, 2016). The murals seek, then, to transform the imaginary because they exalt difference, rebellion, queer identities, and non-hegemonic individuals, those who inhabit the non-places and resist from the periphery.

Fig. 13.4 Mural 4. E10 building, School of Integrated Arts

Notes

1. The Criscadian Collective is composed of Cristina Arenas V., Camila Arredondo V., Diana Buriticá O., and Andrés Valencia M.
2. Though Russell, Kosciw, Horn, and Saewyc (2010) suggest the use of "Queer" as an umbrella term to describe a sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression that does not conform to dominant societal norms, the use of the term LGBT+ throughout the chapter is maintained as it was used by interviewed students to refer to and to describe their experiences related to gender and sexual orientation within and out of the academic space. Other identities are not included, since students did not identify or refer to them during the conversations.
3. Following sociologist Fernando Urrea-Giraldo (2019), we will use the category white-mestizo for non-ethnic population. In addition, after Rivera Cusicanqui (2012), insofar as mestizos have committed to the republican values, they enjoy the same economic, educational, political, legal, and sexual privileges of whites.
4. Translation our own.

5. "a collective resistance, of several individuals, men and women, who acted, with an ethnic-racial consciousness, with the sole aim of defeating the slave system and establishing themselves in free communities around the territory." Translation our own.
6. "white society to proclaim itself the superior race and to affirm its humanity by denying other humanities, especially the African." Translation our own.
7. "These stereotyped and hypersexualized images of black women prevail." Translation our own.
8. After Herman & Kraehe (2018: 229): "The term *whitestream* is used by indigenous scholars and critical race scholars to refer to dominant cultural practices and social structures in North America that normalize the experiences of Whites. Whites and non-Whites can participate in whitestreaming." We add the category of mestizo for in Latin America they also participate in the colonial project against Indigenous and Black populations.
9. Discursive and pedagogical appropriations have been fought back in the political, cultural, pedagogical, and aesthetic arena. See Sánchez-Sáinz (2018).
10. A pedagogy capable of slapping with its silicon tits Comenius, Rousseau, and all the modern pedagogues who thought of the body as something to be surveilled so as to prevent its deviation, and as an "object of pedagogical manipulation and experimentation intervened with the imperative need to make it become natural and universal." Translation our own.
11. In the Dictionary of the Spanish language of the Royal Spanish Academy, *marica* is related to the name Maria; to a homosexual man; and to an effeminate, coward, chickenhearted person. Also, in Colombia, it is used to refer to a dumb person. Recently, *marica* has become a pet word in Colombia and Venezuela. According to the dictionary Asíhablamos.com, *marica* can mean different things depending on the context in which it is said, it can mean: homosexual, or people who let themselves be fooled; also a pet word. Retrieved from https://www.asihablamos.com/word/palabra/Marica.php
12. See Rivera Cusicanqui (2010, 2012, 2019), Aymara scholar, chola, birlocha, and political activist from Bolivia.
13. "the decolonization of our gestures, our actions, and the language with which we name the world. Resuming bilingualism as a decolonizing practice will allow the creation of a "we" of interlocutors and producers of knowledge, which can subsequently dialogue, on an equal footing, with other schools of thought and currents in the academy, regionally and worldwide. The metaphor of *Ch'ixi* assumes a double and contentious ancestor, denied by processes of acculturation and "colonization of the

imaginary," but also potentially harmonious and free, through the liberation of our ancestral Indian half and the development of dialogical forms of knowledge construction." Translation our own.

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CHAPTER 14

Queer/Cuir Pedagogies: Fictions of the Absurd, Writings of the Stagger

val flores

This brief writing[1] is an attempt to humbly reflect on the possible futures of queer/cuir pedagogies from my political, poetic and pedagogical work as a prosex feminist masculine lesbian teacher with no institutional affiliation. I am more inclined toward queer/cuir wandering and to speculative workings of the unexpected and the unforeseen in experimental spaces of intense affective and bodily engagement, than to sticking to the formulae and protocols of educational organizations (flores, 2018a).

The emergence of queerness and a situated sexual dissidence located in the South, a geopolitical and epistemic (re)twisting that is inscribed as *cuir*, takes shape as a way of (un)doing. Its aim is to riddle with questions the field of pedagogy—prone to prescription, definition, stability, formulae, binarisms, models and affective habits produced by these variations—rather than presenting itself as a theory to be applied, or a corpus of renowned quotes to feed the phagocytizing machinery of academia, or as an avant-garde identity to be achieved, or as the imposition of a regulatory ideal of radical activism. Situating the material and theoretical coordinates

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of a line of thought is part of reinscribing the particularity of these spatial, temporal and bodily conditions for a way of thinking that is always carried out together with others, human and non-human.

Rather than a new form of knowledge, a queer/cuir pedagogy implies the ability to ask questions about the paths to access knowledge and to build meaning. As Britzman (1995) suggests, it deals primarily with a radical practice of deconstructing normality, and then, instead of presenting (correct) knowledge as an answer or solution, knowledge is built as an endless question (Luhmann, 1998). Therefore, part of the decolonizing work ahead is to take on challenges that tense academic production and educational practice, that do not submit to the implementation of logics of identity pasteurization in order to be smoothly included or assimilated under the prophylactic view of stifling discourses of respect and tolerance.

There is a relatively recent and considerable theoretical corpus on queer/cuir pedagogy in Spanish and Portuguese, as is evidenced in this book. Hence, if there is any future for this twisted and strange pedagogy that aims precisely to disarm the heart that pumps its fictional blood, those normalization processes that structure educational knowledge, it will be a matter of institutional, epistemological and bodily frictions. At the institutional level, it will take place by overcoming, tensioning and resisting their own process of normalization and assimilation under academic nomenclatures and their straining policies that moralize certain contents, admitting issues only under certain forms and conditions that leave the logic of their government unaltered. At the epistemological level, its future will arise from the haste and disagreements in the theoretical articulation of queer/cuir pedagogies with the ways in which political and artistic activism produces knowledge, creating a materiality of practice that embodies these often-divergent modalities. At the bodily level, it will be achieved by considering antagonisms and discomforts so that the friction between educators' and students' bodies, their multiple identities and forms of sensibility is not buried under the growing cultural pressure of sexual panic and its resulting anti-sex rhetorical trilogy of prevention, risk and danger.

Perhaps because the very idea of future itself is questioned by queer temporalities,[2] imagining the potentialities of queer/cuir pedagogies can be linked to a present time riddled with anachronisms and a range of ways of doing, of bodies, knowledge, affections and national legislations, which talk to and collapse against each other. Accordingly, if sexual deviations articulated queerness as a platform of political and community resistance, the temporal deviations produced by a queer/cuir pedagogy in its own

modes of theoretical and erotic fiction will have to be considered as a practical variation, threatening a temporal politics whose normative fiction organizes a naturalized order of corporality in the educational setting.

If all gender technology is in turn a technology of time, temporal normalization has somatic effects, updating the binary matrix that runs across pedagogical thinking. Therefore, thinking a queer/cuir pedagogy means opening up an alteration of time in its ways of organizing bodies and affections and, therefore, producing infringements in educational temporalities, as well as being able to listen to the coexistence of overlapping and non-combined times produced by queerness, dislocated from the tropes of progress and evolution. It is in this context of temporal mismatch that fictions of the absurd and writings of the stagger can take place.

The Dark Side of Queer/Cuir Pedagogy: An Absurd Perversion

In my opinion, this dislocated present, called the future of queer/cuir pedagogies, can be found, following an oracular intuition, in the act of sustaining its perverted excess by turning pedagogical action into a fiction of the absurd and a writing of the stagger. Here, body vulnerability, conceptual destabilization and authorial listening are affective organizers of a queer/cuir poetics. Sharing Deborah Britzman's (1995) concerns about the study of limits as a problem of thinkability, the point at which thinking stops, I think that both absurdness and staggering foster theoretical and pedagogical operations of cultural displacement and writing deviation, not to make an archive of oddities, but as an analytical procedure and affective methodology of conceptual and bodily dislocation to work on the limits of what is unthinkable; the intolerable, the unhearable or the (un)known.

Following the directions of Sedgwick (1994), who asserted that queerness must be distorted and diverted from previous uses, we might think the dark side of queerness (Sedgwick, 1993), always derogatory and negative, as a gesture that continues to connote perversion and illegitimacy, in order to design experimental educational adventures that bring tension into the complexities of skin, language, affections and state. In this sense, the complexities of queer lives, which include sex workers, BDSM (bondage, domination, submission, sadomasochism) practitioners, non-monogamous relationships, porn actresses and actors, among many other non-normative practices that involve the administration of sex, cannot

remain subsumed to the moral cleansing of queerness in the educational field, usually reduced to the visibility and recognition of LGTTBIQ+ identities and to the emotional grammars of conjugality that the homonormative *status quo* currently validates as appropriate or desirable.

If queer/cuir pedagogy is to represent a way of knowing, rather than a particular knowledge, I would like to recall Halberstam's words regarding the possibility of thinking that alternatives can emerge from "the murky waters of a counterintuitive, often impossibly dark and negative realm of critique and refusal" (Halberstam, 2011, p. 2). As part of that negative realm, the absurd appears as something irrational, incoherent, crazy, nonsensical, illogical, deranged, inadmissible, all adjectives that have crossed our LGBTTIQ+, racialized, precarious and functionally diverse lives. But rather than focusing on episodes, narratives or situations that are absurd, this is about reviewing the conditions to make the heteronormalization of educational knowledge absurd, removing it from the expected track to see how it spills out into the wanderings of other senses, shaking the dualistic logics of school thinking guided by non-contradiction and egalitarian fantasies of harmonic and peaceful relationships, to be able to displace, at that point, their micro-dynamics of power. The potentiality of the absurd as a practice of thought, from the estrangement and piercing of common sense, needs to be placed at the heart of a queer pedagogy.

Questions as a mode of (un)knowing can interrupt the normality of discourse when addressing the limits of thought—where it stops, what it cannot bear to know, what it must cancel to think the way it does. When unusual questions are made and when words are used improperly, semiotic and political collisions take place that surprise, fascinate, distort and break the routine of thinking and force us to cross the thresholds of theoretical and erotic imagination, where education strokes conceptual permeability, deliberate vulnerability, unexpected combinations and improvisation processes.

The absurd that takes the form of a question[3] appears as a possibility of destabilizing the axioms that imprison us in unequivocal, excluding and universal ways of thinking, such as positivity, productivity, the politics of assertiveness, progress, narratives of success, the rhetoric of hope and the imperialism of happiness, all of them comprising a heteronormative affective economy.

Questions that look not only into (im)possible identities, but also into the conditions that make the thought about other ways of living our bodies impossible. Questions on ignorance as a way of understanding and

practicing a certain heterosexualizing, racist and ableist form of knowledge. On the basis of that impertinent performance in-cited by Britzman, her "concern with whether pedagogical relations can allow more room to maneuver in thinking the unthought of education" (Britzman, 1995, p. 155), the provocative invitation is about unlearning the heterosexualized ways of thinking, looking, feeling and questioning, producing crackling frictions between the intimate and the public as a way of sexual (dis) organization, rather than teaching an inventory of fixed and stable identities. Consequently, a queer/cuir pedagogy suspects and destroys the hopes spurred by liberal individualism, associated with the representational inclusion of LGTTBIQ+ identities in the curricula as an alleged subversion strategy against heteronormativity, since it does not disorganize the normative structures of power.

Both the absurd and the stagger can create gestures of inadequacy to power, methodologies of a pedagogy that does not *exist*, but that occurs in the micro-politics of each event, and that is neither universally nor definitively articulated. A poetics of (un)learning, with practices of (un) knowing that reject both the form and content of traditional canons, making room for versatile possibilities that lead to unlimited forms of speculation, to ways of thinking that are not related to rigor and order, to divergent aesthetics for spatial organization, to forms of political commitment different from those enshrined by the liberal imagination (Halberstam, 2011).

Writing as Pedagogical Sensitivity, Staggering as an Epistemological Task

I would like to emphasize a central issue in this combination of frictions and fictions, of absurdness and stagger: how they relate to the language and modes of writing in a queer/cuir pedagogy. Because, as Haraway (2004) reminds us, words operate as catalogues for possibilities of existence. Every word is always a turning point in life, so the question about language has to do with the (im)possible ways of living that shape the present.

How can we try a non-binary writing that asserts the critical texture of the educational experience, its narrative and performative density, without flattening and smoothing its unevenness, roughness and irregularities, that is able to contain the temperature of the conflict inherent to all knowledge,

the emotional arc, visceral questioning, radical exposure and initial desolation it usually causes? How can we attempt an educational thinking that is carried out in the praxis of writing itself, attentive to the power of naming and the exhaustion of the ways of enunciating? Which modalities of work allow us to estrange neoliberal pedagogical language, with its technicalities, lack of commitment and individualization? How do the writing proposals we make to our students attempt to de-instrumentalize scholarly uses of language that slaughter its poetic vocation by treating it with impunity as a communication tool? How can we look for the artifices of language in order to show the contradictions, difficulties, ambiguities, complexities and the fortuitousness of an educational scene, in the construction of gender and in the objection of difference? How can we displace the practice of writing as mere representation, explanation, illustration or reflection of feelings or thoughts, and tense it as a field of experimentation and an indication of disidentification? How do I get involved as an educator in writing, among words, among the multiple ways of doing with other bodies, in order to activate the production of disruptive imaginaries?

There is no tangible neutrality in a system of written production, because that narrative texture seeks to touch someone with the text, to connect, wrap, dissolve, isolate, establishing complicities with ways of doing, material stories, visual disputes, temporal disjunctions, contexts of production or affective economies. Our educational experiences are complex and vary in their affective tones and emotional dispositions, where failures, tensions, contradictions, misunderstandings, obscurities and inadequacies unfold and are often subjugated to a narrative that is too clean and transparent, under the regulatory ideal of positivity that feeds the reproduction of appeased images and scarred speeches of our work as educators. Following Irit Rogoff (2003), we could think of how "the dynamics of loss, resignation, displacement and being without" begin to matter in our pedagogical writings, like an epistemological stagger that requires another tactical sensitivity in its ways of producing knowledge.

Emphasizing the ways of writing means precisely to disturb the regimes of bodily inscription, a constant struggle with the authoritarianism of ways of knowing, their colonial emotional policy and their epistemic violence, which have forged our relationship with the literary. The bureaucratization of writing impoverishes the deployment of an educational sensitivity that is able to discuss and alter the order of the sensitive, and it censors the creativity and initiative of educators and students, and compromises communication into a formulaic prose that condemns inventiveness to death.

Consequently, writing is a political practice, as it disorganizes power by configuring the worlds of the (un)utterable, the (un)thinkable and the (un)affectable.

Staggering is a minimal exercise, both optical and haptic, aiming to disrupt the normative textual economy of school and academic institutions, reclaiming the inventive condition of a practice that combines a process of conceptualizing experience, pedagogical imagination and a practical sensitivity, by working on the limits of our intelligibility and our obediences. It is a task of subjective detachment and tearing of educational lexicons, in order to avoid being suffocated by the sensitive imperatives of the cult to heroic optimism, to affirmative thoughts and positive affects, which challenge all negativity through the textual and sexual purification and sanitation of the production of pedagogical thinking.

Thus, writing as a practice of thinking outlines an unruly policy and an aesthetic that disagrees with the neutralization of educational experiences under a standardized semiotic register and a conventional textual format that legalizes the uniformity of speech, as a kind of soporific modulation of language. It means trying to open writing to an undisciplined porosity, watching out in the unknown the possibility of the emergence of other voices, bodies, experiences, knowledges, which makes institutionalized inequality falter and, thus, undermines its power to name and silence, disturbing its readability. Writings of the stagger that intervene in the writing economies of education as a laboratory of thought and affectivity, redefining the organization and structure of the certainties we feel we possess as educators, prefiguring the conditions of what may be thought and what can happen.

The writings of the stagger aim for a way of (un)doing the hegemonies of knowledge that we have learned and that have formed us, an exercise of affective countermemory against the grain of cruel optimism[4] (Berlant, 2011). Cruel optimism sustains positive thinking as an explanatory force of the social order, which insists on looking at the good side of things at all costs and, in turn, antagonizes positive images of popular representation and LGTTBIQ+ policies that only focus on political recognition and acceptance, silencing the oppressive reality for many of our wayward subjectivities.

If the ways of doing are politics of knowledge, and politics of knowledge involve ways of writing, exploring other languages from the implication of our own abject bodies, non-heteronormative identities and perverse desires involves a reflective and plastic experimentation to design

differential ways of producing knowledge, rather than the normative programming under the already known disciplinary logic that dismisses the more complex and discordant plots of educational intervention.

Disintegrating the Eyes of Hatred, Undoing the Boundaries of Skin

If resistance or, on the contrary, submission to control is decided in the course of each attempt, we must activate our perception during those micro-political interactions that occur below the macropolitical game, where possibilities that make a fruitful combination of politics and poetics are reopened (or shut). Estranging pedagogical languages is part of the political and educational work yet to experience, as "an encouragement for the radical critique of pleasures and their epistemological elisions that seek to expand pedagogical language as an erotic activity and provide spaces to explore erotic freedom, our own fantasies and desires, the negotiation of power" (flores, 2018c).

I would like to suggest a dis-identitarian turn in a significant part of the work on queer pedagogy that often reveals and denounces the lack of queer spaces, the violence against queer subjects, the invisibility of LGTTBIQ+ identities and representations, as an irreducible and paradoxical tension that runs across an educational practice that involves inhabiting different scales of action. These oscillate between the recognition of identities turned uninhabitable, and a sexual grammar interfering with their demands for codification under strict parameters of legibility, rejecting any opacity and overflows. A queer/cuir pedagogy also needs to estrange its modes of saying, doing and feeling, an imaginative labor of suspending ourselves in other ways of thinking and living in which, perhaps, writing is interrogating, educating is thinking, reading is feeling and activating is creating. Because in order to break the consensus of fear and obedience, writing pacts need to be broken (flores, 2018a).

This goes beyond writing about what the school and/or educators fail to do, what is missing, what cannot be done—that will be done by the states and the market corporations that seek to privatize education. Neither is it about putting forward a proposal that claims to say what is or what should be; instead, it is about promoting a thought and creating an opportunity to write about what is being done, establishing an anti-epic, minuscule and ecstatic gesture, in a context such as educational spaces, where

there is strong coercive pressure. It is about making queer/cuir pedagogy a bodily practice of writing, which locates those productive shadows, those hidden fissures, where things do happen (to us) and stimulate other practices and sensitivities as relational potentiality and an area of poetic-educational constitution open to collective composition.

For many of us who live under the eyes of hatred and the imminent annihilation in the hands of white, heteronormative, capitalist, ableist, ageist and colonial laws, the fictions of the absurd and the writings of the stagger conform an urgency for living. And they are, more fundamentally, questions open to the queer/cuir dislocation of our educational practices that understand knowledge as a shivering together (flores, 2018b) by disintegrating the boundaries between the intimate and the public, between the pedagogical and the political, and between school and ways of life, making our skin a porous and fragile ground for radical imagination.

Notes

1. Translation: Gabriela Rumacho.
2. Dahbar (2020a, 2020b), generously made available by the author.
3. A good practice may consist in connecting strange concepts that tend to be detached from each other, such as "moaning" and "education", which I used for a presentation at a university. The text begins with a number of questions, such as: "How can we link moaning with pedagogy? What kind of relation is built between a term that seems to come from intimacy with another signifier that seems to belong to the public sphere? Does this act presuppose that pedagogy is empty of moaning? Or is it responsible for silencing and privatizing moans, or in any case, certain moans produced by certain bodies and identities that are socially undesirable? (…) What educational fantasies and sexual panics are generated by a term that gets sticky with body fluids, with ways of fucking, with sexual pleasure, with the adventure of the unknown? Isn't there a pedagogy of moaning? Are there moans that do not matter? Are there racialized moans? Don't we learn to moan through porn technologies, moral discipline, school catechisms, divine punishments and family mandates?" flores, val (2019) *Llenar la pedagogía de gemidos. Posibles preguntas para encarnar una práctica educativa queer*. Universidad de Quilmes (in press).
4. In her book *Cruel Optimism* (2011), Lauren Berlant addresses the critical aspects of certain optimistic feelings associated with the idea of progress, taking into account the affective dimension of politics. In this regard, Cecilia Macón mentions: "Berlant extensively unfolds the notion that the preserva-

tion of the fantasy of progress, mainly that of upward social mobility, constitutes a particular affection: the cruel optimism, a kind of ideological procedure dedicated to keeping people attached to lives that, actually, do not make them happy" (2013, pp. 21–22).

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[1] Note: Page numbers followed by 'n' refer to notes.

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