AN INTERLOCUTION WITH SOME RESEARCH ON THE AFFECTIVE-SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS OF TRANSEXUAL’S PARTNERS

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ABSTRACT

With the rise of the Queer Theories in the 90s, a reflection was suggested regarding the historical gender and sex categories as opposed to the heteronormativity paradigm. Thus, new subjectivities and new partnership models that exploit the sexual diversity have become visible. The present article focuses on an interlocution with the knowledge produced by some researchers so as to understand how these authors see the t-lovers affective-sexual relationships. Our search for studies on such phenomenon evidenced scarce research on the infinite hues of desire particular to the sexual diversity due to the predominance of pathological aspects of the relationship and the use of quantitative research paradigm. As a result, we have been driven to seek the understanding of the t-lovers relationships through the qualitative research paradigm.

Key words: Heteronormativity, Sexual Diversity, Transexual’s Partners

Introduction

It is in the context of the thoughts about the paradigm of heteronormativity and the historical construction of the categories of gender and sex that the Queer theories appear around the 90s. Historically, heteronormativity is instituted and is reiterated in the dominant logic of heterosexuality, where consistency and continuity between body/gender/sexuality sets a "normality" standard to be adopted. According to Louro (2004), heteronormativity is considered "natural" and independent from culture and, therefore, the concept of gender and sexuality becomes limited to a unique and unchangeable fate: that of heteronormativity.

We know that dominant discourses are set based on the legitimacy of some sexual identities and gender at the expense of others. The place of those that are within the "policy" standard is defined as well as those who are found in its margins. The hegemony of heteronormativity is a historical construction of society that sets the "rules" of sexual behavior of subjects, structuring subjectivities, desires and sexual practices of a single mode.

According to Louro (2004), queer studies emphasize the need of enabling epistemological transformations that deconstruct the heteronormative binary logic and its effects of hierarchy, classification, domination and exclusion. Through the reflection about ambiguity and multiplicity of sexual identities and gender fluidity, the author suggests other creative ways of thinking about culture, which are: knowledge, power and education, which have made possible the emergence of policies to combat homophobia, intolerance and prejudice against the GLBTT population (gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transvestites and transsexuals).

Corroborating the view of this author, Bruns and Santos (2006), point out that the contemporary scene is marked by very fast transformations, technological advances, changes in the relationships between subjects, ruptures of paradigms, new standards of ethics and appreciation of aesthetics and consumption.

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This process of transformation affects the identities of the postmodern subject. The idea that the subject has of itself is displaced or off-centered, which triggers an "identity crisis" in the formation of a mobile and fluid identity. The insecurity instituted by such a situation results in distress due to the human need to be defined. This plurality is confronted with the idea of unity, characteristic of the stability pattern until the current age. To Bauman (2004), the current scenario has a mysterious fragility of human ties, built on "networks" and sites of virtual relationships, in order to be "erased" with the same ease with which were "linked". This way of being and of being in a relationship has generated a deep feeling of existential emptiness and disappointment, as well as anxiety.

From this virtual reality, we direct our attention to studies on transsexual couples, aiming to expand our horizon of understanding in relation to this sexual practice.

Investigations found on affective-sexuals couples of transsexuals are from the beginning of the Decade of the 80s until today. We want to create an inter-dialog with the authors to understand how they dealt with this affective-sexual practice.

In their study, Money and Lacmacz (1984) use the term gynemimetofilia to refer to men who have a sexual interest in feminized men or who live as women in their community. Money and Lacmacz (1984), told them that there are medical clinics for the treatment of these men, whose behavior would be in the field of paraphilias and disorders of sexual preferences.

For its part, the term ginandromorfofilia was first used by Blanchard and Collins (1993), to name the men who are sexually interested in she-males, transsexuals and feminized men. For authors, the ginandromorfofilia is instituted as a differentiated and particular erotic interest of men who don't cross-dress. However, the authors do not distinguish between transsexuals, transvestites or gay men looking for transvestites or transsexuals to have sexual intercourse, as well as feminized, recognized as men in activities of transvestites because of the way they dress or their lifestyle and looking for others like them for sexual encounters.

Blanchard and Collins (1993) argue that, in their majority, the ginandromorfofiles are not defined as gay or homosexual and want to be treated like men/masculine. They also say that the vast majority of the ginandromorfofiles of their studies did not mention their marital status and few assumed that they are married. They also claim that these men do not generally possess activities or transvestite behaviors. In this way, they are distinguished from transvestites and transgender people by the way they recognize themselves, their preference and the dominant role in the sexual interaction.

The authors believe that the ginandromorfofiles are more than you think, due to a very high number of pornographic publications, advertisements in newspapers, even the search for customers in the street for part of this population. In short, there is a wide market offer for these specific consumers.

Huxley, Kenna and Brandon (1981), at the same time, run on the sexual relationship between transsexuals and their partners and relate that such couples, for "love", accept peacefully or share the idea of transsexuals, who believe being born in "exchanged bodies". The authors believe that the degree in which this idea is shared it's expressed in the intensity of the emotional bond between couples, in their sexual needs and the pattern of dominance between the couple and concluded that, in general, the transsexual exerts a dominance over his partner, despite the fact that, in the majority of cases, they belong to the same social class.

In addition, Verde and Graziottin (1997) believe that the transsexual couple shares a folie à deux, term formerly used by psychiatry to describe what today is defined by the DSM-IV-tr (2002) as shared psychotic disorder and the CID-10 (2008) as induced delusional disorder.

Such disorder is characterized by the presence of similar psychotic symptoms in two or more subjects - a delusion shared by two or more persons very closely joined together at the emotional level. One of these people hardly presents an authentic psychotic disorder; the ideas are induced in the other person(s) and they are usually abandoned in the case of a separation. Association of factors such as dominance, submission, pre-psychotic personality, sex, age,
type of delirium and homosexuality with this disorder is discussed, and the emphasis of studies has gone about the factors of origin and its mechanisms of explanation, including identification, heredity and development, imitation and sympathetic shock and pressure. Such disorder is uncommon in clinical settings, although the argument is made that they sometimes go unnoticed. Therefore, for Verde and Graziottin (1997), partners of transgender people would be sharing psychotic delirium of the transsexual.

For these authors, while the sexual orientation of transgender couples can be heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual, the homosexual orientation is dominant, although it possesses many heterosexual behaviors. In this sense, Pinto (2008) says that the choice of a sexual partner can be mistaken with regard to the needs of identity, both on the part of the transsexual as part of his partner which, in reality, is homosexual.

Verde and Graziottin (1997, p.166) also claim that "the characteristics of "normal" partners of transgender people are difficult to define, because they normally avoid the clinical encounter". The authors assert that some transsexuals choose their partners to form a stable relationship, while others prefer to live constantly as singles.

In a more recent study, Lewins (2002) points out the differences between the relationships of women and transgender men. According to the author, the relations of the transgender - biologically male, but that they are identified with the female gender - are more unstable and there is an assessment of the physical characteristics and sexual behavior of the couple, teaching that it acts according to characteristics of the male gender. On the other hand, relationships of transsexuals - biologically female, but they are identified with masculine gender - are more stable and adjustable, and there is a search for partners with features related to love and care, that are characteristic of the female gender.

To expand this universe, Pelucio (2006), discusses the identity of the t-lovers, name currently used in a colloquial way to refer to men who are sexually related to she-males. The research was conducted with a base at weekly meetings and forums in the international network of an organized group. According to this author, such men do not abandon existing hegemonic masculinity, and many times contribute to strengthen it, because in this way "they override the possibility of reconceptualization of references of gender, sexual practices and, also, how they face the she-males" (p.31). The author also claims that, because it is men who transvestites like, knowledge of this sexual practice in the social environment would marginalize them, and they would probably have their masculinity questioned. Finally, declares: "being a t-lover still is to be clandestine" (p.31).

Corroborating to expand the place of the t-lovers, Pelucio (2007), says that men who seek the she-males want not only a penis, but also a type of women related to a pattern of passivity and domination. Seeking, in this way, a "feminine superlative “ (p.4), but at the same time they want a relationship peer. The t-lovers believe that it is impossible to obtain this type of relationship with women, since they do not know how to engage sexually with a man, not only due to a lack of penis.

In a study conducted by Borges et al. (2007), through the story of four cases of patients, the authors sought to relate the obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) with different types of paraphilias disorders. Among the studied cases of OCD, there is a diagnosis that the authors called paraphilia of the ginandromorfofilia, i.e., men that are attracted sexually or men who have casual sexual encounters with feminized men or transvestites; this feature is present from the beginning of the adult life of the patient. The authors tell it in the following way: "the patient spent hours wandering around the streets where transvestites were working at night... He was deeply attracted to the curves of the transvestites and that fantasy did not concern him” (p. 221). The authors end the case telling that the ginandromorfofilia framework remained unchanged during the treatment (Borges et al., 2007).
Brown (2009), for its part, in a qualitative study interviewed twenty women who related affective-sexually with biologically transgender females that passed to the male gender through a sexual and social reform. According to the author, the majority of these women reported that the sexual relationship was affected negatively in the period of hormonal and physical transition from the couple, who went from a female appearance to a male appearance, since many of these women are declared with a lesbian sexual orientation or had a personal story with trauma of relationships with men. However, they also report that it is affected in a positive way, since the couple began to feel more satisfied with their own body and had an increase in libido due to the male hormones administered.

Our history in search of dialogue with authors who focus on interests in understanding the way of being of these men (the affective-sexual pairs of transsexuals) enables us to assert that research about this sexual practice is scarce and that these subjects are clamoring to be understood not only by professionals, but also by the social and family environment.

The emphasis on the pathological aspects identified by our partners reveals interesting situations; However, we believe that research based on the qualitative paradigm may give voice to these subjects so that they are understood from the narratives of his affective-sexual experiences and can, therefore, broaden the knowledge about this way of being nuanced by anxieties, fears and stigmas for being on the border of the binomial hetero-erotic/homoerotic.

References


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