

WHY DON'T YOU EMBRACE ME?

Megg Rayara Gomes De Oliveira

- *Reflections on the invisibilisation of travestis and trans women in black social movements* •

ABSTRACT

In this article, I problematise the process of invisibilisation of travestis and/or trans women in the black social movement in Brasil. Even though the concepts travesti and transexual are recent, the subjects to which they refer are not. I seek to identify them in texts that discuss diverse themes, adopting a genealogical posture as Ines Dussel and Marcelo Caruso (2003) propose, as well as making use of the partial perspective proposed by Donna Haraway (1995) in order to analyze the fragments of the traditional history of the black social movement in Brazil in a critical way. The concept of intersectionality developed by the US – based black jurist Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989 plays an important role in this work, as it allows for the articulation of questions of gender, gender identity and race simultaneously. An intersectional debate allows us to see reflections that emerge from different sectors in society, such as the academy, the black social movement and the movement of travestis and trans women. My position as a researcher counters essentialist visions that generalize existences and ignore the multiple processes that they involve.

KEYWORDS

Travesti | Trans | Race | Black | Brazil | Social movement

1 • Introduction

Why doesn't the Black Social Movement embrace me? Why doesn't it hear me, even when I cry out? Why does the Black Social Movement continue to systematically ignore the exclusion and violence that characterizes the existences of black travestis and trans women? The answer is being announced, but it cannot be understood precisely.

The research conducted for this article shows that blackness in Brazil is being established out of cis heterosexuality¹ and ignores other possibilities for expressing blackness.

Sexualities considered deviant, such as homosexuality, travestis and trans, are seen as betraying the race.² By following this logic, the Black Social Movement is upholding the normatisation and normalisation of cis heterosexuality and in doing so justifying the invisibilisation of travestis and trans women within it.

This article seeks to bring to the forefront the central role that travestis and trans women play in the anti-racist struggle in Brazil and concludes with a set of practical proposals for the Black Social Movement.

2 • Lipstick, wigs and handcuffs: the position of travestis and black trans women

The life experiences of travestis and trans women³ in Brazilian society became a common topic for academic research in the 1990s. From the 2000s on, these studies earned greater visibility and became a central theme of Brazilian research⁴ thanks to the substantial increase in the number of studies on gender and sexuality.

This research, however, refers to more recent experiences and rarely includes information that historically locates people, more specifically black people, who express gender identities that escape cisgender norms.

This lack of historical context contributes to restricting the existence of travestis and trans women to contemporary western societies, as well as to certain spaces such as 'peripheral neighborhoods, nightclubs, plazas, boardinghouses and areas of concentrated prostitution in different capital cities.'⁵

Luiz Mott (2005) provides important evidence of the existence of travestis and/or black and indigenous trans women as early as the 16th century. The 1587 *Tratado Descritivo do Brasil* (Descriptive Treaty of Brazil) recorded the presence of Cudinas,⁶ an equivalent to contemporary travestis or trans women.

Even though they were described in a deprecating way, using the masculine gender and being called 'Nefarious Demons' the treaty in question shows that the Cudinas received the

same treatment and carried out the same activities as cisgender women:

*they dress and adorn themselves like women, speak like women, do the same work as the women, they carry jalatas, crouch down to urinate, have husbands that they care for and always have on their arms, they appreciate it when men woo them and once a month they do the ridiculous performance of pretending they are menstruating (...)*⁷

After these indigenous records, the next historical evidence of the existence travestis in Brazil refers to black people.

The oldest report, dated 1591, tells the story of Xica Manicongo. A resident of Salvador, she challenged gender norms and blurred the boundaries of what was understood as feminine and masculine and went out in the streets with a cloth wrapped around her body to show that she could be a ‘accommodating woman.’⁸

That affront resulted in a complaint to the Santo Oficio courts suggesting that she ‘refused to use the man’s clothes provided by the master, [conserving] the custom of the gentile negros from Angola and Congo, where the sodomite negros who commit the nefarious sin serve as women’.⁹

Scrutiny toward travestis and/or trans women grew at the same rate that they occupied public spaces.

The text of the First Constitutions of the Archdiocese of Bahia in 1711¹⁰ stipulated a fine of 100 cruzados to any man that dressed in women’s clothes, as well as the expulsion from the Bahia Archdiocese. Despite these punishments, travestis and/or black trans women occupied public spaces with greater frequency, chiefly in urbanised centres. ‘The travestis went out every day of the week, usually at night.’¹¹

This policing, nevertheless, was not restricted to the public sphere and ‘also occurred in private spaces.’¹² This control also permitted violence. As a rule, aggressions became grotesque public spectacles that served to normalise and normalise bodies.

I identify, therefore, that the two distinct movements of racism and transfobia are operating on these people and are seeking to attribute to them a lower value than what is attributed to white, cisgendered heterosexuality.

Very little changed at the beginning of the 20th century and the space destined for travestis was divided between prostitution and vaudeville shows, which left them marginalised and restricted to the nightlife.

The existence of travestis and/or trans women started being announced in specific spaces of populous cities like São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Salvador in bars, ports, plazas and brothels.

The black man's supposed dangerous potential and propensity for crime, which were highlighted in the earliest decades of the 20th century, especially after 1930,¹³ also reached the travestis.

That situation derived from the theories of scientific racism implanted in Brazil by Cesare Lombroso's (1835 - 1909) Criminal Anthropology, one of the lines of racial determinism that affirmed it was "possible to discover the criminal before he commits the crime"¹⁴ based on the certainty that "the proportions of the body were a mirror of the soul."¹⁵

And so all that was left for black travestis was a place in the periphery, of poverty, of 'deprivation, of celebrating sin, of luxury, of physical and symbolic violence, of unhealthy conditions, of a life torn apart.'¹⁶

Scrutiny by the State apparatus and by normalizing society determined which spaces and social roles travestis and trans women could occupy. In the periods in which this scrutiny diminished, they were able to gain visibility and sought to amplify their areas of action.

In the 1950s, a time in which the white, middle class homosexual community¹⁷ of Rio de Janeiro enjoyed some tranquility, the transit and professionalisation of travestis remained restricted to prostitution and to the theatre.

Some academics¹⁸ articulate information that reinforces the idea that travesti feminine identities were only tolerated when they were in their workplaces. This meant that those who challenged society and expressed their feminities all the time were rare.

I call attention to the fact that these affirmations are based on the life experiences of white travestis, especially those hired as *transformistas* by theatre companies in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro.

Denied access to this space, black travesti culture was constituted at the margins of the margin, within prostitution, *malandragem*, poverty, covered with physical and symbolic violence and under constant scrutiny by the police.

The press in the big cities contributed to this scrutiny and showed 'a marginal travesti subject that gains visibility through news related to the 'disorder' of the city: fights, assassinations, robberies, etc.'¹⁹

In these stories, the idea that travesti bodies are places where vices are concentrated can be seen, partly because they were considered a specific category of homosexuals. This meant that the press not only spoke in the masculine gender, but also included old associations such as that between homosexuality, pathology and criminality.²⁰

This marginal subject, described in a generic way, in the masculine gender, without individuality or the right to an identity, polluted, dirtied and disordered the spaces. But

they also resisted and tried to secure the right to exist.

This alternative world, where diverse erotic subcultures cried out gained new contours and 'became cultures of resistance to violence, stigma and oppression.'²¹

This culture of resistance was built through social networks of friends who offered one another support and opportunities to socialise and timidly amplified their areas of action.

The travesti shows in the 1960s, 1970s and part of the 1980s became popular, moving beyond being mere parodies of the opposite sex and becoming a new style of performance and a type of speech.²² Some earned significant visibility. Two of them, Claudia Celeste (1952 - 2018) and Weluma Brown (19? - 2013), both black, stand out because they were able to shift very static structures.

Claudia Celeste became nationally known after acting in the soap opera *Espelho Mágico* (Magic Mirror) in 1977 on the TV Globo television network. Weluma Brown worked for a short time as a *chacrete* dancer on the program *Chacrinha's Casino*, which aired on the now extinct TV Tupi.

The fact that they were able to construct feminised bodies with the use of feminine hormones and industrial silicone contributed to their ability to enter into previously prohibited spaces.

They encountered similar difficulty when trying to access social movements that were born or reorganised as the LGBT movement, which was called the homosexual movement at the time, and the black movement.

Fernanda Dantas Vieira (2015), when discussing the Military Dictatorship, informs that the Brazilian government had

an ideal 'people' and an ideal of a sane body type. This led them to enact a process of sanitation, hunting homosexuals, travestis, transexuals and any other deviant sex or gender, as well as 'degenerates.' Backed by a Christian ideology of family and morals, the municipal and state governments waged a war on homosexuals and travestis in Brazil. (n.p.)

Evidently, if we look only at race, the black population would also be the military's target. Because of this, it is possible to affirm that the 'deviant' black people suffer much greater persecution.

I ask then what is the relationship of these deviant black people to the Black Social Movement? I seek to understand to what extent the travesti or trans gender identity was a factor that led to inclusion or rejection in that space.

3 • Not here fag! The Black Movement is for real men!

The actions and articulations of the Black Social Movement have occurred, however not always under this name, since the regime of slavery.

Persecution from the Getulio Vargas government, beginning in the 1930s, and during the Military Dictatorship, which began in 1964, seriously compromised the anti-racist struggle. The Black Social Movement regained momentum in the 1980s, with the impulse of the centenary of the abolition of slavery.

Even though there is consensus that the Black Social Movement has advanced the fight for the rights of historically marginalised people, it is also visible that it reproduces oppressive behaviors by remaining silent on the demands considered less important, such as questions of gender, gender identity and sexuality.

Part of the problem is related to widespread presence of cis, heterosexual men as leaders of the main organisations that fight for the rights of the black population. Their demands are connected to their lives and realities, which reinforces some stereotypes. These include the naturalisation of the idea that 'blackness is constituted through the normalisation of the heterosexual black man, represented by the emblematic virility of his physical force, aggressive nature, violence, hearty appetite for sex and powerful penis.'²³ Within this logic, transvesti or trans identity is something completely disconnected from blackness. Trans bodies, identities and subjectivities will not have a place within the Black Social Movement, as their 'lives are not considered lives and materiality is understood as not important.'²⁴

One possibility for activist action for transvestis and trans women began in 1969 in New York, in the Stonewall Revolt, the cradle of the LGBT movement.

The two people seen as responsible for sparking the protests and paving the way for the present LGBT movement are Marsha P. Johnson, a black transvesti and Sylvia Rivera, a Puerto Rican transvesti.

Despite the presence of transvestis and/or trans women and lesbian women in the process of articulating and organizing this new movement, it was called the Gay Movement and prioritised the demands of masculine homosexuals.

This position contributed not only to the normalisation and normatisation of the cisgender identity, but also to maintaining transvestis and trans women in positions of extreme vulnerability. Denied space within the movement itself, they got organised and founded a separate movement.

In Brazil, the Transvesti and Trans Social Movement was officially inaugurated in 1992 with the founding of the Association of Transvestis and Liberated People of Rio de Janeiro

– ASTRAL, which responded to the need to discuss the specific questions of the travesti universe such as gender identity, social name, de-pathologizing the trans identity, hormonal therapy, violence, education, the job market, human trafficking, industrial silicone, the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS, among others.

Since the beginnings of the TT movement, black leaders such as Keila Simpson, who is now president of the National Association of Travestis and Transexuals (ANTRA, founded in 2007), Jovanna Baby, Cris de Madri, Cris Stefanny, Janaína Lima and Dediane Souza have occupied a special place. Even so, race has not becoming an important issue.

Making an analogy to the writing of Ari Lima (2006) who problematises black homosexuality, it is possible to affirm that travestis and black trans women are inhabitants of two worlds and, at the same time, they do not belong to either one of them.

In an attempt to reverse this situation and call attention to the importance of discussing racism and transfobia in an intersectional way, some activists have started to work both in the Travesti and Transexual (TT) Movement and in the Black Social Movement. Even though the racial question has not come up in the TT Movement in a deeper way, in general, in this space they feel more comfortable as gender identity often maps onto racial belonging.

Paulet Furacão, a black trans woman, social educador and resident of Salvador - BA, explained in an interview with Patrícia Gonçalves (2017) that

Being trans means suffering all the possible stigmas in a country considered the country of diversity and acceptance and that has effective policies for its population. Imagine being a black woman and on top of everything else is trans? It means that I must fight twice as hard to guarantee effective policies.

Comparing a black and a white travesti means recognizing that policies for the black population are not being effectively implemented. Even for trans people in Brazil, it is much easier for public policies to reach the white travesti population, but the same policies will not reach black travestis and trans.

Based on this account by Paulet Furacão, it is possible to affirm that racism serves as a further obstacle, magnifying the exclusion of travestis and trans women.

Socioeconomic and educational disadvantages are just two of the multiple disadvantages that affect black travestis and trans women. This reveals the lack of commitment of the TT (travesti and trans) movement to combatting racism, while also pointing to the maintenance of sexism and transfobia in the Black Social Movement. Paulet Furacão

is incisive on transfobia, communicating in a written interview with me: 'I believe it does [play a role] even if the movement itself doesn't recognise this type of violence being reproduced with our segment.'

Nicole Machado, a black trans woman, who is pursuing a Bachelor's in Cultural Mediation in the Literature course at the Federal University of Latino-American Integration - UNILA, in Iguazu Falls, explained to me in an interview through Facebook that trans women in the Black Social Movement are 'oftentimes the centre of the debate, but the reflections are shallow about our experiences and way of thinking.'²⁵ Despite the tranquility with which she moves through this space, she feels only partially represented by the issues of the movement. An explanation can be found in the intersectional vision that is starting to be adopted, where racism and transfobia are debated simultaneously while also opening up space for a better understanding of the specific demands of the travesti and trans population. This situation can be seen 'when we adhere to the LGBT community. In general, they treat us like it was all the same thing.'²⁶

Opening spaces in a movement that reproduces patriarchal structures and hierarchies from the western model means living with the possibility of running into conflictual situations, including transfobia.

*I have undergone situations of conflict. The most recent one was at a party organised by a black collective that I am familiar with. When I went to the bar to buy a drink, I was completely disrespected. I have also been denied service, but they are unknown people. Sometimes I prefer to rely on a local person.'*²⁷

Relying on a local person, or, in other words, turning to people I know personally guarantees that my rights will be respected in a space that proposes to fight against racism reveals the maintenance of positions that naturalise certain forms of discrimination.

When this movement denounces the genocide of black male youth, there is no interest in understanding the question of sexual orientation and/or gender identity. This confirms that the multiple levels of violence that affect the black population are motivated by racism.

The violence committed by the São Paulo police against the black travesti Verônica Bolina in 2015 reveals the absolute disinterest of the Black Social Movement in the lives of travestis and trans women.²⁸

Accused of trying to kill a person living on the street and resisting arrest, Verônica was brutally beaten by a group of police officers. They disfigured her face, shaved her head and ripped her clothes. After all of the violence she suffered, she had her hands and feet cuffed and was made to lie down, half naked, on the internal patio of the delegacy.

The macabre violence ritual was filmed and photographed, and the images were shared on social media. Despite wide repercussion of the case, the Black Social Movement did not make a pronouncement. It stayed silent, as if Verônica's racial belonging covered over her gender identity.

The violence Verônica suffered is not an isolated case. Travestis and trans women are one of the most vulnerable groups in Brazilian society: "According to the National Association of Travestis and Transexuals (Antra), 179 assassinations of travestis or trans people were registered in 2017. This means that every 48 hours a trans person is assassinated in Brazil."²⁹

The majority of the victims, nearly 70%, are aged between 16 and 29. This is a contributing factor to the low life expectancy of a trans person in Brazil, which is the lowest in the world at 35.³⁰ Concerning the relationship to racial belonging, 80% of the cases were identified as black and mixed race people, challenging the tragic data on the assassinations of black youth in Brazil.

Another significant aspect of these assassinations is that, in general, they are carried out as ritual acts: "in 85% of the cases the assassinations contained evidence of cruelty such as the excessive use of violence, dismemberment, drowning and other brutal forms of violence. This shows hatred in the cases"³¹

With regard to this violence, this genocide, Paulett Furacão agrees that

there are no campaigns within the black movement focused on the trans population. We are practically invisible. There is no care or attention to debating the specificities within the black movement. The whole time we have to impose our presence in these debates. (Paulett Furacão).

Regarding the assassinations, Paulett points out that the commotion is different when the person assassinated is white. The hierarchies of race and gender identity combine to silence, erase: "There is no positioning. Recently there was an assassination of a trans black girl in Rio Vermelho that was not seen in the black movement or in the movement of trans women." (Paulett Furacão).

So what can be done? How to propose an intersectional dialogue among the black movement and travestis and trans women, especially those who are black.

The response is shot out like a ray. With the velocity that only someone who was and continues to be silenced is able to speak.

It is necessary to recover the meaning of the word activism and the importance of bodies and the visibilisation of these segments in this

exclusionary society. The cry "Stop killing us!" should refer to all black bodies. (Paulett Furacão).

4 • Some proposals

Discussing racism means considering the fact that it operates in different ways because it involves questions of gender, gender identity and sexual orientation, among others. The naturalisation of rigid and crystallised binary identities arises as yet another obstacle on the path of black people who escape these normalisations and naturalisations.

Some actions can contribute to alter the situation of invisibilisation of the existence of black travestis and trans people:

1. Develop courses - online and/or live - that encourage leaders in the Black Social Movements to see the fact that the genocide of male youth is also motivated by homophobia and transphobia;
2. Analyze the data on anti-LGBT violence alongside data on violence motivated by racism and, in doing so, identify travestis and black trans women;
3. Organise debates (seminars, meetings, etc.) with the presence of black leaders from the Travesti and Transexual Movement that aim to call attention to the existence of other black identities, distinct from the normative cis heterosexuality;
4. Provide training courses - online and/or live - for leaders and activists from the Black Social Movement, discussing gender and sexual diversity, emphasizing the travesti and trans gender identities;
5. Produce support materials - flyers, magazines, videos, electronic media, etc. - discussing gender and sexual diversity, with an emphasis on travesti and trans gender identities;
6. Produce publicity campaigns that value and support black travestis and trans people;
7. Carry out campaigns stimulating the permanence and participation of black travestis and trans people in the Black Social Movement
8. Establish partnerships with research units at public universities that discuss gender, sexual diversity and ethno-racial relations and provide extension courses that problematise the invisibilisation of black travestis and trans people in the Black Social Movement;
9. On holidays, such as the National Day of Black Consciousness, highlight the participation of travestis and trans people in the fight against racism.

In all of these actions, it will be necessary to adopt an intersectional perspective not only in the theoretical field, but also in the field of militancy, promoting the joining together of issues currently considered distinct, but that impact a large portion of the black community.

In this way, it will be possible to establish dialogues about valorizing and protecting lives. Little by little, these black arms, crossed and inert in the face of the multiple situations of violence directed towards travestis and black trans women, will begin to move. They will start to take the shape of a comforting embrace where we can seek safe harbor and actually feel protected.

NOTES

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- 1 • Ari Lima, "Da Vida Rasgada. Imagens e Representações sobre o Negro em Madame Satã," *Revista do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Estudo de Linguagens* 1, no. 2 (2006).
- 2 • Ari Lima e Felipe de Almeida Cerqueira, "A Identidade Homossexual e Negra em Alagoinhas," *Revista Bagoas* 1, no. 1 (jul./dez., 2007): 269-286.
- 3 • The terms travesti and trans came into greater use beginning in the second half of the 20th century. The people to which they refer, however, have always been a part of humanity in diverse cultures. For this reason and in order to facilitate the understanding of my reflections, I will use them throughout the text.
- 4 • Marília dos Santos Amaral, Talita Caetano Silva, Karla de Oliveira Cruz e Maria Juracy Filgueiras Toneli, "Do Travestismo às Travestiçidades": Uma Revisão do Discurso Acadêmico no Brasil Entre 2001-2010," *Revista Psicologia & Sociedade* 2, no. 26 (2014): 301-311. Because I support a non-sexist education that goes beyond using the feminine and masculine genders to refer to people in general, the first time there is a citation of an author, I include his or her complete name in order to identify his or her sex (gender) and, consequently, to give greater visibility to women researchers and academics.
- 5 • *Ibid.*, 302.
- 6 • Luiz Mott, "Raízes Históricas da Homossexualidade no Atlântico Lusófono Negro," *Revista Afro-Ásia*, no. 33 (2005): 9-33, accessed January 14, 2011, http://www.afroasia.ufba.br/pdf/afroasia33_pp9_33_Mott.pdf.
- 7 • Mott, "Raízes Históricas da Homossexualidade no Atlântico Lusófono Negro," 2005.
- 8 • *Ibid.*
- 9 • *Ibid.*, 14.
- 10 • Jocélio Teles dos Santos, "Incorrigíveis, Afeminados, Desenfreados: Indumentária e Travestismo na Bahia do Século XIX," *Revista de Antropologia* 40, no. 2 (1997):145-182.
- 11 • Santos, "Incorrigíveis, Afeminados, Desenfreados," 1997, 167.
- 12 • *Ibid.*, 154.
- 13 • Maria Cristina Soares de Gouvêa, "Imagens do Negro na Literatura Infantil Brasileira: Análise Historiográfica," *Revista Educação e Pesquisa* 31, no. 1 (9 Jan./Apr. 2005): 86.
- 14 • Lilia Moritz Schwarcz, "As Teorias Raciais, Uma Construção Histórica de Finais do Século XIX. O Contexto Brasileiro," in *Raça e Diversidade*, orgs. Lilia Moritz Schwarcz e Renato da Silva Queiroz (São Paulo: Edusp, 1996): 170.
- 15 • Maria Aparecida Silva Bento, "Branqueamento e Branquitude no Brasil," in *Psicologia Social do Racismo: Estudos sobre Branquitude e Branqueamento no Brasil*, orgs. Iray Carone e Maria Aparecida Silva

Bento (Petrópolis: Vozes, 2002): 36.

16 • Lima, "Da Vida Rasgada. Imagens e Representações sobre o Negro em Madame Satã," 2006, 7.

17 • This was the concept used at the time.

18 • João Silvério Trevisan, *Devassos no Paraíso: A Homossexualidade no Brasil, Da Colônia à Atualidade* (Rio de Janeiro: Record, 2002); James Naylor Green, *Além do Carnaval: A Homossexualidade Masculina no Brasil do Século XX* (São Paulo: Editora da UNESP, 2000); e Antonio Ricardo Calori de Lion, "Ivaná: A Grande Dúvida no Teatro de Revista nos Anos 1950," *Albuquerque Revista de História* 7, no. 14 (jul./dez. 2015): 102-120.

19 • Elias Ferreira Veras, "Carne, Tinta e Papel: A Emergência do Sujeito Travesti Público-Midiatizado em Fortaleza (CE), no Tempo dos Hormônios/Farmacopornográfico," PhD thesis in History (Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, 2015): 41-42.

20 • Veras, "Carne, Tinta e Papel," 2015.

21 • Richard Parker, *Abaixo do Equador* (Rio de Janeiro: Record, 2002).

22 • Remom Bortolozzi, "A Arte Transformista Brasileira: Rotas Para Uma Genealogia Decolonial," *Quaderns de Psicologia* 17, no. 3 (2015): 123-134.

23 • Lima e Cerqueira, "A Identidade Homossexual e Negra em Alagoinhas," (2007): 277.

24 • Tiago Sant'ana, "Bicha Preta, Pobre e

Afetada? Aqui Não, Hein?! – Corpo e Identidade Homossexual na Revista Gay A capa." XII Congress of Communication Science in the Northeast Region, Campina Grande – PB, June 10-12, 2010, accessed March 29, 2014, <http://www.intercom.org.br/papers/regionais/nordeste2010/resumos/R23-1458-1.pdf>.

25 • Interview with Nicole Machado, Facebook, 10-17 October, 2018.

26 • *Ibid.*

27 • *Ibid.*

28 • Kleber Tomaz e Paulo Toledo Piza, "Transexual Verônica Bolina É Presa Após Tentar Matar Moradora de Rua em SP, Diz Polícia." G1, October 5, 2017, accessed on December 16, 2018, <https://g1.globo.com/sao-paulo/noticia/transexual-veronica-bolina-e-presa-apos-tentar-matar-moradora-de-rua-em-sp-diz-policia.ghtml>.

29 • Helena Martins, "Número de Assassinatos de Travestis e Transexuais é o Maior em 10 Anos no Brasil." Agência Brasil, January 25, 2018, accessed October 22, 2018, <http://agenciabrasil.ebc.com.br/geral/noticia/2018-01/assassinatos-de-travestis-e-transexuais-e-o-maior-em-dez-anos-no-brasil>.

30 • Martins, "Número de Assassinatos de Travestis e Transexuais é o Maior em 10 Anos no Brasil," 2018.

31 • *Ibid.*



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I am a black travesti originally from Cianorte in rural Paraná. I presently live and work in Curitiba. I have a design degree (1994) and a specialization in Art History (1998) from the Music and Fine Arts School of Paraná. I also have a certificate in African and Afro-Brazilian Culture and History and Culture, Education and Affirmative Action in Brazil from the Tuiuti University of Paraná (2008). I have a Master's and Doctorate in Education from the Federal University of Paraná (2017). I was the first trans person to earn a doctorate from the Federal University of Paraná, which was founded 105 years ago and is one of the oldest higher education institutions in the country. My master's thesis discussed the silence around the African and Afro-Brazilian aesthetic in art education and my doctoral dissertation sought to understand the resistance and existence strategies developed by black homosexual teachers during their work. Since the beginning of my work as a "researcher" I have discussed themes related to ethno-racial relations, African Art, Afro-Brazilian Art, gender and sexual diversity. Recently, I have been problematising the tensions between the travesti and black trans woman identities both in gender studies and in social movements, specifically in the black movement. In June of 2018, I was nominated to represent the Post-Graduate Program in Education at the Federal University of Paraná for the CAPES award for best thesis in 2017. I am an activist in the black social movement and the travesti and transexual movement in Paraná.

Received in October 2018.

Original in Portuguese. Translated by Courtney Crumpler.



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