

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Carolina Ryan Melchor for the degree of Master of Arts in Women Gender and Sexuality Studies presented on May 30, 2019

Title: The Feminist Itinerant School: A Feminist Pedagogical Approach to Curriculum Transformation for Public School Teachers in Brazil.

Abstract approved:

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This Thesis examines Brazil's political and historical context to explore and understand the logics behind the high rates of violence in our society. It focuses in education as one of our main vehicles of disseminating knowledge and therefore culture, language and values that might be contributing and perpetuating sexism, racism, and classism. It argues and emphasizes the importance of feminist and critical pedagogies to bring different perspectives to the curriculum through a literature review that has guided the development of the suggested workshop for public schools' teacher. The workshop named The Itinerant Feminist school intents to reflect upon social cultural and political issues that directly affects students' lives and our teaching practices. Opening a space for teacher to share their own concerns in the classroom at the same time as exploring and understanding how privilege, positionality and implicit bias might be embedded in our practices.

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The Feminist Itinerant School: A Feminist Pedagogical Approach to Curriculum
Transformation for Public School Teachers in Brazil

by

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A THESIS

submitted to

Oregon State University

in partial fulfillment of

the requirements for the

degree of

Master of Arts

Presented May 30, 2019

Commencement June 2019

Master of Arts thesis of Carolina Ryan Melchor presented on May 30, 2019

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I understand that my thesis will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my thesis to any reader upon request.

Carolina Ryan Melchor, Author

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would first like to thank my adviser, professor Dr. Susan Shaw, as well as my committee Members, Dr. Cari Maes, Dr. Janet Lee and Dr. Michael O'Malley, that have supported me in different ways in this process of developing this work and structuring this thesis.

I thank my family, in particular my partner Luiz and my daughter Maya, for coming along in this journey, in another country, and making every challenge worth it. I thank Luiz for being more than a partner but a work and activist ally, reflecting with me upon this thesis through long conversations, debates and revisions and Maya for keeping us surrounded by joy and kindness at every moment. I thank my Mother, father and brother, for also supporting us when we needed the most.

I would also like to thank all the members of the Feminist collective M.A.R.. Without them this would not have been possible. They have become my family and have inspired me with the foundation of this work, supporting me in every possible way, even with the distance.

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1. Introduction

The debates and discussions around gender and sexuality in Brazil in the last few years have taken an interesting path. It has been a great challenge for the purpose of this research to keep up with the political transformations that are quickly unveiling an extremely conservative section of our society that believes educational policies and politics should be grounded in conservative values that are tightly connect with religious beliefs. These beliefs are supported by a neoliberal social structure that embraces patriarchal values that have historically caused disadvantages to women (and girls), especially black women, people with disabilities, and members of the LGBT+ community. With no fear of retaliation, public officials and government authorities have been openly racist, sexist, and homophobic, influencing educational practices as well as knowledge production and consequently negatively impacting the lives of the already marginalized in Brazil.

For example, on the day of the vote on the impeachment of president Dilma Roussef (PT – Worker’s Party), then-congressman Jair Bolsonaro, (PSL- Social Liberal Party) dedicated his vote in honor of Coronel Alberto Brilhante Ustra, the man who commanded the *Doi-Codi -Departamento de Operações de Informações - Centro de Operações de Defesa Internal* (Department of Information Operations - Center for Internal Defense Operations) from 1970 to 1974. This was the main agency of repression and intelligence during Brazil’s military Regime (1964-1985), well known for the being the place where torture and other atrocities were committed

to prisoners of the regime. Bolsonaro called him Dilma's terror. (Ribeiro, 2018, Arns, 1985). Dilma was brutally tortured at Doi Codi when arrested by the military regime.

Bolsonaro stated:

They lost in 1964. They will lose in 2016. For the family and innocence of the children in the classroom that PT (*Partido dos Trabalhadores* – Worker's Party) never had, against communism, to our freedom, against the *Foro de São Paulo* and in the memory coronel Carlos Brilhante Ustra, the terror of Dilma Rouseff. To the Caxias army and our National armed forces. For Brazil above everything and God above all, my vote is yes. (Bolsonaro, 2016)

This thesis offers one small possibility for resisting these forces in Brazilian society—a Feminist Itinerant School that will offer teachers the possibilities to reflect upon curriculum transformations and pedagogical strategies around issues of gender, race, sexuality, social class, and disability. I begin by examining Brazil's historical context and ongoing legacy of colonialism and then draw from the literature of critical and feminist pedagogies to inform a 10-session experience for teachers and administrators. I emphasize the democratic character of educational institutions to ground my understanding of knowledge production and teaching. I refer to theories grounded in feminist pedagogies connected with critical thinking and cultural criticism. Feminist pedagogy as proposed by Frances A. Maher and Mary Kay Thompson Tetreault “focuses on the particular needs of women students and is grounded in feminist theory as the basis for its multidimensional and positional views of the construction of knowledge in the classrooms” (Tetreault, Maher, 2001, p.3).

Weaving those concepts and ideas with consciousness raising processes and liberatory teaching practices proposed by Paulo Freire and bell hooks, as well as women's movements and activism in the U.S. and in Brazil, allows me to structure the Feminist Itinerant School focused in the possibilities for curriculum transformation and social change.

The process of engaging in this research has taken form in the past few years as I witnessed, as an activist and a teacher, the plight of women in Brazil, especially women in marginalized communities. In Brazil women face high rates of violence and difficulties to overcome the power of patriarchal political structures in the country (Ribeiro, 2018). Rigid gender, race, and class structures maintain a culture of patriarchal violence that contribute to the ongoing oppression of women. Here, I advance an ongoing effort of feminist movements to create possibilities to shift some of these cultural and social practices in educational spaces that can be detrimental, especially for women and girls in socially disadvantaged communities, affirming my commitment to a "politicized revolutionary feminist movement with the central agenda of transformation of society." (hooks, 1994)

1.1. Historical Background

Brazil's colonization project was grounded in exploiting the lands of the new world, to enrich Portugal and had as one of the most powerful weapons the catechizing of indigenous populations by the Jesuits with a strong pedagogical plan that still echoes in our society. The Jesuits arrived in Brazil in 1549, being responsible for the first schools (*Colégios*) and seminars that would expose this "new land" to the

western European colonial projects in order to bring order and control by the colonizers. (Saviane, 2019). Education was then and still is one of the most powerful tools the State uses to “fix” social inequalities and to create the possibilities to succeed in its economical and religious plan. This tool has then, through the history of our country, been used to maintain powerful economic interests, such as the Catholic Church and now the recently powerful evangelical movement. According to historians; Juvenal Costa and Sezinando Menezes; “During the period of 1549 and 1759, education in the colonial period was under the power of priests and brothers of the Jesus Company (*Compahina de Jesus*), that means since the Jesuits first arrived in the Brazil until their expulsion by Marques de Pombal. During this period Christian, Portuguese or not, the Black and Indigenous population had the mark of the Jesuits (2009, p. 3)

Throughout the colonial period (1500-1889), Catholicism was the state’s official religion. It was with the proclamation of the First Republic in 1889 that the state became laic (separation of church and state), but the influence of the Church and its roots within the political structures were already too deep. (Costa, Menezes, 2009) During the first republic and during the Vargas era (1930-1945), the Catholic Church and the state declared mutual respect and cooperation with each other in mutual concerns. This relationship lasted through the military dictatorship, even though there was also a lot of resistance from members of the church facing the brutal regime imposed by the military forces from 1964 to 1985. As the country transitioned to a democracy, the Catholic Church was very involved with social movement, and NGOs, having a strong influence in the country’s educational plan (Rosemberg,

1985). Only in the last ten years has the Catholic Church seen its influence being threatened by the evangelical church. (Oro, 2005)

This strong influence of the evangelical church in Brazil has brought Catholics authorities (Vatican authorities) and the Brazilian government to reconnect and think through strategies to reinforce Catholic influence in the country. In 2008 president Luiz Inácio Lula Da Silva signed a treaty with the Vatican to reinforce that the teaching of Catholicism and other religious confessions should be facilitated within public schools, mainly to ensure the predominance of the Church in society.

Article 11 of the federal decree says:

“§1º. Religious teaching, Catholic and of other religious confessions, of optional enrolment, constitutes the discipline of the regular hours of the public schools in the fundamental level (middle school), reassuring the respect of Brazil’s cultural and religious diversity, in conformity with the constitution and other current laws, with no forms of discrimination.”¹ (Brazil, 2007)

This decree reinforces the Church’s social and political responsibilities within Brazilian society and guarantees religious indoctrination in different social and educational spheres of society. So even though the state is considered laic, there are still many connections and arrangements between church and state. It is interesting to point out that member of the evangelical community, including politicians, were against this decree, exposing a clear dispute in political spaces to guarantee institutional religious interests.

¹ Link to the official federal decree sanctioned by president Lula in 2007 - http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_ato2007-2010/2010/decreto/d7107.htm

I bring this to the introduction of this research so we can from this point understand how the powerful Church apparatus affects directly what kind of “subjects” and disciplines should be incorporated in the national curriculum and what social and religious norms are imposed on all. These religious norms within our culture have supported the strategies used by dominant groups to perpetuate and maintain power, including education. This necessitates dialogues and collective reflections with teachers and educators to transform radically educational practices that are deeply influenced by these religious norms. (Rosemberg, 1985)

While some progress had been made, the political backlash that has taken place in Brazil since the impeachment of the first female president of the history of the country, Dilma Rousseff in 2016, followed by the election of extreme rightwing conservative Jair Bolsonaro, has quickly erased some of the country’s greatest advances into social transformation towards ending gender, race and class inequality. In his first few months as president, Bolsonaro extinguished important government Secretaries such as the Ministry of Labor (*Ministério do Trabalho*), Culture (*Ministério da Cultura*) and Sports (*Ministério dos Esportes*). Reducing the numbers of Ministries from 29 to 22 (Cerione, 2019). When questioned about the female representation in his administration, he “joked”: “For the first time ever the number of female ministers and male ministers is balanced in our government. We have 22 Ministries, 20 Men and 2 Women. But the detail is that each of these two women that are here are equivalent to 10 men. The energy and will of these two gives energy to the rest.”ⁱ (Benites, 2019). The recently elected president also extinguished the social councils that integrated the National Politics of Social Participation (*Política*

Nacional de Participação Social), that included the National Council of Disability Policies (*Conade*). (Putti, 2019)

Apart from obvious political flaws of the Workers Party (PT) in the 13 years it governed the country (2003-2016), it was during the years of governance of Dilma Roussef and Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva that grass roots social movements were the closest to the elaboration and creation of public policies and legislation that could have brought awareness to the importance of naming and addressing issues of inequality in the country. We had important achievements as activists during this period promoted legislation such as federal law 10.639 sanctioned by president Lula, that includes Afro Brazilian history and culture in the mandatory official curriculum in public and private schools. Lula was also responsible for the promoting the *Prouni* (Program University for all) and numerous affirmative actions to promote the improvement of public universities. The Prouni, according to the national department of education had since 2009 supported 600,000 students, 70 % of whom had full scholarships. As far as institutional changes, he was responsible for creating the Secretary of Continuous Education (SECADI) in 2004, who promoted numerous educational programs in the country that addressed issues of inequality and promoted equity, inclusion, and education for all. (Lima, 2010) SECADI, that was also responsible for policies around indigenous education, special education and human rights education, was also dissolved in the first few months of Bolsonaro's administration. (Daher, 2019)

Among the results of these positive actions proposed by Lula and Dilma is also the most popular legislation called the Lei Maria da Penha (Brazilian Federal

Law No 11.340), sanctioned in 2006. This document creates mechanisms to restrain violence against women, including domestic/family violence. The name of the law is a tribute to women's rights activist Maria da Penha, who was violated and abused by her partner for over 23 years. After he twice tried to murder her, she ended up as a tetraplegic as a result of his acts. He was sentenced to ten years in an open regime (Brazil, 1984)ⁱⁱ, which means that he was allowed to serve sentence mostly from his domicile. The indifference of public authorities to deal with situations of violence against women has decreased since the adoption of this law but is still something that is characteristic of our society and culture. This law confronts serious patriarchal values that have in Brazilian culture normalized violent behaviors toward women. It quickly became the most popular law in the country. People frequently refer to it and want to learn about it, especially after research was able to demonstrate that higher rates of violence against women in the country happen inside their homes (Debert, Gregori, 2008)

In 2015 president Dilma Rouseff took another important step toward ending gender violence in the country, sanctioning the law of femicide (Brazilian Federal Law No 13.104), which names and identifies a specific type of homicide that is committed against women due to gender/sex. In the case of femicides, women normally suffer all kinds of abuses before being murdered. These laws illustrate the kind of engagements and commitments of previous administrations not only to name and recognize certain "cultural" aspects present in Brazilian families and relations but also to work closely with grassroots social movements to understand social inequality and the real issues that affect a great part of the population in Brazil.

Today, however, with the recent election of president Jair Bolsonaro, there is already a conservative backlash. Bolsonaro's government has, for example, focused on promoting the militarization of the country, aligning with the armaments policies of the U.S. His administration has worked to overturn social and political advancements using charged speeches in the media and legislation that rolls back hard-won rights.

Public school teachers need tools to resist this rising conservatism and backlash. The Feminist Itinerant School is one possibility for providing resources to help teachers address this need.

1.2. Overview



In this first chapter, I invite readers to accompany me in this extremely difficult process that feminist research requires of us, feminist scholars and educators, to take responsibility for how we position ourselves in the process of research with transparency and awareness in order to engage in truthful conversations and dialogues. I offer an analysis of my own processes of understanding my identities, relating it to the importance of acknowledging the privileges that have surrounded my life as a white middle class Latina woman in Brazil, and how that fluctuates between my experiences in the U.S., as I write a thesis in my second language, in a predominantly white U.S. educational institution as a Latina..

This complex understanding of my positionality as a researcher includes my experiences in the past  five years as a member and co-founder of the Feminist Collective M.A.R. in the city of Paraty, where a group of activist women have started

this process of challenging educational practices through actions and activities with students and teachers in public schools in Brazil. The collective is the main impetus for this research in many ways, as the collective has led me to learn from other women about both our common struggles as well as the impacts of intersectionality, especially for black women in Brazil and the importance of engaging in committed feminist research to change our reality.

In Chapter 2, I present a literature review, which will be the foundation of this research. This literature highlights the urgency of transforming educational practices to engage in social change. I offer an overview of what feminist scholars contest within feminist studies and social justice studies to underline the many biased ways that knowledge has been constructed through our educational systems (and still is even within feminist studies). Identify ways to engage in alternative methods to construct knowledge and engage in our teaching practices. I focus on the Brazilian public educational system, connecting conversations between scholars engaged in feminist pedagogies and critical thinking not only from Brazil but also from the U.S. where this research is taking place. I draw upon the work of Paulo Freire who challenges educators to understand historical and cultural realities in order to reinvent education and promote social change (Freire, 2014).

Following the Literature review, in Chapter 3, I reflect upon the development of what I, with other feminist activists, have called the Feminist Itinerant School, which takes the shape of a workshop or a seminar, with a series of lesson plans and activities that will help public school teachers better understand the roots of Brazil's social, racial and gender inequalities and reflect upon the possibilities of

curriculum transformation in schools to promote socially just changes in the political and educational systems. Rather than being a fully set curriculum, the lesson plans for the Feminist Itinerant School provide suggestions and resources for facilitators to adapt depending on the needs and reality of the local school and community they work with. The School leads educators to reflect on how knowledge is delivered and ways it can be created in the classroom. The themes and activities for each session are only suggestions to be approached in the encounters of this workshop. The main idea is for facilitators to model what we (within the collective) and I as a researcher understand as feminist pedagogies, highlighting the importance of having the stories of the educators and the issues they face in their teaching practice as the driver for the discussions. My experiences with feminist pedagogies also include my experiences in feminist classrooms at Oregon State University. The goal with the discussions, activities and reflections is to identify not only how systems of power operate within each discipline but also how those systems contribute to the perpetuation of discrimination of in our society so that teachers might imagine transforming their curricula to address these issues.

The main themes proposed by the Feminist Itinerant School have come up in past discussions and conversations with teachers and students and yet remain in the margins of the discussion inside many classrooms. For example, these themes include reflections upon the meanings of patriarchy, rape culture, and stereotypes. Also, understanding the roles of language and privilege in perpetuating structural sexism, racism, and colonialism are also important outcomes of the FIS. The School also emphasizes feminist pedagogical theories and practices that challenge the hierarchies

inside of classrooms (hooks, 1994) and the role of the educator (Pacheco, 2005). The resources proposed to support these discussions include films, videos, readings, poetry and art.

To be able to structure the FIS, I draw from Oregon State University's Difference, Power, and Discrimination (DPD) model. The DPD program features a 60-hour faculty development seminar that teaches faculty to transform disciplinary content around issues of difference, power, and privilege. DPD uses a multidisciplinary approach and feminist pedagogies to help faculty examine their own content and processes as they reimagine their courses.ⁱⁱⁱ I use some of the processes of the DPD program, adapting it to the reality of Brazilian public schools.

1.3. Positionality and feminist research

1.3.1. Teaching in Paraty

This project has been profoundly influenced by my experiences as a member and a co-founder of the feminist collective M.A.R that has, combined with my experiences in schools, informed this work in many ways, as well as radically transformed my own ways of thinking about education and engagement with the community in which I live. My experiences with the collective and in schools not only influence my choice to do this project but also the ways I position myself as an educator.

The collective is based in the city of Paraty in Brazil. Paraty is a small tourist town in the south of the State of Rio de Janeiro. It is known for its historical legacy and beautiful natural resources and is a popular place for tourists from all over the

world. It is famous because it holds the country's largest literature festival, the FLIP. It is also one of the most violent cities in the state of Rio de Janeiro (*Mapa da Violência 2016*)^{iv}. It is known for a strong local culture of resistance, within the communities of *Caiçaras*^v, indigenous populations, *Quilombolas*^{vi} as well as *cariocas*^{vii} and *paulistas*^{viii} who have left their hometown and the insane urban life in those cities (as did I) in search of a better quality of life. The last two groups have contributed to the real estate speculation present in the city and its surroundings. Many outsiders came and bought “cheap” land from the local communities, forcing them to move to marginalized communities or isolating them within their own. *Ilha das Cobras*, a neighborhood where the majority of the population are *Caiçaras* who historically have lived on coastal territories, with a strong relationship with their lands and natural resources. They are now immersed in a community populated and threatened by drug dealing factions. While this community is vulnerable, it also trying to resist this reality through cultural and economic practices that can help them survive the neoliberal apparatus that has taken over their lands. (Morais, 2016)

My first thoughts about doing a master's program came from a deep conversation with a very close friend, approximately a year after my daughter was born. I remember being so deeply involved in parenthood that this thought at the time seemed very unrealistic. This conversation came from the need to reach out to resources and programs that could strengthen our activism and teaching practices. I was also at the time teaching at an NGO project called Casa Escola, where I had, especially because my partner also worked there, the “opportunity” to bring my child to the classes I was teaching. Maya started coming to school with me when she was

three months old and having her there changed deeply the ways in which I taught (and teach) as well as the way my students related to me. While that was physically and emotionally consuming in many ways, having to juggle between the activities with the children (Ages 7-13) and giving attention to my child, there was something very powerful about having her there with me, in particular because of the support of the people that worked there as well as support of students.

Casa Escola was an after-school program, designed for children and teenagers between seven and thirteen years old. It was a project committed to the academic excellence of students, since they had to be enrolled in formal school to attend it, providing all kinds of support for students, helping them with homework and other school related issues, and, most importantly, emphasizing the practices of dialogue, care and community building. *Casa Escola* was in one the most marginalized neighborhoods in the city of Paraty (*Ilha das Cobras*) and was surrounded by deep social problems that affected directly the lives of every child there, as well as the workers. Having my daughter there led me also to learn from my ten, eleven, and twelve-year-old students (more often girls), who often helped me with Maya, holding her and feeding her. Their care for her grew from their own experiences as care takers of other people's children in the community or younger brothers and sisters. These children had to take care of children while their parents juggled two or sometimes three jobs or other times while their parents struggled with addictions or when their parents just were not present at all in their lives. These children had duties well beyond learning and playing. The raw reality of those students changed the ways I

saw education and the ways I connected with them, making me realize the importance of engaging in my practice as an educator from their perspectives and their realities.

The power of the stories of some of those girls and boys motivated me to search for broader coalitions to engage in social change. My relationships with some of my students have had a great impact on the reasons why I decided to engage in this project. Their stories were often dismissed, especially by people in more privileged positions, or even by people who considered themselves engaged educators. I once witnessed a colleague and peer, who considered herself an educator, locking the doors of the school so an eleven-year-old student whom she considered to be “violent” would not come in. She said that this girl was bad for the image of our project, and we could not let one student ruin the image of the project or influence other students. She had not once, however, heard the struggles of that students or the types of violence and abuse she was experiencing that resulted in the way she reacted to the world around her. The way in which this girl was denied the right to be inside a space “designed” for her, affected her profoundly, as her situation in general was already not promising at all.

Casa Escola was a project of an NGO that I deeply respect, with amazing people involved. Nonetheless, as with many social projects in Brazil, well-meaning people with social privilege often demonstrated paternalistic sentiments towards the poor. Their attitudes were very common in social projects and NGO’s where people wanted to “work” for social change if it did not affect their own social and economic status quo. Students at Casa Escola often shared how the culture of the violent community we were immersed in affected directly their bodies and the ways they

behaved. Some students would react with a lot of anger to class activities or in conflicts with colleagues and teachers, making it possible to see how some of those children had already been marked by traumas that would take a lifetime to overcome. Since my partner also worked there, that place became a second home for us. We were very connected to the project and the families in many ways, creating a web of support and reciprocity amongst ourselves and with students, to be able to deal with such a raw and violent reality. The lack of resources in town combined with the indifference of public authorities when dealing with such reality just made the situation worse, and our only option really was to think of ways to make the best of the time we had with students there. And we did. We read together, cooked, worked on the garden, played and shared things we thought could be useful for them, creating opportunities to build relationships through dialogue, with love and affection. But most importantly we listened to their stories, creating relationships of trust that would make it possible for all of us to try to reimagine and be creative with the reality in which we were immersed.

Apart from *Casa Escola*, I also had opportunities to teach in private schools in São Paulo and in Paraty different educational levels (elementary and K-12 systems) which enabled me to see how these social disparities that constitute Brazilian society are grounded in a very early stage of children's lives. The resource access disparities between students from public and private schools are enormous in Brazil, providing a very different "start" in life, depending in their economic status. Now as I navigate a higher educational system in the U.S., in a state university, I see these disparities are

even more alarming when it comes to material resource accesses between the two countries within educational systems.

1.3.2. Family and white Brazilian privilege.

I grew up in a middle class setting in the city of São Paulo, Brazil and attended private schools. Even though I was in a position of privilege growing up, these private schools gave me the opportunity to learn how people in even more privileged positions and higher social classes navigate the world. The fear of the poor and of races that were not white European as well as the fear of people who did not fall into the heteronormal categories of gender was present in the lives of my peers and most of my teachers and the school staff, including the Hungarian Benedictine Monks who were part of the administration. I never felt comfortable in that setting, but I now I can acknowledge that my struggles there were still the struggles of a white middle-class girl/woman. I did not fit the established standards of beauty and acceptance. I was overweight and considered a tomboy type compared to my peers growing up, which resulted in serious issues with my body, issues with low self-esteem and lack of self-care. My parents both worked very hard to provide my brother and me with access to private education and resources such as English classes and other activities that are part of the daily life of middle-class Brazilian children. Most of the time, when we were not in school, we were taken care by the maids who spend most of their time taking care of our household. They cooked our food, cleaned our bedrooms and our house. They did all the house chores possible so my parents could work and make money and maintain our social status. Those relationships of

labor, family and care also opened my eyes to see the effects of class, gender and race discrimination which were very normalized in our society. My parents were always fair to their employees, but somehow, I have learned, that those women who worked in our house, who cared for us, were “different” from us. They did not eat with us, they did not watch T.V. with us, if my father was around. Many of them struggled a lot to keep that job, as I now acknowledge the challenges and difficulties of living in one’s employer’s house. There was a strong hierarchical relationship that prevailed in the conversations and in the ways of relating. That is how I realized that the only way to unlearn these lessons and change my life was to start learning from these women who have been in these “lower” positions. Racism, as a structural component of our society (Almeida, 2018), was embedded in our relationships, and it took years for me to be able to see and understand my own responsibilities as part of this structure.

My father had a very specific relationship with the women who worked in my home, as well as with the women who lived there (my mother and me), as well as with my brother. It was a relationship grounded in strong patriarchal family values. I have now a wonderful relationship of reciprocal love and care with my parents, but it took me a while to understand how these patriarchal values are so deeply rooted in his life and background. I can no longer confront these issues with him, as it just brings me back to that feeling of fear and isolation. My mother on the other hand was very caring towards us and her employees, acknowledging their responsibilities of taking care of the household. The last woman who worked in our house, Lucia, has a degree in teaching now and keeps a strong relationship with my family. She has referenced my mother in the acknowledgements of her final undergraduate dissertation as

someone who has supported her through this process of overcoming structural and social obstacles as she chose to invest in her education. Sharing these things through this process does not have the intent to blame my parents in any ways. I bring this here, so I can share what I learned about responsibility and the importance of nurturing relationships, as well as to share the responsibilities white middle-class Brazilian families have in supporting systems that can oppress in many ways, covering up the myth that asserts that Brazil is a racial and social democracy. We have learned as children that we can succeed in our careers and in our jobs if we have someone to take care of our household and family, and this person would never be in the same social class status as we were. We have learned that if we work hard, we will get what we want, never considering obstacles caused by racism, sexism and ableism in our society. We learned that what we earned and could earn through education would be through merit and not because of privilege. We did not need to take responsibility for the historical and ongoing oppression of Afro Brazilian and indigenous peoples. Similarly, to what Peggy McIntosh brings up in her essay *White Privilege: The Invisible Backpack*:

“My schooling gave me no training in seeing myself as an oppressor, as an unfairly advantaged person, or as a participant in a damaged culture. I was taught to see myself as an individual whose moral state depended on her individual moral will. My schooling followed the pattern my colleague Elizabeth Minnich has pointed out: whites are taught to think of their lives as a morally neutral, normative, and average, also ideal, so that when we work to

benefit others, this is seen as work which will allow “them” to be more like “us.” (McIntosh, 1988)

In many ways coming to terms with my own social location in relation to this project has been the most difficult part of the process. My own identity moves between Brazil and the U.S. On my father’s side, we are of Spanish and Italian descent. My father’s sisters attended university, which was not common for women who were born in the 1920’s. One of my aunts was one of the first woman to graduate in law at the University Of São Paulo, which has deeply influenced the connections we have with education and the accesses to resources. On my mother’s side we are a family of U.S./Irish migrants who went to Brazil in the 20th century. My mother was born in Texas, and my grandfather migrated to Brazil with my grandmother and six children over 65 years ago. She also attended to higher education, as it made us feel like that was just part of what we should inherit. My family have all been migrating and immigrating between both countries, making it possible to see the difference between these cultures as well as the access to resources and opportunities we have in the two different places. It has though, in my case, been a tough challenge to understand my identity, especially regarding a place. Both places are home to me, but in the U.S. I feel misplaced on many occasions because of my deep connections with a South American country.

Even though the category of Latina excludes individuals from Portuguese speaking countries, Brazil is a country in Latin America, and we speak a Latin language and are surrounded by Latin culture. A lot of times in the U.S. I have been questioned about my identity as Latina, and what that implies politically. The

constructions of identities by authorities in the U.S. points to the outsized influence of the U.S. on the global South and the ways dominant powers get to name reality. For me, this construction creates a sense of displacement and uncertainty.

Within my family in the U.S. there are histories of addiction and cases of domestic violence that have directly affected this process of writing. Dealing with family members who are suffering with drug additions and domestic violence pushes and pulls me from this work as struggles and pain are present in the lives of people I care for and deeply love. I feel hopeless and sad. The process of understanding how trauma and pain are passed on in our family gives me strength to heal so the next generations can feel love and care and be in an environment free of violence and struggle. Activism, teaching and writing, combined with my connections with art are my main ways for healing and dealing with my own trauma. Still, there is also incredible family support that at the same time, makes it possible for this project to be completed.

1.3.3. Privilege

I took advantage (in a positive way) of every opportunity I had to study in life, as an artist and within academia. I started to learn the craft of jewelry making when I was seventeen with a very dear friend. He, one of the greatest mentors I have, told me that, if nothing else worked out, I could always come back to this craft, and I could sell my jewelry to friends, on the beach or in street fairs. I took that for granted, and for most of my life I dedicated my time to learning the craft of silversmithing, but always connected with teaching and learning from different fields as well. After a

short while working as an artist, I decided to finish my studies and get a baccalaureate degree to teach. I chose history as my undergraduate field of study to understand better the roots of social inequalities and discrimination, but it wasn't until I moved to Paraty, in a very different lifestyle than my parents had provided me, that I knew I had to do much more than just "take advantage" of my privilege. I needed to learn from people who were being exploited and discover ways that I could serve as an ally.

It was not only external forces that motivated me on this journey with feminism. My life has also been marked by episodes of abuse. My access to economic resources, however, gave me options that were unavailable to women of lower social classes. This process of awareness is still ongoing, as I am constantly learning from students, activists, friends, family and *companheiras* how different systems of oppression operate and oppress us differently. My activism as a feminist has become a way of life, a way of loving and learning to create bridges and become an ally especially for women in disadvantaged communities. I center in this process, not only to learn empathy and sorority as the main ways to engage in this world I am re-imagining, but also dignity and transparency.

It is also crucial to me in this process of writing that I acknowledge my privileges as a white middle class Brazilian woman and with the simultaneous contradictions of my status here in a higher educational structure in the U.S., where I count on government support to pay my rent and support my child, who has recently gone through an immigration process, along with my partner, to accompany me on this journey. Even though I had financial support to get here, if it wasn't for resources

such as WIC, amazing educational resources such as Head start and food stamps, all resources that only low-income families can access, I am not sure this academic journey would have been possible.

1.3.4. The Feminist Collective M.A. R.

The Feminist Collective M.A.R. took shape from the encounters and meetings from a larger group of women from the city of Paraty, the Forum de Mulheres de Paraty. Formed in 2015 after the brutal assassination of the 33-year-old woman Gisele Alves, a group of women gathered in an act of revolt and desperation to demand justice and demand basic civil rights for women who have been for centuries surviving a culture rooted in the domination and abuse of women. Gisele Alves was just one of the many women who suffer violence and have had their lives taken by men. The repercussion of her death in the media had a different dimension than what usually happens to other women, because she was a white middle-class woman. I have, for the purpose of this research tried to “officially” track down other femicides in the media, but, because these victims were poor, black, or drug addicts, their deaths go unnoticed. Still with the large repercussions, all the evidence, and cameras on the street where the femicide happened, the police were not able to find the responsible. The forum organized many public acts to demand that public authorities take these events seriously. From that meeting that began with over 50 women, we started learning the struggles of each and started creating a web of reciprocity that encouraged women to pressure public authorities to take responsibility for the violence in town. The meetings brought together women from different ages, races

and classes, to engage in very difficult conversations that forced each one of us to look within ourselves and our different accesses to resources to be able to understand each other's struggle and how we could take action to change the social reality we all lived in. It was a fearful reality, and we had had enough. As time went by, the group got smaller and divided. Although that seemed negative at the time, today it is possible to see how powerful those meetings were and how women have learned in this process and are still learning with a strong commitment to social change. Smaller groups got together to understand their own struggles, forming not only the collective M.A.R, but the collective of Black Women of Paraty, (*Coletivo das Mulheres Pretas de Paraty*), combining forces together and understanding collectively each other's struggles and how discrimination affects our lives very differently.

The collective M.A.R. was then formed in 2016, by a group of women who were part of those earlier meetings and had as its main focus education. I am a member and cofounder and have supported this group in any ways I can since the start.

Among the activities promoted by the collective are roundtables with women connected to education, in and outside schools, study groups, and seminars in schools with the intent to share ideas, tools and resources to resist against the violence embedded in our culture and therefore in the educational systems as well. Most women in the collective are mothers, from different ages, who also promotes activism for reproductive rights, psychological services and access to health care.

The collective organizes the *Cine Mulher and the Cine Menina*, (Cine Women and Cine Girl) which are movie screenings followed by roundtables. These movies are directed by women and have themes that helps us in this process of understanding

how our (*machista*) culture is constructed, not only in Brazil but in other parts of the world. When possible, we invite the directors of some of these movies to participate in the roundtables. The *Cine Mulher* was screened in public places at first, provided by a partnership with the department of culture of Paraty but is now mostly focused in the school where we have the more influence (CEMBRA). The collective also promotes roundtables of conversations with women from public schools, where we share resources and stories to better understand our realities and how we can be allies to confront problems that public authorities ignore. We have done the I and II feminist encounters of the city of Paraty, where we got an educational grant to promote weekends of seminars, inviting women from different cities and different fields, such as lawyers, sheriffs, psychologists and teachers to share their experiences and expertise with the community. We also promote art activities and encounters, making t-shirts, to sell and raise money for the actions> The design of the t-shirts is all made by women from the collective and printed by all of us. We also have raised money selling publications made within the collective.

1.3.5. M.A.R. Maria Angélica Ribeiro

The name of the collective is in honor to Maria Angelica Ribeiro, a woman born in Paraty in 1829. When she was six years old, she went to live in Rio de Janeiro, where she became a playwright and dramatist. She was the first Brazilian women to have a play in the theaters. She was married at the age of 14 and by the age of 21 already had four kids, MAR dedicated her life to literature as a feminist and abolitionist activist. Her work deeply critiqued the racist and sexist society we live in.

Our collective honors this woman with the name, and Thalita Aguiar, one of the members and co-founders of the collective, honors her through her dedication and commitment to research, studying the life and history of Maria Angelica, and creating awareness around the importance of knowing the history of the town we lived in and the previous feminists activists that came before us and left us an amazing legacy. The abbreviation MAR in Portuguese means also ocean, which also aligns with Paraty's surrounding natural resources and scenery.

1.4. Conclusion

I could not have created this project if it were not for the numerous encounters with the members of the Feminist Collective MAR and with other feminist activists, educators and students. Being present in schools in the last few years as an activist and in an NGO as a teacher, and now as an instructor at Oregon State University, has led me to reflect on the important role of teachers (mentors or educators) and the lack of pedagogical support they get to do their jobs. Teachers receive little training or assistance to engage in social justice education (especially in public schools in Brazil). On the other hand, these experiences have helped me look at students differently and have made me aware of what I can learn from them. I have also become aware that students should become responsible (with the support of mentors) for their own learning processes from a young age through awareness and the process of political and social conscientization (*Conscientização*) (Freire).

In the next chapter, I explore concepts learned from feminist scholars to understand better the importance of critical thinking and feminist pedagogies to develop a basis for the Feminist Itinerant School. This literature suggests actions we

can take within schools and ways we can engage with knowledge and curriculum content to change our realities. This literature provides a foundation to think collectively of ways of creating safe spaces inside schools, based on trust and responsibility, so we can share personal stories and then connect these stories with historical events and political contexts that perpetuate discriminatory behaviors. As an activist and a now a scholar, I understand there is a great challenge with this, especially when inviting educators from very different backgrounds, ethnicities, and spiritual beliefs to create constructive conversations towards positive and affirmative action. I am encouraged, however, by thinking about education as a loving practice of freedom as suggested by Paulo Freire and bell hooks, acknowledging the connections of education with politics, democracy, and social responsibility.

2. Literature Review

To be a good liberating educator, our need above all to have faith in human beings. You need to love. You must be convinced that the fundamental effort of education is to help with the liberation of people, never their domestication. You Must be convinced that when people reflect on their domination, they begin a first step in changing their relationship to the word. (Freire, 1971, p. 62)

In the quotation above, Paulo Freire, reminds of the importance of having faith in human beings as well as the importance of never aiming to domesticate people. This practice, according to one of Brazil's most important educational references, can really affect negatively the relationships individuals have and the way they navigate the world. The act of discipline such as the one mentioned by Freire can also be responsible for dictating "behaviors," cultural and religious norms that can interfere in the way students and teachers learn and "teach," especially for students in socially disadvantaged and marginalized communities. Freire points out to us that the world is constantly being created and that we, as educators and students, should be able to find possibilities within our histories and knowledge, rather than just determinations. That we should acknowledge ourselves not only as objects of history and other disciplines, but as living subjects not only learning about politics, culture or history to adapt, yet to change and interact with the reality we are in. Understanding our possibilities of intervening with the reality we are immersed through our choices, decisions and actions. In this sense, he raises awareness to a process where

conscientização (consciousness) is a human demand, and the path to the practice of epistemological curiosity. (Freire, 2011, p.54)

The literature I am about to describe will address some of the social and political issues in Brazil, considering feminist pedagogical approaches as an alternative to the traditional public educational system. This literature has encouraged me as an educator and as a student to see ourselves as the subjects and the actors of our realities, raising the importance of social responsibility through educational practices. This literature combined with my experiences as an activist, teacher and graduate student serves as the theoretical basis for a workshop on curriculum reflection and transformation for Brazilian public-school teachers—The Feminist Itinerant School (FIS).

This literature integrates some very inspiring insights about faith in human beings and the importance of building relationships grounded in trust and love. Love, as suggested by bell hooks, urges to let go of “our obsession with power and domination” to bring us to a commitment to life, therefore to education, based in honesty, openness and personal integrity (hooks, 2000). Relationships can then guide us to construct useful reflections, nurturing each other so knowledge can be used to emancipate ourselves from structures of domination instead of perpetuating those structures (Lorde, 1984).

Feminist pedagogical approaches and theories can, when linked to everyday practices, promote critical thinking to encourage educators and students to disrupt behaviors that carry on patriarchal, sexist, and racist ideals in schools. This approach will require us, teachers and students alike, when reflecting and teaching about issues

of racism, sexism and homophobia to “reach down into that deep place of knowledge inside ourselves and touch that terror and loathing of any difference that lives there. See whose face lives there” (Lorde, 2000 p. 113). This approach asks us to reflect upon our experiences, privileges and positionality to recognize how domination takes place, listening and learning from the people who have been excluded the most from political and social spheres and have been marginalized in many ways. It also requires us to understand how institutions and individual behaviors can reproduce conditions that distribute resources inequitably and maintain inequality, marginalization, and social vulnerability. As part of this process, we must also attend to our own practices and positions as teachers and students. We must, to fulfill this process, engage with knowledges, languages, and cultures of those who have been most excluded from dominant political and social spheres, textbooks, academia, and recorded history. Within this framework, we must define more equitable conditions for learning that prioritize individuals’ and communities’ dignity over neoliberal expectations of politics and economy. (Birolli, 2018, Location 1054) This literature review focuses not only on Brazil’s current political context but also on the ways critical pedagogies have informed what feminist pedagogies are and how feminist pedagogies can be one of the most powerful tools educators have to transform the schools and the curriculum. The brief analysis of Brazilian history and political context that follows will lead us to understand how these structures and heritages directly affect educational practices and the curriculum. It will also bring attention to the importance and dynamics of a democratic learning environment where students can experience democracy through practice as well as guidance, to discover the world for

themselves rather than simply receive it from someone else's perspectives and experiences. (Chomsky, 2000) A democratic education allows learners to act on their beliefs and challenge the conservative status quo. (hooks, 2000, p.90)

In this context, education can be the foundation for truthful relationships that can lead to an effective process of teaching and learning. Achieving this kind of education requires including feminist studies as part of our references as well as making a commitment to the practice of feminist engaged pedagogies, grounded in integrity and purpose (hooks, 2009. p. 18).

I will also utilize examples of the mechanisms and resources schools already have available to incorporate feminism and sex education in our teaching practices, and I will draw from educational initiatives and theories that have inspired and guided this work to reflect upon the Feminist Itinerant School. This seminar will invite participants to engage in critical thinking, exploring analytical tools and theories grounded in feminist pedagogies and curriculum transformation. We will question our positions as educators and our role in enforcing disciplines defined by the government present in our curriculum. We will examine how those disciplines can contribute to control student and teacher mind/bodies within physical and psychological spheres to fit into a neoliberal society, directed toward shaping efficient and productive workers and consumers. (Arnt, 2018) We will help teachers to engage in curriculum transformation, sharing resources and conversations that examine how gender, race, class and ability can influence the ways we experience the world differently, and therefore the ways in which we learn and internalize ideas. Significantly, we will acknowledge how schools have historically exerted great influence that has helped

maintain institutions of power that are coercive and controlling, including education itself. (Chomsky, 2000)

In this process, I would also like to enhance the connections between education and culture, considering ways in which teaching takes place. Political scenarios can directly affect the way our bodies behave dictating social norms we are expected to impose or to follow as educators or students. (Grossberg, 1994) These norms then become symbols and language that construct our culture. Enacting feminist pedagogies requires us to understand how cultures of domination cultivate fear to ensure obedience (hooks, 2000, p.93) not only through media messages and political propaganda but also within educational practices.

This project integrates perspectives from theorists who explore the meanings of feminist pedagogies from different parts of the globe, with a focus on Brazil and the U.S. These theorists conceptualize and articulate feminist epistemologies and critical pedagogies that can be used to understand gender, race, class, sexual identity and disability as analytical categories that can deepen our understandings of oppressive and liberatory teaching practices in both public schools and higher educational structures. This field has evolved from many different sources that explore the “consciousness-raising practices derived from the women’s movements, the progressive tradition in American education created by John Dewey, and the more general forms of ‘liberatory teaching’ espoused by Paulo Freire and others,” (Maher, Tetreault, 2001). Consciousness, according to Freire, will allow us to find, through dialogue and reflection, the programmatic content of education and the curriculum. Consciousness allows us to recognize the structural conditions in which thinking and

language constitute each other dialectally. (Freire, 1987 Loc, 1629), and, in this case, we will focus on “the particular needs of women students and its grounding in feminist theory as the basis for multidimensional and positional view of the construction of knowledge in the classroom” (Maher, Tetreault, 2001). More specifically, I draw from feminist epistemologies to understand better the meanings that have structured feminist pedagogies and social justice practice in order to examine and propose a critique of the ways we are teaching “updated” feminist concepts and “curriculum” in old educational settings.

Epistemology describes how we produce knowledge. It refers to the ways in which we establish the relationships between subject and object, embracing the representations of knowledge as truth in which we operate. (Rago, 1998) In this sense, I believe it is important we look at the ways in which feminist knowledge is being generated. In particular, we must pay attention to the relationships of scholars in the Northern Hemisphere and scholars in the Tropics and how feminist voices from the Global South challenge standard western scientific knowledge production, particularly through the search for new language and new research methods interpreted within specific contexts. Feminist scholars from the Global North and Global South must establish relationships that do not replicate colonial histories but bring diverse perspectives together to understand how learners construct their knowledge and participate in the conception of culture and in the practice epistemological curiosity. (Freire, 2011)

For this purpose, I choose to highlight in this research the work of African American women and women of color in Brazil, such as bell hooks, Djamila Ribeiro,

and Kimberley Crenshaw, to understand the perspectives and theoretical foundation of feminism from voices that have been excluded from the center of knowledge production in academic spaces and therefore school curriculum. These voices offer an urgency of implementing an educational system based on anti-racism, anti-sexism and towards equity and equality, which can be the foundation for curriculum and social transformation.

I will overview some initiatives that are currently active in transforming curriculum and shifting social and cultural standards that have been rooted in western patriarchal and religious standards. These initiatives mostly center students' experiences and unique realities in their educational or activist journeys and focus on individual's autonomy within social relations. They provide students and educators with opportunities to engage in education towards critical consciousness, as highlighted by Chandra Mohanty, that requires:

Reformulation of the knowledge-as-accumulated-capital model of education and focus instead on the links between the historical configuration of social forms and the way they work subjectivity. This issue of subjectivity and voice thus concern the efforts to understand our specific locations in the educational process and in the institutions through we are constituted. (Mohanty, 1989 p. 148)

2.1. Patriarchy and Intersectionality

Patriarchy and intersectionality are especially important terms for this project. Teachers teach within patriarchal structures, and patriarchal ideas can also shape how and what they teach. (Louro, 1996) It is through educational practices that we learn

basic aspects of socialization and behaviors, or as Guacira Lopes Louro points out, where the process of construction of what it means to be female and male in our society takes place, and with that the roles each individual should learn from an early age. Both teachers and students are located within intersecting locations of these power dynamics that contribute to differences and discrimination in our society (Saffiotti, 2004), shaped through education. To understand our educational system and reflect upon ways we can shift some paradigms; it is essential we engage with the meanings and importance of these concepts to understand our current social, political and educational scenario (hooks, 1994). Patriarchy is a system that institutionalizes western male dominance over women, children, workers, and LGBTQ people (Lerner, 1986). This system creates divisions and hierarchies of gender, race, class, sexuality, and disability access. It fosters abuse of power in the family, at work, and in school. It is deeply connected with the capitalist economy that simultaneously denies difference while at the same time exploits people based on difference in order to maintain a conservative status quo (Lorde 1984, p.115). In particular, Flavia Birolli's definition of patriarchy is helpful in understanding how discrimination takes place in our social systems, where she states it as an heterogeneous complex structure that defines patterns that imply in the disadvantage for women and allow men to dispose their bodies, their time and labor. It is affirmed within institutions as well as in the daily life relations of individuals. (Birolli, 2018) These patterns, especially in education can be seen with the exclusion of stories and perspectives from people in disadvantage sectors of our society and from women in the curriculum. This is where there is an urgency to understand the meanings of this structural complex as well as to

understand how educational systems have been influenced and distorted through biases that uphold white supremacy, imperialism, sexism and racism, the core of patriarchal systems. (hooks, 1994)

U.S. critical race theorist and lawyer Kimberley Crenshaw (1989) coined the term “intersectionality”. Intersectionality is a tool for analysis that considers the simultaneously experienced multiple social locations, identities, and institutions that shape individual and collective experience within hierarchically structured systems of power and privilege:

I consider intersectionality a provisional concept linking contemporary politics with postmodern theory. In mapping the intersections of race and gender, the concept does engage dominant assumptions that race, and gender are essentially separate categories. By tracing the categories to their intersections, I hope to suggest a methodology that will ultimately disrupt the tendencies to see race and gender as exclusive or separable. While the primary intersections that between race and gender, the concept can and should be expanded by factoring in issues such as class, sexual orientation, age, and color. (Crenshaw, 1990)

Intersectionality allows us to understand the trajectories of people and how they have been impacted differently by norms and discrimination as well as by religion and moral beliefs (Birolli, 2018, location 3008). Intersectionality is a powerful analytical tool within feminism that calls our attention to the vulnerability of women of color, especially those from socially disadvantaged communities. (Carbado, 2013) This concept also helps us understand and connect issues of race,

gender, age, class, sexuality, and ability in a profound web that crosses our educational spaces. In addition, intersectionality helps us consider our status as citizens or as immigrants and the meaning of borders in democratic nations.

All these intersecting differences have a profound impact on educational settings and practices. If we are not willing to recognize those differences within our practices, we will be led, as proposed by Audre Lorde, to deeper traps that can lead to distortions of facts and reality when things are misnamed or misunderstood. By ignoring the role of intersecting difference within systems of power (including the institution of education) our practices can inadvertently sustain domination and perpetuate social injustices. (Lorde, 1984 p, 115)

2.2. Politics and Education

Conversations in schools about gender, sexuality and feminism have been the center of many political debates. (Altmann, 2017; Alves, 2019; Louro, 1994, Saffiotti, 2004). Conservative social movements, which have close connections with Brazil's recently elected president, especially to his son, Flavio Bolsonaro, such as *Escola Sem Partido* and MBL (*Movimento Brasil Livre*), in conjunction with Brazil's most conservative wings and religious institutions have utilized the term "gender ideology," pushing against teacher's teachers' attempt to raise students' political awareness and consciousness as well as demonizing gender and sexual education, by emphasizing that these are "doctrines" imposed on students. According to these conservatives' movements, such as *Escola sem Partido*, "It is urgent to combat gender ideology, because the notion of gender equality and the incentive of homoparental relations puts in at risk the fact that sexual differences have structural

functions in the physical development of the child” . The movement *Escola sem Partido* created a special commission and a project of law (PL-7180), that emphasizes the importance of giving priority to the family order, controlling, sexual and religious education to reflect certain beliefs that are closely connected to conservative movements. This project aims to make changes in the Brazil’s most important federal educational law, the LDB, creating guidelines to limit discussions around about gender studies, feminism and social justice in schools. The project was archived by the Chambers Commission in December 2018 with insufficient votes, but the supporters of the projects are individuals such the president himself, along with his three sons, who are also occupying occupy important positions in such as the Senate in the State of Rio and in the Chamber of Deputies in the city of São Paulo. The debates and pushbacks on the archival of this project have been kept alive, demonstrating the efforts the new administrations are willing to do undertake to influence in what should and should not be and shouldn’t be part of the national curriculum.

Even though educators want to engage in discussions around social justice, feminism and gender studies and share useful information with students, we see in the pushback from the political administration that educational decisions are driven by conservative political ideas and moral values. This provides government opportunity to intervene directly in individuals; lives (Altman 2001), controlling students’ sexuality, behaviors and beliefs. According to scholar Helena Altman, these topics are a relevant matter to the public government and public interest because sexuality is connected to the capability of an individual to work, to give birth, and to and produce

goods. Sexuality hence as well as the establishments of gender hierarchies and relations are directly connected to capitalism and neoliberalism (Pecheny, 2013). Since schools are often sites aimed toward producing workers for the capitalist systems, for feminists, the need to address sexuality in schools is paramount. (Altmann 2001) Schools offer a place for resisting over knowledges and ways of learning that that can subvert the capitalist shaping of students as workers and reproductive laborers. Additionally, these conservative forces shape the extent to which feminist interventions are possible. Instead of engaging students in informative and empowering conversation, educational institutions ended up being pushed to reinforce control of students' bodies, ideas, and sexualities, guided by fear and lack of resources and pedagogical support. (Quirino, Rocha, 2012)

Following the recent election of president Jair Bolsonaro, Brazil has also started to experience the censoring of feminist ideas and the constraining of sex education in school and within health public spheres. He has recently published a “homemade” video on YouTube, where he recommend parents to rip apart pages of the immunization record document (*Caderneta de Vacinação*), provided by the federal government (developed in the mandate of President Dilma Rousseff) that have references to sex education such as information on ways to prevent DST's and how to use contraceptives (Bolsonaro, 2019). During his time as a congressman Bolsonaro became famous for his constant attacks against the LGBT community^{ix}. Specifically, he criticized a project initiated during the term of President Dilma Rouseff, called *Programa Brasil Sem Homofobia* (Program Brazil without Homophobia). *Escola Sem Homofobia* was elaborated by educational professionals as well as representatives of

social movements and by the Department of Education at the time. The program was launched by the federal government in 2004, and it had as one of the main goals to promote the development of materials and pedagogical support for educators to approach themes regarding sexism and homophobia in schools, bringing attention to the importance of “unmasking the order that posits in heterosexuality as natural, normal and the only possibility of individuals to live their sexuality, through work activities (dynamics) that intend to support pedagogical practices, benefiting the reflections and incentivizing changes”. (Brazil, 2010) One of the materials released along with the program was the *Kit Escola Sem Homofobia* (School without Homophobia Kit), which was a pedagogical product with a rich amount of resources to support teachers to deal with gender inequality and discrimination in schools. It called educators to rethink the curriculum and schooling within a democratic society by learning how homophobia and discrimination work against people who do not conform to conventional social rules for gender and sexuality. The material, which was banished by conservative movements in congress, had lesson plans that promoted affirmative actions, and encouraged teachers and students to engage in reflection upon our culture, language, history and politics, so students could better understand their realities and trace the roots of discrimination, racism and sexism in our society. At the time, Bolsonaro as a congressman, nicknamed this project pejoratively as the “gay kit” and then mentioned it constantly in his presidential campaign, supported by evangelical members of congress as something that would “teach our children to be gay” or be an incentive to pedophilia.

Bolsonaro has also shown contempt for women. In 2016, in an argument with Congresswoman Maria do Rosario, he stated, “I wouldn't rape you because you don't deserve it.” Another time, he commented, “I've got five kids but on the fifth I had a moment of weakness and it came out a woman.”^x, and given Bolsonaro disdain for women and the LGBTQ community, my project is both particularly timely and especially challenging in this political moment. These examples are just a fraction of the outrages that have been pronounced by the Bolsonaro family and their political allies in the past years illustrating how the new government will be treating initiatives that have inspired this research project. Bolsonaro statements remind me of the challenges we have ahead of us, if we believe schools should be democratic, inclusive and respectful places.

The right to education around gender, race, class, and sexual identity has legal basis in the Brazilian Constitution (1998), the Law of Directrices and Base of National Education (Law 9.394, 1996), the National Guidelines of Education and Diversity, and the high school curriculum directrices, elaborated by the national Council of Education and in the Law Maria da Penha (Law 11.340, 2006)^{xi}. The Brazilian National Plan of Education (PNE) and the National Curriculum Base (BNNC) which is part of the Law of Directrices and Base of National Education allowed inclusion of feminist, gender, and Afro-Brazilian studies in the educational agenda and curriculum. Under the new conservative regime, however, informed discussions of gender, violence, racism, and sex are being pushed out of education.

LDB is the legislation that regulates Brazilian public and private educational systems. It is within this legislation that the rights of education are guaranteed to the

population by all different government levels, from federal to state to municipal. The government first introduced this law in 1934. A revised version went into effect in 1991, and the most recent version was finalized in 1996². The LDB is a detailed document that includes over 92 articles stating how the Brazilian educational system should function, including the responsibilities of public authorities and educators and the rights of students. Even though the law includes aspects of the responsibility of the federal government to provide technical and financial resources to the states and counties as well as to promote conscientization around discrimination and violence (LDB, 1996 art. III, art. X), there is still a great lack of government responsibility and bureaucracy. The situation for many schools is of precarity and scarcity of resources, especially in smaller towns and rural areas. Teachers get very little incentive (financial or pedagogical support) within their working environment and are expected to deal with a large range of societal issues, including violence, discrimination, and sexism. The situation can be different depending on the location since the funding is funneled from the federal level, and each state and city decides how and what the priorities are, according to Leonardo Sá, journalist writer of Nova Escola, a well-known website that supports teachers in their practices with materials, lesson plans and legal support. He asserts that it is a duty of the government to offer educators pedagogical support, but the government has actually done very little to support teachers. So, for example, in relation to gender and sexual identity, the Department of Education (MEC) offers specific actions, but no real support. Most teachers do not

² <http://www.observatoriodopne.org.br/>

have enough knowledge and training to deal with students' issues of sexuality and gender in the classrooms (Sá, 2014).

Another important aspect of the law is to indicate what disciplines are to be included in the national curriculum through the BCN, defining the rights and objects of study of the Brazilian educational system guided by the National Council of Education (LDB, 1996 art. 36). Mandatory disciplines include math, history, science, sociology, biology, physical education, philosophy and religion. The law also prohibits proselytizing in schools (LDB, 1996).

The National Plan of Education, approved in 2014, (Federal Law no 13.005/2014) is instrument of planning that the government uses to orient, execute and enhance public policies in the educational sector. The National Plan is included in this legislation, (PNE) and should be (and have been) revised every ten years according to the constitution, including 20 national educational goals that serve as mechanisms to re enforce some aspects of the LDB and reflect upon the organization and funding of the public-school system. The National Educational Conference (CONAE 2010) organizes conversations every four years where government authorities invite members of other sectors of society connected to education to evaluate and develop the elaboration of the national plan for the following year. These conferences tend to bring to the center of discussions the main issues presented by scholars and educators as well issues around funding, structure, strategies and enrollment projections. Within these goals, there are also important references regarding the monitoring of the access, utilization and permanence of the social beneficiaries (such as public school students) to enhance the importance of addressing

issues of discrimination, prejudice and violence in schools. These goals also establish expectations for an environment where students can succeed with the support of the families, public organizations, and social and health assistance during childhood and adolescence (Strategies 2.4)³

Another important aspect of the plan is to bring attention to the responsibility of each state and city, facing their own challenges with education, recognizing the differences in each part of the country, and aiming for an inclusive educational system in every level, from primary to high school.

The plan is one of the first documents in the country to include awareness of the importance of diversity and inclusion in the national curriculum. One of the goals included in the documents issued in 2001 was to “Maintain and consolidate the assessment program of the textbook created by the minister of education, establishing criteria and adequate approaches to gender, ethnicity and the elimination of discriminatory texts that reproduce stereotypes around the role of women or of the black and indigenous population.” (PNE, 2001, goal 10).

The most recent version of the PNE from 2014 that mentioned gender equality and sexual identity, was quickly “updated” and replaced with more generalized concepts of diversity and differences by the department of education (MEC). Highlighting in the national curriculum, how students, starting on 9th grade (15 years old approximately) should discuss gender and sexuality according to “different religious and philosophical traditions.” The National Base Curriculum, was included in the Educational plan since the implementation of the federal law 13.005 from 2014

³National Plan 2014 - Goal 2 http://pne.mec.gov.br/images/pdf/pne_conhecendo_20_metas.pdf

and includes the main references and guidelines for the national school curriculum to follow.

Removal of the reference to gender and sexual orientation shows the influence of conservative and religious sectors of society in the legal structures of the country that leads to negative consequences based on misinformation and ignorance around human rights and inclusion. Any attempt to stop these debates and sharing of information violates the legal rights of students based on the principles of equality, equity and cultural diversity. Yet we see that the current political climate is closely connected with Brazil's history of colonialism, conservative attitudes and social structures that prevail, specifically around gender, sexuality, class and race. (Ribeiro, 2018) Public schools can be a site of resistance and growth, but teachers need material and pedagogical support to navigate these conservative structures that can directly influence in the lives of individuals. (Quirino e Rocha, 2018)

2.3. Brazil's Colonial Legacy

One of the legacies of colonialism in Brazil is the high rate of violence, including violence against youth, women, and especially amongst Brazilian black individuals. Brazil has one of the highest rates of violence in the Americas according to a research conducted by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2017). The country ranks ninth position when compared to other countries in Latin and North America. (Darlington, 2018) When compared to the United States for example, the murder rate in Brazil in 2018, according to the Brazilian Forum of public Security, was 30.8 per 100.000 people and in the U.S, was five for 100.000. An article by Shasta Darlington

in the New York times in 2018, when reveling these alarming numbers from Brazil, even mentioned data analysis from Mexico, where the rate is 25 per 100.000 (2018).

The rates are much higher within the Brazilian black population. According to the Atlas of Violence of 2017 (*Mapa da Violência 2017*), research conducted by the IPEA (Institute of Applied Economic research) and the Brazilian Forum of Public Safety, Brazil had over 60,000cases of homicide in 2016. Out of all these cases, 71% of them were committed against the black population, and 53% of these cases were committed against youth. The research also points out that that black youth have 78.9 % higher chances of being victims of homicides than other racial groups in Brazil, such as White (European descendants) or Indigenous (WHO, 2017). Between 2005 and 2015 there was a growth of 17.2% of homicides among youth, totaling 318,000 young individuals murdered in the country in that period (*Atlas da Violência 2017*). Even though in the last decade mortality among white women has dropped 7.4%, mortality among black women has risen 22%, showing how violence in our society is connected to structural racism. This study also shows us not only the rise of the mortality rate among black women but also the proportion of black women who are victims of aggression, going from 54% in 2005 to 65.3% in 2015. The research that resulted in the *Atlas da Violência 2017* also illustrates that the interlocking nature of gender and racial violence in Brazil is still detrimental to our society and needs to be addressed.

2.4. The Legacy of Colonialism

The process of the colonization in Brazil and the legacy of the Portuguese empire on its largest colony, has created a political, economic and social structure that

is constituted in ways that disadvantages individuals and entire communities based on gender, race, sexual identity, and disability. Within the dominant culture, marginalized people, especially black people are excluded from social spheres, education and especially from politics (Gomes, 2001). The essence of racism in Brazil is a form of oppression called structural racism, in which racism permeates every aspect of our society, within public and private spheres, configuring social relations and being naturalized by dominant groups (Bersani, 2018). These relationships supported by these structures have been inherited from colonial periods and are still present in the essence of Brazilian society, where unequal power and resource access has led to the anti-democratic politics and social structures we have in Brazil today (Freire, 1977, p.101)). In 1968, when writing *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Paulo Freire reflected on the characteristic of an antidemocratic regime and the negative consequences of such model. At the time, he was exiled in Chile while Brazil was experiencing the dark? years of military dictatorship. In 1985, Brazil became a democratic regime and has in many senses made great social improvements, especially due to organized grass roots social movements and activists. Even though is still a racist, sexist and patriarchal society that uses political power to impose social, cultural and religious norms and values, it was in the 1980's, during the process of political "openness" and [Re]democratization of society, that we are able to see a new form of political participation by the black community. They started to participate directly and effectively within social movements, especially within the ones that dealt with identity issues, bringing other forms of problematization and new ways of civil participation and reintegration into politics.

The black movement then questioned the state, the Brazilian left wings sectors of society, and social movements that were omissive or neutral on issues of race that need to be central to the constitution of the nation. (Gomes, 2010) The unequal treatment in contemporary Brazilian society critiqued by Freire is directly connected to Brazilian conquest and the legacy of racist and sexist structures of colonization. (Freire, 2014) Brazil was a colony of exploitation rather than a colony of settlement as seen in the U.S., for example. According to historian Fernando Novais, this form of colonization carried the same levels of brutality towards native populations as with other colonies in the world, but in Brazil's case colonization focused on exploiting resources to export goods to Portugal and enrich colonizers. (Novais, 1969) The indigenous resistance was strong, but the Portuguese were armed and merciless, eliminating the native population and profiting even more from the slave market they established in the Atlantic. Ribeiro notes:

The Nation People does not emerge in Brazil from the evolution of anterior forms of sociability where groups of human's structure themselves in opposite classes but are combined to attend the necessity of survival and progress. The Nation People emerges from the concentration of slave labor forces, recruited to serve the mercantile purposes unacquainted to them, through violent processes of ordination and repression that constituted in fact a genocide and an implacable ethnocide. (Ribeiro, 1995)

Darcy Ribeiro, in his research about Brazilian people, argues that there were on the coast of Brazil over one million Indians from the Tupi Nation, the approximate population of Portugal, at the time the colonizers arrived in South America. Part of

the colonizing project of the European explorers that first arrived in Brazil, the Portuguese and French, was to take advantage of indigenous forces, making alliances with tribes to defeat the “enemy”. Allies of the Portuguese were encouraged to defeat the French and vice versa. Indigenous nations from the South American territory organized confederations, such as Confederação dos Tamoios, that united different tribes, such as the Tupinambás, Goitavas and Carijós. These groups ended up (through schemes of pressure and coercion) making alliances with the colonizers and engaging in bloody wars, not only with the outsiders, but within indigenous populations from other tribes that would make alliances with colonizers (Ribeiro, 1995). The indigenous population in Brazil was massacred by the effects of colonization and exploration that resulted in these local wars and alliances, as well as by the diseases the Europeans brought to the American continent. The Portuguese, with their hunger for feeding a decadent royal elite quickly connected their colonies through the commercialization of slaves. By 1535, the African slave trade was “properly” organized as a legal activity by the Europeans and Brazilian authorities to move and carry the economy in the tropics through the production of sugar cane (in the 16th century), then gold and diamond mining (17th century), followed by coffee production (18th Century). (Nascimento, 48, 49) The relationship established between Portuguese and natives, and Portuguese and Africans, constructed hierarchical values, grounded in mercantilism, Christianity, and exploration, enabling the construction of differences articulated with power, stigma, and inferiority, creating the roots of racism and dimensions of power that directly affect the distribution of valuable

resources and political and educational representation in Brazil until today, putting “white subjects to a clear advantage to other social groups.” (Kilomba, 2016 p.42))

Black women were brought to South America as colonial goods and were constantly raped and expected to generate slaves to sustain the economy or provide assistance to the family in every way. This recent history of Brazil, the last country to abolish slavery in 1888, has shaped religious and patriarchal values that are still rooted within our society with extreme social consequences to the black population. (Nascimento, p.61). Black feminism has recently played an important role in unveiling Brazil’s history of discrimination and mistreatment of Afro-Brazilian women, which is grounded in Eurocentrism. (Ribeiro, 2018, p.20).

Recently one case that shocked the country was the murder of black feminist and supporter of the LGBT movement, Marielle Franco, who was shot to death after leaving a public meeting in the city of Rio de Janeiro. Marielle was the only black councilwoman in Rio de Janeiro, and her work was deeply connected to denouncing state violence in the favelas of Rio as well as violence against black women and LGBT community members (Franco, 2017). Her focus in congress was around issues such as legalization of abortion in the country as well as projects against sexual harassment and for childcare, especially for women in disadvantaged communities. Marielle who was from favela da Mare was a strong symbol of resistance for women and was therefore considered a threat to rightwing conservative politicians. (Carneiro, 2018) Her legacy has brought even more women to rise with indignation to confront and fight a violent society where machismo and racism are still the roots of our social formation. It is important to connect what happened to Marielle, and what happens to

thousands of Brazilian women, especially black women everywhere, particularly if we note how our politics (supposedly a democracy) and civil rights are tightly connected to the schools. It is therefore also important to start this conversation with students early in life if we want to see changes in our society.

The resistance of the Afro Brazilian movements towards a more just educational system and inclusion has led to the approval of the law no 10.639/2003. This law mandates inclusion of African history, the Black movements' resistance, and the contributions of the black population in the social, economic and political structures of the history of Brazil in the national curriculum as part of national identity formation^{xii}.



What worries teachers, scholars and black social movements activists is that the implementation of the law requires an enormous effort of public authorities to provide pedagogical support and training for teachers and educators making sure inclusion in the curriculum is taking place in the classroom, destroying racist stereotypes and positioning the history of Africa as central to understanding Brazilian national formation (Muller, Coelho, 2013). This process of “including” resources and training should also include the stories of students, and teachers. The lack of support for educational professionals as well as the lack of resources and updated textbooks, make it very hard for the law to be effective in promoting social change. More important, however, in this process is the willingness of educators to recognize their own social locations and privileges and dialogue with those recognitions in understanding how to promote social justice teaching and inclusive classrooms. It is crucial to have these laws approved to shift historical perspectives and to invest in

pedagogical support for teachers and school staff to overcome implicit biases and stereotypes that are endemic in many schools. (Gomes, 2010) Additionally, staff need resources and pedagogical support to create feminist classrooms and offer education in feminist issues, including sex education. (Quirino, Rocha, 2012) A research group from the University of São Carlos (in the state of São Paulo) has developed a research project financed by the National Department of Education (MEC) and UNESCO to learn the challenges and limits faced by teachers when trying to implement the goals determined in the documents that established Afro Brazilian studies (Lei 10.639/2003) as mandatory in schools. This research, entitled “Pedagogical work practices with ethnical-racial relations in schools in the perspective of the law 10.639/2003” (*Práticas pedagógicas de Trabalho com relações étnico-raciais na Escola na perspectiva da Lei n° 10.639/03*) included visits and observation of 36 public state and municipal schools to learn how the goals were being implemented and to discover how to provide support to school staff in implementing educational practices connected with ethnic and racial relations. (Gomes, 2012) The research pointed out that the main complaint of school staff when questioned about this law is that there is a great lack of information around the themes and lack of financial and material resources available. But as the authors spent more time in their analysis, they were also able to notice that the great resistance to curricular change is within the schools’ community. One important task for educators, then, is to envision how to engage in feminist transformation to implement affirmative actions in order to disrupt preconceptions that lead to discrimination. (Gomes, 2012, p. 66) This resistance is connected, according to Nilma Lino Gomes, to the presence of a conservative

imaginary in relation to diversity among school staff and others responsible for schools policies, including scholars and intellectuals, who have a tendency to keep hierarchies, (especially racial and social economic) around inequality in place. (Gomes, 2010) In this sense, it is important, especially when thinking about how to change our curriculum that we also take in consideration the role of teachers in this process as well as the conditions for teaching. It is undoubtable that teacher in public schools in Brazil need more resources, pedagogical support for their practices as well as support to build partnership with the community to be able to engage in social change. (Karp, 2007)

2.5. High Rates of School Drop Out

Another issue that needs to be considered when re-thinking curriculum and feminist studies in the schools is the high rates of school evasion, especially for teenage girls due to early pregnancy. The data collected by Pnad (*Pesquisa Nacional de Amostras por domicilios*), a national research study conducted by the IBGE, have shown that in Brazil from 2012-2013 over 5.2 million girls aged of 15 to 17 years had at least one child, and out of this group 75 % of the girls were not attending school. (Moreno, Gonçalves, 2015). Such high rates of evasion of pregnant girls are a great challenge for public authorities in relation to the national plan of education since one of the goals of the National Educational Plan is to universalize education for all the population between 15 and 17 years. In 2017, another research study conducted by the department of health showed that the rates of pregnancy for girls aged 10-14 remained the same in the previous five years for the northeast region of the country where higher incidence of early pregnancy occurs. Another study

conducted by *the Fundação Oswaldo Cruz*, between 1999 and 2001 showed that 32.5% of the girls who got pregnant attended school only up to *Ensino Fundamental* (only up to 14 years old). These girls don't have access to information around sexuality and contraception and, in many cases, are victims of sexual abuse and have nowhere to report and share information. Helena Altmann argues that the lower the schooling rates the higher the rates of pregnancy in the country. (Altmann, 2001)

It is also important to emphasize the importance of establishing ways of communications and exchanges between the school and the Family, based on trust and with the support of the health department organs, in which information about sex education and sexuality can be shared with students from an early age to avoid not only unplanned pregnancy but also the prevention of STD's and the wellbeing of the students. (Taborda, 2014 p.8)

2.6. Feminist Education versus "Gender Ideology"

Current educational materials and legislation reflect what feminist scholars, activists and researchers have achieved with the inclusion of gender studies in the curriculum, bringing attention to power relations in our society, the relationship women have with their bodies, and the way patriarchal influences have helped shape those behaviors and expectations. Women's history and gender studies finally made their way into textbooks where different perspectives are woven together to understand concepts such as femininity, patriarchy, abortion and other aspects of feminism, such as the organization of feminists in the U.S., Europe, and Brazil (Oliveira, Costa, 2016). In particular, the inclusion of gender in the curriculum allows educators and students to engage in examination of structures of power:

Gender relations are established as power relations due to the asymmetry that was constructed during history. These oppositions were constructed by controlling institutions such as religion, the State, the justice systems, and schools. These institutions formed and idealized fixed and immutable hierarchies between genders, and therefore to talk about gender (in the plural - *gêneros*), is to talk about domination. (2016)

At the same time that there were significant changes happening with inclusion of themes never seen in the curriculum, conservative social movements in the country, such as *Escola Sem Partido* and MBL (*Movimento Brasil Livre*), in conjunction with Brazil's most conservative wings and religious institutions, coined the term "gender ideology." Gender ideology, according to some of the conservative movements I have mentioned previously, is an expression that minimizes and critiques feminist interventions in schools. These conservative groups are also against the theories and philosophies proposed by Paulo Freire, who is considered a Marxist and a communist by them. As Bolsonaro tweeted right after the elections, "One of the goals to get Brazil out of the worst positions in international education rankings is to combat the Marxist rubbish that has spread in educational institutions" (Bolsonaro, 2012). Among the propositions in his political program during his campaign were the urgency to change the methods around administration in education, improving literacy programs and revising curriculum, giving emphasis to the need to expurgate Freire's ideology from the Nacional Curriculum Base. (Bolsonaro, 2018) According to critics of "gender ideology," such as MBL and *Escola Sem Partido*, teaching about gender confuses students about their sexuality and gender and would incentivizes

them to change their identities and engage in non-normative relationships. (Carta Capital, 2018) In 2017, Judith Butler was banned by some of these conservative activists from delivering a talk in São Paulo. The feminist philosopher, who was organizing a seminar about the “End of Democracy” (*Os fins da Democracia*)), was attacked under the misconception that she would offer a seminar about gender, although that was not the topic. Conservatives hold Butler as one of those responsible for what they call “gender ideology”. Butler has argued against essentialism, the idea that biology determines gender. Instead, she suggests that gender is a performance that is socially constructed (Butler, 1990). Butler herself (2019) traces conservative opposition to “gender ideology” to a 2004 letter to bishops from Cardinal Joseph Aloysius Ratzinger, who argued that this phenomenon called gender was a revolution against the historical forms of sexuality and therefore against “men and nature” (Ratzinger, 1997).

Opposition to “gender ideology” has been pushing back this conservative movement as they can. In 2018, MBL successfully passed the Project of Law in congress. The Project Of law, had as one of the main articles, to prohibit teachers to discuss themes related to gender or sexual orientation. The Project, suggested that each classroom in the country had fixed signs, listing the main “duties” of teachers (*Escola Sem Partido*, 2018)

With all the political divergence and recent changes in Brazil, I acknowledge that among the main challenges of this project (as I have experienced in my own journey) will sharing with teachers how to deal with disagreement and mediate ideological conflicts as these topics emerge from the conversations between teachers

and students. We can share with our students that disagreement can be key to critical exchange and openness if we learn how to practice constructive disagreement among ourselves, teachers, building relationships of trust and respect with each other (hooks, 2009, 88), that would be the key to a feminist education.

2.7. Current Textbooks

Currently, textbooks in Brazil are a very important tool for students and educators in public schools, sometimes being the only resource available to work with the proposed themes by the national curriculum in the classroom. (Freitas, Rodrigues, 2008). In many schools, where access to technology and libraries are limited, the textbooks end up being the only resource students have when interacting with knowledge. (Matos, 2012)

In 1985, in the process of democratization of the country after 21 years of a military dictatorship, the government launched a program called the National Plan of [school] Text Books (PNDL – *Plano Nacional do Livro Didático*). With this plan, the department of culture and education (MEC) became responsible for to select titles that would be used in public schools. This program allowed the government to provide a few options that then could be chosen by teachers to be used in the classrooms. (Miranda, Luca, 2004) In this sense it is important to highlight the fact that textbooks can be powerful tools to carry ideas and norms that are selected by specific sections of the government and can be considered important documents guided by the relationships of government organs and editorial companies to provide teachers with the knowledge they “need” to approach in the classroom (Matos, 2012). Even though teachers from public school sometimes have an option in which book they want to use

in their classrooms, they do not have much to choose from and end up being in a marginalized position, between academic knowledge production in the hands of profitable editors, government authorities and their students. (Matos, 2012, Bettencourt, 1993) I will refer to a sociology textbook selected by teachers from a school in the State of Rio to try to illustrate how academic knowledge is funneled from editorial companies and government sections into public schools with not many options for educators. This illustrates how content is sometimes delivered to teachers to teach, without previous debates, trainings or a basic understanding of the subjects available to teach. I also choose gender studies, since this research addresses the consequences of gender discrimination with an intersectional perspective and the importance of accessible theories to understand issues of structural violence in our society.

The sociology textbook, *Sociologia Para Jovens do Século XXI* (Oliveira e Rocha) for high school students in public schools provided by the state government of Rio de Janeiro to teach in the small city of Paraty. It serves as an example of current textbooks that address gender studies. While this textbook represents great progress in the content of the material as far as the inclusion of gender and feminist studies, there is still a strong predominance of western feminist scholars and values, especially from the U.S., and U.S. academic feminism. Even though I acknowledge in this research the importance of the transnational exchange, especially between scholars and educators, as well as the power of the feminist movement in the U.S., especially in the last four six decades, I also acknowledge that there is a difficulty of educators and students to engage in certain themes that emerge in a different language

and in different social and cultural contexts, with no pedagogical support for teaching. (Quirino e Rocha, 2012) It is also clear to see how dominant voices and privilege sectors of society the main characters of the book are still, giving little attention to the realities of the local communities and student's experiences.

To open the chapter on gender studies, which is titled "Lugar de Mulher é onde ela quiser?" Relações de gênero e dominação masculina no mundo de hoje" (Is women's place where ever she wants? Gender relations and masculine domination in the world today), there is a short text from a well-known white middle-upper class male Brazilian journalist, Gregorio Duvivier. His essay tries to explain the effects, especially on women, of gendered socialization during childhood and social expectations of women. He is not writing about toxic masculinities or the effects of that socialization on white middle-class Brazilian men; he is writing about the experiences of women. My question is, why can't a woman, from her own positionality and experiences be given the opportunity to write about women's experiences? Gregorio writes about the influences of Disney films and family relations, without taking into considerations the interlocking systems of oppression that might affect women differently, depending upon their race, class and abilities. His main audience is adolescents from public schools in the State of Rio who have a much different social reality than his. Why is it that a man (whom I truly respect and admire as a journalist and a comedian) can write about this experience and, more importantly, be the reference when teaching gender to high school students? How can we bring these discussions to teachers' attentions, embracing what is proposed by feminist studies and feminist pedagogies, letting the voices of students be heard and

most important listening without falling into the traps of keeping the voices out of the materials? Furthermore, in the chapter, there are definitions of gender and gender identities from what the authors considers “experts” on the subjects, who are predominantly North American feminists who have reflected upon their own experiences of gender within the context they have lived and experienced their lives and work. (Oliveira, Costa, 2016) Feminism and women’s histories are included in the chapter called “Gender and Transgender: what has and hasn’t changed in the XX century” (2016, p 340).

The book emphasizes that “gender” is a term “borrowed” from North American feminists to counter definitions based on biological essentialism and give meaning to cultural relations that are present in the definitions and the distinctions of what masculine and feminine mean. (Olivera, Costa, 2016, p.339). The book does not bring to attention the historical, philosophical or social conditions of the production of gender as a category of analysis. (Swain, 2017) It would be interesting to see in the material in schools how feminist activists and scholars, especially from Brazil and Latin America, are engaging in discussions such as how configurations of family, labor and social relations have shaped the condition of women in our society, leading them to suffer different kinds of violence and restricting their presence in public spheres. (Birolli, 2018) According to Brazilian scholar Tania Navarro Swain, this construction of what has been called “gender ideology”, especially when misinterpreted by conservative sectors of society, has put aside the main aspects of the feminist agenda, that permeates the debate around reproductive rights, race, gender, class, and access to basic human rights such as the right for abortion, to

concentrate its debate in the diversity of sexual identities or sexual orientations.

When we come across the discussions of gender studies on textbooks, we rarely see them expose the main issues women must deal with regarding unpaid domestic labor, reproductive rights, equal health access and political representation, in other words essentially how capitalism has influenced the constructions of this social category. (Swain, 2017). The book does bring an important (yet small) reference about abortion and the importance of a close critical reflection between the issues with exposing personal “opinions” based on personal religious and moral beliefs and the importance of understanding the meanings of living in a laic democratic state.

The book falls short in examining patriarchy historically. It tends to rely on legal frameworks for understanding women’s subordination and overlooks the myriad ways in which throughout history men have subjugated women through language and institutions such as the family, religion and legal systems, and political systems. It also falls short on tracing historical facts that demonstrate how this structure was shaped and perpetuated through the denial of women’s participation in education, as protagonists of history, or as active participants in politics (Lerner, 1986).

The book focuses on how women’s resistance started in the 19th century but omits discussion of all the ways women resisted long before organized movements for suffrage. It refers to the establishments of gender hierarchies through the Roman code and through the establishment of the pater rule, where men became “owners” of women, emphasizing that it was not until the 19th century that women, “in relation to a specific point of view, started to demonstrate revolt to ‘masculine domination’ in a collective way.” (Oliveira, Costa, 2016 p.340). It affirms that male domination over

women was authorized with the establishment of patriarchy, (2016, p.341), but the historical evidence seems vague and sometimes absent. It refers to U.S. scholars to understand the meanings of the word gender within recent feminist theories, but it does not refer to important (also western) feminist historians and sociologists (Aguilar, Federicci, 2004, Lerner, 1986, Gonzalez, Carneiro,) to really understand the roots of patriarchy and the relationships between the accumulation of capital and gender relations and how capitalism as a social economical system is “necessarily committed to sexism and racism”. (Federici, 2004) Ignoring the relationships between gender hierarchies, capitalism and neoliberalism in a sociology book of the 21st century, shows the influences of the liberal economy within feminism, especially in how it should be taught and referred to. Not mentioning these connections to students, when conversations about gender raise in the classroom, can contribute to veiling important social issues in our society that contributes to the high rates of violence and perpetuation of political and social patriarchal structures.

In addressing race, the book brings to our attention important issues that can give students an idea of how the construction of race took place in Brazil. It refers to the difficulties Brazilians have in discussing, dialoguing and learning about racism and unveiling the myth of Brazil’s “racial democracy.” (Oliveira, Costa, 2016) The book though has two pages of reference to the history of Africa and not one statement by a black woman regarding the subject. Even though it brings attention to the problems we face in our society, it still does it in a way that it is considered a subject to be studied, as if the subjects are not present in the room or in the schools. Followed by the discussion and visual information (graphics and images), the book brings

attention to the importance of understanding the connections of racism with class disparities but keeps gender in another separate chapter, so it is hard to read the effects of intersectionality, especially upon the situation of black women or indigenous women within our social reality. In the chapter on gender there is an important reference to Brazilian black historian and anthropologist Lélia Gonzales and to some aspects of feminism's third wave. The author raises the main issues between white and black feminist struggles, trying to demystify the universal visions of white western feminism. It is still a very small reference that could be included in other chapters, such as the one that references the problems of racism in Brazil. Gonzales addressed issues of sexism and racism in Brazilian culture in the 1980s, and her work is crucial to understand intersectionality in a local cultural perspective, considering the challenges black women face in Brazil. (Gonzalez, 1984) She points out the flaws of the feminist movement that would exclude those discussions from its main agenda, and she dismantles the myths of Brazilian racial democracy. My point is that she could be a central reference in at least two chapters of the text book. It is common for, at least individuals from my generation, who studied humanities in a Brazilian University and attended school in Brazil (either public or private) to not have been exposed to black women authors and scholars in the curriculum. Making those changes and including different perspectives can create a great impact on students' lives, where students and educators can grapple better with their reality by relating directly with other people's lived experiences in their language and immersed in their culture (Ribeiro, 2018). This book is a typical example of how textbooks have tried to integrate feminist perspectives of gender, race and class in the curriculum. In

summary, they have included some subjects that have been excluded from the curriculum in the past, and they have made these issues accessible for students. Still these textbooks have come up short by overreliance on North American feminists, exclusion of students' own realities and experiences, and lack of pedagogical and material support for teacher to succeed in their work.

2.8. Feminist Pedagogies and Critical Thinking

I am aware of the improvements the books have made by approaching topics there were never mentioned in classrooms before, but this analysis shows the books can do better. This is why I propose a feminist pedagogical approach to classrooms, where we can, as suggested by Freire as well as hooks, generate themes in discussions that are part of our daily lives and then engage in committed research on the themes we choose, bringing different perspectives and voices that have never been heard to the center of the discussions. Feminist Pedagogies and Critical Thinking

2.8.1. Paulo Freire and influences in feminist pedagogies

There is a vast literature available within Brazil's pedagogical field that informs not only this urgency to discuss power relations with teachers and students but also connects this analysis with feminist perspectives (Freire, 2014; Sardemberg, 2011; Louro, 1997; Gomes, 2003; Gonzales, 1987, Ribeiro, 2018). When Freire writes *Education as a Practice of Freedom*, he brings to our attention the necessity of an education that leads students to be able to make their own decisions towards social and political responsibility. Through education, he believed that the word (*a palavra*)

could be transformed from alienating ideologies to a powerful instrument of social transformation (Freire, 2014). It is through the relationships of the “man” with reality, that “he”^{xiii} can be part of this reality and make decisions and take responsibility for these decisions. Freire’s insights around individual and collective action and the recognition of subject and object within systems of oppression are particularly useful concepts for feminist pedagogies. (2014) Feminist scholars have built on these ideas and developed their own theories of pedagogies that underline the importance of learning different strategies when in engaging in the practice of “teaching” about gender, sexuality, and feminism. (Maher, Tetreault, 2001)

In this section, I explore some of the ideas of feminist pedagogies and critical thinking as well as the transnational aspects of these practices to analyze how professionals both in Brazil and the U.S. apply feminist and critical pedagogical practices in totally different settings.

Freire worked with peasants through literacy programs, and feminist scholars, such as bell hooks and Audre Lorde, they worked in universities and schools, to promote inclusion and equity. What I would like to emphasize here is that these philosophical approaches to teaching show us that no matter where we are, we should consider the realities of the students with whom we work. We should attend to language, symbols, and culture, and we should understand how critical thinking and critical pedagogies can also be responsible for generating knowledge and bringing to light to voices and experiences that have been excluded from formal curriculum and textbooks. (Freire, 2014, hooks, 1994) Alleyne Johnson in one of her essays for the collection *Education is Politics* raises awareness of the importance of making

connections between the “day-to-day reality of students and the day-to-day process of teaching and learning that takes place in urban schools across the U.S.”.(Johnson, 1999) This is part of the core values of Freirean pedagogies, in which teaching becomes this mechanism that encourages students and teachers to make space for possibilities in their practices to create and produce knowledge from their own experiences and places. I also identify ways to connect these practices in our daily work as teachers, emphasizing the importance of a democratic and respectful educational practice. The pedagogies discussed in this section are intended for intervening in spaces where knowledge is produced, creating nuclei of resistance in the current political context, allowing educators and students to engage in reciprocal dialogues, learning from each other and teaching ourselves (Alexander, 2005).

According to Brazilian scholar Cecília Sardemberg, feminist pedagogies are embedded in what we also call “critical pedagogies” or “liberatory pedagogies”. These practices have as the main “learning outcome” to bring conscientization to individuals around the oppressed condition they occupy in society (Sardemberg, 2004). The method of conscientization proposed by Freire, does not intend to be a method for teaching, but a method for learning, where individuals do not create their possibilities of being free, but learn how to make freedom effective. This pedagogical approach suggests that individuals reflect on their lives and conditions and engage in education as a practice of freedom. (Freire, 1987) This conscientization, led by critical thinking, should change our teaching practices. We, as feminist educators, must be willing to have conversations and to collaborate in discussions that can cross theoretical and physical boundaries and create spaces for change and intervention (hooks, 1994).

Within feminist practice, there is a need to conceptualize not only gender as an analytical category, but also race, class, sexuality, and disability, being careful not to make one category more salient over another and being aware that these categories are the structures for all our relationships (Hill Collins). When referring to feminist pedagogies it is important to understand social, cultural and religious values and practices to analyze critically the patriarchal structures we occupy and how we are affected differently by these structures. These practices aim to bring conscientization, providing us with tools to overcome discrimination and power differences (Sardemberg, 2004) Patricia Hill Collins emphasizes the necessity of asking new questions in our educational practices that will move us away from the practice of ranking oppressions. These questions should uncover the connections among these categories of analysis. One of the questions she suggests that I believe can be useful to this research when looking at feminist pedagogies in schools is, "How do race, class and gender function as parallel and interlocking systems that shape this basic relationship of domination and subordination?" (2016) This type of question can move us from a focus on one form of oppression to an analysis of interlocking oppressions, specifically in schools where we examine not only the role of teacher and student but also of janitor, cook, administrator, and administrative board members. Conversations around these specific relationships of the work environment can embrace dynamics of power, hierarchies and political influences in a way that can be an important start for feminist pedagogical practices. Questioning not only what knowledge we are given to teach but all aspects of society that seems to be imposed without dialogue and reflection and bringing awareness and a sense of social and

political responsibility to students. Bringing attention to the fact that if individual can claim their rights for education (any political rights), they should also manifest consciousness around their responsibility with each other in a larger social sense, a commitment with society. (Pacheco, 2012)

bell hooks have been profoundly influenced by Paulo Freire's work (and vice versa) and has deep commitment in her work as an educator and as a writer of feminist pedagogies. She draws a beautiful analogy of Freire's influence on her work, comparing her pedagogical practice with the act of weaving a tapestry, where she has taken threads of his work and woven toward her version of feminist pedagogies (hooks, 1994, 52). hooks do a very important critique of Freire's work, acknowledging the sexist language in his writings and emphasizing the value of his thoughts and his philosophy in this path for a liberatory education. Freire's commitment to liberatory education and literacy was enormous, and his most important tool in this process was dialogue. He reminds us of the importance of this tool: "Liberating education consists in acts of cognition, not transfers of information. It is a learning situation in which the cognizable object (far from being the end of the cognitive act) intermediates the cognitive actors—teacher on the one hand and students on the other. Accordingly, the practice of problem-posing education entails at the outset that the teacher-student contradiction to be resolved. Dialogical relations—indispensable to the capacity of cognitive actors to cooperate in perceiving the same cognizable object—are otherwise impossible." (Freire, 1987, p. 74)

Paulo Freire's ideas have emerged again recently in the political debates in Brazil with a similar approach as when he was exiled. The fear of his philosophy and his ways of thinking which were deeply engaged in the commitment to critical thinking, literacy and liberator democratic education for the poor is still vivid among middle/upper class conservative and religious society. According to bell hooks, engaging in dialogues is one of the simplest ways we can begin as teachers, scholars, and critical thinkers to cross boundaries that may be erected by race, gender, class, professional standing, and a host of other differences (bell, 1994, p.130).

Bolsonaro's comments about Freire suggest the immediate importance of critical feminist pedagogies in Brazil. At this moment, conservative forces are seeking to undermine efforts to raise consciousness and facilitate greater self-awareness and agency around gender and sexuality. Freire's ideas about conscientization as well as feminist education seems to be the greatest "threat" to the current administration, which alleges that Freire's ideas are apologetics for communism and Marxism. The same administration also recently dissolved an important secretariat of the previous government, the SECADI, which was the office for continuous education, literacy, diversity and inclusion in the country. It focused not only on programs such as EJA (Educação de Jovens e Adultos – Education of Youth and Adults) but also on education in the prisons and in rural areas (Silva, Lorenzi, Pereira, Silveira, 2019). In the next section, I will bring to light some educational initiatives that have inspired this work and research around the possibilities for curricular transformation and the transformation of educational spaces in a broader sense. I will then try to connect these initiatives with some of the

main issues proposed in this literature review to suggest themes to initiate dialogues with teachers in a structured seminar, the FIS. Again, the themes that will follow in the next chapters are only suggestions, and the goal of the FIS is to model critical and engaged feminist pedagogies, where participants can also be responsible for generating the themes to be discussed in the encounters. This requires flexibility from educators as well as willingness to engage constantly in research and educational processes of exchange and growth.

2.8.2. Educational initiatives currently leading to curriculum transformation

As I was immersed in this process of research in a higher educational setting in the U.S., as well as in my previous experiences as an educator, I have come learn about some educational initiatives in Brazil and the U.S. that have led me to reflect upon curriculum transformation and understand the possibilities and the challenges we face when asking educators to engage. Curriculum transformation underlines the importance of bringing different perspectives into the classrooms and asks educators to rethink and reimagine our individual social relations, centering integrity, honesty, engagement, responsibility and autonomy. I will return to these values a in the last few paragraphs of this chapter.

Here I share a few educational initiatives, physical spaces, and publications that are already engaged in social transformation towards a non-racist, nonsexist, more equitable educational system and therefore society and that have inspired me in my journey as an educator. Each of these initiatives, is very different in their format; where some are schools, some are a compilation of references to support teachers, and some are active social movements, and some are websites. They all somehow

address areas of concern for teaching and learning for critical consciousness. These models offer ideas and practices that I use to develop the FIS. As I stated in the first chapter, this research has been guided and inspired by actions within the feminist collective M.A.R. in Paraty, which has, through feminist pedagogical practices, public debates and seminars, enabled us to engage in difficult dialogues in schools and in public spaces, weaving a web of support and reciprocity among women in Paraty. Most importantly, the feminist collective M.A.R. has helped raise consciousness and awareness of the vulnerability of women and girls in our society. By exchanging stories and connecting them theoretical and legal frameworks, we can see our positions in society and the ways that women are still subordinated to patriarchal, racist and sexist systems of dominance. Even though we did not yet call these practices “feminist pedagogies”, they were clearly practices that aimed to bring consciousness to individuals regarding the patriarchal order in our society and them instruments to overcome this order and work towards the construction of equity among sexes. (Sardenberg, 2011)

2.8.3 Projeto Âncora

The first contact I had with this educational project in the city of Cotia in the State of São Paulo was when, Casa Escola, a nonprofit where I taught for a period of time, hosted a weekend pedagogical workshop/immersion with the two women that headed the project at the time, Edilene Morikawa and Claudia Duarte. They came to us, because the educator José Pacheco, one of the idealizers of the project, was also involved in the development of Casa Escola’s pedagogical project. Edilene and Claudia had weekly meetings with the coordinator of Casa Escola at the time, Luiz

Gubert, to exchange ideas and experiences about the daily lives of students and educators. Casa Escola, a much smaller project than Âncora, was following the steps that in my experiences teaching were typical. According to research, conducted by Brazilian scholar Sheyla Almeida, the educational philosophy at Ancora included the constitutions of attitudes, emotions and behaviors of children. The dialogical process, which it centered, allowed students to engage in human relations and therefore transformative educational processes (2017). As Almeida states:

What we see in the Project, and in many other educational experiences that are willing to change the current social scenario, is that education should be developed under dialogical perspectives that are also solidary, respectful, carried with affection and freedom; enlarging its relations with its community and its surrounding.

Mobilized by the convictions that other human relations need to be developed if we want to constitute different social and cultural configurations. (2017) Projeto Âncora, does not have the same classroom structure as conventional schools, and therefore no lectures (only when requested by students). The students must follow the curriculum proposed by the education department of the Government (MEC – Ministério de Educação e de Cultura) but there are also no grade levels and no graded assignments, they choose when and where to engage with the materials and are guided by instructors within the best ways for them to learn within their own realities and possibilities. There is common understanding that this physical space, the school is a place of encounter where students and teachers are invited to live knowledge and the various forms of acknowledging the world, a place to develop critical thinking, social skills and autonomy. (Pacheco, 2016) According to Jose Pacheco, the twentieth

century schools produce “ignorance and unhappiness” and with this educational approach the students have access to everything. They learn how to ask questions analyze and criticize, they learn how to engage in constructive dialogues and reflection upon their reality and the world they live in. It might sound that students are very loose in this scenario, but it is actually the opposite, one they find subjects of their interests to work with, they engage with different educators as necessary to develop their projects making sure they attend to all requirement from the government’s curriculum. (Almeida, 2017) In 2018, the School was also recognized as a cultural reference by the National Department of Culture, (MEC) enriching not only the experiences of the students but also of the surrounding community. (Âncora, 2018)

2.8.4 *Primavera Secundarista*

This “educational initiative” that I would like to bring to our attention is the transformation of schools after what was known as the *Primavera Secundarista*, or the Occupations of Schools in Brazil from 2015, at least for a short period of time. This student led movement also known as “the occupation of the schools”, or the “High School Spring”, or even the “Feminist Spring” (Garcia, 2016) was a political strategy used by students in Brazil following examples from other countries in South America to resist against measures imposed by the governor’s office regarding financial cuts and changes in the educational system. (Rossi, 2015)

This form of protest garnered such interest in public and on social media that public authorities not only had to listen to what the students were asking for but to negotiate with them as well. The protests inspired dialogue among important political

figures, exposing the power of white male dominance in Congress positioned against the voices of students in the streets.

The documentary directed by Beatriz Alonso and Fabio Columbini, *Lute Como Uma Menina* (Fight Like a Girl), illustrates the organizations and alliances among students, especially female students, and emphasizes how they took responsibility not only for what they learned, but also what they should learn and how, in order to participate in politics and social justice affairs. It is amazing to see with this film, how students were able to organize and critically engage in conversations that concerned their own educational journey. During the occupations, there were activities inside of schools, led by students, lectures lead by teachers and the involvement of outside social movements that contributed in any form they could. Anyone from the community, such as musicians, artists and just general help, that wanted to contribute with the “occupation” was welcome inside the schools. (Alonso, Columbini, 2016)

The documentary has a powerful feminist perspective on the students’ movements and shows how teenage girls took leadership of the occupations as political organizer. The participation of the female students in this process of occupation and leadership, would bring discussions about gender to the center of political debates, making conservative sectors of society, specially within political spheres furious (Garcia, 2016).

2.8.5 Rethinking Schools

Rethinking Schools has been, since 1986, gathering and organizing stories, essays and resources for U.S. teachers, students and parents. These resources are

deeply connected with educators' experiences in the classroom and challenges faced by teachers and students when trying to implement a critical, multicultural pedagogical approach in schools.

Rethinking Schools is also influenced by Paulo Freire. On their website they note that "Brazilian educator Paulo Freire wrote that teachers should attempt to 'live part of their dreams within their educational space.'" Rethinking Schools believes that classrooms can be places of hope, where students and teachers gain glimpses of the kind of society we could live in and where students learn the academic and critical skills needed to make that vision a reality" (Editors)

The essays, included in not only *Rethinking Our Classrooms* (2007), but also, *Rethinking Sexism, Gender and Sexuality* (2017), and *Rethinking Ethics Studies* (2019) seek to focus on stories and experiences grounded in the lives of students, connecting them to current political issues, to promote an education that is anti-racist, participatory, academically rigorous, hopeful, and experimental (Bigelow 2007). The work of Rethinking Schools encourages educators to reimagine classroom practices and to extend beyond the school's physical space, inviting teachers and students to think critically about how we can encourage more collaborative learning based on students' lived experiences beyond the classroom walls. (Bigelow, 2007, p.11).

Among the themes that these collections explore are ways to deal with issues of race and respect among children (Tenorio, 2007), ways to address gender in early childhood, (Pelo, 2007) and ways to support students in dealing with issues such as identity, anger, and relationships. (Salas, 2007). In one essay, Bill Bigelow shares insights about an untracked classroom and the possibilities of using students'

imagination and creativity to learn (history in this case). He emphasizes the downsides of memorizing dates and fact and suggests instead more experiential activities such as role-playing, poetry reading and improvising as much more effective ways of learning, bringing new possibilities to our educational spaces. I have learned through these publications the difficulties of educators in the U.S. and was able to draw some connection to the efforts of some Brazilian educators, especially in trying to transform our educational structures and promote anti-racist, anti-sexist pedagogies that aim for equity and social justice.

2.8.6 Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice

Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice (2007) (which pairs with Readings for Diversity and Social Justice) has provided useful examples of overall lesson plans and activities that can be utilized to engage with teachers and students to promote reflection upon curriculum transformation. Even though the book focuses on teaching in higher education in the U.S., it provides us with activities and reflections that explore multiple facets of critical thinking and teaching, examining historical evidence to increase awareness around racism, privilege, sexism and other forms of discrimination in the classrooms (Bell, 2007). It also reminds us social justice educators of the importance of having clear objectives to the activities we propose in our classrooms, with ideas of planning, identifying concepts, and organizing learning goals, outcomes and activities (Bell, 2007). The book also provides useful examples of class/workshop modules to understand systems of oppression that can be helpful to

engage in difficult conversations, while it provides support to facilitators' organization and structure. Sex Ed the City

The project, Sex Ed the City, designed by a group based in Oakland, California named Forward Together (formerly Asian Communities for Reproductive Justice) is dedicated to assuring that young people get the healthcare services and information they need and to creating policy change that can ensure a comprehensive sex education curriculum. This initiative pushes for the school community to create environments for children and teens to have the information they have the right to access and to create a safe community for young people. Their work also provides a model for other communities seeking to provide comprehensive sex education and is helpful in developing the workshop I propose.

2.8.7 *QG Feminista, Géledes, Scarleteen, Sex Etc.,*

The online feminist magazine *QG Feminista*, as well as the website *Géledes*, has particularly contributed immensely in the sense of offering thoughtful interpretations and historical analysis of feminist theory and the main issues in our society addressed in this work. I was able within these platforms to find powerful references, strongly politicized content, and accessible language. *Géledes* offers a series of lesson plans with suggestions to educators on how to discuss issues around race, centering the narratives of Afro Brazilian people.

It is undeniable how much social media and today's virtual world influence the lives of youth in different parts of the world. (Stack, Kelly, 2006) I came across, during this process of research, many references for sex and feminist education that I believe can be powerful tools to be used among educators, students and activism,

especially if we recognize the spaces of resistance within this neoliberal web we are immersed in (2006). Four of them in particular, inspired me to reflect critically over the main themes of the FIS, as they were able to establish the relationships between the structures of the capitalist, patriarchal, white, heteronormative systems we are embedded in, and the relationships of these systems with politics, our bodies, our sexuality and our health. Most importantly, they help us understand the importance of reading, listening and learning from each other's experiences in this process of social justice education. Sex Etc. and Scarleteen are two important initiatives in the U.S. that share on their website/blog stories of teens across the U.S., relating these stories with useful information regarding sex, relationships, pregnancy, STIs, birth control, and sexual orientation. The websites are designed so these "subjects" do not come across as social taboos but as personal lived experiences.

2.8.9 Difference, Power, and Discrimination Program at Oregon State University

For the past 25 years, Oregon in the U.S. has offered a faculty workshop on curriculum transformation through its Difference, Power, and Discrimination Program (DPD). Even though the DPD program focuses on curriculum transformation in the United States, I still believe it is a great example to reference for curriculum transformation in Brazil as well. The program offers an opportunity to engage in critical reflection on the curriculum, providing opportunities for faculty and students to bring attention to discrimination and relationships of power and privilege in the U.S. The faculty seminar helps teachers examine their own curriculum and reformulate it with difference at the center. (Roberts, 2007). The DPD seminar and

program has inspired me to think over the structures of the encounters of the FIS, where within the literature and classroom experiences, I was able to understand some of the issues around the importance of the structures of the classroom, the role of the facilitators and the processes involved when engaging in curricular transformation.

The DPD seminar is a 60-hour workshop c designed for faculty to discuss and engage in curriculum transformation as well as critical pedagogies and issues around difference, power and discrimination. Enrollment in the seminar is voluntary and participants receive a stipend to participate in the seminar. The director of the DPD program is responsible for conducting the seminar and for providing participants with useful resources to engage in the process of curriculum transformation (Shaw, 2007). I believe that this format could be a great incentive to engage teachers from public schools in Brazil in curriculum transformation. DPD activities and discussions can be encouraging and stimulating for teachers. The structure and design of the DPD program, according to Larry Roper, “requires a thoughtful exploration of difference, power and discrimination through the disciplinary lenses of designated courses. Simply stated, the DPD program as conceptualized at Oregon State University is a construct, while diversity is a concept. In this case, a construct means the relationship between difference power and discrimination is explored in relationship to each other, not as isolated dynamics” (Roper, 2007 p.227). DPD courses are also a baccalaureate core requirement at OSU. All undergraduate students are expected to take at least one DPD course that requires students from all fields and disciplines to engage in the “intellectual examination of the complexities of the structures, systems and ideologies

that sustain discrimination and the unequal distribution of power and resources in our society” (Burns, 2007, p.38).

This model, I believe, can be restructured and adapted to be implemented in public schools in Brazil by focusing on the dynamics of the relationships of teachers and students and rethinking curriculum and pedagogical approaches from within culturally appropriate frameworks. Combining the DPD model and structure with the resources compiled by feminist collectives as well as collections such as *Rethinking the Classrooms* can become a powerful tool to support teachers with their practice and activism in schools.

I ground this analysis of curriculum transformation in the importance acknowledging how gender, race, class, sexuality, and ability can influence the ways we experience the world differently and how we create and maintain culture (Adichie, 2015). Our language and ways of communication reinforce the structures we occupy and the culture in which we are immersed. That is why it is important in this project always to refer to historical analysis and social context, especially when thinking of curriculum transformation. The process of colonization of Brazil mentioned in a previous section of this chapter and the legacy of the Portuguese empire on its largest colony, has fed a political and social structure that has pressured socially disadvantaged individuals and marginalized non-dominant voices and speech from the social spheres. These relationships of isolation and silence in the colony were responsible for shaping the anti-democratic politics and social structures we have in Brazil (Freire, 1977, p.101). Despite the great advance in the curriculum with the inclusion of women’s studies and intersectional feminism, there are still structural

gaps that need to be filled with perspectives that have not yet been represented. The project will address some of these gaps by providing a workshop for teachers that explores curricular and pedagogical transformation rooted in social justice.

2.8.10 Conclusion

The goal of this curriculum transformation workshop is to be able to form a web of support and reciprocity where we can learn from individuals' experiences and group interactions, as well as from relationships in the classrooms that enable us to make conscious critical reflections on the importance of student-centered learning (Adams, 2007, p. 15). To provide structure and support to the participants of the workshop in their classrooms in this reflection process, I draw from pedagogical strategies that can help teachers interact with diverse students (Adams, 2007, p.15).

The idea for the Feminist Itinerant School emerged in discussions within feminist collectives, especially M.A.R. (Paraty) and *Atreva-se* (São Paulo). The goal of the school is to facilitate encounters with educators to discuss issues of power and discrimination and reimagine curricula and pedagogies that are empowering. To support the structures of these encounters, I have researched and gathered ideas and suggestions from different scholars engaged in critical pedagogies and critical thinking, who have shared challenges and results and impacts that a social justice classroom can have in our society. This literature review serves as the theoretical basis of the school and shapes the curriculum and processes for the workshop for teachers.

3 The Feminist Itinerant School

The pedagogical process is eminently cultural, and the relationships between teaching and learning are constructed in a field of values, of representations and different logics. We don't deal only with cognitive processes. Indeed, more and more we discover that cognition is also constructed within our culture. Therefore, educational research will always be enriched through the dialogues with other human science field. (Gomes, 2003)

The literature I reviewed in the previous chapter is now going to guide me through organizing the ideas in this process of sharing with teachers and students ways we can make changes and adjustments in our daily life in schools to make our curriculum and teaching practices more inclusive. As I mentioned before, the idea of the feminist itinerant school emerged within conversations among activists and teachers who are constantly searching for support and ideas that can be useful for them to overcome inequality and discrimination in their classrooms and schools. These activists and teachers are committed to an ongoing project in which we can, as teachers, encourage our students' academic excellence while at the same time teaching them to examine history, politics and the role schools have played in society, sometimes perpetuating sexism, racism, and other forms of discrimination. My hope is we can create spaces to empower teachers and students to engage in work that can lead to progressive social change. (Lee)

3.1 Structure

The Feminist Itinerant School (FIS) is a project that proposes the inclusion of feminism, gender politics and sex education (within a broader political context) in public schools in Brazil. This project is designed to enhance and support teaching practices, inviting K-12 teachers to share their challenges in the classroom and bringing their experiences to the center of the discussion. The FIS consists of 10 two-hour encounters in the school with teachers and members of the school community where we will be sharing ideas around the themes that have been the driver for this research. The plans proposed in this chapter are flexible and can be modified as the seminar takes form, depending on the necessity and reality of the school in which it is taking place. Therefore, these plans offer a starting place for the FIS, but the actual implementation will vary from place to place depending on local challenges and needs.

In the first session, we'll ask teachers what challenges they face in relation to the themes, and we'll shape, as best we can, subsequent sessions to accommodate their needs. It is important that the facilitators are adaptable and understand how to adjust the sessions if changes need to be made in the proposed curriculum. While the central goal of curriculum transformation remains, how we get there can be flexible as facilitators adapt the workshop to meet the needs of the participants.

The pedagogical practices of the FIS will themselves be feminist and serve as a model for the practices we hope teachers will adopt after their participation in the school. For example, the FIS will be attentive to creating an inclusive space where participants feel they can speak freely and will feel valued. Cecilia Sardemberg

suggests in her reflections around feminist pedagogies, that feminist workshops (*oficinas*) such as the FIS set clear guidelines for participation:

- Explain with clearness the objectives of this work
- Explain the dynamics and techniques involved in a feminist classroom
- Promote interaction and stimulate the development of trust among participants
- Emphasize the importance of confidentiality of information shared within the group
- Establish with the group norms and rules to be followed in the encounters;
- Guarantee that all the voices are heard
- Avoid monopolization of speech and individuals for speaking for others
- Be aware of attitudes that aim to avoid conflicts, hindering the process of learning and reflecting around social issues
- Avoid attitudes of psychological authority
- Assure that all the stages of the seminar/workshop are concluded in the time proposed
- Create a document that evaluates and records the process of the work in practice^{xiv}

These guidelines will frame the processes of the FIS and create a welcoming and democratic space for authentic participation.

The FIS is deeply rooted in the practices of feminist pedagogies and within a feminist classroom. These practices, as mentioned earlier, are connected to the processes of consciousness raising and social transformation:

Conscious raising starts from the telling of women's experiences in areas such as childhood, jobs, motherhood, or sexual relationships. Consciousness raising involves a "process of transformative learning" that awakens personal awareness, leads to critical self-reflection and analysis, discovers group commonality among a class of situations, and provides an "ongoing and continuing source of theory and ideas for actions" (Sarachild, 1975, p. 147) (Adams, 2007)

The FIS will rely upon interactive learning strategies and activities to center students as the main actors in the classroom, while raising awareness of the ways students learn differently and have different needs. These activities will consist in reading, writing, research, artistic projects, dialogues, reflection, and dynamics inspired by scholars committed to social justice and feminist education (Adams, Bell, Griffin, Shaw, Kilomba, Boal, hooks). A feminist classroom will call us to reflect upon dynamics of power, authority and positionality, to challenge our current curriculum, and to work together to transform the curriculum by bringing different voices to the classroom. Facilitators and participants need to be aware that this process will may evoke strong feelings, such as anger, anxiety, fear and discomfort. It is important we develop a sense of care and responsibility to be able to balance these feeling with the learning process by providing support and time for participants to debrief and communicate their feelings. Facilitators are co-learners and not holders of knowledge

in a feminist classroom. It is crucial that we have this awareness, consciousness, and sensibility among ourselves and as well as curiosity and commitment to engage in research in the themes we bring to share with our students.

Oregon State University's Difference, Power, and Discrimination Program offers a stipend to participants in recognition of curriculum transformation as part of the ongoing labor of the classroom. Even a small stipend underlines the value of participation in the workshop and supports intellectual labor that can lead to social change. My hope is that the FIS can offer stipends to participants as well. This, of course, will vary from school to school and will depend on the ability of the Feminist Itinerant School to search for its own funding through grants or other forms of fundraising. While ideally schools should have funding for professional development activities and resources, we know that is not the reality of the Brazilian public system.

3.2 Why Itinerant?

Rather than calling this model a “workshop” or “seminar,” I have chosen to name it the “Feminist Itinerant School.” As an “itinerant” school, the project is mobile and allows us to adapt the model to different places and different school cultures. It also allows creation of networks across schools and teachers through the country, and possibly the world. Rather than offering fixed solutions for the local problems of schools, the FIS shares ideas, processes of critical thinking, and political conscientization that teachers can use to transform curriculum and pedagogies within their own particular contexts. The collective M.A.R. have in many ways already been proposing these conversations and encounters in schools as mentioned previously, and now I would like to propose a model where we can support facilitators and

activists to extend this work. The FIS can help us build a web of reciprocity, sharing our experiences, struggles, ideas and resources in a semi-structured environment. The collective M.A.R. has very close relationship, as stated earlier with one of the schools in Paraty, CEMBRA, and this project also envisions to share some of what is being done there with teachers and students in the last few years.

The fact that this project is not grounded in one school but is itinerant also reinforces the importance of being mobile and flexible in such terrifying political times. In Brazil's rapidly changing political environment, teachers will need to be able to adapt feminist ideas and pedagogies to address current events in their teaching. Additionally, schools and teachers must make choices about how they engage in the FIS, knowing social and political harassment may result from anti-feminist forces currently in power.

3.3 Facilitators

The Feminist Collective MAR offers an important model for this project because it shows how important it is to include individuals, educators, mentors, and facilitators who are willing to find common ground and understanding on the basic principles that undergird this project. For the past three years, the collective, has been engaging in seminars and publications, as well as difficult conversations about feminism in our community and among ourselves as co-founders of the collective. This practice that involves research, reading, and (self) reflection has brought us to some common ideological inspirations that are crucial to move forward in this collectively. Coherence is one of them, as well as the understanding that education needs to be an act of love and therefore an act of courage. As Freire advises us

educators, we cannot fear the debate nor the analysis of reality. (Freire 127) These debates, when done with respect and basic rules, can lead us toward a democratic education. These dialogues generate significant themes and reflections that can guide us to think about action and change within our local communities. Our feminist pedagogies bring participants' stories and their students' stories to the classroom, and we connect those stories with social issues, current events, and curriculum content. This type of feminist learning in the FIS is achieved, not through a banking model of education, but through facilitation by leaders who are also co-learners in the process and who guide, rather than control, learning. These facilitators will act as models of feminist teaching for participants.

Facilitators for the FIS will be immersed in a training process (when preparing and grappling with the materials and ideas for the project) that will invite them to create a connection with the material they will be introducing. We will also share with facilitators the importance of not only “teaching” those themes to participants of the project, but also stimulating creativity and imaginative discussions. It is important that facilitators understand their positionality in society and that they speak respectfully to teachers as peers, so that teachers can be inspired to do the same with their students. Facilitators will establish a nonhierarchical environment to create welcome for diverse perspectives. They will model how to engage and discuss ideas, theories, and practices in their leadership of the FIS.

At least two facilitators should guide the encounters. This will allow facilitators to debrief after each session to improve facilitation, adapt materials, and maintain relevance as the school progresses. It is important to have one of the

facilitators engaged in taking notes as well as monitoring the process of the encounters (such as where the discussions are leading us, who is speaking more and what challenges to engagement in respectful dialogues emerge).

Depending on how comfortable the participants are, we can invite them to participate in the process of taking notes to share at the end as well as to be process monitors. I have experienced having a process monitor in a classroom in a DPD classroom at Oregon State University, and this experience enabled me to have an idea of the predominant voices in the room as well as the overall process of the discussions. Some ground rules need to be set with participants in the course of the encounters, understanding the importance of empathy, solidarity and respect. Debates and disagreements are fundamental in the process of learning, and the only way to engage in this true process of learning is if we are willing to listen and respect others' perspectives, experiences, and point of view. Guidelines for discussion, however, should ensure disagreement does not become personal attacks, particularly attacks targeting anyone's gender, race, class, sexuality, or disabilities. We emphasize that any kind of discrimination will be unacceptable in the classrooms of the FIS.

3.4 Themes, Outcomes and Goals

In this section I will examine each theme proposed by the Feminist Itinerant School and the respective learning outcomes and goals to each topic approached. The structure and development of each lesson plan and encounter was done with the support of the material highlighted in the educational initiatives section of the literature review, grounded in feminist pedagogical practices and guided by

conceptual frameworks in curriculum design integrated with feminist theories and social justice practices. I have in the literature review focused on why it is important we tap into these themes with teachers, to understand how this patriarchal heteronormative society operates and the importance of engaging in curricular transformation. Here I offer a framework for each of the ten sessions of the FIS. The outlines are broad, leaving room for facilitators to adapt the session to the specific context of the school/community where the FIS is being offered. Each session offers an overview, learning outcomes, activities, and resources. I provide basic information and references on the terminology and guidelines for each encounter. Additionally, I offer Power Point slides and handouts in an appendix.

3.5 Curriculum Transformation

Reflecting upon curriculum transformation is key in this process of engaging with different perspectives and knowledges in our teaching and learning journeys as students and as educators. When we reflect upon curriculum transformation it is important that we understand this as a process. Transformations do not necessarily mean starting from scratch or dismissing what we have accomplished in education so far. The word transformation itself carries the importance of re-imagining educational spaces, practices and relationships in the classroom. It pushes us to reflect upon how to achieve equity and end discrimination in the spaces we navigate, if we want to see this happening in a broader sense. It is important that we are not only critically engaged with the materials and information of our formal curriculum, but also with our classroom setting, such as how we will sit, if everyone can see

everyone, if there are appropriate accommodations for people with disabilities, and if parents are able to bring their children to class if they don't have another option, or even if they just want to do so. "We must exercise our responsibility as citizens and support decisions to further educational practices leading to a society where equity, equality, and justice are words we not only speak but live." (Braun, 1994, p. 13).

Some of the questions for curriculum transformation proposed by professor Susan Shaw in the Oregon State University DPD Program as well as those by a scholar and artist Grada Kilomba, can help us navigate conversations about curriculum transformation::

- "Who is included in the content of your curriculum? Whose issues are explored. Who is left out?
- Who created and defined your discipline? How did their perspectives affect the ways your discipline was constructed? Whose perspectives were ignored in the development of your discipline.
- What epistemological assumptions undergird your curriculum? How might other ways of knowing reshape your curriculum?
- From whose perspective is your course taught. Whose perspectives are excluded, marginalized, or minimized? How would inclusion of these perspectives change what/how you teach?
- How does your curriculum support and help maintain the dominant culture? In what ways could your curriculum challenge the dominant culture?
- What are the ethical considerations implicit in your curriculum?

- What may be the impact of the application of your curriculum in the real world? Who is affected? In what ways?
- How might your curriculum play a role in effecting social justice?

Who is advantaged by your teaching style? Who is disadvantaged? How might your teaching style play a role in effecting social justice?” (Shaw, 2000)

Kilomba also raises some important questions in one of her performance/speech *Decolonizing Knowledge* with some similar insights such as;

- How is knowledge recognized as knowledge? Which one isn't?
- Which knowledge is part of the official curriculum and which isn't?
- Who is recognized as someone who has knowledge?
- Who can teach knowledge? Who can perform it? (Kilomba, 2008)

3.6 Encounters

3.13.1 Encounter 1: Introduction to Feminism and Feminist Itinerant School

Overview

In the first encounter, we will share with participants an overview of the learning outcomes of this project and the reasons why we are engaging with it. We will introduce the core ideas of the feminist Itinerant school and the process of knowledge production. We will also note our desire to center participants' insights, expectations, and needs and then ask if they believe this can be useful in their practices.

We will briefly share our understanding of feminism and what we think about when we refer to feminist pedagogies, emphasizing the importance of bringing our

stories to the center of the discussions, as well as our commitment to telling the truth and respecting other's stories. We will emphasize the importance of bringing one's whole self to the process and to understanding one's positionality in the school and in the discussions.

Drawing from Enid Lee's advice about multicultural education, we will illustrate the values and goals of this workshop. According to Lee, it is essential we understand the importance of academic rigor and useful analysis. When we engage in critical conversations about the systems and structures we occupy, it is easy to fall into a criticism that is not productive. Criticism needs to come with good arguments supported by evidence and solutions for change. The FIS, then, encourages participants to examine diverse perspectives and to look beyond their disciplines to solve problems of any kind they might have in their classrooms. While proposing this kind of academic commitment, we invite participants to examine history and political contexts to be able to underline the causes of discrimination in our society, including in our teaching practices. We ask them to imagine ways to connect all forms of inequality through lenses of intersectionality, acknowledging how individuals face different forms of oppression depending on their race, gender, class status, sexual identity, and disability status. We also note the importance of working together and creating a web of allies among professionals who share similar struggles with us. (Lee, 2001)

We will introduce current examples to illustrate some social issues that call for the urgency of engaged feminist teaching, and we will share resources and activities. We will ask participants to reflect and share their own ideas about the

importance of considering the lenses of gender, race, class, and sexuality as analytical tools to engage with the materials they use in the classroom. We will invite them to imagine ways we can improve our teaching to address contemporary problems of social difference, keeping in mind what educator and scholar Guacira Lopes Louro suggests in her writings about gender, sexuality and education:

Schools delineate spaces. Through symbols and codes, schools affirm what each one of us can (or can't) do, segregating and institutionalizing. Schools inform the 'places' for the younger and the older, the boys and the girls. Through their boards and crosses, saints and sculptures, they point out those who should serve as role models, allowing that individuals recognize themselves in these models (or not). The school building informs all its own reasons for existing. It marks, through symbols and architectural arrangements, 'making sense,' instituting multiple senses, constituting distinct subjects. (Louro, 1997, p.58)^{xv}

Goals

- Understand basic concepts that define feminism and feminist pedagogies
- Increase awareness around the influences of education in behaviors that can perpetuate systemic oppression such as racism, sexism, classism and ableism.
- Identify common stereotypes and myths around feminism

Learning Outcomes

As a result of taking part in this encounter, participants will be able to:

- Explain the importance of academic rigor that comes with this project.
- Identify ways in which schools are responsible for perpetuating racism, sexism and other kinds of discrimination; and reflect upon ways we could transform this reality.
- Explain the importance of acknowledging privilege and power differences in the classroom.

Materials

- AV connection to project the video and the presentations. (If the school does not have access to technology, we will provide a print version of the presentation to the class, as well as the reading for participants).
- Pen and paper.
- Index cards
- Reading References and Resources

Activities

1. Introductions. Facilitators should introduce themselves and invite participants to introduce themselves and explain why they have chosen to take part in the FIS. Share Slides from Appendix
2. Share the main ideas and learning outcomes of the Feminist Itinerant School (briefly described in the introduction on this chapter). Introduce the Feminist Collective MAR. Share slides that introduce the main ideas of the FIS and

outline the ongoing activities of the collective, emphasizing the importance of acknowledging our positionality in relation to feminism as part of engaged feminist pedagogies and recognizing positions of power and privilege in schools and in the classroom. Introduce Lee's ideas of academic rigor. Ask participants to explain why academic rigor is important to them and to this project.

3. Introduction to Feminism: Ask participants to brainstorm what they've heard or think about feminism/feminists. Record answers on a chalkboard. Facilitate a brief discussion about their responses.

- Ask participants to read individually "What is Feminism." – This article highlights key aspects to understand gender hierarchies and to acknowledge privilege in our society. It shares the importance of raising feminist consciousness through comprehending some crucial aspects of feminism, such as the importance of having scholarly work and research that addresses the history of women. This is particularly important to open our discussions around who occupies the spaces of knowledge production and how our culture is influenced only by the perspectives of dominant voices. When participants finish reading the article, ask them to discuss it in small groups. Ask each group to define feminism. Have the groups share their definitions? Help the whole group shape a working definition of feminism for the purposes of the FIS.
- Watch "Por que no Feminismo é Importante" – This video shares perspectives and trajectories of women and their thoughts of what

feminism is and how it can be a powerful platform to exchange information and support. The video can also be useful to guide conversations about sexual harassment and behaviors that are inappropriate in work environments, especially in schools.

Give participants a big piece of paper and markers. Ask them to work in groups to write or draw their responses to the video reflecting upon feminism. Have them share their responses. Ask them to discuss how they feel about feminism and if they identify as feminists.

4. Have participants remain in groups. Ask participants to brainstorm ways they could incorporate feminism in their classroom.
 - Ask participants to write on an index card the expectations and the themes within feminism that they would like to grapple with in the course of the workshop. They have the option to identify or not themselves. Keep the card for references for future encounters.

Debrief the day

- Ask participants: How are you feeling about what's happened today? What did you learn today? What do you think you will do differently because of what you learned today? Is there anything the facilitators should know before our next encounter?

Resources and Reading References

- What is Feminism?
By Cila Santos

[https://medi4um.com/qg-feminista/o-que-%C3%A9-o-feminismo-](https://medi4um.com/qg-feminista/o-que-%C3%A9-o-feminismo-630886ab3abf)

[630886ab3abf](https://medi4um.com/qg-feminista/o-que-%C3%A9-o-feminismo-630886ab3abf)

- Por que o Feminismo é Importante

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=57&v=nxOjYwqzr4M

- Feminism is for Everybody

by bell hooks

<https://www.plutobooks.com/blog/feminism-is-for-everybody-bell-hooks/> -

also available in Portuguese.

3.13.2 Encounter 2: Feminist Pedagogies

Overview

In this section I would like to bring light to the importance of a teaching practice grounded in feminist pedagogies. This practice makes us look at inclusion beyond the classroom and structures; it makes us search for responses within ourselves and investigate the ways we navigate the world. Feminist pedagogies ask us to understand what it means to be in privileged positions, as well as aware of the oppressions individuals (including ourselves) have to deal with depending on gender, race, class, sexuality, and disabilities, recognizing the fact that we still live in a society grounded in patriarchal values (Sardemberg, 2011). Feminist pedagogies invite us to be embodied and engage in our teaching through awareness and conscientization, as well as sharing resources that can be useful to overcome patriarchal values and structures. To be able to illustrate this process, it is important to bring to light activities that invite participants to reflect on the way they deliver

knowledge to their students and the ways they position themselves in the classroom and within the work environment.

We as educators, facilitators, teachers or mentors should be attentive to our words, teaching activities, content, and learning resources to ensure they are inclusive across gender, race, sexual identity, class, ability, and religion in every topic or theme we approach in the classroom. Our attention to feminist pedagogies also means attention to our responsibility for the content we bring to students. The challenge is to understand our subjects within our current political contexts in a way that stimulates productive engagement toward social good. As we think about feminist pedagogies, we will also begin to think about transformation of the content of our teaching. We will focus on the importance of learning from different people, strategies of resistance, healing, self-care, and love. Some of the questions that Elizabeth Tisdell proposes when thinking about feminist pedagogies will be part of the goals of this section

Goals:

To understand:

- How is knowledge constructed?
- Whose voices are heard and whose aren't?
- How do feminist pedagogies help different perspectives to be included in the knowledge we use to teach in the classroom?

These questions will help participants begin to think about processes of feminist teaching and curriculum transformation.

Learning Outcomes

As a result of taking part in this encounter, participants will be able to:

- Explain how knowledge is constructed, with specific attention to who is writing and whose perspectives are in the materials we use
- Express the importance of having different perspectives and voices in the classroom
- Extend their existing knowledge of what democratic education means, emphasizing the importance of positionality in a feminist classroom.

Materials

- AV connection to project the video and the presentations. (If the school does not have access to technology, we will provide a print version of the presentation to the class, as well as the reading for participants).
- Pen and paper.

Activities

1. Check-in.

For the first few minutes of each encounter, we will ask participants to discuss their reflections on the previous day's learning. We will pay attention to the extent participants have understood and engaged with the material, and we'll guide the conversation to ensure participants have understood key concepts.

2. Share a brief presentation with participants on feminist pedagogies, the construction of knowledge, and democratic education. Appendix 2.1
3. Connect theories to practice, drawing from examples of the collective M.A.R.
4. Ask participants to discuss how knowledge is constructed in their areas of expertise and how they teach students to construct knowledge.
5. Introduce positionality and its importance to feminist pedagogies.
6. Power Shuffle (Appendix 2.2)

This Power Shuffle^{xvi} is a Theatre of the Oppressed activity that helps us understand how our own privileges, disadvantages, and positionalities are present in both our learning and our teaching. This activity will also help us better understand how social categories are constructed in Brazil and therefore in the material we use and the ways we navigate public and private spaces.

This is an activity that can help us reflect on our own social locations and their impacts before teaching about issues outside the relative safety of our group.

Theatre of the Oppressed was created by Brazilian drama theorist and political activist Augusto Boal, building on the work of Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. The methods and practices of the TO have been built upon the aesthetics of education, where people are given "the opportunity to engage, on their own terms, in a learning process where they use all available resources, including human ones, to transform their own existence as well as empower their communities". (Pitcher, 2007 p. 4) The practices and theories involved in the methods proposed by Augusto Boal (2006) are focused on dialectical and dialogical principles to engage with social and political participation and

transformation, analyzing power relations and discrimination and the roots of social issues in our society. (Pitcher, 2007)

Activity guidelines

Ask participants to stand (if possible) in a line on one side of the room, facing the opposite side of the room.

The facilitator explains that they will read a statement and ask participants to walk across the room and turn and face the group if that statement applies to them. The facilitator will also explain that participants are free not to cross the room as well if they are not comfortable revealing something about themselves. With each statement, once participants have crossed the room, the facilitator will say, “Notice who's with you. Notice who's not. Notice what that means.” Then the facilitator will have participants return to the original line before reading the next statement.

1. If you're under 18
2. If you're under 21.
3. If you're over 60
4. If you are Brazilian
5. If you are Indigenous
6. If you are Black/Afro Brazilian,
7. Mixed Race
8. A man
9. A woman

10. Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, non-heterosexual identity
11. If you were raised in a family whose religious practice was something other than Christian.
12. If your current religious practice is something other than Christian.
13. If you have experienced violence, harassment, profiling, or discrimination for being a non-Christian.
14. If growing up your family didn't have enough money for basic needs (food, housing, etc.)
15. If you have any kind of disability (physical, emotional, mental, learning etc.)
16. If you have experienced harassment, discrimination, or violence from being labeled overweight.
17. If you've survived any type of violence.

Provide space (at least 40 minutes), for students to debrief about the activity.

Instructors need to be aware that these activities can make participants feel vulnerable and anxious, for example. Sharing that with them before the activity might support them in dealing with the feelings that come up with the activity. It is important we establish a level of trust among the group (when possible) and make sure that we keep the outcomes of the activities and the conversations within the group. Make sure also to provide students with individual support at the end of the session so we can try to

identify some of their feelings connecting them with the importance of this work and discussions.

Some of these questions and prompts can be used as guides for the debriefing section of this activity. Provide students with note cards in case they would like to add anything they don't feel comfortable sharing with the group.

- Ask participants if they believe they could perform this activity with their students in the classes they teach? What would they do differently?
- Ask participants how they can set up their classroom to be more inclusive.
- Ask who participates more in class discussions. What does that mean? How can teachers encourage greater participation in discussions? How the structures of class discussions in your encounters, who participates more?
- What are your thoughts and ideas when reflecting upon bringing students' experiences in class discussions?

Collect the cards and keep them for a future activity with students.

7. Share video *Intuição Feminina* Mel Duarte with participants – This video is a Ted talk by Brazilian feminist activist, artist and slam poet Mel Duarte. Mel reminds us of the importance of our intuitions in our decisions. She emphasizes the importance of listening to ourselves, trusting our instincts, connecting our experiences with our heritages, and remembering and honoring our ancestors. She talks about resisting through art and how some places and institutions can serve be prisons of our ideas and thoughts. She invites women to be sensitive to those feelings, respecting our times and needs. (Duarte, 2018)

Debrief the day

Ask participants: How are you feeling about what's happened today? What did you learn today? What do you think you will do differently because of what you learned today? Is there anything the facilitators should know before our next encounter?

Ask participants to bring class materials for the next encounter (textbooks, handouts, etc.).

Hand out reading for the next encounter.

Resources and Reading References

- Considerações introdutórias a pedagogias Feministas

Sardenberg, C. (2011). Considerações introdutórias às pedagogias feministas. *Ensino e Gênero: perspectivas transversais*, 17-32.

- Decolonizing Knowledge by Grada Kilomba

Kilomba, G. (2017). Descolonizando o conhecimento. *Acesso em*, 10.

3.13.3 Encounter 3: Representations and Stereotypes: Gender, Race and Class.

Overview

In this session, we invite participants to examine gender with specific attention to how our expectations of gender affect students and teachers. We will explore aspects of our culture, including political and religious norms that influence the ways we behave and the ways we relate to others. We will explore how we as educators may well reinforce gender norms and stereotypes in our teaching. We will examine how we treat boys and girls in the classroom and how gender is represented

in our curriculum. We will emphasize how toxic masculinity is taught to boys and how that influences their behaviors as well as how girls are taught femininity, particularly through media. Finally, we will explore how these differences, which are constructed from an early age, enhance the hierarchical relationships between men and women, leaving girls and women at a disadvantage from the start.

Goals

- To identify misrepresentations in the curriculum and in schools.
- Understand the consequences of stereotypes in textbooks and in the school community.

Learning Outcomes

As a result of taking part in this encounter, participants will be able to:

- Identify and explain aspects of our culture that play a role in creating gender, racial and class stereotypes
- Outline how media representation influences how boys and girls behave;
- Identify representations of women and girls in textbooks considering the intersections of race, class and disabilities.

Materials

- Computer and projector and Internet access
- Handout: Stereotypes and Representations
- Textbooks
- Index card/paper and pen

Activities

1. Check in
2. Share slides Appendix 3.1 on media representation in the media and in our textbooks
3. Watch documentary about Stereotypes and Representations – *Mulheres Brasileiras* https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=16&v=MyDfr4N7dWk

This video offers a brief reflection about the representation of women in Brazil, especially in the media. It raises awareness around the problems of having only a few families controlling all the media in the country and how that can help perpetuate oppression.

Prompts for video discussion

How do media reinforce stereotypes?

How does that reflect our activities in schools?

What are the main vehicles of information used by Brazilians?

Who is responsible for the media content we have access to in Brazil?

4. Read and Hand out – Appendix 3.2 Como abordar a História das Mulheres [_https://novaescola.org.br/conteudo/16097/como-abordar-a-historia-das-mulheres-durante-todo-o-ano](https://novaescola.org.br/conteudo/16097/como-abordar-a-historia-das-mulheres-durante-todo-o-ano)

This article shares important research regarding representation in the classroom and some suggestions for participants that can be incorporated in their classrooms, with tips and ideas on how to approach the history of women in our classrooms.

Brainstorm in a larger group way we can include the history of these women suggested in the readings in our classrooms in an interdisciplinary way;

- In groups, ask participants to choose one of the women in in the reading and connect the history to a relevant subject in their curriculum.

Ask participants to search in the material they use in the classroom (textbooks most likely) to identify stereotypes or false representations around gender, race or class. Have them share what they find. How do they see the representations of the media affecting life for students in the classroom and in the school environment?

Take notes on a note card and share with the group.

5. Introduce and explain these concepts and how they limit/harm different people, particularly in education. Draw examples from current situations in Brazil;

6. Watch the teaser for the web series *Eu Empregada domestica*; (Me, Domestic Worker)

This teaser looks at the impacts of this project and the Facebook page developed by history teacher, rapper and activist Preta Rare, which point out the main serious issues and consequences of stereotypes.

<https://www.facebook.com/euempregadadomestica/videos/1126518134061594/>

Divide participants into small groups. Ask participants to respond to the characteristics proposed in the handout and connect them with men or women according to the first impressions that come to mind. Then do the same with the professions. Ask them in their groups to reflect on their responses and identify why we connect this representation to each gender. Then ask how these representations appear in their textbooks. Who are the heroes in the books?

1. Who are the doctors?
2. Who are the presidents?
3. Who are the politicians in general and how are they represented?
4. Who are the caretakers and domestic labors?

Encourage participants to examine the roles women and men are given in the books. Ask participants to notice how racial representation takes place. Have each group report its findings. Ask groups to imagine how they might conduct this activity with their students and their actual textbooks., Have them brainstorm ways they can bring different perspectives to their lectures/classrooms.

5. Ask participants to list on an index card two ways this encounter might be relevant in their teaching.

Debrief the day

Ask participants: How are you feeling about what's happened today?

What did you learn today? What do you think you will do differently because of what you learned today? Is there anything the facilitators should know before our next encounter?

Ask participants to bring class materials for the next encounter (textbooks, handouts, etc.).

Hand out reading for next encounter.

Resources and Reading References

Filmes Infantis Perpetuam Estereótipos de Gênero

<https://www.geledes.org.br/filmes-infantis-perpetuam-estereotipos-sociais-e-de-genero/>

O que é Estereótipo de Gênero – QG Feminista

Films and videos

Precisamos falar com os homens? Uma jornada pela igualdade de gêneros

O desafio da Desigualdade -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=04u0UHEq2f4>

The Mask we live in

Misrepresentations

Relações de Gênero na escola -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y1fDkuGrJzw>

Livres e iguais ONU - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gniErZlyzbA>

3.13.4 **Encounter 4: Patriarchy**

Overview

The word patriarchy comes from the combination of the Greek words *pater* (father) and *arche* (origin and command); it is, according to bell hooks a “political-social system that insists that males are inherently dominating, superior to everything

and everyone deemed weak, especially females, and endowed with the right to dominate and rule over the weak and to maintain that dominance through various forms of psychological terrorism and violence”. (hooks, 2010)

In this session, we will invite students to understand this social, cultural, religious and political structure that reproduces dominance by [white] men in our communities and social spheres. It is important we can identify aspects of our culture that support and perpetuate patriarchal structures, especially in schools, within our practices as educators, identifying ways we can disrupt toxic behaviors and institutional oppression. Beyond understanding the dangers around gender stereotypes and misrepresentations, here we will investigate different manifestations of patriarchy, grounded in historical and political contexts, to understand how it operates and is embedded in our contemporary culture. We will examine how women, LGBTQ individuals, and people of color are situated within patriarchy. We will explore expectations of women around domestic labor and sexual behaviors connected with the imposition of heteronormativity, especially when looking at official documents that suggests that gender studies should be included in religious studies. We will analyze particular examples to highlight the workings of patriarch, including female participation in politics and women’s status within the family that might reflect their experiences as students. Such as juggling with domestic labor and school, balancing family and school, or in cases of early pregnancy, what are the expectations, especially for the girls and how that is influenced by patriarchal structures.

Goals

- Learn what patriarchy means.

- Acknowledge the history of this system and how it reflects in educational settings and materials.
- Identify the relationship between patriarchy and the ways knowledge is constructed and delivered in the classrooms
- Brainstorm ways to include different perspectives in the curriculum that challenge patriarchal structures.

Learning Outcomes

As a result of this encounter, participants will be able to:

- Explain patriarchal structures
- Identify ways we can challenge these structures through educational practice, discourse and language.

Materials

- Computer and projector and Internet access
- Handout: Stereotypes and Representations
- Textbooks
- Index card/paper and pen

Activities

1. Check in.
2. Suggested readings shared in previous encounter:

The Creation of Patriarchy (Lerner, 1984) – Chapter 11

Translated by GARRa Feminista

<https://we.riseup.net/assets/472664/a-criac3a7c3a3o-do-patriarcado-e28093-gerda-lener-1.pdf>

In this chapter, Guerda Lerner provides an overview of the history of patriarchy, tracing historical evidence of the origins of patriarchy, describing how gender roles were defined long ago and how women's subordination took shape in western society.

PRINCÍPIO: Desafie o patriarcado ao se organizar by Escola de Ativismo

<https://medium.com/@EAtivismo/princ%C3%ADpio-desafie-o-patriarcado-ao-se-organizar-f0be6186e0d3>

Share slide presentation with meanings and implications of patriarchal structures in our society. Appendix 4.

3. Lead a group discussion on the readings and slide presentation:

- What is patriarchy? How would you define this system with your own words?
- What are the first historical traces of patriarchy identified by historian Guerda Lerner?
- Do you see patriarchal structures embedded in educational spaces? If so how and where?
- How is patriarchy apparent in the textbooks used in the school you teach?
- How might you help your students learn about patriarchy?

4. Common Ground Activity (Leondar-Write, Yeakel, 2007, p. 182)

This activity will allow us to raise awareness and consciousness around the fact that the themes we are approaching in these encounters might be part of our own lives and experiences. It will help us understand the

dangers of making assumptions and to engage with the themes with respect and care for others. It can also guide us through recognizing some aspects of our culture that contribute to perpetuating patriarchal values

Ask participants to stand in a large circle. Explain that you will read 10 to 12 Statements. When each statement is read, they should take one step into the circle in silence if the statement is true for them, look around, and notice who is in the circle and who is not. Then you will thank participants and ask them to step back. You will then read the next statement, and so on. Inform participants that this activity is done in silence. Ask them to be observant and self-reflective. Explain that they are to be as honest as possible during this activity but also care for themselves. This means that they do not have to divulge any information about themselves they don't want to divulge. Once you have finished reading all the statements ask the group to comment on their experiences of this activity with these prompts:

- What was it like for you to do this activity? What was it easy or hard about it?
- What did you notice?
- What surprised you?
- Why do you think we do this activity?

(Adams, Bell, Griffin, 2007; p. 185)

Common Ground Statements (adapted to the theme):

1. Have you ever heard music or videos that degrade women or sexually objectify girls or women?

2. Have you ever or you ever known someone who bullied or harassed someone for being a woman?
3. Have you ever heard derogatory language towards women?
4. Do you know someone who has been harassed or hit by a man?
5. Do you or know someone who has been hit or harassed by a woman?
6. Do you or know someone who has ever felt powerless in a relationship?
7. Do you know many men who take domestic chores seriously, like staying home with children if there is no childcare, cooking, cleaning and washing?
8. Do you know women who have issues with what they can or not do, how they dress or if they can work with because of fear of their partners?
9. Have you ever felt powerless in a relationship?
10. Have you ever been harassed or assaulted by a man?
11. Have you ever been harassed or assaulted by a woman?

Debrief activity in a large group and ask participants to share out loud or anonymously on the index card any thoughts and feelings about this activity.

Suggested prompts for activity debriefing:

1. What were your feelings during this activity?
2. What did you learn about yourself in this process?
3. Do any of these issues ever come up in your encounters with students?
4. Do you see yourself doing these activities with your students?

Ask participants in groups to think about themes they identify within their disciplines that might be perpetuating patriarchal structures. Ask them to identify

issues that arise in their textbooks or other educational materials that may perpetuate stereotypes about gender Is the language gendered? Who are most of characters? Where are representations of women and children when we study world history, political geography, literature, health, science and so on?

Ask participants to reflect upon what issues of gender and race their students face. How might they address these issues in their teaching?

Debrief the day

Ask participants: How are you feeling about what's happened today? What did you learn today? What do you think you will do differently because of what you learned today? Is there anything the facilitators should know before our next encounter?

Ask participants to bring class materials for the next encounter (textbooks, handouts, etc.).

Hand out reading for next section

Readings and suggested Resources

➤ *PRINCÍPIO: Desafie o patriarcado ao se organizar*

By Escola de Ativismo

<https://medium.com/@EAtivismo/princ%C3%ADpio-desafie-o-patriarcado-ao-se-organizar-f0be6186e0d3>

➤ O que é Patriarcado?

By Christine Delphy the Dicionário Crítico do feminismo

<https://medium.com/qg-feminista/teorias-do-patriarcado-7314938c59b>

➤ Understanding Patriarchy

By bell hooks

3.13.5 Encounter 5: “Teaching” Feminism and Gender Studies

Overview

It is important we take a close look at the ways we constitute gender, and how we see that [or not] connected to sexuality.

The word gender has multiple meaning when looked up in a Brazilian dictionary. Bringing these meanings to conversations and discussion can be useful if we want to understand gender, using feminism as a category of analysis. Through these discussions, we can find a common ground and vocabulary where we can open space to share our struggles and our own uncertainty when having these conversations with students.

According to one of the most important Brazilian dictionaries, the Michaelis, the word *Gê-ne-ro* has multiple meanings. It is over all considered a term that constitutes the common characteristics of a specific group of people or objects. It is referred to, for example, in biology as a morphic group or taxonomic category that groups species that are phylogenetically related, different from others but with specific features that reflect the main subdivisions of families. In the Portuguese language, we learn that *Gênero* is a linguistic category that establishes the distinction between classes of words based on the distinction of feminine, masculine, neutral, animated and inanimate, countable or non-countable. In arts, *Gênero* has the same meaning as genre in English, serving as ways to classify art an according to styles,

techniques and so on. In the field of literature, it refers to the ways that literary contents are organized, determining specific features of a text or of an author.

With that in mind, we can share with participants how and why we are using the word gender in feminist studies and why it is so important we also try to grapple with some of these meanings, connecting them to our own reality and language, bringing our own reflections to the theme. It is important we understand gender as a category of analysis to engage in this work to help us examine how gender operates and how we can disrupt its operations to challenge gender hierarchies. We must also pay attention to the intersections of gender with other forms of social difference. We must also understand how gender is a concept, developed by feminist scholars to contest the naturalization of sexual differences in multiple fields of resistance (Haraway,1995)

Goals

- Understand gender within feminist studies as a category of analysis
- Learn about the importance of intersectionality within gender and feminist studies.
- Understand how socialization in and outside schools are connected to gender norms.

Learning Outcomes

As a result of taking part in this encounter, participants will be able to:

- Identify the effects of gender within the materials we use, taking into consideration what we have learned about representation and personal experiences.
- Identify aspects of the material we use that emphasize gender stereotypes
- Explain the representation of women and LGBTQ people in textbooks using an intersectional lens.

Materials

- Computer and projector and Internet access
- Textbooks
- Index card/paper and pen

Activities

1. Check-in.
2. Share slides Appendix 5.1 to discuss varied definitions of gender as a category of analysis and meanings of intersectionality. Emphasize the importance of finding a common language to be able to think about curriculum transformation.
3. Rules for Intimacy: Paired Questions (Botkins, Jones, Kachwaha, 2007) – Have participants organize into two lines facing each other. Ask participants to pair up with someone opposite then them in the other line. Explain that they will each have two minutes to talk while other person listens without

interrupting. After they decide who will go first ask them to respond the following questions:

- When you were a child what are some of the messages you were taught about relationships and differences between boys and girls?
- How were you taught these lessons?

After two minutes, ask everyone to change speaker and listeners roles, so the other person has 2 minutes to answer the same questions. After another two minutes, ask everyone to change partners. Use the same instructions for the next questions:

- What did you learn as a child about how males should relate to each other and behave?
- How did you learn this lesson?

Once again change partners;

- What did you learn how females are supposed to relate to each other and behave?
- How were you taught this lesson? (2007, p. 182)

Debrief the activity in a larger group. Ask how they felt about the activity, especially when talking about gender stereotypes, gender roles, and social expectations around gender.

4. Ask if participants discuss gender and intersectionality in the classroom. If so, what challenges do they face? If not, what do they imagine might happen if they did? Why would teaching about gender and intersectionality be important?

5. Introduce sexuality in relation to its intersections with gender. Ask participants if they address sexuality in their classes. Ask them to identify places in their curriculum where they could cover issues of sexuality.

6. Watch:

CUIDADO | Curso: Feminismo e democracia, com Flávia Birolli

In this video, the political scientist Flavia Birolli highlights the importance of care and responsibility in our society. The video connects major aspects of how a democratic regime works (the specific case of Brazil) with the responsibilities to promote equal access and opportunities for individuals.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=suSiwQC9DNc>

Facilitate a discussion of the video.

Prompts for video discussion:

- What are the relationships the author establishes between feminism, democracy and care in her presentation?
- What are some of the impacts of authoritarian work and domestic relationships in individuals' lives?
- What does Birolli mean by unequal forms of inclusion?

Debrief the day

Ask participants: How are you feeling about what's happened today?

What did you learn today? What do you think you will do differently because of what you learned today? Is there anything the facilitators should know before our next encounter?

Ask participants to bring class materials for the next encounter (textbooks, handouts, etc.).

Hand out reading for next section

Readings and Resources references

- Raça e gênero na sociedade brasileira,

By Moira e Ribeiro

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t90_-hqT3zQ

- The Urgency Of intersectionality – Kimberley Crenshaw

By Kimberley Crenshaw.

https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle_crenshaw_the_urgency_of_intersectionality/discussion?utm_campaign=eNewsletter&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-_lh6TZdNxmcUgaLfNP-Lq-wNMZzabAXoH0mr8uj4srdBHLRi-IZVY6QPv7jpZGg_6eAq-F

3.13.6 Encounter 6: Culture and Language in the Classroom

Overview

In this encounter, we will reflect on our own understandings of the meanings of culture and conduct an analysis of how our language, materials and symbols that are used in the classrooms may carry values that support the patriarchal structures that sustain our educational system. It is important here that we understand here how patriarchy fosters a culture that normalizes existing hierarchies in our society and justifies violations of individuals through a

patriarchal discourse that includes symbols and language that maintain different roles for men and women in our society (Fernandes, 2016 Castro 2016 Palitot, 2016 Rocha, 2016). Patriarchy provides religious, social and moral justifications that women should be more “passive”, and men should behave in an active, dominating way. This culture emphasizes that women should be more oriented to house chores and men should be working outside their homes and not worried about domestic labor. This gendered discourse even extends to the ways that women should dress, talk, and behave.

We will pay specific attention to the ways our language can be sexist and *machista*. For example, because Portuguese is a very gendered language, when referring to large groups, especially in textbooks, we are normally referring to them in the masculine.

In 2014, the IPEA, a research institute in Brazil, conducted research with 3,408 individuals, asking them about the relationship between the ways women behave and the high rates of rape in the country. Fifty-eight percent of participants agreed that if women knew how to behave properly, there would be fewer cases of rape. Even though this research was done five years ago, it is important to have in mind that the cases of rape in Brazil have been rising in the last five years. In 2017 the country registered 60,018 cases of rape--an average of 164 per day one every 10 minutes. These data collected by the Brazilian Forum of Public Safety show that there was an increase of 8.4 % in reported rapes since 2016 and a 46% increase since 2010 (Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública 2013).

This encounter invites participants to engage in understanding what rape culture means, as well as how we construct toxic masculinities. We will examine data and the social values that perpetuate these behaviors, and we will explore how rape culture manifests itself in public schooling. Most importantly, we will imagine ways participants can address rape culture in their teaching.

Goals

- Identify aspects of our language and culture that perpetuates sexism and racism in the classroom
- Understand rape culture as a part of the larger culture
- Reflect upon ways we can transform our practices

Learning Outcomes

As a result of participating in this encounter. Participants will be able to:

- Explain how aspects of our culture and our language lead to the normalization and perpetuation of violence, particularly in rape culture
- Identify ways to address sexist and racist language and culture, especially rape culture, in the classroom.

Materials

Computer and projector and Internet access

Textbooks

Index card/paper and pen

Art Supplies

Activities

1. Check-in.
2. Present data analysis from the Brazilian Forum of Public safety - Appendix 6.1
3. Share with participants Rape Culture guide organized by Feminist Collective M.A.R. (2018) Appendix 6.2
4. Give participants a large piece of paper (like a panel) and in groups ask them to reflect upon the definitions of one or more of these words or phrases: “rape culture,” “machismo,” “sexist language,” “culture” (Or choose one). Invite participants to the first thing they think about when they hear these terms, how they see these terms in the school, and how these things may be present in the lives of students. Ask them to reflect on the school’s responsibility in addressing these issues. Have them draw or write their responses on their paper. They may also perform a response in groups or individually.
5. Back in the larger group, have each small group share its paper or performance.
6. Ask participants what they experienced during this activity and what they learned from it.
7. Song Analysis:

Choose two of the songs proposed for cultural analysis. Watch the videos with the large group

➤ *Baile de Favela*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=91&v=kzOkza_u3Z8

➤ *Trepadeira*

By Emicida <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ShnL-2LeCj4>

➤ *Amiga da Minha Mulher*

By Seu Jorge

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=3&v=m3bUU7U8oP

o

- Divide participants into small groups and ask them to engage in a discussion of aspects of these songs that contribute to our *machista* culture and the normalized sexist behavior in our society. Debrief activity in a larger group. Ask participants to describe Brazil's culture and language in relation to girls and women, to LGBTQ people, to indigenous and Afro-Brazilian people.
8. Ask participants to give examples from their schools and classrooms of the ways language and culture reinforce hierarchies of gender and race.
 9. Ask them to identify ways they see rape culture at work in their schools.
 10. Ask participants to examine textbooks and identify how language and culture may reinforce notions of gender, race, and sexuality.
 11. Ask participants to name ways they can help students critique gendered language, sexist and racist culture, and rape culture.
 12. Ask participants to write on an index card one way they will transform their curriculum to address language, culture, and/or rape culture.

13. Debrief the day

Ask participants: How are you feeling about what's happened today?

What did you learn today? What do you think you will do differently because of what you learned today?

For the next Encounter read: *Cultura negra e educação* by Nilma Lino Gomes

<http://www.scielo.br/pdf/0D/rbedu/n23/n23a05.pdf>

Readings and Resources References

➤ https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=91&v=kzOkza_u3Z8

3.13.7 Encounter 7: History, and Literature: Centering Narratives of Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous Women in the National Curriculum and in Our Culture.

Overview

In this section, we bring attention to the representations of Afro-Brazilian and indigenous people in the curriculum. According to Brazilian scholar Nilma Lino Gomes, it is the responsibility of educators to understand how different populations through the course of history classified themselves, how certain classifications were set into hierarchical structures in the context of racism, and how this phenomenon interferes in the construction of the

students' lives and self-esteem (Gomes, 2003). To address the legacy of colonialism and ongoing racism, educators should emphasize positive representations of Afro-Brazilian and indigenous people in the curriculum with attention to intersections of race, class and gender.

Goals:

- Have a broader understanding of how we are in Brazil socialized and educated into a system of racism and white privilege
- Understand how racism is embedded in educational structures and materials
- Underline the importance of intersectionality when reflecting upon oppression and discrimination.

Learning Outcomes

As a result of taking part in this encounter, participants will be able to:

- Reflect on personal experiences of bias and identify ways bias has been internalized
- Identify aspects of our curriculum that perpetuate racism and racist structures.
- Explain the meanings of intersectionality

Activities

1. Check-in.
2. Share Slides on this week's themes (Appendix 7.1)

3. Discuss the reading for the day: *Cultura Negra e Educação* by Nilma Lino Gomes
<http://www.scielo.br/pdf/rbedu/n23/n23a05.pdf>

Prompts for reading discussion:

- Who is Nilma Lino Gomes?
- What are the main issues the authors raise connecting culture and the perpetuation of racism in educational structures?
- What are the relationships the author establishes between culture and identity?

4. Watch - *Djamila Ribeiro*

<https://ponte.org/nao-ha-como-pensar-classe-raca-e-genero-de-forma-isolada/>

In this video Brazilian scholar Djamila Ribeiro explores the concept of intersectionality coined by American scholar Kimberly Crenshaw, Ribeiro invites us to reflect upon the urgency to combine categories of analysis to understand oppression and discrimination in our society.

Video question prompts;

- How does Djamila Ribeiro describe the concept of intersectionality?
- Is it possible, according to Djamila Ribeiro to think about gender, race, and class separately? Why not?

5. Ask participants to partner with someone who teaches in a closely related discipline and reflect upon representation in the textbooks they use; use these question as guideline for discussion;

- How are Afro-Brazilian and indigenous people represented in the textbooks? How are Afro-Brazilian and indigenous women specifically represented?
- Who are the authors of the sections where Afro-Brazilian and indigenous populations are approached? What do we know about the race, gender, and class of the authors?
- Why is positionality important in knowledge production?
- Who holds the production of knowledge in our country and why does that matter in terms of representations of “subjects”?

Have each group present an example from their textbooks and summarize their discussion for the large group.

6. Activity to imagine the impact of exclusion.

This activity requires students to reflect upon their own experiences as they think about inclusion, exclusion and privileges. It asks participants to imagine the effects and importance of being represented as part of society, in not only in the curriculum but everywhere.

Theatre of Discourse (A Theatre of the Oppressed Activity): Ask participants to reflect and recall a time where they felt excluded. Then ask one person to tell their story to the groups. Ask them to recall a time when they felt excluded and did nothing about it. Then ask one person to tell their story to the group. The group members then take on roles to act out the incident as realistically as possible. Then have them repeat the scene, but this time the person who told the story does not go along with the

exclusion but resists it. If there's time, you can have more participants tell their story and have it acted out both ways.

Suggested debriefing prompts for activity:

1. How did it feel to resist exclusion?
2. How do you do you think it might feel to be excluded from your own historical process?
3. What do you believe can change in the curriculum and in classrooms, so everyone feels included?

Debrief the day

- Ask participants to imagine how they can approach content about Afro-Brazilian and indigenous people so it's more inclusive. What methods would they use? How would they imagine shaping classroom relationships to teach about Afro-Brazilian and indigenous people?

Ask participants: How are you feeling about what's happened today? What do you think you will do differently because of what you learned today?

For next week, read - Para que serve a Educação Sexual nas Escolas.

<https://www.todospelaeducacao.org.br/conteudo/para-que-serve-a-educacao-sexual-na-escola/>

Readings and Resources References

- Não há como Pensar Classe, Raça e Gênero de Forma Isolada
By Djamila Ribeiro

<https://ponte.org/nao-ha-como-pensar-classe-raca-e-genero-de-forma-isolada/>

➤ Cultura Negra e Educação

By Nilma Lino Gomes

➤ Mulheres em Movimento

By Sueli Carneiro

➤ A Mulata que nunca chegou

By Natalie Neri

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=02TBfKeBbRw>

➤ Mulheres Indígenas

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0qYZGaX_G88

➤ Plantation Memories

By Grada Kilomba

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ftRjL7E5Y94>

<https://narraracidade.files.wordpress.com/2019/03/a05-a-kilomba-gradadescolonizar-o-conhecimento.pdf>

➤ Somos todas Rainhas

By Gisele Cristina Dos Anjos Santos

<http://www.afrika.org.br/publicacoes/somos-todas-rainha-1ed.pdf>

3.13.8 Encounter 8: Sexuality Studies and Political Sex Education

Overview

According to a document developed by the U.N., “Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) is a curriculum-based process of teaching and

learning about the cognitive, emotional, physical and social aspects of sexuality. It aims to equip children and young people with knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will empower them to: realize their health, well-being and dignity; develop respectful social and sexual relationships; consider how their choices affect their own well-being and that of others; and, understand and ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives (UNESCO, 2018)

Sexuality is present in schools, whether it is addressed in the curriculum or not. Because sexuality is such a central part of life, however, schools have a responsibility to provide sex education. T. In this encounter, I invite participants from across disciplines to recognize their responsibilities as educators for teaching accurate and healthy information about bodies, sex, and sexuality across discipline to their students. Across their young lives, children and teens strive to understand how their bodies work and how to engage in relationships. Sexuality, and therefore sex education, has a social and political dimension that affects individual's lives directly. (Louro, 1999) It is important as educators that we are able to have conversations with our students that go beyond what is presented in the curriculum. We should help students reflect upon the importance of self-esteem, how we relate to our body image, what we know about STI and how to address and deal with unintended pregnancy. This encounter is a space where we can share our struggles and questions around how to deal with these topics within our practices.

In this encounter, we approach sex education aware of students' developmental stages, ages, as well as intersecting systems of gender, race, and class that shape psychosexual development. Fully comprehensive sex education must include not only the mechanics of sex but also sexuality, relationships, and reproductive justice within a context of difference and power.

Brazilian legislation assures that these themes are approached in schools in many ways. as the ECA (*Estatuto da Criança e do Adolescente*) and the LDB (*Lei de diretrizes e base*) assure the rights of students to access to sex education., Also the Department Of Health has published a document called *Marco Legal, Saúde, um Direito de Adolescentes* (Legal Landmark - The right of health access to adolescents) (Brasil, 2005 that provides tools and support for us to understand the legal instruments for the protection of rights of students.

This Material, proposed by the federal government proposes the analysis of themes around sexuality such as teenage pregnancy, HIV prevention and treatment, other STIs, and alcohol abuse and consent.

Goals

Explore key components of comprehensive sex education:

- Bodies and Mechanics of Sex
- Sexuality
- Teenage Pregnancy – analysis of rates and ways of prevention

- STD's learning what they are and prevention
- Alcohol abuse and consent
- Self Esteem
- Reproductive Rights

Learning Outcomes

As a result of taking part in this encounter, participants will be able to:

- Explain connections between sexuality and politics and how the law operates in ways that control bodies and behaviors,
- Identify ways we can include issues of sex education in our own teaching across disciplines.

Materials

- Computer and projector and Internet access
- Textbooks
- Index card/paper and pen

Activities

1. Ask participants to share stories of their own sex education.

- What did they learn? From whom?

- Was it accurate?

- Did they learn about positive body image and self-esteem?

- Did they learn about consent? Did they learn about reproductive justice?

What do they wish someone had told them when they were children?

2. Group reflection on the reading – Para que serve a Educação Sexual nas Escolas.

<https://www.todospelaeducacao.org.br/conteudo/para-que-serve-a-educacao-sexual-na-escola/>

Divide into small groups. Give each group these three questions to discuss in relation to the reading:

1. List at least three benefits for youth of a comprehensive sex education program.
2. What are ways sex education can impact students' lives and relationships?
3. What are ways you believe you can include comprehensive sex education in the curriculum you teach?

4. In pairs create a mini lesson plan on how you would approach any of these issues in your class.

➤ Give Participants a Lesson Plan Template Appendix 8.1 and ask them in pairs to create a lesson plan, thinking over the themes we have been approaching. Invite them to think over the curriculum in an interdisciplinary way. For example, how can aspects of a biology classroom interconnect with social sciences or history? How can we talk about self-esteem, in a Portuguese or literature class? How can a physical educational teacher contribute to end gender and sexuality stereotypes?

➤ Ask Participants to think about cooperative teaching and how they can support each other with their lesson plans and their teaching

- Exchange the lesson plan with another pair and ask them to engage in peer review. Giving feedback to each other about why they chose the themes, the goals, and the learning outcomes.
- Bring participants back to the large group and ask each pair to summarize their lesson plan. Give time for the large group to give the pairs feedback.

3. Debrief the day

Ask participants: How are you feeling about what's happened today? What did you learn today? What do you think you will do differently because of what you learned today? Is there anything the facilitators should know before our next encounter?

References and Reading Resources

- Educação Sexual

By Marcos Ribeiro

- Marco legal: saúde, um direito de adolescentes

By Ministério da Saúde

- Orientação Sexual nos Parâmetro Curriculares Nacionais

By Helena Altmann

- International technical guidance on sexuality education: an evidence-informed approach

By UNESCO

Associação para o Planejamento da família – Association with IPPF – International Planned Parenthood Federation, – This website provides

information about sexuality as well as Resources to share regarding sex education.

<http://www.apf.pt/>

3.13.9 Encounter 9: Personal is Political - *O Pessoal é Político*

Overview

Facilitating discussions that cross lines between public and private can be challenging in schools. Even though we are face to face with the realities of our students, sometimes we don't have the resources or are not prepared to deal with issues that are not in the curriculum or that we have been "trained to teach". In this encounter, we call attention to the importance of educators, awareness of the realities of our students. We acknowledge that the school is not responsible for all that goes on outside its spaces, but it is responsible for providing students a safe space to share their experiences and resources that might be essential for their survival.

In the same research done by IPEA that we reflected upon in our encounter about culture and language, in Encounter 6 researchers asked participants about how public authorities should react to cases of domestic violence in the country. Sixty-three percent of participants agreed that cases of violence that happen inside homes should be discussed only among the family members involved. They said that "dirty clothes should be washed at home". Also, 89% of the interviewed agreed that this is an issue that has been

normalized in our society and that women should be able to deal with these situations at home. This distancing of the personal from the political permeates the reality of our relationships in society and influences our practices as teachers. Sometimes teachers are aware of cases of abuse or other family issues that go on with their students and don't know what to do or how to react. This encounter will help participants understand how the personal is political and how through their teaching they can help their students deal with their personal struggles'

Goals

- Identify aspects of the political sphere that can affect directly our personal lives
- Understand how schools can be supportive to students through familiarizing themselves with our legislation and the resources available for protection around domestic violence

Learning Outcomes

As a result of taking part in this encounter, participants will be able to:

- Explain how personal aspects of our relationships intersect with politics and political decisions.
- Outline the cycles of abuse and how our legal system works to protect victims.

Materials

- Computer and projector and Internet access
- Textbooks

- Index card/paper and pen
- Large piece of paper

Activities

1. Ask: How do you think the personal is political? Can you give specific examples? Record this on a large piece of paper. Then ask, how is sex political?
2. Share Slide presentation and promote a discussion based on the data provided on the slides (Appendix 9.1)

Prompts for discussion;

- What is the importance of sex education?
- What kind of information we could share with our students?
- What do you believe is the role of schools in comprehensive sex education?

3. Watch: Feminismo e Democracia – Aborto

By Flavia Birolli

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AjuzAjv32jUThi>

In this video, the political scientist Flavia Birolli highlights aspects of our legislation regarding abortion laws in our society. She connects major aspects of how a democratic regime works (the specific case of Brazil) with the rights of women in Brazil.

Prompts for discussion

- What are your thoughts about countries that have more flexible abortion laws than Brazil?
 - How do you believe that this legislation affects women's lives and decisions?
4. Ask participants to think about their curriculum. Ask: where in your curriculum could you talk about how the personal is political? Specifically, where could you address abortion and reproductive justice? Have participants share their examples.
 5. Debrief the day: Ask participants: How are you feeling about what's happened today? What did you learn today? What do you think you will do differently because of what you learned today? Is there anything the facilitators should know before our next encounter?

3.13.10 Encounter 10: Curriculum transformation and Radical Imagination

Overview

In this last encounter, I invite participants to reflect on inviting students to participate in curriculum transformation. While we must include different perspectives and stories in the curriculum, we should also create ways for students to participate more in their own processes of learning. Feminist pedagogies, as we saw in previous sections, rely upon the stories and lives of everyone in the process of learning to take place. Even though we have been engaging with aspects of curriculum transformation, we will spend time, thinking of ways that we can change the content of our class to promote

equity and equality in our schools. The heading Radical Imagination is inspired by a conference organized at Oregon State University, where students and presenters are given the opportunity to reflect critically upon their practices as scholars and ways to engage in social change. This conference gives students, presenters and educators time to reimagine educational spaces and rethink our practices.

Materials

- Computer and projector and Internet access
- Textbooks
- Index card/paper and pen
- Handouts and copies of the Laws proposed in the activities.
- Art Supplies – Large Board to create a panel with students.

Any supply available is welcome.

Activities

Choose One of The Three Topics;

1. Inclusion of Afro Brazilian Studies in the curriculum,

Lei 10.639 Regarding the History of Afro Brazilians (Appendix 10.2)

http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/leis/2003/110.639.htm

Legislation that includes the history of Afro Brazilian heritage and history of

Africa in the national curriculum

2. Abortion – *Uma história Severina*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=65Ab38kWFhE>

This documentary is about the experience of Severina. She was directly affected by the decision of the Brazilian Supreme Court. She was going to have an abortion because her baby had microencephaly. The ban from the Supreme Court was issued the day before her procedure, affecting the decisions of her doctors at the time.

3. Estatuto da Criança e do Adolescentes – Legislation that protects the rights of children and adolescents in Brasil

http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/leis/18069.htm

In groups, ask participants to engage with the following prompts specifically in relation to their topic.

1. How do you as an educator see the importance of learning about our political system?
2. How do you think you can incorporate attention to political systems in your teaching?
3. When we think about social justice and feminist education and curriculum transformation, is it possible to think about political change as well?
4. Ask each group to summarize its discussion for the large group.
5. Final Activity - **Radical Imagination Panel**

We will combine this information with the discussions we had in class and make suggestions to move forward with curriculum transformations and ways we can be more engaged with our political system and our community.

Provide large sheets of paper to create a wall panel. Ask participants in groups to draw, write, and/or create images on the panel that reflect their ideas about transformations they would like to see in their classrooms and schools. Remind them

that we are responsible for creating our culture and symbols. What would they want other to see, feel or imagine when they see the result of their panels?

Ask participants to spend time exploring the panel. Then bring the large group back together to debrief the panel.

Guidelines for Debriefing:

1. What were your feelings when reflecting and engaging with this project?
2. Why did you choose some of the symbols?
3. Who is represented in your artwork; who isn't?

Debriefing the Feminist Itinerant School

As we wrap up our final activity, we will reserve some time to share our experiences in the course of the encounters. and our expectations, desires and feelings around our journey with the Feminist Itinerant School.

Suggested prompts for discussion;

1. What did you feel about these encounters?
2. What did you like the most?
3. What didn't you like? Why?
4. Do you think this will be useful for your practice as an educator?
5. What are ways you believe you can incorporate some of what we have done here in your practice?

Give students an index card so they can write their suggestions, expectations, and frustrations and expectations with this process. Share with them the importance

of constructive feedback to continue this work, an ongoing project that is supposed to be flexible, adaptable and transformable as well.

3.14 Conclusion

Creating this outline of the Feminist Itinerant School has allowed me to reflect on ways of being in a classroom and has been a transforming and liberatory experience for me. This compilation of resources and activities is inspired by s discussions I have had with teachers, students, and activists. These resources are sorely needed. Often teachers are unaware that resources to transform their teaching exist. Discovering, creating, and sharing resources has been an important part of this work for me. I have been able to draw from my experiences in feminist classrooms in the U.S. in a women, gender, and sexuality studies program where many educators incorporate the reality of a feminist classroom in their practices, including my academic advisor Professor Susan Shaw and Professor Nana Osei Kofi whose course "The Inclusive Classroom" had great impact on my learning process. These experiences have helped me shape and organize some of the ideas in this project, even as I acknowledge the organic aspects of the FIS as well. It will change and grow in implementation as it responds to local needs and political resistance. My next step, as I return to Brazil, is to resist the impositions of the conservative government that are affecting the lives of many people, finding spaces to share the ideas of the Feminist Itinerant School.

4 Conclusion

The process involved in this research goes way beyond just reimagining relationships within educational systems. I have had a chance in my own learning process to reflect upon the flaws in our educational system. I was also able to recognize the innumerable allies we, who truly believe education can be transformative, still have. I especially acknowledge feminist allies who recognize their responsibilities in minimizing the effects a neoliberal education grounded in capitalist and patriarchal values that leaves many children behind. I have on this journey many allies who, through literature, activism and art, have been resisting oppressions that limit our creativity and our will to go beyond walls, borders and classrooms. These systems are deeply rooted in and aligned with individualistic perspectives of success, leaving aside the importance of participating in community. Community building allows us to learn each other's struggles and imagine ways these struggles can be minimized through support, guidance, mentorship, transparency and honesty. I feel that within these processes of learning from each other we are also more likely to understand how culture is "constructed" through our relationships, languages and symbols. This process is crucial to understand the many facets of democracy--how this political system has been designed, how it operates, whose voices are heard, and whose are not

I acknowledge the enormous challenges within this process of imagining a feminist education, where this openness requires people to come forward and share their fears, their struggles and their stories. It is important that we learn (and I am immersed in this process as I write) to be accountable for our acts and for our

practices. Connecting them with historical and theoretical evidence can support us in this process of becoming aware of responsibility, instead of enhancing feelings of guilt and isolation.

The current political scenario in Brazil has at many times intimidated me in the process of doing this work. As stated in the previous chapters, the conservatives who support these patriarchal structures have no fear of retaliation for their offensive speeches and statements, especially because they have a good proportion of the population who support them. My main fears, which I know are where my main challenges lie, are to engage in productive dialogues with individuals who have chosen the political figures who now hold the reins of our democracy. These politicians and leaders are trying to take control of something that can't be controlled, trying to impose norms that, in a democratic system, should not be imposed upon the population. The distance that the new administration keeps from grassroots social movements is telling. Bolsonaro's slogan is "Brazil is above everything and God is above All". We are supposed to live in a democratic laic state in Brazil, but Bolsonaro is imposing a conservative Christian framework through our government, including our educational system.

Although this political authoritarianism is happening, I also acknowledge that there is a very strong web of resistance woven among grassroots social movements and politically engaged activists, artists, scholars and students, including myself, who will not rest in the face of so much injustice. We will continue to challenge educational systems to promote equity and inclusion. As the artist Jonathan Herrera notes, "If it's not accessible to the poor, it's neither radical nor revolutionary". (Date

unknown) As we resist, we must bring this intersectional perspective to our work, recognizing the interactions of gender, race, and class in creating and maintaining systems of dominance.

My goal is to keep encouraging teachers to reflect on the different opportunities that are given to individuals in our society and to raise awareness of the ways many people are left way behind in the neoliberal market; some don't even get a chance to enter the "race". Teachers need to reflect on the different outcomes and "possibilities" for everyone in such different social realities and understand how people's social locations affect how they navigate the world. This is a complex work that will require many of us to reflect critically upon our privileges and listen genuinely to learn from perspectives that have not been part of dominant discourses and have therefore been excluded from formal curricula.

As Paulo Freire suggests, we can construct our presence in the world, immersing ourselves in it, being not only the objects of histories but the subjects as well. (2011) In *Pedagogy of Autonomy*, Freire states:

Being in the world without making history, and being made by history, without making culture, without "dealing" with our own presences in the world, without dreaming, without singing, without music, without art, without taking care of the earth, of our water, without using our hands, without sculpting, without philosophy, without different perspectives about the world, without making science, or theology, with no fear of mystery, without learning, without teaching without organizing ideas, without politicizing ourselves; is not possible. (2011)

My hope is that the Feminist Itinerant School provides one way to help teachers achieve a radical and transformative learning environment in the classroom and in schools. I hope to help them imagine an educational system committed to enhancing human relationships and interactions, with care and love.

I am not yet quite sure what will be the next steps with the FIS, as I return to Brazil in such a delicate moment. Some colleagues and activists have assured me that this is the right time to engage in this work and that many schools are open and welcoming these debates around feminism. Many feel the isolation and the direct consequences of the influence and impositions of Brazil's current administration in their lives and work. Others feel defeated and exhausted in their daily life as teachers and activists, and these struggles are directly affecting their wellbeing and health.

I intend to reconnect with the collective to think about the best strategies for moving forward with the FIS. I want to share experiences and support to continue this journey creating awareness toward collective feminist consciousness. I want to help us continue our engagement in these political struggles for our democratic system, especially within schools where so much good work can be done. This project is one way I hope to give back to my communities and participate in our moving forward together in solidarity.

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Appendices

1.1 Slides Encounter 1



What are some of the Learning Outcomes Of the Feminist Itinerant School?

- Analyze ways in which stereotypes are constructed through textbooks and representations in schools.
- Describe how perceived differences and gender hierarchies are socially constructed.
- Identify how feminist theories and feminist pedagogies can inform our teaching in schools from elementary to K-12 education.
- Identify the importance of student-centered educational practices and learn ways we can support students in their journeys.
- Explore aspects of our culture that can help us understand how educational systems are intertwined with larger structures embed in a patriarchal society
- Identify their own location and positionality in the classroom.

BASIC GUIDELINES TO BE CONSIDERED

- PROMOTE INTERACTION AND STIMULATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRUST AMONG PARTICIPANTS
- EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION SHARED WITHIN THE GROUP
- ESTABLISH WITH THE GROUP NORMS AND RULES TO BE FOLLOWED IN THE ENCOUNTERS
- GUARANTEE THAT ALL THE VOICES ARE HEARD
- AVOID MONOPOLIZATION OF SPEECH AND INDIVIDUALS SPEAKING FOR OTHERS
- BE AWARE OF ATTITUDES THAT AIM TO AVOID CONFLICTS, HINDERING THE PROCESS OF LEARNING AND REFLECTING ON SOCIAL ISSUES
- AVOID ATTITUDES OF PSYCHOLOGICAL AUTHORITY

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS WORK?



- The right to education around gender, race, class, and sexual identity has legal basis in the Brazilian Constitution (1998), the Law of Directrices and Base of National Education (Law 9.394, 1996) the National Directrices Guidelines of Education and Diversity, and the high school curriculum directrices, elaborated by the national Council of Education and in the Law Maria da Penha (Law 11.340, 2006)



- PROPOSED THEMES**
1. **INTRODUCTION TO FEMINISM AND THE FEMINIST ITINERANT SCHOOL**
 2. **FEMINIST PEDAGOGIES**
 3. **REPRESENTATIONS AND STEREOTYPES AROUND GENDER, RACE AND CLASS.**
 4. **PATRIARCHY**
 5. **"TEACHING" FEMINISM AND GENDER STUDIES**
 6. **CULTURE AND LANGUAGE IN THE CLASSROOM**
 7. **HISTORY, AND LITERATURE; CENTERING NARRATIVES OF AFRO-BRAZILIAN WOMEN IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM AND IN OUR CULTURE.**
 8. **SEXUALITY STUDIES AND POLITICAL SEX EDUCATION**
 9. **"O PESSOAL É POLITICO"**
 10. **CURRICULUM TRANSFORMATION**

21. Slides Encounter 2

Encounter 2
The Feminist Itinerant School



"No Education is Politically Neutral"

Feminist Pedagogies

are a collection of principles and practices that strives to bring consciousness to individuals regarding the patriarchal structures in our society and give them instruments to overcome these structures through taking action to build social equity.

"We should reflect upon a reconfiguration of the world from other perspectives, questioning what was created from a language exclusively Eurocentric" (Djamila Ribeiro, Quem Tem Medo do Feminismo Negro)



Feminist Classroom

- Discuss issues of power and discrimination and reimagine curricula and pedagogies that are empowering
- Discuss meaning of equity and inclusion
- Reflect upon our political responsibilities
- Raise feminist consciousness - Reflect upon Freire's contribution to feminist pedagogies.
- Search for responses within ourselves and investigate the ways we navigate the world
- Create possibilities to reflect upon our realities, our disadvantages in society as well as our privileges.

WHO PARTICIPATES, WHO DOESN'T?



SOME OF THE QUESTIONS PROPOSED BY FEMINIST PEDAGOGIES

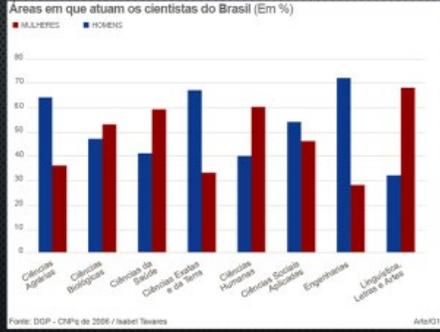
- HOW IS KNOWLEDGE CONSTRUCTED?
- WHOSE VOICES ARE HEARD AND WHOSE AREN'T?
- HOW CAN WE INCLUDE DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES TO BE INCLUDED IN THE "KNOWLEDGE" WE USE TO TEACH IN THE CLASSROOM?

WHAT ARE ASPECTS WE NEED TO CONSIDER IN A FEMINIST CLASSROOM

- FEMINIST COLLECTIVE WORK
- STRUCTURE (FORMAT)
- ASSIGNMENTS
- RESOURCES
- EQUITY
- INCLUSION
- RESEARCH COMMITMENT
- TRUST
- INTEGRITY
- ACCESSIBILITY

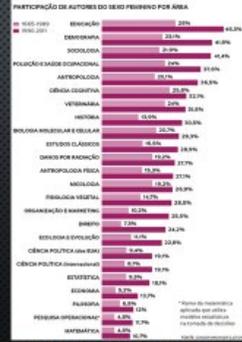


Academic Knowledge



Presença crescente

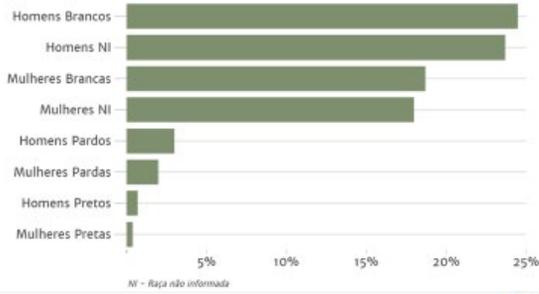
Evolução de autor por gênero em publicações científicas vinculadas à base de dados Jstor



<http://revistaescola.uea.br/2013/01/12/enfiteos-terminhos/>

PHD's graduates in Brazil - INEP 2016

Docentes doutores na pós-graduação



Fonte: INEP - Censo da Educação Superior 2016



POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT AND CURRICULUM

- BRAINSTORM ASPECTS OF CURRICULUM WHERE WE FEEL GROUPS OF PEOPLE WERE LEFT OUT OR MISREPRESENTED.
- ENGAGE IN CRITICAL THINKING TO GENERATE CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK.
- IT IS IMPORTANT IN A FEMINIST CLASSROOM THAT WE CREATE AWARENESS TOWARDS HOW OUR POLITICAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXTS, REFLECTING UPON HOW OUR DEMOCRACY WORKS.
- LEI DE DIRETRIZES E BASE, PLANOS NACIONAIS DE EDUCAÇÃO

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES

- REFLECTING UPON FEMINIST PRACTICES AND ACTIONS REQUIRES US TO GET OUT OF OUR COMFORTABLE ZONE.
- FEELINGS AND A SENSE OF VULNERABILITY MIGHT COME UP WITH THESE DISCUSSIONS.
- IT IS IMPORTANT WE RESPECT EACH OTHER'S IDEAS, FEELINGS AND THOUGHTS.
- LISTEN TO YOUR OWN INTUITIONS AND REFLECT UPON THE WAYS YOU LIKE TO BE TREATED.
- LISTEN, REFLECT.
- GIVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE TO FIND WHAT MAKES THEM COMFORTABLE, CONFIDENT.



3.1 Slides Encounter 3

Encounter 3 – Representations and Stereotypes



Gender, Race and Class

Reflect Upon stereotypes—gender, race, class—in the books we use.

- Are there any implicit messages and ideas?
- - Who are the main characters? Who are the heroes? The Care takers?
- Who are the politicians?

EXAMPLES OF REPRESENTATIONS IN THE MEDIA



(Fonte: Representatividade das Mulheres Negras, Site Medium)



(Fonte: Coluna Radar on-line, site da revista Veja)



(Fonte Economist Site UOL)



(Fonte: Coluna Economia, site IG)

NOS LIVROS DIDÁTICOS

Como elas aparecem nas narrativas

Quem são as mulheres:

21,3% negras
72,3% brancas



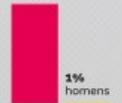
Citados no centro da narrativa do livro

90% homens
58,5% mulheres



Citados em relação a um familiar

75% mulheres
1% homens



• Research conducted by the Website Nova Escola

• Women are still misrepresented, especially Black, Indigenous and Asian Women.

Who and what can we add to the curriculum?

(Fonte: Ilustrações – Site nova Escola)
 Maria Carolina de Jesus
 Damiano da Cunha
 Katherine e Johnson
 Hipatia de Alexandria

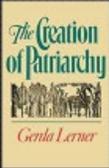
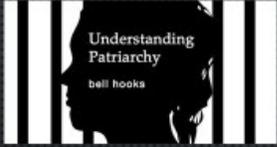
stereotype [ster-ee-uh-tahyp] (noun) an overly simple picture or opinion of a person, group or thing

Some Definitions

- SYSTEM THAT INSTITUTIONALIZES WESTERN MALE DOMINANCE OVER WOMEN, CHILDREN, WORKERS, AND LGBTQ PEOPLE. (LERNER, 1986)
- HETEROGENEOUS COMPLEX STRUCTURE THAT DEFINES PATTERNS THAT IMPLY IN THE DISADVANTAGE FOR WOMEN AND ALLOW MEN TO DISPOSE THEIR BODIES, THEIR TIME AND LABOR. IT IS AFFIRMED WITHIN INSTITUTIONS AS WELL AS IN THE DAILY LIFE RELATIONS OF INDIVIDUALS. (BIROLI, 2018)

4.1 Slides Encounter 4

Encounter 4 - Patriarchy



Some Definitions

- SYSTEM THAT INSTITUTIONALIZES WESTERN MALE DOMINANCE OVER WOMEN, CHILDREN, WORKERS, AND LGBTQ PEOPLE. (LERNER, 1986)
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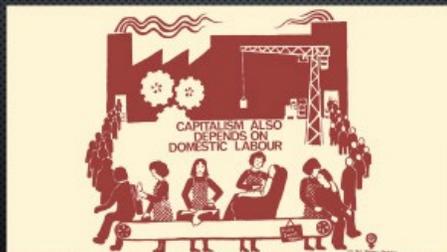
BRIEF HISTORY

- ACCORDING TO HISTORIAN GUERDA LERNER PATRIARCHY TOOK 2500 YEARS TO CONSOLIDATE IT SELF
- CÓDIGO DE HAMMURABI – BABYLONIAN KING HAMMURABI 1792-1750 B.C
- MESOPOTAMIA REGION AROUND 1750 B.C. CHRIST- EVIDENCE OF TRANSACTIONS USING WOMEN AS METHOD OF PAYMENT.



CAPITALISM & PATRIARCHY

- PATRIARCHY IS DEEPLY CONNECTED WITH THE CAPITALIST ECONOMY THAT SIMULTANEOUSLY DENIES DIFFERENCE WHILE EXPLOITING PEOPLE BASED ON DIFFERENCE IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN A CONSERVATIVE STATUS QUO (LORDE 1984)



Retrieved from <https://theoccupiedtimes.org/?p=13482>

PATRIARCHY AND CULTURE

IF PATRIARCHY WAS CREATED BY CULTURE, IT CAN ALSO BE CHANGED BY CULTURE (LERNER, 1984)

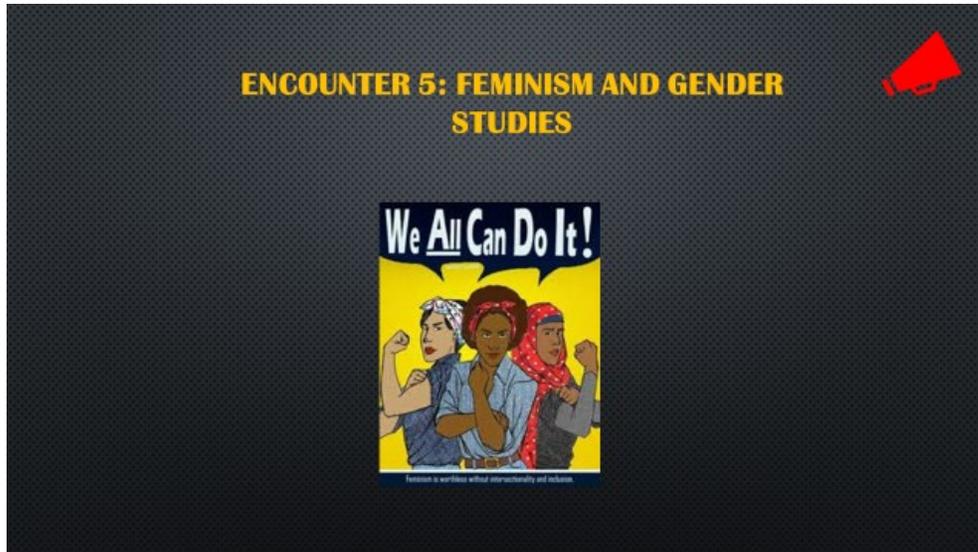
WHAT ARE ASPECTS OF A PATRIARCHAL CULTURE?

- POLITICAL LEADERSHIP
- MEN ARE SOCIALLY PRIVILEGED
- PATRILINEAR (NAME)
- RAPE CULTURE

PAIR THINK AND SHARE (PROMPTS FOR READINGS)

- HOW ARE ASPECTS OF PATRIARCHY VISIBLE IN THE CURRICULUM?
- HOW DO YOU SEE PATRIARCHY IN RELATION TO OTHER SOCIAL STRUCTURES SUCH AS THE SCHOOL?
- HOW DO YOU SEE PATRIARCHY IN RELATION TO RELIGION?

5.1 Slides Encounter 5



FEMINISM

- **Feminism as a social movement in Brazil starts to rise in the XIX century.**
- **Women then were prohibited to participate public spheres and could not vote.**
- **The constitution during the Brazilian empire did not even mention women in its body**
- **To the men that elaborated the constitution of the republic it was disrespectful to have women participation of politics**

Political representation and the right to Vote

Nisia Floresta and Bertha Luz are considered the pioneers of the feminist Movement in Brazil

- 1922 they founded the Brazilian Federation for Feminist Progress - That has as the main goal to fight for the vote access
- 1927 Rio Grande do Sul was the first State to allow women to vote,
- 1934 the electoral code permitted women the right to vote as well as to have political representation
- 1960 - FEMINISM IN BRAZIL STARTED FEELING THE INFLUENCES OF ACTIVISTS AND SCHOLARS FROM EUROPE AND THE U.S.



Bertha Luz



Nisia Floresta

Integrantes da Federação Brasileira para o Progresso Feminino, em 1930.

1980 - BLACK FEMINISM STARTS BECOMING STRONGER, BRINGING ATTENTION TO THE IMPORTANCE OF WHAT WAS LATER CALLED INTERSECTIONALITY.

1985 - NAMES SUCH AS SUELI CARNEIRO, LÉLIA GONZALES, NUBIA MOREIRA, LUIZA BARROS OPEN PATHS TO THE IMPORTANCE OF THE REPRESENTATION OF BLACK WOMEN IN BRAZIL.



Sueli Carvalho

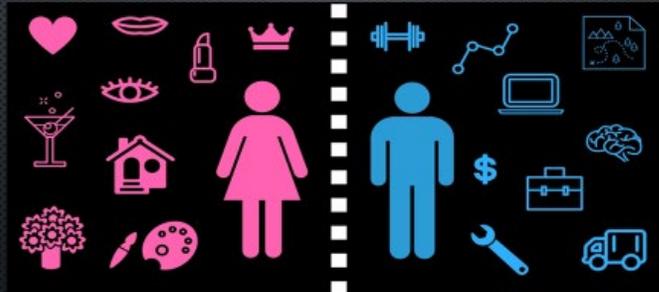


Lélia Gonzalez

GENDER AS A CATEGORY OF ANALYSIS.

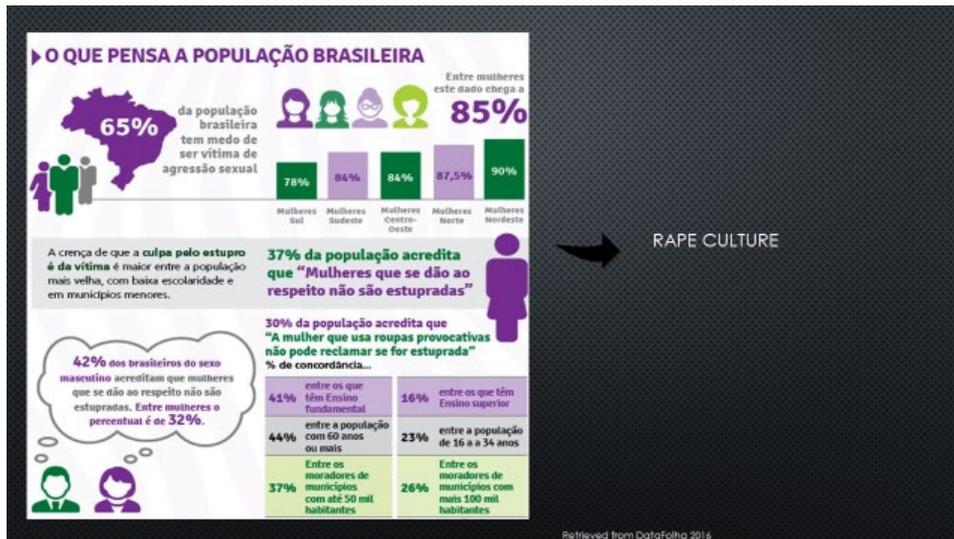
- According to U.S. scholar, Joan Scott gender is perceptions around sexual differences. (Piscitelli, 2002)
- It identifies symbols and meanings that are build upon the notion of sexual differences, used to make meanings of everything in our surroundings, such as our social relations and more specifically the relationships between men and women. (Carvalho, 2011)

Gender refers to the socially constructed characteristics of women and men – such as norms, roles and relationships of and between groups of women and men. It varies from society to society and can be changed. While most people are born either male or female, they are taught appropriate norms and behaviors – including how they should interact with others of the same or opposite sex within households, communities and workplaces. (Women Health Organization)



CERTAIN SOCIAL PRACTICES BECOME NORMAL, NEUTRALIZING AND BANALIZING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN , PERPETUATING PATRIARCHAL STRUCTURES SUCH AS

- BOYS LEARN THAT THEY CAN TOUCH GIRLS WITHOUT CONSENT TO "IRRITATE" THEM OR TEASE THEM.
- BOYS/MEN GETTING WOMEN DRUNK SO THEY BECOME MORE VULNERABLE
- POPULAR SAYING THAT INSISTS- "BRIGA DE MARIDO E MULHER NÃO SE META A COLHER"
- OR EVEN VICTIM BLAMING IN CASES OF ABUSE OR RAPE



RACISM

- IN BRAZIL WE ARE SOCIALIZED AND EDUCATED INTO A SYSTEM OF RACISM AND WHITE PRIVILEGE
- RACISM IS INTERNALIZED IN EDUCATIONAL STRUCTURES AND MATERIALS
- INTERSECTIONALITY



INTERSECTIONALITY



INTERSECTIONALITY A PROVISIONAL CONCEPT LINKING CONTEMPORARY POLITICS WITH POSTMODERN THEORY. IN MAPPING THE INTERSECTIONS OF RACE AND GENDER, THE CONCEPT DOES ENGAGE DOMINANT ASSUMPTIONS THAT RACE, AND GENDER ARE ESSENTIALLY SEPARATE CATEGORIES. BY TRACING THE CATEGORIES TO THEIR INTERSECTIONS, I HOPE TO SUGGEST A METHODOLOGY THAT WILL ULTIMATELY DISRUPT THE TENDENCIES TO SEE RACE AND GENDER AS EXCLUSIVE OR SEPARABLE. WHILE THE PRIMARY INTERSECTIONS THAT BETWEEN RACE AND GENDER, THE CONCEPT CAN AND SHOULD BE EXPANDED BY FACTORING IN ISSUES SUCH AS CLASS, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, AGE, AND COLOR". (KIMBERLEY CRENSHAW, 1990)



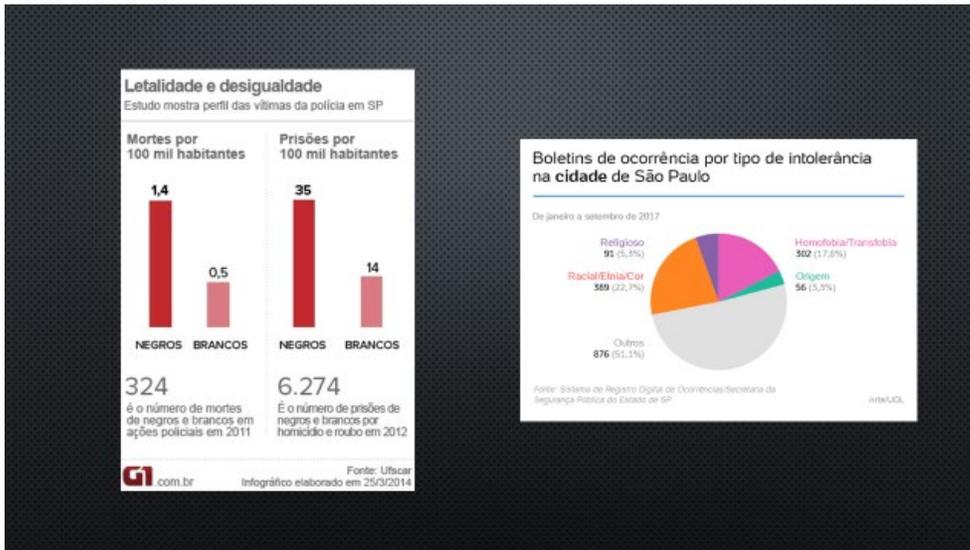




Image in a 7th grade history textbook suggested by the Department of Education.
<https://www.geledes.org.br/pesquisadora-questiona-abordagem-mulheres-negras-em-livros-didaticos/>



Donatella Kereke, diretora de estilo da edição brasileira da revista "Vogue" in her Birthday party in 2018

7.1 Slides Encounter 8



ENCOUNTER 8: SEXUALITY STUDIES AND POLITICAL SEX EDUCATION

- **COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION (CSE) IS A CURRICULUM-BASED PROCESS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING ABOUT THE COGNITIVE, EMOTIONAL, PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL ASPECTS OF SEXUALITY. IT AIMS TO EQUIP CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ATTITUDES AND VALUES THAT WILL EMPOWER THEM TO: REALIZE THEIR HEALTH, WELL-BEING AND DIGNITY; DEVELOP RESPECTFUL SOCIAL AND SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS; CONSIDER HOW THEIR CHOICES AFFECT THEIR OWN WELL-BEING AND THAT OF OTHERS; AND, UNDERSTAND AND ENSURE THE PROTECTION OF THEIR RIGHTS THROUGHOUT THEIR LIVES (UNESCO, 2018)**

Sex Education can help prevent child abuse



UNICEF

GRAVIDEZ É O MOTIVO DE 18% DAS MENINAS ABANDONAREM OS ESTUDOS E DE 1,3% DOS MENINOS EM 2014.

18%
DOS BRASILEIROS NASCIDOS EM 2015 SÃO FILHOS DE ADOLESCENTES ENTRE 10 E 19 ANOS.

66%
DESSAS SÃO GRAVIDEZ INDESEJADAS.

EARLY PREGNANCY PREVENTION

Infância e adolescência ameaçadas

Apesar de a taxa de natalidade entre jovens ter caído 17% de 2005 a 2015, os números continuam altos, colocando o Brasil entre os países onde a gravidez precoce é um problema social e de saúde pública



- Prevalce em famílias de **baixa renda**
- É maior em **áreas rurais**
- Nas **cidades**, ocorre mais nas **periferias**
- Potencializa o **risco de bebês prematuros e de baixo peso**
- **Diminui conforme aumenta a escolaridade das jovens**

Queda é tímida, taxas continuam elevadas
Número de nascidos vivos de mães adolescentes e percentuais em relação ao total de nascidos vivos (comparativo entre 2005 e 2015)

Faixa etária das mães

Entre 10 e 14 anos	Entre 15 e 19 anos
2005: 26.752 (0,881%)	661.137 (20,9%)
2015: 26.700 (0,884%)	547.565 (17,26%)

Norte e Nordeste têm os maiores números relativos de casos
Nascidos vivos de mães na faixa de 10 a 19 anos por região, em 2015. Números absolutos e % em relação ao total

Região	Número	%
Brasil	547.564	18,14%
Norte	82.112	25,58%
Nordeste	180.186	21,30%
Sudeste	179.332	15,00%
Sul	43.369	17,51%
Sudeste	62.565	15,39%

Fonte: Ministério da Saúde

<https://www12.senado.leg.br/noticias/especiais/especial-cidadania/gravidez-precoce-ainda-e-d-fa-mostram-dados>

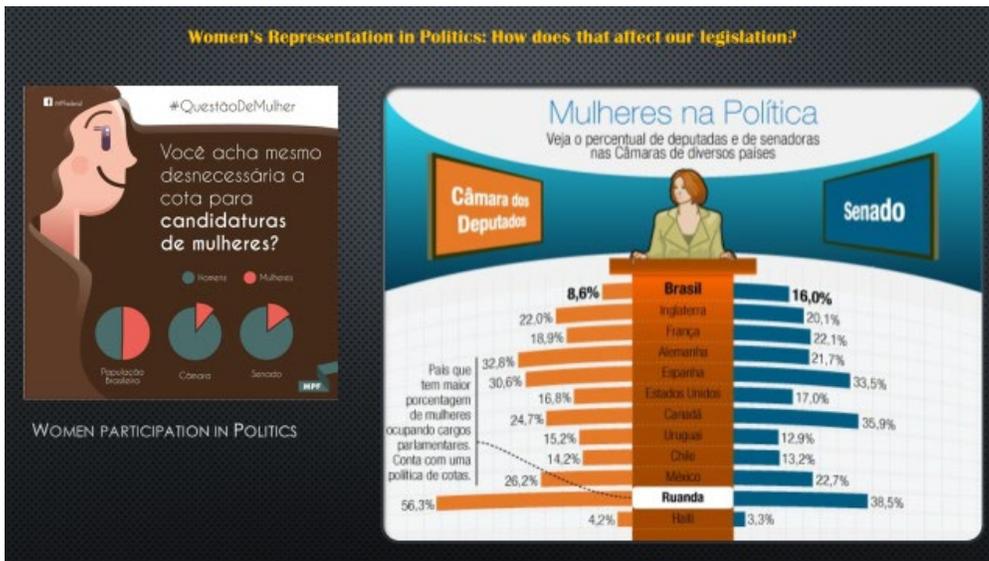


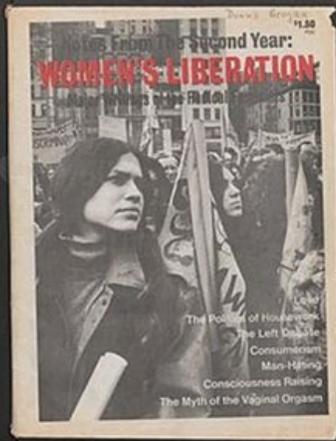
MÉTODOS CONTRACEPTIVOS OFERECIDOS GRATUITAMENTE NO SUS

- Preservativo masculino e feminino
- Pílula combinada, anticoncepcional injetável, mensal e trimestral
- Dispositivo intrauterino de cobre (DIU - IUD)
- Diafragma
- Anticoncepção de emergência
- Minipílula

Fonte: MINISTÉRIO DA SAÚDE

8.1 Slides Encounter 9





Legislation affects our lives directly. The movement, the Personal Is Political, recognizes that everything that happens to us in the private spheres affects our lives in the public sphere as well.

MAIN LEGISLATION THAT AFFECTS WOMEN DIRECTLY IN BRAZIL

- LEI MARIA DA PENHA
- ECA – ESTATUTO DA CRIANÇA E DO ADOLESCENTE
- ART. 128 DO CÓDIGO PENAL - DECRETO LEI 2848/40
- WHAT OTHER LEGISLATION DO YOU FEEL AFFECTS YOUR LIFE DIRECTLY? LET'S REFLECT UPON THAT!



The legislation does not stop women from having abortions.
Black women and socially disadvantaged women suffer even more with this legislation since middle class women can usually afford to pay for the procedure.



Notes

ⁱ Free translation - “Pela primeira vez na vida o número de ministros e ministras está equilibrado em nosso Governo. Temos 22 ministérios, 20 homens e duas mulheres. Somente um pequeno detalhe, cada uma dessas mulheres que estão aqui equivalem por dez homens”, disse. E completou: “A garra dessas duas transmite energia para os demais.”

ⁱⁱ Law Decree 7.209 - http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/Decreto-Lei/De12848.htm#art33

ⁱⁱⁱ p.41

^{iv} https://brasil.elpais.com/brasil/2015/07/04/politica/1436039196_544016.html

^v Caiçara is the name given to the population that lives on the coast of Brazil with social, cultural and economic aspects in common. They are known to practice agriculture and fishing and they have deep connections with their land and resources. They have been pushed out of their lands due to real estate speculation, selling their lands for cheap and moving into the suburbs of larger urban areas, often marginalized places. (Adam 2000)

^{vi} Quilombos are a social and economic structure of resistance and organization of the slaves who were able to escape and resist in spaces that are still very strongly organized around a particular identity that holds African traditions brought by their ancestors to Brazil when enslaved by the Portuguese. (Boa Ventura, 2000)

^{vii} Name given to individuals who are born in the city of Rio de Janeiro

^{viii} Name given to individuals who are born in the city of São Paulo

^{ix} Bolsonaro in the *Hebraica* Seminar in Rio de Janeiro - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dIfcdfDUNZ8>

^x Bolsonaro in the *Hebraica* Seminar in Rio de Janeiro - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dIfcdfDUNZ8>

^{xii} Federal Law 10.639:

“O conteúdo programático a que se refere o **caput** deste artigo incluirá o estudo da História da África e dos Africanos, a luta dos negros no Brasil, a cultura negra brasileira e o negro na formação da sociedade nacional, resgatando a contribuição do povo negro nas áreas social, econômica e política pertinentes à História do Brasil” http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/LEIS/2003/L10.639.htm

^{xiii} Freire’s sexist Language have been pointed out by feminist scholars such as bell hooks.

^{xiv} I have translated and adapted what Cecilia Sardenberg proposes in her article “*Considerações Introductorias sobre Pedagogias Feministas*” to this material.

^{xv} Free translation - A escola delimita espaço. Servindo-se de símbolos e códigos, ela afirma o que cada um pode (ou não pode) fazer, ela separa e institui. Informa “lugar” dos pequenos e dos grandes, dos meninos e das meninas. Através de seus quadros, crucifixos, santas ou esculturas, aponta aqueles/as que deverão ser modelos e permite também, que os sujeitos se reconheçam (ou não) nesses modelos. O prédio escolar informa a todos/as sua razão de existir. Suas marcas, seus símbolos e arranjos arquitetônicos “fazem sentido”, instituem múltiplos sentidos, constituem distintos sujeitos (LOURO, 1997, p. 58).

^{xvi} This activity is based on an adaptation made by Marc MeinBlatt and then Dr. Quo Li Driskill based on the Theater of the Oppressed. I have adapted the questions of the activities I had access at Oregon State University with Dr. Driskill to the realities of Brazilian public school