


Disputes to the rules for the use of condoms in the *bareback* curriculum: production of the *unrubberman* subject position

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Abstract

This article brings part of the results of a doctoral research. The analysis was carried out under the post-critical curricular perspective, which understands that the curriculum is not restricted to school subjects, but consists of different spaces and cultural artifacts. The methodology used articulated elements of netnography and Foucaultian-inspired discourse analysis of a blog and three twitter profiles. We name the heterogeneous set of sayings located on these bareback curriculum sites. The argument developed is that in this curriculum the position of the unrubberman subject is produced, constituted with specific marks based on the demand for transgression of the norms of condom use. These marks, in the scope of bareback sexual practice, show tensions in the way the anti-AIDS pedagogy works, centered on the mandatory use of condoms.

Keywords: Curriculum. Bareback. Condom.

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Resumo

Contestações às normas do uso do preservativo no currículo *bareback*: produção da posição de sujeito *unrubberman*

Palavras-chave:

Currículo.
Bareback.
Preservativo.

Este artigo traz parte dos resultados de uma pesquisa de doutorado. A análise foi elaborada sob a perspectiva curricular pós-crítica, que compreende que o currículo não se restringe às disciplinas escolares, mas se constitui em diferentes espaços e artefatos culturais. A metodologia utilizada articulou elementos da netnografia e análise do discurso de inspiração foucaultiana de um blog e três perfis do twitter. Nomeamos o conjunto heterogêneo de ditos localizados nesses sites de currículo *bareback*. O argumento desenvolvido é o de que nesse currículo produz-se a posição de sujeito *unrubberman* constituída com marcas específicas a partir da demanda da transgressão às normas do uso do preservativo. Essas marcas, no âmbito da prática sexual *bareback*, evidenciam tensões no modo de funcionamento da pedagogia anti-AIDS centrada na obrigatoriedade do uso do preservativo.

Resumen

Controversias a las normas para el uso de condones en el currículo de *bareback*: producción del cargo del sujeto de *unrubberman*

Palabras-clave:

Curriculo.
Bareback.
Condóm.

Este artículo aporta parte de los resultados de una investigación de doctorado. El análisis se realizó bajo la perspectiva curricular poscrítica, que entiende que el currículo no se restringe a asignaturas escolares, sino que consta de diferentes espacios y artefactos culturales. La metodología utilizó elementos articulados de netnografía y análisis del discurso de inspiración foucaultiana de un blog y tres perfiles de twitter. Nombramos el conjunto heterogéneo de dichos que se encuentran en estos sitios del currículo a pelo. El argumento desarrollado es que en este currículum se produce la posición del sujeto *unrubberman*, constituída con marcas específicas basadas en la exigencia de transgresión de las normas de uso del condón. Estas marcas, en el ámbito de la práctica sexual a pelo, muestran tensiones en el funcionamiento de la pedagogía anti-SIDA, centrada en el uso obligatorio del condón.

Introduction

During the 1980's, in the history of sexuality, the AIDS epidemic arose. Initially, the outbreak was poorly handled by medicine, quickly caused many deaths and generated fear in the whole society. Because of its contagious nature, (transmitted by blood, sperm) and because it mainly affected prominently marginalized groups, including, male homosexuals¹ and men who have sex with men (MSM), the disease raised biological, social and moral questions (POLLAK, 1990). As Gonzalez (2019, p. 60), highlights, "once AIDS was linked to sexual transmission, a sex panic set in".

This panic happened after a movement toward gay liberty in the 1960s and 1970s (HALPERIN, 2007), marked by the desestabilization of speeches that pathologized homosexuality and by the fights against physical repression and political oppression. With the AIDS' emergency, the "re-pathologization of homosexuality" is activated (HALPERIN, 2007, p. 4). In this sense, "the beginning of the AIDS crisis meant the end of gay sexual liberation" (GONZALEZ, 2019, p. 60). The meaning of homosexual promiscuity is elevated as irresponsible and unsafe sexual behavior that needed to be disciplined and controlled. Once the virus that caused AIDS was discovered - the hiv² - the expectations for epidemic control were developed around educational practices that oriented and prescribed the use of masculine condoms. Therefore, "among men who have sex with men (MSM), having anal sex without condoms became a relic of the pre-AIDS era, replaced by the condom code" (GONZALEZ, 2019, p. 60).

As Chambers (1994) outlines, the prescription of mandatory condom use for all sexual relations, in particular for gays, gained strength as a moral code. Not using prophylactics was not only reckless, it was wrong and violated the obligations within a community that was again facing discourses that labeled homosexuality as a disease. Some revisions began to develop at the end of the 1990s with the advent of drug therapies that widely reduced the mortality relative to AIDS in the populations that had access to medicines (DEAN, 2009; GONZALEZ, 2019). With these pharmaceuticals, living with hiv becomes possible. As a result of these revisions, there are changes in erotic practices, and it is in this context that the practice of sexual bareback emerges.

It is about an intentional sexual practice, specific for men that have sexual relations with other men, of not using condoms during sex with occasional partners and/or anonymously, embodying it as a practice of premeditation and anal sex erotization without condoms (DEAN, 2009; HAIG, 2006). Tim Dean (2009, p. 2)

¹ Throughout the text, we use the words homosexuals and their derivatives and also men who have sex with men (MSM). The first refers to men who also have sex with men, but recognize and perceive themselves as homosexuals, participating in some way in the broad spectrum that constitutes gay culture and affects the constitution of their identities. The second will also be used, since "just as some married men and other ostensibly straight guys regularly participate in casual same-sex erotic activity without regarding themselves as gay" (DEAN, 2009, p. 10), as well as it happens in the *bareback* practice.

² We adopted the use of the term hiv in lowercase in this text inspired by the struggle of the author and activist Herbert Daniel, who died in 1992. The use of the term in lower case aims to reduce the burden of being a virus carrier. From Herbert Daniel's perspective, the individual cannot be reduced to the virus, nor should this be considered central to his or her life. For more details on these issues, his life and struggle for diversity check: GREEN, 2018.

states that "the term barely existed prior to 1997, AIDS having rendered inconceivable the idea that gay men would intentionally relinquish protection when fucking". Gonzalez (2019, p. 60), on the other hand, specifies when this term enters the cultural gay lexical: "in the cover of February of 1999 Poz Magazine". The magazine³ described *bareback* as a clandestine sexual practice that challenged the rules of mandatory condom use. This edition's cover depicts the image of a white and muscular man riding on a black horse. The picture references the origin of the word *bareback* that comes from equestrianism and means "ride the fur", i.e, ride a horse without a saddle, or blanket over the horse's back (GARCIA, 2009).

Later, the practice gained more followers, becoming a community and culture (DEAN, 2009). Taking into account, as Anna Paula Vencato (2015, p. 373) defends, that the internet "opens a fundamental path for [individuals/groups] to meet other people that share their desires and practices and it becomes possible to talk about this experience", we can deduce that it was crucial for the wide outreach it has today. Once connected to cyberspace, the *bareback* culture started to count "with its own Web sites, pornography, and subcultural codes", provoking "profound [...]cultural transformations." (DEAN, 2009, p.2).

Considering, these statements and taking them as provocations, we understand that the *bareback* practice subscribes in the present as cultural pedagogy, that is, in this article's perspective, a curriculum that produces a variety of knowledge about ourselves and about others. In this sense, in order to research the *bareback* sexual practice, we mobilized a wide conception of curriculum, under the post-critical perspective. The post-critical term is commonly used to name a set of theoretical perspectives as post-structuralism, post-modernism, queer theory, feminist and gender studies, multi cultural studies, post-colonialism, ethinical, ecologic, etc. (PARAÍSO, 2004).

The curriculum "for some time has been conceptualized as a 'cultural practice'" (PARAÍSO, 2010, p. 29). This way of conceptualizing curriculum brought implications not only for the ways that we comprehend curriculum but also as we search about it. We started, then, to understand that curriculum isn't restricted only to subjects or a set of systematic school knowledge, because other wider cultural instances teach knowledge, prescribe behaviors, share values and, so, also have a curriculum (SILVA, 2020; PARAÍSO, 2010). In other words, Marlucy Paraíso (2010, p. 37) affirms that "a curriculum has its existence not only in the curriculum policies, [but also] in the schools, education colleges or universities". It materialized, then, according to Paraíso, in different spaces and artifacts such as, libraries, museums, media, games, literature, cinema, music, internet, etc.. Curriculum is, therefore, "an artifact involved in power relationships of different kinds that presents a set of knowledge to be taught to someone to be transformed, modified, subjectivized, [or] ruled" (PARAÍSO, 2010, p. 50). Thereby, curriculum began to be researched as the existence and operation of non-schooling cultural education in different spaces. This requires paying attention to the built character, to the dimension of cultural artifacts, to the power-knowledge relations and to the investments in certain types of subjects present in them, while "questioning what has been taught by the different existing curriculums" (PARAÍSO, 2010, p. 30).

³ GENDIN, Stephen. They Shoot Barebackers, Don't They? Poz, [S.l], fev. 1999. Features. Disponível em: <https://www.poz.com/article/They-Shoot-Barebackers-Don-t-They-1459-4936>. Access in: Dec. 27th, 2020.

Once it materialized in cyberspace, the *bareback* culture discloses and produces meanings about abandoning the use of condoms in specific terms, mobilizing another narrative that contends in order to self-constitute as truth. This narrative enters into a dispute with what is mostly taught in other spaces of health, prevention and sexual pleasure. Taking into account, therefore, this aspect and the curriculum conceptions previously mentioned, we understand that the *bareback* culture is a curriculum. Due to the abundance of the finding material in cyberspace, for the present research we used a cutout.

We named as *bareback curriculum* a set of heterogeneous speeches found in cyberspace, specifically in the blog *blogbareback.br.blogspot.com* and in three Twitter profiles: *bare_putaria*, *@baredeprep* e *@bareback3*⁴. The blog and the profiles were selected from exploratory research that identified the blog as the only one in Portuguese with massive sharing of the practice. The profiles were selected because at the time of the research they had more followers and, therefore, had a wide reach capacity. It is, thus, referring to this set and to the curriculum comprehension here shown that we will mobilize throughout the article the *curriculum bareback* expression. Curriculum, on its part, is understood as speech, i.e., as productive practices of power-knowledge that take place over specific emergence conditions. This discussion was made in a finished research for doctoral degree, in which we sought to analyze the *bareback curriculum* operation in the production of truth, knowledge and subject positions. The present article brings in part of the research results (OLIVEIRA, 2021) and the argument developed here is that in this curriculum is produced the *unrubberman subject position* constituted with specific markers from the demand of transgression against the rules of condom use. The *unrubberman* term was minted in reference to the term *rubberman*, which can be translated as rubber-man or, in the context originally used, the one that, in all the hypotheses, uses the rubber condom⁵. However, *unrubberman*, with the *un* prefix, designates what this prefix announces in the English language: the denial of something, in the meaning of reverting some specific situation. Thus, the use of *unrubberman* term here translates the prominent marker of this subject position: *the one that has sex without prophylactic*.

Methodology: initial definitions, procedures to information production and *bareback curriculum* analysis.

For this search, methodologically, we articulated elements and netnography procedures - methodology derived from ethnography to investigate cyberspace - (SALES, 2010) and the Foucauldian-inspired speech analysis - methodology used for information production and analysis of discursive practices. Netnography was utilized for cyberculture analysis to search how the link between *bareback* culture and cyberspace culture is done. Based on the analyses of Foucauldian-inspired speech, it was possible to select the blog and profiles that made up part of the research and then produce the information and analysis on the curricular perspective. For

⁴ These names are fictitious to preserve the anonymity of the sites surveyed.

⁵ In addition to the subject position *unrubberman*, in the thesis we discuss the subject positions *preper*, *bugchaser*, and *giftgivers*. These positions are conflicting, constituting subjects in varying ways, demanding that they engage in bareback sexual practice for different reasons. The *preper subject position*, for example, is mobilized in some way by the safety that the drug PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis) offers for practices deemed risky. For the full paper check: OLIVEIRA, 2021.

those analyses, we also mobilized the sexuality concept defined by Foucault, as a "set of effects produced on the bodies, in the behaviors, in the social relations, for a certain device belonging to a complex political technology" (FOUCAULT, 2014, p. 139). In other words, we can understand it as "a social apparatus for producing knowledge and, indeed, for generating a certain kind of truth about human subjects" (DEAN, 2018, p. 142). From these methodological resources and these principal concepts, we followed with search procedures that we describe hereafter.

The first methodological procedure adopted comes from netnography. We initially sought to immerse ourselves in cyberspace. Here it was possible to obtain information about aspects related to cyberculture comprehension connected with the *bareback* speech circulating in cyberspace. The first search happened in a wide way, looking for blogs that dealt with the topic. There were many results achieved. So, we considered as criteria to choose between these results: it must be in Portuguese and exclusively speak about the *bareback* sexual practice. Then, initially we chose two blogs; however, they didn't have enough material for the analysis because the posts were not updated. We decided to do another search for the *bareback* term on Facebook. We didn't use any filter to search on the platform. We took into account all types of posts, from anyone, any group, anywhere and any date. On Facebook we found the promotion of a blog with a lot of posts and content for analysis, which was then selected for the research.

From the definition of this blog as object and location of analysis, we started to access it consistently between August of 2019 and March of 2020. On some of the accesses we prioritized observation as a manner to meet the blog' culture and operation as well as the *bareback* practice shared there. This aspect of immersion in cyberspace occurred in the initial phase of the research. After reading the theoretical material and strictly following the methodological precepts of netnography combined with the analysis of Foucauldian speech, we started to collect some text fragments, images and various sayings that could be utilized afterwards. This collection took place, based on a specific way of questioning - *what is being taught here?*

We also looked for some Twitter profiles to compose the research discursive body, taking into account the same criteria used for the blog selection. After a search process mobilizing tools available on the network itself, such as, the "explore" topic and hashtags, these options emerged: top, latest, people, photos and videos. Facing the goal of following profiles for a longer amount of time, we selected the category "people". From those, we chose the three most followed profiles, considering the wide dissemination of information that they had related to the others.

As we accessed the search field daily, with the deep study on the demanded theoretical concepts to explain the information we were finding and considering the methodological concepts that are applied here, our view towards the understanding of *bareback curriculum* became sharper. In this sense, we were able to articulate the sayings of the blog and Twitter profiles in order to reorganize the information so far obtained and refine our searches to be more directed to the research goals. We then started to map, organize and select those sayings, splitting them into more general categories, but maintaining the core strategy of description and analysis of what was being taught there, which knowledge was being shared, and how it was done. Through these methods we

were able to make records of what was effectively being said, written, and shared, and we have direct contact with cultural elements of its own analyzed context. In short, with the understanding of the languages, the constructed meanings, the existing power relations, the disclosed knowledge, we learned how the bareback curriculum works.

Considering, then, that the curriculum is a speech - as we previously argued, and from the methodological procedures presented, we seek in this article to show that the "speech is a practice: it is the space where the production of truth and subjects are possible" (PARAÍSO, 2007, p. 54). The truth can be understood as an effect of power-knowledge articulation in speech, as a discursive construction. It's from this understanding that Cunha (2011, p. 56) states that "as an effect of this type of discursive articulation, truths institute subject positions". In what concerns the curriculum here specifically investigated, the truths are the ones that inform us about how the *barebacker* subject should be, i.e., the shared sayings and the raised divisions in articulation demand specific types of subjects. In this article, we focused on the production of the *unrubberman's position*.

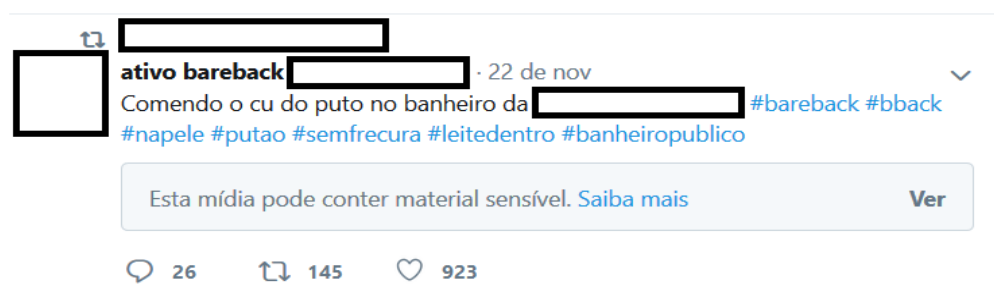
In the analysis undertaken here, we consider that "all the practices for which the subject is defined and transformed are followed by the creation of certain types of knowledge" (FOUCAULT, 1993, p. 205). In this way, we showed which knowledge acquires truth character on the *bareback curriculum* assigning specific markers to the *unrubberman subject position*. In other words, we can understand that the determined truths shared in this curriculum can inform specific subject positions.

The subject positions are incorporated as "discursive positions" that produce the subject in the same operation that attributes to them a discursive place (LARROSA, 1994, p. 66). To Foucault (2008, p. 107), they are a "determined and empty place that can be effectively occupied by different individuals". Although, to occupy a determined subject position is not something that is given once and at all; in opposite, it is given as a contingent character, instable and temporary, to the position that a particular subject can occupy. Therefore, once again, as Foucault teaches, we don't operate an individual-centered analysis to think about the production of subjectivities aspect, instead, we return to the speech effects, or, in the case of this article, to the operation of curriculum as speech. Using curricular analysis we look to show how, in this curriculum operation, the *unrubberman subject position* is made available, and has specific markers. These markers, given to the conditions of the speech production, "tell desires historicals, speak of lusts, aspire to truths and drive subjects to be of determined ways" (CARDOSO, 2012, p. 154). These are the markers that we are going to explore.

Unrubberman subject position: deny the condom use, transgress the touch prohibitions with body fluids

Using the narratives, posts and hashtags searched, we show that in this curriculum there exists a demand of a way to be a *barebacker* that seems to care only about the sex practice without condoms. This is one goal used to guide, stimulate and provoke MSM, constituting, therefore, an important marker of subject position here named as *unrubberman*. We highlighted two discursive fragments to show the creation of this subject position in the analyzed curriculum:

Image 1 – Screenshot 1⁶



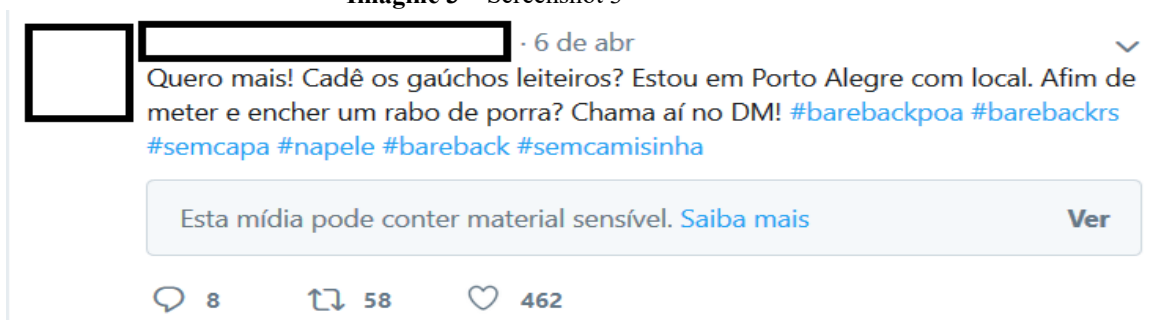
Source: *TWITTER*. Retweet from @bare_putaria. Post of November 22nd of 2019.

Image 2 – Screenshot 2⁷



Source: *TWITTER*. @bare_putaria. Profile description.

Image 3 – Screenshot 3⁸



Source: *TWITTER*. Tweet from @bare_putaria. Post from April 6th of 2019.

Image 4 – Screenshot 4⁹



Source: *TWITTER*. Retweet from @bare_putaria. Post of March 10th of 2019.

⁶ Eating slut's ass in the restroom of #bareback #bback #intheskin #slut #nofussy #milkside #publicrestroom

⁷ Slut, versatile, exhibitionist and BAREBACK lover! Sex no fussy and milk inside! #bare #nocape #onthefur #gaybare curiouscat.me/BarebackPutaria

⁸ I want more! Where are the Gauchos milkmen? I am at Porto Alegre with a place. Wanna fuck and fill the ass with cum? Slide in the DM! #barebackpoa #barebackrs #nocape #intheskin #bareback #nocondom

⁹ Come make me a slut too #bbc #bareback #nocondom #intheskin #inthefur #nocape #nocondom #bare #barebr

It's possible to find an intense and frequent use of the *hashtags* #nocondom #intheskin #inthefur #nocape and #semcamisinha¹⁰ in the tweets. In action and available in the curriculum here investigated, these *hashtags* take place as a type of specific reference to the *unrubberman* subject position. According to Gislene Evangelista (2016, p. 45), "the hashtags are everywhere in cyberspace and, more than disseminating content, they have the characteristics of marking the message as relevant, placing it in the spotlight". What is highlighted here seems to be exactly what we are seeking to show as the prominent mark of the *unrubberman's* subject position: *the one that has sex without protection*. The words, in the way that they are organized in this curriculum, evidence the proposal of using a *hashtag* (the symbol "#"), with being able to start "providing a space of instantaneous grouping of messages and metadata" (COSTA-MOURA, 2014, p. 150). Messages that, in the perspective adopted here, are built in discursive fragments that show one specific way of being a *barebacker*.

Those *hashtags*, on a first instance, can be similar to the meaning of the bareback term, in which, in general, can be understood as "premeditation and eroticization of unprotected anal sex" (DEAN, 2009, p. 1). After all, when the intention is sharing content about *bareback* using words like these, it is the erotization of unprotected anal sex that is being diffused as relevant, since what connects the expressions used in the *hashtags* is exactly the demand for this way of having sexual relations. "#nocondom" is the term in English to "*semcamisinha*"¹¹ that are, thus, in two languages - English and Portuguese - and is a synonym for the expression "#nocape", with cape here a substantive that substitutes the words rubber and condom. "#napele" applies to sex without interferences, without mediation of any object, says of one skin with another, it is the friction of these skins. "#inthefur" is an expression that is related to the arise of the equestrian term *bareback*, ride a horse without saddle, touching the animal's fur. From the tweets' use of *hashtags*, we established that a set of knowledge about the sexual practice of *bareback* is that one that produces this practice as the individual engagement in sexual relations without protection, demanding, in this way, the *unrubberman* subject position.

The posts are followed by videos of sexual experiences, in which it seems like the individuals themselves record and share the content in the network, where they are liked and *retweeted*. The function of *retweet* is a way of sharing the content, being it from the user itself or from another person. In this case, when a profile *retweets* its own message, it is considering it, somehow, relevant. The repetition of something brings with it powerful effects. The words that are shown in the sayings and *retweets* - #nocondom #intheskin #inthefur #nocape #semcamisinha¹² - are established in the format of *hashtags*, grouping, then, a set of posts that can be easily accessed in the network by the user. Therefore, they aren't static nor do they show in a neutral way the *barebackers'* experiences and, yes, they also promote ways of driving the conduct, because they intend to teach valid modes of having sexual relations.

We consider, thus, that the way of how the *bareback curriculum* works, with the specific language sources - *retweet* and *hashtag* -, is like a performativity, understood here as "a way of naming a power that the

¹⁰ #nocondom in Portuguese.

¹¹ In Portuguese.

¹² #nocondom in Portuguese

language has to produce a new situation or of adding a set of effects" (BUTLER, 2018, p. 35). Performativity also says about a characteristic of linguistic statements, "at the statement moment, [it] makes something happen or brings some phenomenon to the existence" (BUTLER, 2018, p. 35). We understand that it's brought to existence through a declaration, here, in a *hashtag* format: *#nocondom*, *#intheskin*, *#inthe fur*, *#nocape*, *#semcamisinha*. This statement stands for a prescription, as sharing knowledge as truth, represented by the repeated use of these *hashtags*. They disclose a specific way of having sexual relations, which causes a series of events to happen as an effect. Power relations are established here, by inciting that sex be *#nocondom*, *#intheskin*, *#inthe fur*, *#nocape*, *#semcasinha*, an action that concerns both in the conduct drive, demanding the *unrubberman* subject, and in the dispute over the truth of precautions about the prevention in sexual relations.

Thereby, it brings out a way to lead oneself to break with a discursive regularity that seems to be accepted and instituted as truth in many spaces, (i.e., the one that invested in the understanding that we have about the obligation of condom use in sexual relations) in the way that what is prescribed in this curriculum can sound weird, scary or even unthinkable, to many of us. Haig (2006, p. 8) defends that the condom use was done as "one of the fastest transformation resorts of massive behavior in the history of sanitary promotion". This behavior can be understood here as a term of driving conduct that is related to truths that the individuals link themselves and others to in a specific way. Somehow, the necessity of condom use is one aspect of knowledge that acquires the character of prominent truth in the power relations which rule MSM's behavior related to sex and to sexuality. However, as it is embedded in power relations, certain knowledge is always competing with other knowledge that tries to show, insert, or constitute also as truth. So there is, in the *bareback curriculum*, an investment in producing as truth a different knowledge about condom use in sexual relations. The use of expressions *#nocondom*, *#intheskin*, *#inthe fur*, *#nocape* and *#semcasiminha* explicitly contradict the knowledge that was developed as part of the "anti-aids critical pedagogy" over the last few years which affirms that everyone must "use a condom in each sexual relation, not caring where or with who" (GÓIS, 2003, p. 30)¹³.

The *bareback curriculum's* way of operation shows the contingent and inventive character of the knowledge that we have as truth about compulsory condom use in all sexual relations, highlighting the relation of the power that produces it. The generation of this knowledge, enrolled in the *anti-aids critical pedagogy*, passed and still passes through tensions, because of what is produced as truth in the *bareback curriculum*. In other words, the context for facts around the use of protection in sexual relations is not limited to the *bareback's curriculum* operation, here specifically demonstrated throughout language capabilities of *retweets* and *hashtags* *#nocondom*, *#intheskin*, *#inthe fur*, *#nocape* and *#semcamisinha*. In the uniqueness of historical events, it's possible to find some discontinuities that destabilize a assumed linear trajectory development of the condom as essential in sexual relations. Góis demonstrates that many studies, since the end of 1980s and over the full decade of the 1990s, "indicated that maintaining a sexual regime in which rubber condoms were always a present component was an unfounded claim" (GÓIS, 2003, p. 30). According to the Góis, the indispensability of

¹³ Original in Portuguese.

reaffirming the need of condom use as an instrument and technique of *anti-aids critical pedagogy* established that the reflection about the adherence problems which the author calls as new erotic order "was relegated to the background" (GÓIS, 2003, p. 30).

In this pedagogy, there's a significant preoccupation with juveniles in hiv/AIDS prevention campaigns, as a response to the major incidence of positive hiv in the young (DIAS, 2012; PAIVA; PERES; BLESSA, 2002). In Brazil, the prevalence of infection by the hiv virus remains [highest] among young people (WOHLGEMUTH; POLEJACK; SEIDL, 2020). In this way, the discursive disputes around the protection, triggered by the protagonism in fighting the hiv virus, mainly affects the conduct of young people. Therefore, once we find, in *bareback curriculum*, the incentive for sexual practice without protection, this curriculum also competes more prominently for the governance of juvenile sexuality. The State, AIDS prevention NGOs and LGBT movements, through these prevention campaigns that prescribe the condom use in all sexual relations, the Catholic church¹⁴, using the reaffirmation of moral values of sexual abstinence until marriage, and the *bareback curriculum* contesting sexual practice control via condoms, generate different ways of being young. These are discursive contests that trigger diverse techniques, suggest multiple exercises for the production of certain youth subjectivities that are based on valuations about what is good or bad, pleasant, healthy, safe, correct, suitable and unsuitable for each one's behavior.

The conflicts and disputes established by power relations for the production of juvenile subjectivities and the drive of conduct in sexual practices won specific configurations in present Brazil. There's a conservative movement that, in sexuality politicization, means to "restart to radicalize contests between religions, family and managers with [the] ambition of controlling what 'is supposed to be' what young people do" (PAIVA; ANTUNES; SANCHEZ, 2020, p. 2). As Seffner (2020, p. 2) demonstrates, an investment by education exists from the anchored legislative proposals in "family and religion values", that directly affects the political retreat of STI¹⁵/AIDS prevention. As an effect of this, it's possible to notice an "erosion of public political speech in health and sexuality" (SEFFNER, 2020, p. 3). According to the author, these "should be based on evidence", however, they are "guided by religious values or simple personal beliefs that work as arguments to disallow scientific surveys" (SEFFNER, 2020, p. 3).

The conflicts around the condom use prescription in sexual relations are centered, mainly, in health, moral and pleasure's order. More than informing which sexual practices are allowed, different sexual politics and styles of moral regulation (PAIVA; ANTUNES; SANCHEZ, 2020), in different speeches about prevention and condom use happen to incite different ways of driving the conduct of many young people. The *bareback curriculum* composes these conflicts. Regarding the production of the *unrubberman's subject position*, it acts most prominently in the field of pleasure. It is notable that, in this position, there's no prescription of concern with the risks to health inherent to *bareback's* practice. It is prescribed only that the sex be without a condom, as we previously demonstrated. Although there's a morality signal of what the practice provokes, it is affirmed,

¹⁴ For the discussion on the relationship between prescribing condom use within the Catholic Church check: OROZCO, 2006.

¹⁵ Sexually Transmitted Infection.

in this curriculum, that "this practice is not always open" (image 5), and the biggest investment is in the pleasure. In this sense, it is highlighted that the sex without a condom is "too good", there's 'too much lust' for this". To feel this lust, it is necessary that the individual adopts determined actions on their behaviors, as, for example, "to milk" and "be milked". It is up to us here to investigate what each of these terms and their related terms produce in the bareback curriculum. "Milked" is the one that received from the partner the sperm during the relation, being it through the oral sex or anal sex, however the one that "milks", or "milker" is the one that provides the sperm. Because of this, in this curriculum, it's given one more marker for the *unrubberman subject position*: the one that is "milker" or "milked":

Image 5 - Blog's 1 post title¹⁶

sexta-feira, 22 de fevereiro de 2019

Só para os barebackers nível 10! Putaria hard, quer vitamina, quer?

Leitar e ser leitado, é bom demais! Muitos tem tesão em vitaminar ou mesmo ser vitaminado. Essa prática nem sempre é totalmente aberta, mas muitos curtem! Sentiu tesão? Veja os vídeos!

Source: blogbarebackbr.blogspot.com. Post of February 22nd of 2019.

Image 6 – Blog's 2 post title¹⁷

domingo, 9 de dezembro de 2018

É assim que se faz: Bareback de verdade ama GOZAR DENTRO!

Tem coisa melhor do que deixar seu leite dentro de um putu? Ou então receber leite, às vezes, até de quem tu tem conhece bem! Leitar ou ser leitado, nós barebackers amamos fazer isso!

Source: blogbarebackbr.blogspot.com. Post of December 9th of 2018.

Image 7 - Blog's 3 post title¹⁸

sexta-feira, 7 de dezembro de 2018

Surubas Bareback

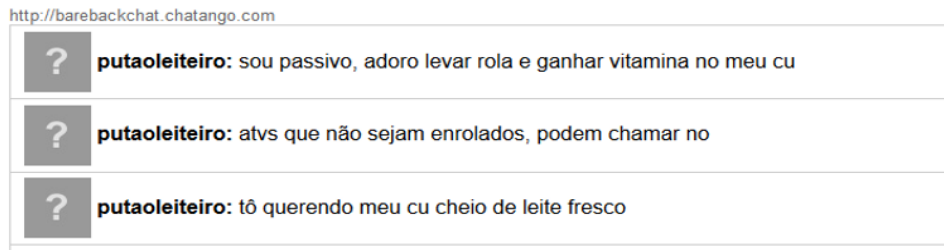
Alguém aí ainda fode de camisinha? Acho que não! Aí estão alguns vídeos para deixar vocês com vontade de ser depósito de leite para vários caras ou participar leitando o rabo dos amigos, quem quer? Vai encarar? Tesão demais isso!

Source: blogbarebackbr.blogspot.com. Post of December 7th 2019.

¹⁶ Only to level 10 barebackers! Hard whoring, do you want vitamins, right? To milk and to be milked, is too good! Many have a hard-on to vitamin or to be vitaminated! This practice is not always open but many like it! Felt horny? Watch the videos!

¹⁷ That's how it's done: True Bareback loves to CUM INSIDE! Is there something better than letting your milk inside a slut? Or to receive milk, sometimes, even from someone that you know well! To milk or to be milked, we barebackers love to do it!

¹⁸ Bareback Threesome. Is there someone that still fucks with condom? I don't think so! Here are some videos to let you wanting to be a milk deposit to many guys or to participate in milking your friends' asses, who want it? Will you face it? This is too horny!

Image 8 – Blog chat from blogbarebackbr.blogspot.com¹⁹

Source: blogbarebackbr.blogspot.com. Post of February 14th of 2019.

Naming the one that looks for sex without condom as "milker" or "milked" designates the summit of the transgression against the rule prescription of the mandatory condom use in all sexual relations, because, one is not only encouraged to have sex without a condom, but the body fluid becomes a desire and excitation object. The semen can bring with it some important meanings.

Once investigating sexual practices exclusively between men, Barreto (2019) realized that the corporeality and the body fluids are meaning elements in these practices. The meanings given to the body parts, substances and secretions take, in these practices context, specific attributions, in a way that he found a "singular erotic in fluids" (BARRETO, 2019, p. 724). In the *bareback curriculum*, the body fluids - more specifically sperm, as it can be previously seen - are mobilized to demand ways of conducting actions that take place in the production of the *unrubberman's subject position* with specific markers given by the meanings engendered within the *bareback* practice.

Despite the translation and meaning of the *bareback* term "ride without saddle" - what it refers to, mostly is the terms associated with sex without a condom, to sex "in the skin", "in the fur" - the exchange of body fluids, sperms or milk, as it is named in the *bareback curriculum*. Considering the speeches previously highlighted, sharing body fluids is a demand directed to the *unrubberman subject position* drive of conduct, setting it as an action that can provide pleasure. In other words, according to Silva (2008, p. 111), the direct contact with semen or sperm in *bareback'* practice "seems important for the sexual self-realization". This is a frequently directed demand and from many different ways in the investigated curriculum, present abundantly in the sayings and scenes of the porn videos posted in it, as it can be seen in section "Of porn videos".

In such ways, if in the *bareback curriculum* it is taught that the most pleasant, most exciting and the best is the sex without condom, (in the skin) (OLIVEIRA, SALES, 2020), it also engenders meanings about the exchange of semen, of sperm, that affect the conduct of *unrubberman subject position*. From the investigations done by Silva (2008), we can notice that the *bareback* practice, when seen through two perspectives - only sex in the skin or with sperms exchanged -, in an opposite way by the practitioners, can be assigned different values. It's because, he affirms, that the majority of the practitioners "highlighted the produced pleasure when touching the sperm, although some have been emphasizing the skin to skin touch as sufficient to justify sex without condom" (SILVA, 2008, p. 113).

¹⁹ putaoleiteiro (Milker Big Whore): I'm passive, I love to be taken with a dick and win vimatin in my asshole. putaoleiteiro: Actives that aren't lazy, call me on. putaoleiteiro: I'm wanting my asshole full of fesh milk.

The same author points out that "the act of drinking or swallowing sperm is present in *bareback* practices, even though it is not exclusively from them" (SILVA, 2008, p. 109). What may differ this act in the *bareback* practice ambit from the other sexual practices can be the related meanings that, in *bareback*, acquire specific qualities. These are the meanings²⁰ that we search for here to discuss the assigned markers to the *unrubberman subject position*. If we get the question - what are the tensions that these meanings hold and which effects are they capable of producing? -, maybe these meanings help us to problematize the operation of the *bareback curriculum*.

For that, we seek to show how, by naming sperm in another way such as milk or vitamin, for example, exists, in this curriculum, a power strategy. If it's necessary to describe and analyze ways of thinking and action that the language of a curriculum links to what it teaches (PARAÍSO, 2007), this is done here by seeking tension with the mobilized meanings and strategies on the investigated curriculum. This is because, through the words milk, vitamin and its related expressions, in this curriculum, particular strategies are invented and used to instrumentalize the interests and choices of the *unrubberman subject position*. Therefore, the *unrubberman subject position* is produced and ruled through the activation of meanings that give particular qualities to the terms here used.

Regarding the search for possible meanings of milk, we utilized, initially, in a brief genealogy by Paula Sibilía (2014), some inspiration. Sibilía, to discuss what is obscene about nudity, sets forth some images throughout the Middle Ages, of Renaissance and of contemporaneity that have something in common: the nude feminine breast. During this brief genealogy, focused on nudity, she reflects about the meanings and feelings about milk and breastfeeding. As the text demonstrates, from the images of Madonna²¹, breastfeeding was promoted in a way linked to holiness, with virginal reminiscences. We can find images, like the Milk Virgin, in which Our Lady is represented "breastfeeding her son, in a pose that often involved the ostentation of a breast whose nipple was offered to the open mouth of the holy baby (SIBILIA, 2014, p. 31). Similar images are present from the second century until the 18th century. It is highlighted, yet, in the genealogy done by the author, that, "sometimes, this mother's milk exalted in the images not only nourishes the baby Jesus, but it also nourishes certain adult men" (SIBILIA, 2014, p. 32). She also mentions the lactating saints, even a man that had received the grace of being able to breastfeed in adverse situations.

Thus, breastfeeding was produced as a divine miracle of physical and spiritual nutrition. With modernity, another point of view about breast, breastfeeding and milk was constituted, connecting them to sexuality, "being it through the medical instrumentalization bias regarding reproduction or disease, either through eroticism and

²⁰ The senses and meanings attributed to sperm seem to go beyond those circumscribed to the scope of the *bareback* curriculum. We seek to bring for discussion in the body of the text those concerning the curriculum investigated here or those closest to it that take place in the context of *bareback* practice outlined by other authors. However, we point out here, for necessary in-depth purposes, that there is a large literature on the topic. Foucault (2001) discusses the concern about the waste of seminal fluid present in ancient Greek thought showing the difference of this concern with how it occurs from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with medical-pedagogical practices. Silva (2008) mobilizes different bibliographies to make comparisons between the meanings attributed to sexual fluids and sperm in the West and in the East, in the scope of Indian and Chinese medicine.

²¹ The word Madonna comes from Italian. In Portuguese it means Our Lady or Virgin with child, thus being a representation in art with paintings and sculptures of the Virgin Mary.

desire" (SIBILIA, 2014, p. 32). In this context, what we can notice is that "the anatomic knowledge and the pornographic industry" (SIBILIA, 2014, p. 40) were collecting their meanings. Therefore, the Milk Virgins couldn't be exposed anymore, being even burnt and/or retired, erasing any trace of explicit breastfeeding.

Even though the author stays on the nudity discussion, what we want to maintain here are the meanings of breastfeeding, of milk. Through Sibilía's (2014) argumentation, we can see that these meanings were modified throughout history, having specific effects on representations through images. When "something is described, explained, in a narrative or speech, we have language producing a 'reality', setting something as existing in such and such way" (COSTA, 2000, p. 77). In this way, the pornographic and medical speeches focused on the description and explanation of the Milk Virgins modifying and changing the way that they would be exhibited. Considering that the previous meanings didn't stop existing, but remain in the dispute to make themselves true in the established power relations, from the contribution of Sibilía (2014) we can say that the meanings regarding milk from modernity can circumscribe themselves in at least, three domains: medical, erotic and spiritual. This last domain is connected to nutrition, as the transmission of holiness, goodness, and spiritual nourishment seemed to come through breastfeeding.

These domains seem to affect some meanings about milk in the *bareback* practice, when this is, in the curriculum here investigated, used as a term related to sperm and, with breast feeding, somehow, is associated to ejaculation in the mouth. If, as Bonfante (2019, p. 259) affirms, "the barebackers boost symbolic and moral displacements around nudity and human physiology, establishing new indexicality orders for milk", this is done by mixing different feelings and meanings. Inspired on the domains established on the reflection tabled by Sibilía (2014) - medicalization/medical knowledge, eroticization -, we demonstrate how each of these terms set connections on the meanings' production about milk/breastfeeding in the *bareback curriculum*.

Once circumscribed to the medication or to the medical knowledge, the semen, as well as the milk, can be associated with reproduction or disease. In a society in which sex for *reproduction* is seen as correct and appreciated, and which organizes the discursiveness around the heterosexual family model, the semen is essential. It still can mean intimacy between couples that have stable relationships, in the way that the exchange of body fluids represents this intimacy's intensity and the trust of a monogamous relationship. This definition can also compose all the relations between couples with same gender people.

When related to *disease*, "there's a whole contemporary biomedic problematization about the harm or damage that the semen can, in fact, cause, mainly as sexually transmitted infection" (SILVA, 2008, p. 110). Hence, the condom use in the most intense moment of the AIDS epidemic brought disturbing and unconscious associations to each sexual act: "associations of pleasure and violence, sex and punishment, intimacy and harm, love and kill - or be killed" (ODETS, 1995, p.133). It was possible to be better protected, to talk with the partner about the risks around sex, or maybe having more pleasure, but "once the sexual act is done, it[the condom] lay[ed] full of a lethal fluid, a concrete memory of the mixed feelings about homosexuality, sin, punishment, suffering and death" (ODETS, 1995, p.133). The body fluid, in this discursive field of disease and death, is what

we should keep distance from. In other words, "avoiding the exchange of body fluids became not only a mandate of public health, but also an imperative category (GONZALEZ, 2019, p. 60).

On confronting the hiv/AIDS epidemic, the condom use not only began to be a public health imperative, but represented the central inside gay movement, defining "conduct rules" (GARCIA, 2009, p. 546) to the homosexual population, in order to not only face the epidemic, but also to raise this population to normality. Added to this, many campaigns during the epidemic brought in moral slogans through a metaphor by, instigating the "direct association of certain sexual conduct, specifically [for] homosexual[s], fearing disease and death, as well as the confusion with the virus with people" (GARCIA, 2009, p. 556-557).

Therefore, it became necessary to resign or, at least, contest for the production of other meanings around body fluids. Thus, maybe because of this, in the *bareback curriculum*, semen is named milk. This seems to be one strategy of this curriculum, and it has an important role in its operation as a way to shape and orient the *unrubberman subject position* conduct, thus making it become a certain type of subject. To milk and be milked are actions impregnated with meanings attached to the *bareback* practice. We realized, then, that, in this curriculum, there exists an operation close to what Paraíso (2007) observed with the educational media curriculum when affirming that it "selects with diligence the utilized strategies, the vocabulary that it uses (PARAÍSO, 2007, p. 174).

It has specific effects in the way semen is built by the medical knowledge, being it constituted, then, as a strategy that associates semen to another representation. When, in this curriculum, expressions like "to milk and be milked" are mobilized to refer to the ejaculation in the partner's anus or mouth, thus, resulting in the exchange and direct contact with the sperm, there is, in the power relations here established, an attempt to soften the drama that this demand of the individuals who practice *bareback* conduct carries. Thus, "the euphemistic and metaphoric language, that invokes the similarity between it and sperm, is used as a strategy "to resign its risk property" (BONFANTE, 2019, p. 258), proven by medical knowledge. Evidencing this, in addition to the sayings highlighted in print above, you can see some others similar to them below:

"He sucked me again and my dick came out jets of milk in his mouth and he swallowed it all" (Tale Toilet in the college in the Center of Rio²² - blogbarebackbr.blogspot.com)

"While he sucked me, I got my dick, held it and kept playing with it harder, because I knew that milk was about to come" (Tale Blond boy and blue eyes at ferry toilet²³ - blogbarebackbr.blogspot.com)

"When he put his hand, I already put him to suck me, and in the end he drank my milky" (Tale Learning more and more with Ronaldo²⁴ - blogbarebackbr.blogspot.com)

We can realize, in this sense, that there's still a prevalence of milk and it's relative terms, even in the diminutive, as we can find at the last saying, associated, because, "to the semantic field of childhood, innocence, and milk nourishment, forgetting the biomedic meaning of risk linked to the semen and to the fluids exchange" (BONFANTE, 2019, p. 259). Therefore, sometimes, "the performance of bareback desire should be carefully communicated, under the sign of a new language, euphemistic and zealous" (BONFANTE, 2019, p. 259)

²² Tale's name in Portuguese: Banheiro na faculdade no Centro do Rio

²³ Tale's name in Portuguese: Garoto loiro e de olhos azuis no banheiro das Barcas

²⁴ Tale's name in Portuguese: Aprendendo mais e mais com Ronaldo

Some terms are still mobilized, so, associating them to breastfeeding and to childhood, densifying the same softening strategy of dramas/risks. In one of the erotic tales shared on the *bareback curriculum*, we found, for example, sayings with the following affirmations: "my friend Claudio suckled him a lot" (tale threesome fucking with a party boy in Niterói)²⁵. In this spectrum of softening, we also found the term "vitamin". Silva (2008) during his research also done in cyberspace, found "the concepts of precious liquid and nectar (that refer to the idea of source of food and life), were also associated with sperma" (SILVA, 2008, p. 109).

The term vitamin appears linked to the demand to milk or to be milked directed to the *unrubberman subject position*. This term is mobilized in the *bareback curriculum* also in the way of conduct driving when used as a verb, as we can see at the saying of image 6: "many get horny in vitamine or be vitamined". In this curriculum, *vitamine* can be defined as a *barebacker's* action "that feels horny in passing on the virus, stampers"²⁶. However, in some sayings, it's not possible to imply that this is actually the action, being many times related and/or close to the action of to milk or to be milked. Vitamin can be triggered to simply refer to sperm, then. Barreto (2020, p. 203), during the investigations, stated that he noticed vitamin to be an "expression to be used in situations that wasn't related to some contamination desire, but to a certain sperm nutritional value itself, of a desire to be fed with other's fluid".

There may, thus, be a spectrum of variation of meanings about vitamins and their homologous terms in this curriculum. Besides that, in the context of *bareback* practice, the production of meanings about what is a vitamin "can be associated to the presence of [hiv] virus, but also to the medicine or cocktails use" (SILVA, 2008, p. 143).

If, in the holy images analyzed by Sibilía (2014), milk is represented as nutrition, in the *bareback curriculum*, this meaning is activated, imbricating itself with the senses already produced with the use of the term "vitamin". It is taught, for example, in this curriculum, that, "with about 15 calories per serving, sperm contains the same amount of protein, vitamin C, calcium, magnesium, potassium, vitamin B12 and zinc as an ordinary egg"²⁷. After giving this information, they ask if drinking sperm fattens by the fact that it also has frutosis. By answering the question in a negative way, it is explained that the liquid has low calorie in the quantity found in a single ejaculation. From this, it's encouraged in this curriculum: "You can drink milk all you want then!".

At the same time that it's necessary to soften, it is also necessary to make the sperms exchange into something erotic. This is something that is done with words, that unlike the sources that softened the sperms exchange, seek to intensify, enhance, and sharpen the demand for this action in the conduct driving of *unrubberman subject position*. You can see, for example, when, in the curriculum, this is done by "level 10 barebackers!" (image 8), through the question "Is there something better than letting your milk inside a slut?" (image 9). So, simultaneously to the use of terms that soften the risks of a condomless sex, we find, in the

²⁵ Original in Portuguese: Fudendo a3 com um micareteiro em Niterói

²⁶ Source: blogbarebackbr.blogspot.com. Post of October 9th, 2018.

²⁷ Source: blogbarebackbr.blogspot.com. Post of October 9th, 2018.

sayings, expressions such as "hard whoring", "hard-on to vitamine" (image 8), "milking on friends' ass" (image 10), showing, in this way, that power relations in this curriculum are constituted in very complex manner in an entanglement of strategies that may even be conflicting.

Milk here, as correlated to sperm, is circumscribed to the field of the erotic, blending itself with this field proper vocabulary as "whoring", "slut", "hard-on". This is an eroticism explicitly linked to transgression against the norms of condom use. It is questioned in the *bareback curriculum*: "Is there anyone there that still fucks with condom? I don't think so!²⁸". In addition to this, in the other sayings registered here, we can notice how having sex condomless is associated to the lust that it can provide and, due to this, in this saying one seems to have an understanding that the majority chooses for this sexual practice.

Final considerations

Taking into account the discussions made in this article, we understand that the main marks of *unrubberman subject position* are: the refusal to use a condom and the transgression against the prohibitions from contact with body fluids. These are hallmarks of this position that constitutes a *barebacker* way of being, among others made available in the investigated curriculum. The analyzed meanings prominently approach the demand for a *barebacker* way of being that seems to care only with practicing sex condomless, to milk and to be milked. In other words, we can affirm that this hallmark says more specifically about the subject position of *unrubberman*, because the eminent assumption that drives the "milker" and "milked" conduct must be that the sex be "*nocomdon #intheskin #inthefur #nocape #semcamisinha*, because only then can he understand himself as a "milker" or "milked".

Finally, associated with the hallmarks of milker and milked as connected to the subject position of *unrubberman*, it's worth noting that in many of the most recent [anti-AIDS] campaigns, it is possible to notice a prevention model that still promotes the stigmatization, misinformation, and the fear of sexual pleasure constituted within this position, confirming what is considered a sexuality model to be followed. In this sense, the *bareback* practice might be "politically a protest against the fear of pleasure and of the sex that is inadvertently fostered by the rules of biomedic prevention and speeches of 'safe sex' or 'safer sex'" (GARCIA, 2009, p. 552).

Therefore, the hallmarks of "milker" and "milked" have a specificity here because they are associated with sex between homosexual men and/or MSM. In this sense, Garcia (2009, p. 547) argues that, "when a homosexual [seems to] enjoy semen incorporation or of genital touch of skin with skin, his pleasure instantaneously transforms [into] a political declaration", though this declaration can be seen as part of a "suspicious and new militancy" (GARCIA, 2009, p. 547). Therefore, this is a statement that can be linked in some way to the *unrubberman subject position*, when this position is given the label of "milker" or "milked", erotizing this hallmark and constituting the ways of conducting the conduct of the milker and the milked as

²⁸ Source: blogbarebackbr.blogspot.com. Post of December 7th, 2019.

something pleasurable. Although this political declaration is not explicit, what is shown here, in the *unrubberman subject position production*, is a conduct driving to contest the already conventionalized prescriptions in promoting condom use to avoid contact with bodily fluids, which, considering the link between hiv, AIDS, and homosexuality, seem to focus mainly on male homosexuals.

So, there is, here, a way of life's managing the negotiation between the pleasure inscribed in relations with a risk definition. It is clear that, in epidemiological and biopolitical terms, this way of conduct driving arouses some interest and preoccupation. Because the massive engagement with the practice can generate some effect that is not about individual choices, but impacts what, in terms of biopolitics, is referred to as the population. However, the establishment of fear, demonization, silencing and acting through morality as mechanisms against the bareback practice, that we saw historically on the prevention strategies, did not constitute as effective politics. Quite the opposite; what is stated is the necessity of dialogue with the fantasies created by the individuals (PARKER, 2000; SEFFNER, 2002; PAIVA, 2002). Nevertheless, this perspective can be left behind. According to Dean (2009, p. 11) "when bareback sex is approached from an epidemiological perspective, the dimension of fantasy disappears completely". In other words, "when sex between men is reduced to issues of viral transmission, it is no longer treated as sexuality" (DEAN, 2009, p. 11).

It is needed to consider the limitations of the present study, because, the investigations taken on it were done exclusively in cyberspace. In order to broaden the understanding of the phenomenon, future research focused on a more direct dialogue with the subjects themselves who engage in *bareback* sexual practices is suggested.

We hope that all the arguments here developed, contribute to the debate about the many questions that involve sexuality and the related curricular pedagogies and that we could densify our comprehension around its present challenges. We further suggest that the educational and curricular fields multiply the analytical tools for understanding the culturally demanded subject positions between complex contemporary power relations.

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