
THE MAN CATEGORY IN PUBLIC POLICIES AND BRAZILIAN LAWS¹

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ABSTRACT. This article discusses the view of man as a gender category in public policies and national laws, especially those focused on violence against women. With this objective, it contextualizes the studies of feminisms and masculinities as theories and epistemology that guide the analysis of 17 official Brazilian documents selected for this study. This analysis seeks to clarify how the gendered man has been understood in various documents over the years. It discusses how the formulation of laws can provide a new accountability approach beyond the punishment of these men. It also investigates the regulation of some of the existing groups of men who have used violence against women in the country. It finalizes claiming the importance of these reflections for the debate on gender and masculinities in pursuit of a more effective system of prevention and eradication of violence against women. It discusses and argues in favor of both changing the way this category is addressed in official documents, and formalizing spaces for reflection for men who have used violence against women.

Keywords: Violence against women; public policies; masculinity.

A CATEGORIA HOMEM NAS POLÍTICAS PÚBLICAS E LEIS BRASILEIRAS

RESUMO. Este artigo apresenta uma discussão acerca da visão do homem enquanto categoria de gênero nas políticas públicas e leis nacionais, especialmente as voltadas para a violência contra mulheres. Para isso, introduz brevemente os feminismos e o estudo de masculinidades como teorias e epistemologias que norteiam a análise de 17 documentos oficiais brasileiros, selecionados para este estudo. Esta análise objetiva clarificar como o homem genderificado é entendido nos textos de diferentes documentos ao longo dos anos. Discute como a elaboração de leis pode possibilitar um novo discurso de responsabilização para além da punição desses homens. Também investiga a normatização de alguns grupos existentes com homens autores de violência contra mulheres em território nacional. Conclui defendendo a importância dessas reflexões para as discussões sobre gênero e masculinidades, em busca de um sistema mais efetivo de prevenção e erradicação da violência contra mulheres. Argumenta e problematiza a favor tanto da modificação da maneira como essa categoria é abordada nos documentos oficiais, quanto da formalização de espaços de responsabilização e reflexão para os homens autores de violência contra mulheres.

Palavras-chave: Violência contra mulher; políticas públicas; masculinidade.

LA CATEGORÍA HOMBRE EN LAS POLÍTICAS PÚBLICAS Y LEYES BRASILEÑAS

RESUMEN. Este artículo presenta una discusión acerca del hombre como una categoría de género en las políticas públicas y leyes nacionales, especialmente aquellas direccionadas a la violencia contra mujeres. Para eso, introduce los feminismos y los estudios de masculinidades como teorías y epistemologías que dirigen el análisis de 17 documentos oficiales brasileños seleccionados para este estudio. Este análisis tiene como objetivo tornar claro como el hombre generalizado es comprendido en diferentes documentos al pasar de los años. Discute como la construcción de leyes puede posibilitar un nuevo discurso de responsabilidad más allá de la punición de estos hombres. Además,

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investiga la normalización de algunos grupos existentes con hombres autores de violencia contra mujeres en territorio nacional. Concluye haciendo defensa a la importancia de estas reflexiones para las discusiones sobre género y masculinidades, en busca de un sistema más efectivo de prevención y erradicación de la violencia contra mujeres. Argumenta y problematiza en favor tanto de la modificación de la manera como esta categoría es abordada en los documentos oficiales, como de la formalización de espacios de responsabilidad y reflexión para los hombres autores de violencia contra mujeres.

Palabras-clave: Violencia contra la mujer; políticas públicas; masculinidad.

Thinking, questioning and problematizing the man category contemporaneously comes especially from provocations and debates derived from post-structuralism. In gender studies, *man* has been the synonym of human being or human species for many years, without being considered a specific gender, without bearing the gender mark that the woman category currently carries, due to the history of struggles against social exclusion and for the place of women in society. From the progress of feminist reflections and the onset of masculinities studies, we have begun to reflect on the man category, its narrative or discursive implications, and its effects of meaning regarding several contemporary problems and demands targeted by social or public policies.

Discursively, what does the word man mean? How does it exert senses and meanings in legislative texts and gender discussions? What are its effects of meaning? When is it emptied or silenced?

Considering this context, we intend to bring the man category to debate based on a documental and reflective study of Brazilian public policies and legislation, discussing its limits, possibilities and challenges. This debate aims to bring questions and reflections that advance in the contemporary gender debates, public policies and social and legal psychology, incorporating discussions that allow improvements in current actions and elaborations.

Thinking about that, we sought to answer the following guiding question throughout this text: "how is man, as a category, conceived in official documents and how can they make the production of a new concept of masculinity possible?"

In order to accomplish that, we believe it is important to understand the relational, complex and interdisciplinary character of violence against women and what the characteristics of the construction of men as a gender category are, so that policies and legislation are better prepared to deal with its specific questions in the future. It is essential to keep in mind that intersections such as race, ethnicity, social and economic context directly affect the construction and the needs of all people, and it is the State's responsibility to guarantee their rights according to these specificities, something not very concrete until today when we deal with men.

Then, let us start by selecting legal regulations, here organized along the lines adopted by Brazilian constitutional law, that mention or could mention the man category. For example, legislation designed to regulate the operation of groups of men who have used violence, and public policies, plans and legislation which had in their scope the work with gender or violence. We have also selected specific LGBT, health and anti-racist policies, including the intersectionalities relevant to the subject (Nogueira, 2013). The specific documents studied are the following:

Federal legislation

- Law No.13.104 / 15 - Law on Femicide (Official Journal of the Union of March 10, 2015 - DOU, according to its acronym in Portuguese)
- Law No.12.288 / 10 - Statute of Racial Equality (DOU of July 21, 2010)
- Law 11.340 / 06 - Maria da Penha Law (DOU of August 8, 2006)
- Law No. 11,489 / 07 - National Men's Mobilization Day to End Violence against Women (DOU of June 21, 2007)

Municipal legislation

- Law No. 2.647 / 14, in the municipality of Duque de Caxias (RJ)
- Law No. 2229/2015, of 2015, in the municipality of Taboão da Serra (SP);

Resolutions

- Resolution No. 3/2012-CJ, of 2012, valid statewide in Santa Catarina;
- Resolution No. 128 - CJ, of 2011, valid nationwide;

Convention

- Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women- "Convention of Belém do Pará", of 1994, valid in the Americas;

Policies, plans and programs

- National Policy to Combat Violence against Women, of 2011, valid nationwide;
- National Men's Health Care Policy, of 2008, valid nationwide;
- Brazil Without Homophobia - Program to control violence and discrimination against LGBT and promote homosexual citizenship, of 2004, valid nationwide;
- Male Perpetrators' Reflection Group Standardization Program, undated, valid statewide in Rio de Janeiro.
- National Plan of Policies for Women, of 2005, valid nationwide;
- Integrated Plan to Combat the Feminization of the AIDS epidemic and other STDs, of 2007, valid nationwide;
- II National Plan of Policies for Women, of 2008, valid nationwide;

There is great variability in the types of documents selected, either in intervention strength, legal weight or scope of proceedings. Ordinary laws (DOU and municipal laws) regulate specific matters, by excluding what is not regulated by supplementary laws or Constitutional amendments, according to Article 59 of the Federal Constitution, they are legally "stronger" in a certain way. They need a simple majority to be approved in the Legislative Houses where they are processed. Resolutions are an "act of the National Congress or any of their houses separately, aimed to regulate internal matters within its competence" and rarely have external effect. Therefore, they do not depend on presidential sanction and are not subject to veto, as the previous laws (Mascarenhas, 2008). Conventions, in turn, are treaties representing a formal agreement between countries, international institutions and collectives regarding a certain topic, creating regulations and guidelines to implement the objectives listed by participating countries and organizations (Barros, 2014).

Finally, Public Policies include Plans, Programs, Actions and Activities developed by the State with the participation of the population, social movements and organizations, aimed at ensuring and promoting social rights to some specific social categories. They can be formulated by the executive and legislative powers based on demands of society and must be instituted by law. Plans establish the guidelines and goals to be achieved by their institution; Programs establish general and specific goals regarding a particular matter subsumed in public policies; and Actions and Activities, in turn, establish a greater connection with the concrete implementation of this policy (Souza, 2006).

Based on the critical reading of those documents, we sought to investigate and analyze what the vision of the man category in these Brazilian legal rules is. The outline of this study focuses primarily on elucidating how the understanding of the man category influences the way it appears in specific policies of other minorities and in policies related to gender violence.

Feminisms and gender studies

Feminism is a social movement with repercussions in the academic field that arises searching for women's rights and equality between sexes. Since its inception in the 1960s there have been numerous discussions and different opinions on the goals of the struggle, its subjects, and the means to achieve change, among others. For this reason, we currently talk about Feminisms, aiming to take its heterogeneity into account (Borges, 2014).

In Brazil, the Feminist Movement gained strength in the 1970s, especially in the struggle for the country's redemocratization. From the late 1980s on, a strong dialogue with the State was established in the search for a legal guarantee of rights, achieving the annulment of some regulations that

decriminalized violence against women³ or ensuring the implementation of services and laws protecting women (Barsted, 1994). It is within this scenario that protection and prevention policies against domestic and gender violence began to be approved. These historical changes allow us to think of new alternatives for the man category, beyond male privilege (for years legitimized in the very penal code) and getting closer to the struggle for equality between men and women.

Therefore, an important discussion for us is the man's place in the struggle for gender equality (Noriega, 2009; Chagoya, 2014). An important unanswered question arises: according to the gender discussion, are feminist men taking responsibility for their change (Chagoya, 2014) or occupying a place that does not belong to them and stealing women's voice?

It is also important for us to think about this position of privilege, the power imbalances that historically tilt the scale to the men's side. Male privilege is inherent, which means being privileged does not depend only on personal actions and choices, but is linked to the idea that someone benefits from the structure of society, simply by the fact of being a man (Nalon, 2015). We also believe that not all men benefit or are privileged in the same way or with the same intensity (Noriega, 2009) and that privilege is not only linked to gender relations, but also ethnic-racial, economic, sexual, etc. Still, 'being born a man' provides benefits regardless of personal choices (Nalon, 2015). This is one of the main reasons that lead to distrust toward men who insert themselves in the feminist environment (Bourdieu, 2002), since they often get privileges or are even congratulated for their sympathy for the movement or their egalitarian behavior, while women are generally judged and criticized for the same reasons.

Before the existence of specific policies for women, laws and policies were centered on men (in line with a patriarchal content or as the universal representative of mankind). Historically, in recent decades, several changes have been made to the criminal code, e.g., changing regulations and laws that favored the man in relations of power and domination of the feminine (legitimizing a masculinity or a traditional way of being a man - patriarchal, hegemonic and idealized). Crimes in legitimate defense of honor, annulment of marriage due to defloration unknown by the husband, among others, were legally rethought as a result of the struggles of the feminist movement and progressive discussions in Law (Pandjarian, 2002; Ramos, 2012). These changes have influenced the creation of current legal rules (such as the Maria da Penha Law), public policies for women and discussions regarding other masculinities and possible forms of being a man, which are important aspects for the study developed in this article. They have guaranteed the historical conditions for the advances with regard to the legal treatment given to womanhood, beginning to relativize the place so far given to the man in these legal rules.

We base ourselves on a socio-constructionist perspective and rely on legal-political institutions to ensure social change in an increasingly egalitarian direction. Since we believe that legal and political discourse (re)produce a regulatory rule, it is extremely important to reflect how much room this break in hegemony has had among policies and laws at the national level.

Masculinities - how being a man is constructed

Feminist and gender studies have clung to the study of women for a long time, primarily due to the invisibility of knowledge about women and the feminine, secondarily due to the belief that it was not up to the movement to discuss man and the masculine (Climaco, 2009). Over time, such a dichotomy became increasingly hard to sustain. It became clear that it was impossible to extract the relational character between being a man and being a woman, between the feminine and the masculine⁴. In

³ In the 1970s, despite legal advances in various fields, the position of women was still seen as subordinate to the man. In 1988, with the re-democratization of Brazil, a new Federal Constitution comes into effect, establishing equality of rights and duties between men and women in all spheres. Historically, there has been an effort to change legislation, particularly the penal code, in order to ensure women's rights, questioning patriarchy and male privilege, that used to emphasize men as superior to women, and a traditional and hegemonic masculinity, constructed upon domination of the feminine and relations of power. As a result of these changes, women's police stations were also created in the country (Pandjarian, 2002; Ramos, 2012).

⁴ It is also important to consider recent discussions on gender expressions that challenge the binary standard, on transsexualities, transfeminisms. Transgender men and women need to be properly inserted in the discussions on feminisms, public policy and also on masculinities.

addition, people started to question who the knowledge seen as masculine would refer to. Did all men fall under that knowledge, were all of them represented by the "male point of view"?

Noriega (2009) criticizes the idea that knowledge is constructed under the "point of view of men", questioning the homogenized man category, that shares a unified point of view and constructs knowledge based on it. Laws and scientific knowledge are produced by a minority among men and only represent this small portion of the male population, mainly composed of heterosexual, white, middle or upper class men, the so-called *hegemonic masculinity* (Connell, 1995). Thus, to talk about "men" assuming a hegemony is empty of meaning, as well as to assume that "men" is a synonym of the human species. A man category that does not take into account all the transversalities that construct different men in terms of gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, social class, will not take all its diversity into account when elaborating laws and policies for this population.

We can say that throughout history man has paradoxically been both central and at the same time invisible as a gender, as reflected in Brazilian legislation today. Central because man - white, heterosexual and from the elite - has always been in power to draft and approve these laws and ensure their privileges. It was their view that drafted, approved and implemented them, often without taking into account that there are other subjects to be governed by these policies, with other experiences and other needs. On the other hand, invisible, because at the moment "man" was considered synonymous with "humans", the specificities of this category were lost and it was ignored that these men have their own needs, which are constructed in different ways due to their experiences, that need care, attention and therefore specific policies.

It is worth questioning why it is legitimate for the man to impose himself through violence. From the perspective of gender studies and social constructionism, it is necessary to analyze the male socialization processes and understand the processes and meanings that constitute different masculinities (Beiras, 2012; Beiras & Cantera, 2012). It is an attempt to establish an ideal model of masculinity, which requires the repression of emotions, physical strength, breadwinning, virility and aggressiveness (Lima, Buchele, & Climaco, 2008).

Albuquerque Júnior (2014) traces a chronology of violence suffered by a child to become a man; violence that can be subjectivized and later used as self-affirmation mechanisms. The author believes that the process of male adultization presents a more traumatic rupture than the feminine, because we are born and learn our first bodily schemes based on the maternal female body and, in most cases, we continue to experience the care and life experiences of the female universe during the first years of life.

On the other hand, the education for masculinization also begins for all those children who were born biologically male. This education puts him in a deep conflict, forcing him to belittle, degrade and hate the feminine, the same feminine that is part of him and that has been taught to him from the earliest age. Violence is present throughout this process: physical violence is still used to "teach how to be a man"; and, even more, the symbolic violence of the death of the feminine that will forever be present. It is necessary to point out that this symbolic violence to which the child is subject in order to become a man does not emerge only from male figures, but also from the female figures around them, such as mothers, aunts, sisters, educators, lovers, friends (Albuquerque Júnior, 2014).

The inability to kill everything considered feminine within them will always make them insecure about their own masculinity. Every time they feel challenged or insecure regarding their masculinity, every time they get in touch with their feminine, they will react the way they were taught to. He will try to dominate or control everything that is feminine around him and inside himself, and since he was molded through violence, he will learn to impose himself through violence as well.

Based on the assumptions presented above we sought to observe certain recurrent aspects in our critical reading of the listed documents. These aspects were then arranged into integrative but not exhaustive analysis categories, which will be presented and discussed below, according to the following categorization: (a) How man is conceived in these documents; (B) Possibilities of Work with Men who have Used Violence - MUV; (C) Standardization of MUV Groups; (D) Intersectionality and Health.

a. How man is conceived in these documents

We sought direct references to men, considering only the use of the word "man" or other expressions that represent it as a gender category and not as synonym of humanity. The oldest document among the ones selected that refers to men is the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women, or "Convention of Belém do Pará", of 1994, followed almost 10 years later by the National Plan of Policies for Women (PNPM, according to its acronym in Portuguese), of 2005. There are no direct references to men in the Convention, and the term "perpetrator" is only mentioned few times. The PNPM does not directly mention such category either, but it does mention the support for gender equality in addition to the work with the "victims", indirectly including men.

In the Maria da Penha Law, of 2006 - document on the theme of domestic violence, which is well known and discussed by the whole population - the content of the references to the male is directly linked to punitiveness. There are few references to men, the first is in Art. 22. All 34 references have used the term perpetrator and often relate it to the coercive measures applicable to each of the offenses. Despite the punitive content, it is the first law with a direct mention of reflective and educational work with man.

It is curious to notice that so far, when the documents bring up influences of different social categories to gender relations and violence against women, they use the word gender to refer only to women or to the inequality between women and men, leaving the reflection regarding the masculine gender empty. We can infer that the limitation of the man category in the Maria da Penha Law may end up having direct effects on the public policies derived from this law, which must be carried out by the State. An example is the current difficulty establishing groups of men who have used violence, which was recommended in the law, 10 years after its promulgation. There is not a specific national policy for this group yet, except for some laws and isolated regulations in the country. In addition, some initiatives that arise often limit the understanding of man as a perpetrator who must be resocialized or punished, instead of actions that develop reflection, social change and seek gender equality, different expressions of masculinities and subjectivities (Beiras, 2012; Beiras & Cantera, 2012).

In 2007, the Integrated Plan to Combat the Feminization of the AIDS epidemic and other STDs presents a more complex view of men and their performances, taking the social construction of masculinities into account, such as in the passage that says:

In the perspective of the roles related to the exercise of masculinity in our society, notions such as that men should initiate their sexual life as soon as possible, have many sexual partners, "control" their partners and that sexual practices without the use of condoms are more pleasant, are the main reasons for women's vulnerability regarding the prevention of HIV / AIDS and other STDs. The reproduction of traditional roles in gender relations, and of power relations between genders, interferes with their capacity to negotiate safer sexual practices with their partners.

For these reasons, it is very important to include activities aimed at raising awareness and involvement of men in STDs / AIDS prevention strategies, and to confront violence against women throughout the process of establishment and implementation of the Plan. (Special Secretariat of Policies for Women, 2007, p. 13).

In the same year, Law No. 11.489 established December 6 as the National Day of Mobilization of Men to End Violence against Women. In both documents we can notice a new attitude toward men, understanding them as responsible for their inequality perpetrating attitudes and therefore responsible for their own change. Beyond punishment, it is sought to integrate them into the struggle for equality through awareness and active participation in the prevention of violence against women.

Further deepening the study of masculinities, the National Men's Health Care Policy 2008, defined as its main goal the promotion of health actions focused on contributing significantly towards "the understanding of men's singular reality in its diverse socio-cultural and political-economic contexts" (Secretariat of Health Care, 2008, p. 3). Due to the non-participation of men in preventive actions, they become more vulnerable to severe and chronic diseases and have lower life expectancy than women

and lower adherence to long-term treatment. According to this policy, non-adherence to health measures happens mainly due to cultural beliefs that men are invulnerable - and being sick or looking for a doctor goes against this belief. The hours of operation of services during work time is also mentioned as an obstacle, due to the breadwinner role fulfilled by many of them (Secretariat of Health Care, 2008).

The policy also points out other habits linked to male affirmation that corroborate the health problems faced by men, such as greater and earlier alcoholic consumption, higher smoking rates. It also talks about how professionals are unprepared to deal more fully with men's sexual health, since this is one of the factors that interferes the most with their quality of life, as pointed out by the WHO (cited in Secretariat of Health Care, 2008).

It also states that it is necessary to raise awareness among men about the duty and right to participate in reproductive planning. Fatherhood should not be seen only from the point of view of a legal obligation, but above all as a man's right to participate in the entire process, since the decision to have children or not, how and when to have them, as well as following pregnancy, childbirth, postpartum and child education. (Secretariat of Health Care, 2008, p. 15).

The policy affirms that "masculinities are historically and socio-culturally constructed, and the significance of masculinity is a process in permanent construction and transformation. Being a man, as well as being a woman is composed of both the masculine and the feminine". (Secretariat of Health Care, 2008, p. 15). Due to the rules of construction of an ideal masculinity, men become more vulnerable to violence, both as perpetrator and as victim, especially when they are young and adolescent. For this reason, the policy assumes that it is necessary to implement a systemic view on the process of violence through preventive and not just reparative interventions. The document points out the need to change men's attitude towards health care through educational initiatives and better organization to receive them in the SUS (Acronym in Portuguese for the Brazilian Unified Health System), (Secretariat of Health Care, 2008).

As we can see, this policy understands men and their numerous problems in a much more complete way, not restricted only to the field of traditional health but integrating different sectors of male experience focusing on their physical and mental health. We should also remember that this policy does not arise from a demand by men reflecting on their male condition, as occurs with policies for women. It happens because of a movement centered on medicating the man's body for reasons directly linked to diseases such as prostate cancer (Müller, 2012, 2013).

Still, this policy allows a very deep reflection on a much more complex man and in a much more capable and responsible position - as we advocate it should be in other policies - moving away from the first policies that pointed in the opposite direction - an out-of-control and cruel being, to whom only incarceration and punishment were left. Müller (2012, 2013) conducted a cartographic analysis of the policy, examining these issues more deeply and associating them with rights, violence and vulnerabilities.

b. Possibilities for working with men who have used violence

The first far-reaching law or policy to address the matter and open more practical possibilities of intervention with MUV was the Maria da Penha Law in 2006.

In its text, the law provides that it is the responsibility of the multidisciplinary care team, among other attributions assigned by local legislation, to provide information in writing to the judge, Public Prosecutor's Office and Public Defenders Office, in reports or verbally in a hearing, and develop guidance, referral, prevention work and other measures aimed at the victim, the perpetrator and family members, with special attention to children and adolescents. (Law No. 11.340, 2006, art. 30)

Furthermore, education and rehabilitation centers for perpetrators shall be created and the judge may "determine mandatory attendance of the perpetrator to rehabilitation and re-education programs."

(Law No. 11.340, 2006, art, 45)⁵. It is worth considering that the law still carries a binary and dichotomous logic in its text, placing the man as perpetrator and the woman as victim, fragile and vulnerable, which are analytical aspects that help us realize that the image is of a man that is still focused on violence, on biological features (since it does not mention transsexualities), and on fragility as a female-only characteristic.

Following this law, the Integrated Plan to Combat the Feminization of the AIDS epidemic and other STDs, in 2007, mentions in its text that both the Ministry of Health and the Special Secretariat of Policies for Women of the Presidency of the Republic aim to raise awareness among administrators and professionals to "organize referral and counter-referral services and integrated care networks for people in domestic and sexual violence situations" (Special Secretariat of Policies for Women, 2007, p.15). Considering that the program always presents domestic and family violence as relational and cultural, we can assume that an intervention that also integrates perpetrators of violence would not go against its logic.

The National Policy to Combat Violence against Women, 2011, is based on Article 226, Paragraph 8 of the Federal Constitution (cited in Secretariat of Policies for Women, 2011), in which the Brazilian State commits to ensure assistance to the family to restrain violent relationships among any of its members. Based on that, the policy "provides for the development of actions to deconstruct gender myths and stereotypes and modify sexist patterns that perpetuate power inequalities between men and women and violence against women" (Secretariat of Policies for Women 2011, p.25). Still in 2011, Court of Justice Resolution No. 128 also highlights the role of the State in creating mechanisms to restrain violence in family relationships. There is no direct mention of the creation of groups of men who have used violence in either of them, but they create a context in which these groups are consistent with their guidelines.

In 2012, Resolution No. 3/2012-TJ creates CEPEVID - Coordination of Criminal Enforcement and Domestic and Family Violence against Women - in the state of Santa Catarina and provides for Project Start Again, which aims to promote certain actions of rehabilitation of prisoners and former convicts, creating professional and social re-education opportunities in order to reduce recidivism rates. It also provides support for "policy development, training and actions related to combating and preventing domestic and family violence against women" (Resolution No. 3/2012, 2012, p.3). Man starts gaining legal space as responsible for his actions and is given more opportunities to integrate into a more equitable society.

c. Regulation on groups of men who have used violence

An entire new construction of man as the subject of policies and legislation enables the existence of laws aimed at establishing reflective and educational groups with men who have used violence, escaping the crystallization of the man as perpetrator and the woman as victim. Among the selected documents, Law No. 5825/01 creates, in 2001, the Program to Prevent and Combat Domestic and Intrafamily Violence of Blumenau-SC, which comprises Referral Center services - attending women in domestic and intrafamily violence situations and their perpetrators - and Shelter Home services, aimed at women and children in extreme cases of risk to their life and health.

Later, in 2014, we have Law No. 2647, that created the Men's Referral Center in Duque de Caxias, under the Department of Women's Rights. It provides psychological, social and legal care through educational, pedagogical and reflective activities with men who have used domestic and family violence, besides lectures, workshops and seminars for government agencies and society in general. A gender perspective that includes the accountability of MUV is utilized (Law No. 2647, 2014).

In Taboão da Serra, state of São Paulo, Law No. 2229 was approved in 2015, establishing the "Awakenings" Program, created in conjunction with the Judiciary and the Public Prosecutor's Office. It is

⁵ In November 2015, a bill was drafted in the Senate amending the Maria da Penha Law and establishing the protective measure of participation in education centers and rehabilitation of the perpetrator. The proposal is still under discussion and the report of the meeting along with the bill is available at: <http://legis.senado.leg.br/comissoes/reuniao;jsessionid=C04C0A1599BBE3C5B4E8F3288A15D529?0&reuniao=4405&codcol=834>

held annually, and aims to reduce the recurrence of cases of domestic violence through MUV awareness. The target audience are men "under police investigation and / or with ongoing criminal charges in the Judiciary of Taboão da Serra County", except those who "have their freedom restrained; are accused of sexual crimes; are chemical dependents with damage; have psychiatric disorders; are perpetrators of intentional crimes against life "(Law No. 2229, 2015, p.1).

Along a similar line, we have the document on Standardization of the Male Perpetrators Reflective Group, in the state of Rio de Janeiro. This document defines the structure, functioning and evaluation of these groups. They aim at "accountability (legal, cultural and social aspect); equality and respect for diversity (discussion on gender); equity (compliance with the guarantee of universal rights); promotion and strengthening of citizenship (respect for individual and collective rights and duties) "(School of Magistrates of the State of Rio de Janeiro [EMERJ, according to its acronym in Portuguese], n.p., p.411). It is required that groups will be closed after the first session, with a maximum of 14 participants. Led by a social worker and a psychologist, fortnightly, with 8-10 meetings and about 2 hours per meeting. Only one absence is tolerated, and a replacement session is suggested. In addition, assessment is scheduled for the end of each group and another one sometime after the end of it; the document elaborates further on physical structure, topics discussed, professionals in charge and support materials (EMERJ, n.p.). Analytically, we can see a gradual introduction of legislation aiming to legitimize and stabilize groups and group services for men who have used violence, which allows a broader reflection on masculinity, encouraging gender equity relations that are critical of patriarchy and of male socialization linked to violence. These measures help counter the instability that these services suffer in the country due to the lack of a specific national policy to regulate them, and encourages the State to continuously take action in this regard.

d. Intersectionalities and health

In this category we will address policies that do not relate directly to questions regarding violence against women, but that we believe could help elucidate the place assigned to man within Brazilian legislation. There are not many public policies aimed at a male audience and the National Men's Health Policy (2008) is the only one among those we have found.

In this policy, man is clearly integrated into the social contexts that construct him. It is interesting to notice how careful it is to accept man considering their cultural differences and different masculinities, which are not always hegemonic. For that purpose, the policy commits to promoting men's comprehensive health care in different populations, such as "indigenous, black, maroon, gay, bisexual, transgender, rural workers, men with disabilities, at-risk, incarcerated, among others "(Secretariat of Health Care, 2008, p.32). and also to develop "strategies to promote equity for different social groups" (Secretariat of Health Care, 2008, p.32).

It also looks at socioeconomic and age differences among men. It points out that the main risk group for homicides in Brazil are teenage men, especially black men who live in poor neighborhoods or neighborhoods with low education and work qualifications. Another time when age issues have an influence on men is in old age, since they are compelled to face their vulnerability when they need to seek medical help, mainly because they did not engage in preventive actions or early treatment (WHO, 2001 cited in Secretariat of Health Care, 2008).

All these factors that intersect with subject formation, which have long been discussed in women's care policies, will only be addressed with such depth in this policy for the first time in 2008. That is the reason why we cannot find them in the other investigated policies. The Brazil Without Homophobia Program - a program to control violence and discrimination against LGBT and promote homosexual citizenship, of 2004, for example, has no mention of transversalities regarding the masculinities considered in its text. It does deal with the transversality of being a homosexual woman and being black or gay black, and discusses changes to be adopted in different areas of daily life, such as education, work and health, but it does not deal directly with being a black man and its direct consequences on the individual's life.

Another interesting aspect is the relational approach used in the Integrated Plan to Combat the Feminization of the AIDS epidemic and other STDs (2007), where the man is seen as participant in the relationship between the woman and her sexual health. We can see here that we have overcome the idea of male dominance over female sexuality. The document addresses man and the construction of their dominating and unequal masculinities in relation to the feminine, as an influence upon the intimate relations between men and women, and as an important factor for the silence regarding women's care and sexuality.

Finally, in law No. 12.288, known as Racial Equality Statute, approved in 2010 due to the social movements against ethnic-racial prejudice, there are some sections on the inequalities generated by gender and by race, but when these terms are united, the references are restricted to being a woman and being black. The law makes use of a common method in official documents: using the masculine for generalizations when referring to the entire population, and the feminine to guarantee the specific rights of women.

In no way do we intend to appeal for a victimization of men or seek "compensation" for the attention gained by women in these documents. We are aware of the importance of these specificities in the struggle for equality and to ensure the voice and rights of women. Our intention is only to instigate questioning in regards to the absence of references to the specificities of men and whether or not it would be of use to the struggle for gender equality that this invisibility and simplification of the masculine were rethought, getting closer to the different masculinities lived by black, gay or trans men, for instance.

Final considerations

As we have seen, men as gendered subjects are usually placed in the position of perpetrators in discussions regarding gender violence. The simplification of the male figure as the perpetrator may have been useful in the search for the rights and safety of women, but it has become increasingly clear that sheer punishment does not address the issue of violence and the recurrence of the role of victim and perpetrator even in new relationships.

Reflection and accountability groups with men who have used violence aim to create the conditions for men to feel like they can prevent new episodes where they use violence as a way out. In order for this to happen, we believe it is necessary that official documents change the way men are seen and insert the different constitutions of masculinities in the legislation, giving way to accountability and awareness of men and expanding their rights as a specific gender, which has been a significant advancement of the Men's National Health Policy.

Therefore, we have sought to arouse the reader's reflection on the importance and relevance of discussing the man category from an interdisciplinary, feminist and gender perspective, to think about improvements in legal regulations, consistent with contemporary gender discussions, feminist theory and masculinities studies, human rights and diversities. We are aware of the different weights and effects of the legal rules studied, our intention was to raise awareness for the discussion and reflection, even with some limitations that can be further clarified in specific future studies of these legal rules. The dialogue between the improvement of these rules and proposed actions in public policies by the State is important to promote thinking about new advances in this sector.

Moreover, we believe in the regulation and evaluation of MUV groups to ensure their long term existence and the study of their effectiveness in preventing outbursts of violence as a form of domination or conflict resolution. If something is not in the legislation, it legally does not exist, it is not a right. Hence, it is necessary to think about changes that structurally modify society, something that becomes possible through joint work at the personal, community, national and global level, believing in laws and public policies as a guarantee to this work in the long run.

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