

Aqultune, Constância and Zacimba – dialogs with poor, black, masculine lesbians

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Rationale/Background: From the myth of Aqultune, an African princess who became a slave in Brazil, this poster establishes a dialog with two poor, black, brazilians, masculine lesbians. Her narratives reveal life paths that reinforce how identity markers of race, sexual orientation, body grammar and class intersect when citizenship rights are obstructed. Both women talk about difficulties in school and denounce the silence in the face of violence in that environment. Their workplace has also revealed to be hostile and their survival resources are based on excessive dedication, from the perspective of moral shielding. Both also report the process of empowerment as black lesbians. Black female intellectuals contribute to the discussion and explain how discriminatory racist practices, kept under the false ideology of racial democracy, translate into violence and disadvantages, resulting in exclusion and vulnerability for black and lesbians women. Considering the reality of scarce academic production on black lesbians, this paper seeks to expand research in this area, which may help elaborating public policies for this segment.

Research Questions: To what extent does the intersectionality of race, class and sexual orientation affect the human rights of Brazilian black lesbians with male body grammar and low social class?

Methods/Metodology: The experience as activists of the social movements of black women and lesbians in Brazil, coupled with the experience of researchers on the themes of gender, race and sexual diversity, provided dialogues with different women in different parts of Brazil. We chose the state of the Espírito Santo (Brazil) to present the stories of two female, black, lesbian women with male body grammar who tell their stories of blackness and lesbianity. The dialogues were established in different ways: the first one, from participation in events of the LGBT movement of Espírito Santo state, through informal conversation, between the years 2005 and 2010; the second, through an interview recorded in 2012. The stories told were intertwined with stories of black women important to the history of Brazil, this being the way the authors used to make known the legacy of struggle of black women little known not only in the popular social context, but also in the academic environment.

Conclusions: There are few academic works that focus on black lesbianities, although many are the black lesbians that make up Brazilian society. Who are? Where are? What do they claim? What dreams? How do they think the world they live in? How do they deal with issues such as motherhood, love, marriage and fidelity? What does it mean to live well for black lesbians? Raising academic interest in this field of study may favor the creation and implementation of public policies directed toward black lesbians, due to the place of inequality that they occupy in the Brazilian social scene.

Keywords: Aqultune, Lesbians, Black Women, Public Policies