

Gender and male: policies for men on the great ABC

Abstract

The present article seeks to present the organization of a group of men in the Grande ABC in São Paulo, actions such as the Forum of Gender and Masculinities of the Great ABC, the “And Now José?” Program, the Great ABC Gender and Masculinities Course, the Gender and Masculinities Thematic Group, and GEPRAGEM - Group of studies and practices on gender and masculinities. Besides the presentation of theoretical concepts and references in the area. The present article seeks to present the organization of a group of men in the Grande ABC in São Paulo, actions such as the Forum of Gender and Masculinities of the Great ABC, the “And Now José?” Program, The Thematic Group on Gender and Masculinities and the GEPRAGEM - Group of studies and practices on gender and masculinities. Besides the presentation of theoretical concepts and references in the area.

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Introduction

The theme of gender and masculinities has aroused interest in many people thanks to the mobilization and struggle of the women’s movements, which has generated a corresponding academic theoretical deepening in the universities and the implementation of feminist policies engaged in popular democratic municipalities and states. This article seeks to present the organization of a group of men that meets in the Greater ABC, in the exercise of their masculinities to confront violence against women, as well as in the construction of practices based on mutual care, solidarity and the implantation of policies aimed at men. Among the actions are the “And Now José” Program, the Gender and Masculinities Course, and the Grande ABC Gender and Menus Forum. The Grande ABC is located in the metropolitan area of the city of São Paulo, with a population of 2,684,066¹ 51.7% of women to 48.3% of men. The region has a common historical origin, originally was a large municipality that was dismembered, and thus officially created the seven present cities: Santo André, Sao Bernardo do Campo, Sao Caetano do Sul, Diadema, Mauá, Ribeirao Pires and Rio Grande da Serra Kleeb.²

In the Great ABC there has been for many years a feminist movement present and active on several fronts: the Regional Front to Combat Violence against Women, which has existed since the 1990s; in the Popular Legal Promoter Courses, organized and given in the seven cities. Also in the Gender GT in the Inter municipal Consortium of the ABC that brings together the Coordinators and Public Policy Management for Women of the 07 cities, besides the existence of Municipal Councils of Policies for Women in most partner cities. The participation of men and policies aimed at men was also present during all these years; both in the Regional Front to Combat Violence against Women, since 2001 the White Ribbon Campaign: men to end violence against women, and in the implementation in reflective groups for men, with experiences in Santo André, São Bernardo do Campo and Diadema.³

The “and now Joseph?”

In Santo André, the “And Now José?” Program is carried out. The socio-educational group on the accountability of men Urna & Pechtoll,⁴ a result of the partnership and articulation of ENAEP - “Entre Nós - Assessoria, Educação e Pesquisa” Justice - District of Santo André, the Coordination of Social Reintegration and Citizenship of the State Secretariat of the Penitentiary Administration and the City of Santo

André. The “And Now José?” Program was built on the basis of the reference term elaborated in July 2008, as a result of discussions held by different Ministries and representatives of civil society at the Seminar “Discussing the Centers for Education and Rehabilitation of the Aggressor”, held in Rio de Janeiro.⁵ The care services for male perpetrators of violence are provided for in Law 11,340 / 2006 - Maria da Penha Law, in its final provisions in Article 35 - item V, provides for the creation of education and rehabilitation centers for the aggressors and in Art. 45 modifies the wording of the Criminal Enforcement Law allowing that in cases of domestic violence against women, the judge may determine the perpetrator’s compulsory attendance to recovery and re-education programs.

The group meetings are weekly, lasting two hours, with a maximum of 15 participants. Being that the group only receives men authors of violence sent by decision made by the competent court. The cycle of meetings is repeated every twenty meetings. Participants start at any time during the twenty meetings. The proposal of the applied workshops was structured over the years, built with the involvement of many people, applied in various groups of men and women. The methodology was based mainly on three publications: in the Methodological Proposal for Gender Work with and among Men, developed by the CANTERA Popular Education and Communication Center of Managua; in the methodology of popular feminist education extracted from the book Women and men working for peace and against domestic violence, organized by Vera Vieira and Clara Charf of the Women for Peace Association of São Paulo Charf and Vieira;⁶ and also in the series Working with Young Men: Violence for Coexistence of the Promundo Institute and its Project H collaborators.⁷

Our work menu is based on concepts and studies that cover social structure and inequality.

- a) Power and domination.
- b) Studies on gender and masculinities.
- c) Ideology and reproduction of machismo.
- d) The constitution of the Patriarchate.
- e) The socio historical construction of masculinity.
- f) The struggles of women and Feminism.
- g) Analysis of the effects of male socialization.

- h) Study of the constituent elements of violence.
- i) Gender violence and domestic violence.
- j) Socio-educational process for men.
- k) Reflective groups of men.
- l) Service of accountability and education of aggressors.

Thematic and technical of the 20 meetings:

- a. The meaning of being a man;
- b. Division of masculine and feminine tasks;
- c. Male and female professions;
- d. How we become men;
- e. The effects of our way of being men;
- f. Violence in children's games;
- g. The struggle for life;
- h. Violence against women;
- i. A less violent life is possible;
- j. Discrimination by men;
- k. The discrimination suffered by men;
- l. My life of John;
- m. Man's things X woman's things;
- n. A baby is born;
- o. Stereotypes under discussion;
- p. The male honor;
- q. Risk behavior;
- r. Non-active violence;
- s. Sexual diversity;
- t. Sexual violence.

Course gender and masculinities for men civil servants of the seven cities of the great ABC

The Intermunicipal Grande ABC Consortium was created in 1990 and brings together seven municipalities: Diadema, Mauá, Ribeirão Pires, Rio Grande da Serra, Santo André, São Bernardo do Campo and São Caetano do Sul.⁸ The Consortium acts to articulate and plan regional actions divided into eight axes of action, each axis is composed of Working Groups (WGs) formed by public managers and technicians in the areas of specific action of each WG and technicians of the Consortium. The members of the Working Groups are appointed by the Executive Heads of the consortium municipalities.

In 2013, a proposal was presented to the Gender Working Group of the Intermunicipal Grande ABC Consortium for a course aimed at men, civil servants from the seven cities, with the objective of sensitizing men and, at the same time, providing theoretical training that offered tools for those who wanted to act with other men. The focus was on sensitizing and training men on gender relations, feminisms and masculinities. A partnership was established with the ABC Medical School for certification as an extension course, in partnership with the Consortium, conditioned to a minimum frequency of 75% - 14

meetings. For the accomplishment of the course, there were several speakers, people who became references in their areas of practice, among them: Adriano Beiras, Amelinha Teles, Arlete Bento, Deivison Nkosi, Gabriela Manssur, Julian Rodrigues, Leandro Feitosa Andrade, Leo Barboza, Maria de Lourdes Ventura, Neon Cunha, Paulo Cagliari, Reginaldo Bombini, Sérgio Barbosa, Silmara Conchão, Rachel Moreno, Tales Furtado Mistura and Vivian Navarro

In the first part of each meeting the workshop was applied, using a dialogic and participative approach, based on the experience of the subjects, valuing their knowledge and experiences, through techniques of group dynamics, dramatic games and others. In the second part of each meeting a theoretical presentation was made by the facilitator or invited person, in which we present articles and books of the following authors: Acosta,⁹ Andrade,¹⁰ Arilha,¹¹ Beiras,¹² Beiras A,¹³ Lopes,¹⁴ Lobo,¹⁵ Louro G,¹⁶ Rohden,¹⁷ Saffioti,¹⁸ Sayão,¹⁹ Scott.²⁰ Copies of the bibliographic references have been distributed, most of which are available electronically. With the end of the course the need arose of the group to continue meeting, in this way, a meeting was scheduled after the graduation; on that occasion, the group, in consensus, decided to create the Forum of Gender and Masculinities of the Great ABC. Noting that still in 2016 was held the 2nd Course of Gender and Masculinities. After the end of the course GEPRAGEM - Group of Studies and Practices in Gender and Masculinities was built, space for debates, reflections and deepening of studies in the subject, with monthly meetings.

The forum of gender and masculinities of the great ABC²¹⁻²⁷

The Gender and Masculinities Forum was set up in August 2015, with monthly meetings to consider new strategies for involving men in actions to end violence against women and other violence. The Gender and Masculinity Forum of the ABCDMRR is a permanent Regional Forum for the representation of men, women and men and transgender individuals or individuals with legal personality, public or private, in search of equality of rights and respect for human dignity, entities related to gender policies and other stakeholders. It is a forum for articulation and political deliberation in defense of gender policies, with participatory character, broad social control, and democratic discussion on issues related to the theme Gender and Masculinities. In order to program actions to cope with machismo, ending violence against women, violence due to racial, class, age, disability and LGBT issues (Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation). Since its founding, the Forum has organized lectures, workshops, seminars and courses in partnership with different social agents, such as the Intermunicipal Consortium, the Municipalities of the Grande ABC, the Federal University of Grande ABC, Trade Unions, Public Defender, among others.

Another action was the organization of the White Ribbon Campaign in 2015 and 2016: men to end violence against women, which built strategy and a large agenda of actions in the cities of Santo André, São Bernardo do Campo, Diadema and Mauá, and of the importance of joining the campaign of the Banking Union of the Greater ABC, effecting the distribution of the ties by the banking agencies of the seven cities. In December 2016, The Gender and Masculinity Forum, in partnership with the GT Gender and Masculinities Grande ABC, launched the Regional Primer on Gender and Masculinities: "Man: to be and / or not to be", material published by the Consortium Intermunicipal Grande ABC.²⁸

Considerations

The theme of gender and masculinities, supported by feminist theoretical references, of socio-historical character, allows us to offer interpretations on possible ways of constructing the behavior of men, in their most varied forms. Identifying the macho and patriarchal culture as a maintainer of relations of domination of men over women. Having, as unfolding a series of inequalities, violence and discrimination against the human person. And, at the same time, sustaining social inequality and the concentration of wealth for some due to the poverty of others. When we realize that the man is not naturally violent, but that he learns to exert violence in his sexist socialization. And we have identified that group coexistence with nonviolent men can awaken other masculine discourses, usually not accepted in the day-to-day patriarchal culture. The possibility of deconstruction of this violence is realized, through a group experience based on respect for human rights. Based on these findings, we constructed some actions towards the care of men in reflective and socio-educational groups, with the purpose of reducing the exercise of violence, achieving a reduction of the damages in the lives of some women and men.

And it is possible to make a society less violent, with men less violent, able to share and live with respect. We have observed this in our groups and actions. Indeed, in the Gender and Masculinities Course, as well as in the groups of men who perpetrate violence against women, we have noticed changes in the sexist discourses of men who attend meetings. We hear men tell us that they have changed, that they have come to identify violence against women; who are starting a new stage in their lives; who seek a distribution of domestic tasks; who took a weight off their back. This brings us to many reflections. How is it possible, in such a small number of encounters, to trigger a process of behavior change for these men? Is it possible that these men really change and come to defend the human rights of women and men? Or did they already have in their possession these other characteristics and ideas that were not machismo and which did not make them public only through the influence of the sexist social environment?

We want to believe that these men change, that the critical analysis and the ethical-political project of seeking fair relations, equity and struggle for rights, is capable of fostering social transformations, as well as, building fairer relations between men and women. Men who start to seek fairer working relationships, with a distribution of productive and reproductive tasks with equity. In the fight for equal pay for women and men. In support for women occupy more spaces of power and men more domestic spaces. And that it is possible to build a reflective and socio-educational process that enhances men's characteristics such as non-violence, caring parenthood, the capacity to build healthy affective relationships, health care, and the ability to manage care with others (a), as well as to develop habits of prevention and planning of sexual and reproductive life.

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None

Conflict of interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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