

EDITORIAL*EDITORIAL***Eroticism and Sexuality in Old Age**

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The title of this work "Eroticism and Sexuality and Old Age" aims at pluralizing meanings, exploiting conceptual categories and increasing reporting margins. At a historical juncture where the question for desire is notoriously politicized and the claiming to the right to pleasure diversity ends up earning a special place over rigid and uniform rules, going on producing speeches on this issue is necessary. Bauman (Featherstone, 1998) supported the idea that eroticism was a sex cultural process, whereas Featherstone (1998) added it was the way sex drive was created, domesticated and regulated.

Thus, eroticism is presented as an emerging cultural production operating in unique space and time contexts, not only including characters, practical and pleasure identities, but also excluding them. The insertion of cultural imperatives into sex drive, which Freud (1981) called sexual impulse, makes eroticism ways multiply and articulate such renewed speeches.

Foucault (1986), in his *History of Sexuality*, creates a conceptual division between sexuality, marked since the nineteenth century as a science that controls what can be potentially pathological, physical or mental, and eroticism, thought as an art (Foucault, 1986), where pleasure is top priority for a subject, going beyond certain time demands, such as the practical view directed primarily to procreation.

Eroticism would be basically related to a production of pleasure within oneself, even when it cannot be without other, with lowercases or uppercases. Such pleasure creates a unique insertion of the subject into culture, as a continuous self-amended meeting point.

Eroticism, in Old Age, has been very little studied as far as cultural, historical and political aspects are concerned. The way sexuality in old age has been approached since the twentieth century, has gradually abandoned reference to moral hazard and to those horrible forms of perverse polymorphism, but maintaining a certain biologic bias, expressed in terms of ability or disability and sex economy, manifested in numbers and quantities (semen, frequency).

However, new ways of representing and discussing this topic have gradually broken away such a speech. One of the ways critical thinking has been promoted within today's gerontology is said to be through the so-called prejudices and stereotypes over aging in general and sexuality in particular. However, this point of view cannot always be applied, reducing approaches and limitations in operating perspectives, that is, to be able to ask ourselves as a society, the way eroticism is built, impact on eroticism possibilities.

The attempt of this magazine editors, and mine as well, is to guide this proposed thematic as it has been barely addressed to in recent years and also the diversity of points of view and ways of understanding it.

The idea to prepare a *Kairós Gerontologia* thematic issue arises from the need to provide readers with the results from recent researches on eroticism/sexuality in the gerontology field. I hope that from now on, new researches are carried out over this today's topic of renewed interest in order to occupy such privileged space in this magazine. The magazine call and this editor's invitations have reported a success and held considerable resonance. We have had acute and original responses as to contradictory aspects, as well as methodological and theoretical developments and even broad and varied proposals for intervention which reveal such theme complexity.

To situate, from a logical perspective, what comes before and what comes afterwards, what gets together and what sets itself apart has always appeared as a construction upon the consistency the editor expressly stipulates. The first two items question the theory of eroticism upon two different themes.

The pulsional defusion and destinations of sexuality beyond genitality, by Leopoldo Salvarezza, focuses on the analysis of erotic issues from various theoretical angles. Sexuality in Old Age appears trapped in fragmented and rigid discourses named prejudices and stereotypes consisting of a special mechanism of control on the body. This is where the question surfacing from the this text comes from, how the body becomes one of the main scenarios for the drama of old age as well as the privileged

place where the phantoms of different meanings of human sexuality are deployed. Sexuality presents a diversity of pleasures: preliminary, partial, final, total ones, following a socially constructed rigid hierarchy order, but it also works as an adventure in which each person's own existence together with the other's is fulfilled in a unique way; where desire, desperation or, consciousness are embodied to reach the other as a body, for fascination and possession. A search in which the world becomes a world of desire (De Beauvoir, 1980). In this journey the author is introduced into the magnetic Freudian pole, the primary narcissism, and in this need for a fusional encounter, from own pores and the other's pores, on a subject external edges, the skin, in search for intimacy which results in a game of desire, the need to desire and to function as the object-cause of desire in relation to the other. Then, the skin is converted into a self-representation metaphor as well as an object for exchanging and enjoyment. Such an object, the body, starts addressing questions in old age again since "it is then presented as not respecting common aesthetic ideal measures and, therefore, it is seen as a victimization of men. Thus, aesthetics emerges as a mechanism of cultural control that regulates, by analogy and comparison to the pattern socially established, the measure of what is desirable, mainly in the area of sexuality" (Salvarezza and Iacub, 1998).

The lack of exchanges will be suggested at the end of the article not only as a source of isolation and sensory deprivation, but also as envy generator, according to Klein, driving the desire to possess such a thing and destroy it, including one's own body.

The following two items will highlight partner relationships and their impact on sexuality. The article **The couple relationship - Support functions and sexuality in old age**, by Claudia J.Arias and Luciana Polizzi, aims to analyze the characteristics of partner relationships, its link supporting functions and attributes, its gender variations, as well as investigating the changes that occur in partner sexual activities within heterosexual elderly couples, through a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the data presented. The results obtained clearly show the main role partner relationships can have in old age. Several results show such relationships primarily fulfill functions regarding emotional support, companionship and counseling or cognitive guidance, presenting some gender differences as far as supporting functions related to partners are concerned. Furthermore, some changes regarding sexuality arise like decrease of sexual activity frequency, good level of satisfaction and derivation of sex drive.

The article named **Dementia and inappropriate sexual behaviors (ISB): What we know and what we need to know**, by Josep Fabà and Feliciano Villar, aim to review the scientific literature regarding sexually inappropriate behaviors that people with dementia can present: increasing companionship, mutual care and positive affectivity. The authors argue that sharing experiences and difficulties through the years seem to promote greater mutual understanding and better accepting one another, and, despite the difficulties that may arise from each partner, from changes in results and strategies used, older people maintain not only an active sexual life, but also an enjoyable one. The article is intended to be an exhaustive narrative regarding the conditions changing sexuality as from the moment the pathology is set, either from its prevalence, potential factors likely to trigger them, their consequences and some available therapeutic alternatives. The article, at the end, provides a theoretical counterpoint to the report already established that promotes a critical analysis of the lack of clarity and consensus in the definition of the so-called inappropriate sexual behaviors. In that regard, according to (Davies *et al.*, 1992) suffering from a disease does not involve the disappearance of desire and sexual needs, even when modified. That's where the moral sense of inappropriate sexual behavior assumes a human value which pursues the relationship with the other and the search for control and adaptation so as to face the loss of privacy, the handling of everyday and emotional situations as well as one's own diminished valuation. People suffering from dementia could start developing sexual behaviors as desired. However, the authors point out that cognitive impairment can lead to such behaviors if the context is wrong or its forms are changed, resulting in disruptive situations like decay and rejection of surroundings.

The article **Transgender, aging and old age - Do transgender people get old?**, from Pedro Paulo Sammarco Antunes and Elisabeth Frohlich Mercadante, evaluates the process of aging and old age in the so called transvestites. This qualitative research was conducted in order to understand the meanings ascribed and increase awareness of the process of aging and old age through three open interviews focusing on the life stories of elderly transvestites. This group was particularly excluded and socially made invisible for breaking gender established rules, and, therefore, was labeled by medicine and treated by medicine according to this group alleged pathology. Thus, the authors claim the political structure regarding gender notions, as it attempts to hide its intentions upon an alleged biological basis, placing it as a pre-discursive segment. At old age they are double discriminated as they are getting older as well as living as transvestites. As

physical attributes at this stage are not considered beautiful, they no longer feel attractive and, therefore, are often unable to continue with what they are labeled to be doing for a living, prostitution. Losing the function and the self-description which gave meaning to being a transvestite, make these subjects have a particular and negative view of aging and old age. Besides, some go through a "*des-transformación*", which makes them dress like men again, whereas others take up different tasks such as dressmakers, maids, cooks, hairdressers which do not positively represent them and are less profitable. The research focuses on the need for public policies that meet their specific needs and demands.

Transsexual aging: needs and difficulties, by Noelia Fernández-Rouco and Nikki Hatza, gives a brief overview of some of the most important questions facing transsexual individuals throughout the aging process. This report starts by discussing the current state of aging, and the various studies that have specifically addressed aging in transsexual individuals. Finally, it proposes various suggestions for improving the future wellbeing of elderly transsexual individuals.

The paradigmatic widowhood: loneliness and sexuality in old age in Mexico, by Verónica Montes de Oca Zavala, who presents us with a new light over widowhood since sexuality and pleasure are regarded through a qualitative study based on three cases in particular. Nowadays widowhood emerges increasingly related to older adults and old age mainly since death has been postponed to later stages. This phenomenon is often associated to economic vulnerability, exclusion, loss of social supporting networks, loneliness, changes at identity levels, physical and mental illnesses and even to likelihood to committing suicide. In short, all these situations can affect older adults quality of life. However, the article suggests remarriage as a solution for loneliness and at the same time having sensual enjoyment again, as Doña María exhaustively stated: "Although women deny it, even if they say no, they do need it, they lie when they say they do not, they do not desire". In viñetas [cartoons], eroticism is associated with perspectives regarding gender, meeting one another, care and protection. As the author points out: the lack of a partner highlights the importance of companionship in old age, since it represents a window to love, sexuality and pleasure no family members can provide for. Life stories and interviews are presented in the next three articles which investigate and reflect on intersections among those notions regarding gender, generation and territory, leading to subjective eroticism representations.

Sexuality in old age: key issues, gender differences and future proposals, from Noelia Fernández-Rouco, Andrés A. Fernández-Fuertes, Rodrigo J. Carcedo González and Nikki Hatza, presents a brief overview of some of the most important issues related to sexuality during old age. First, it presents the state of the current situation, in order to later explore some of the elements that have been considered key factors in experiencing sexuality, specifically in this stage of life, while exploring certain needs and difficulties. Similarly, some of the differences between men and women, within this context, are presented. Finally, future proposals aimed at better understanding this topic in old age are presented, with suggestions on how to improve wellbeing and care in regard to sexuality among the aging population.

The article **“Old sertaneja song”**: narrating a backcountry life story about aging process in homosexuality”, from Márcio Alessandro Neman do Nascimento, aims to analyze Marcelo's life history, a homosexual adult from the interior of Paraná. The analysis into his experiences shows how the intersections among generation (aging), homosexuality (sexuality and gender), territory (countryside people), and other interconnected categories, result in the construction of an interesting theoretical-methodological reference to discuss and analyze subjectivities (Piscitelli, 2008) as well as increase the discourse analysis quality in which socio-historical and cultural contexts determine processes of subjectivation. Marcelo's history helps us understand not only how being subject to rules has made certain aspects of his life impossible, but also how current means of representation and dealing with aging and homosexuality create new ways of representing and re-signifying life stages. The author shows that, at any given moment, a subject assumes multiple identities and thus builds his/her unique life story.

The article **Erotic, Sex, and Old Age in a Geriatric Institution**, from Margarita Murgieri, addresses this issue on a qualitative basis seeking to understand the impact of eroticism in the quality of life from a gender perspective. To address this matter, the author examined how gender representations limit various forms of pleasure by interviewing 15 residents among men, women and transgenders. The positions reflect multiple gender and generation notions, even though there are also variations according to different histories reported by each subject. This article shows gender notions in which desire can either last for a certain amount of time or continue for a lifetime. Next, it addresses the incidence of knowledge and attitude in professionals qualified to work with sexuality in old age.

The paper **Sexuality and HIV/AIDS in Third Age**, from Suzana Carielo da Fonseca, Alessandra Thomazini, Alexandre Rosafa Gavioli, Fabiana J. Mariza Martos, Ilvana Severo Alves, Juliana Rocha Barroso, Roberto Galassi Amaral and Silvana Aparecida Baroni Goulart, is specifically targeted at bringing up a reflection involving the articulation between the elderly and sexuality. Such theme has been motivated as from the verification, based on epidemiological data, that Brazil currently is facing an increasing number of new cases of AIDS among the over 60 age group. If, on the one hand, said data serves to cast off beliefs (stigmatized ones) toward the idea that "the elderly do not have sexual intercourses", on the other hand, it shows the need to question the reasons for such state of things. Therefore, attention has been paid to approaching "sexuality", "Third age" and "HIV/AIDS" as concepts and then explore how their association allows reading the reality mentioned above. At the end, there is a discussion about how, in Brazil, the State and non-governmental organizations have been facing the elderly health problem so as to see, more specifically, the social protection system available to face AIDS in this segment of population.

The article **Sexuality in Old Age and AIDS: new challenges for university seniors**, by Marcia Regina Diniz Rufino, Alessandra Rocha Arrais and Carmen Jansen de Cárdenas, aims to analyze the psycho-socio-cultural sexuality implications to deal with AIDS in old age using the Universidade da Maturidade, at the Federal University of Tocantins, as the locus to break paradigms and preconceptions regarding this issue. For this purpose a qualitative and quantitative action - research was applied. From the data analysis it was found that, despite the prejudice concerning the no sexuality of elderly, the most of them claims to be sexually active, they known prevention means, but few use it as it prevails in their speech, the idea that AIDS is associated with the "risk groups" and immoral behavior.

The article **Sexuality of the elder individual presented on paintings** - from Josiane Aparecida Duarte, Bruna Miclos de Oliveira, Hugo Henrique Alves Ferreira, Armando José China Bezerra, Lucy Gomes Vianna & Alexandre Sérgio de Araújo Bezerra -, aims to show that, in the great majority of paintings, the elder individual is presented as an asexual character, and on the few paintings that retract the sexuality of the elder, we can see a clear prominence of the male gender. Between painters of the 20th century, there are self portraits in which artists of both genders paint themselves naked in advanced age, showing a tendency in changing the current paradigm.

The article **The issue of sexuality represented the elder in Brazilian literature**, from Bruna Miclos de Oliveira, Josiane Aparecida Duarte, Hugo Henrique Alves Ferreira, Lucy Gomes Vianna & Armando José China Bezerra, aims to analyze how sexuality in old age is represented in Brazilian literature, making a cut just at different times. It seeks to identify the brand of drama silencing of sexuality in old age in societies that are coming, and the way they use to expose the hypocrisy of human relations.

The Experience Report **What the perspective of the elderly in relation to HIV / AIDS?**, from Claudia Lysia Oliveira de Araújo and Ana Cristina Silva Monteiro, present HIV and AIDS epidemics in the elderly in Brazil as a real public health problem. Therefore, this study, based on a descriptive methodology and quantitative analysis, seeks to characterize and identify, from the aging point of view, the knowledge and feelings the elderly have towards HIV/SIDA. The results of this study lead to the conclusion that, even when the elderly has some knowledge about the HIV/AIDS virus, only 22% use condoms what demonstrates the difficulties this group has to care for themselves. It can be presumed that prevention campaigns are addressing 20-34 year old groups and they are not actually reaching the elderly. Moreover, such a group has sex intercoursés and, very often, with more than one partner, without taking any proper care. The data obtained in this study demonstrate the modes of transmission of information were not enough, nor specific. Thus, the authors suggest designing prevention projects policies that meet this group needs in particular.

Closing this issue of the Journal, Ricardo Iacub interview **Brian de Vries**, aging expert and currently working very hard on Aging GLBTTI (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, transvestite, intersex).

Each article presents us with means through which eroticism and sexuality can be observed in different contexts and ways in old age, trying to reaffirm, once again, what is denied.

Eroticism is associated with several and distant terms, such as skin, body, fusion, beauty, destructiveness; encounter, means of control, contact, repression, denial, stereotypes, heterosexuality, homosexuality, transvestites, commitment, communication, companionship, love, appropriate and inappropriate, partial, prior, final, full pleasure, transformation and destransformation, prevention, care and even pathology. Eroticism is a key part of human encounters, as it signals the metaphor of desire, to desire and to be desired. On the one hand it is reduced to quietness of a small

room, a vital stage, a bed, a relationship, a science, a meaning and on the other hand, the whole set of resonances arising from the exploitation of the human being, in this case in particular, at old age, is increased.

We do expect the reading of this *Kairós Gerontologia* issue may add knowledge, perspectives and inquiry angles to be amplified and resonated within every single reader.

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