

Depathologization of homosexuality and transexuality: an integrative review**Despatologização da homossexualidade e transexualidade: revisão integrativa****Despatologización de la homosexualidad y transexualidad: revisión integrativa****Received: 18/07/2018****Approved: 10/03/2019****Published: 01/07/2019****Jhonatan Costa Back¹**
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This study aims to identify discourses regarding the depathologization of homosexuality and transexuality in academic production, as well as their technical-scientific positions. This is an integrative review in the online databases: SciELO, Scopus, PePSIC, and Google Scholar, which found 30 articles from August 2017 to February 2018, about the period from 2000 to 2017, regardless of language, with the descriptors: pathology, transexuality and homosexuality. Homosexuality is not considered a mental disorder by the American Psychiatric Association or the World Health Organization, but, outside the scientific community, it is treated as such, leading to homophobia. Transexuality, on the other hand, is still characterized as a mental disorder by the same institutions. This situation highlights some of the ways in which culture can cross subjects and instill conceptions of normality, which infringe the boundaries of free expression and subjectivity.

Descriptors: Pathology; Transsexualism; Homosexuality.

Este estudo tem como objetivo identificar discursos referentes à despatologização da homossexualidade e da transexualidade presentes na produção acadêmica e nos posicionamentos técnico-científicos. Trata-se de uma revisão integrativa nas bases de dados *online*: SciELO, Scopus, PePSIC e Google Acadêmico, perfazendo 30 artigos levantados entre agosto de 2017 até fevereiro de 2018, considerando o período de 2000 a 2017, independente do idioma, com os descritores: patologia, transexualidade e homossexualidade. Apesar da homossexualidade não ser considerada um transtorno mental pela Associação Americana de Psiquiatria e pela Organização Mundial da Saúde, fora da comunidade científica ela é tratada como tal, gerando a homofobia. Já a transexualidade ainda é caracterizada como um transtorno mental pelas mesmas instituições. Assim, enfatiza-se como a cultura pode transpassar os sujeitos e incutir concepções de normalidade, as quais infringem as fronteiras da livre-expressão e da subjetividade.

Descritores: Patologia; Transexualismo; Homossexualidade.

Este estudio tiene como objetivo identificar discursos referentes a la despatologización de la homosexualidad y de la transexualidad presentes en la producción académica y las posiciones técnico-científicas. Se trata de una revisión integrativa en las bases de datos *online*: SciELO, Scopus, PePSIC y Google Académico, totalizando 30 artículos levantados entre agosto de 2017 hasta febrero de 2018, considerando el período de 2000 a 2017, independiente del idioma, con los descriptores: *patología, transexualidade y homosexualidade*. A pesar de la homosexualidad no ser considerada un trastorno mental por la Asociación Americana de Psiquiatria y por la Organización Mundial de la Salud, fuera de la comunidad científica es tratada como tal, generando la homofobia. Ya la transexualidad aún es caracterizada como un trastorno mental por las mismas instituciones. Así, se enfatizan las formas como la cultura puede traspasar los sujetos e inculcar concepciones de normalidad, las cuales, infringen las fronteras de la libre expresión y de la subjetividad.

Descriptores: Patología; Transexualismo; Homossexualidad.

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INTRODUCTION

The process of depathologization of transexuality, here understood as a feeling of not belonging to one's biological sex¹, and of homosexuality, here understood to mean attraction to people of the same sex², has been the subject of many discussions in the area of health in recent years.

In 2009, twenty-nine cities from different countries took part in a movement for the removal of gender identity disorders from diagnostic manuals, the such as Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) and the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD)^{3,4}.

Movements seeking to discuss the themes related to gender and the problematization of pathologization have been on the agenda since 1950, when we had the first articles on transexualism⁵.

In debates on the subject at the time, it was easy to find articles regarding endocrinology in which transexual individuals were seen as those who found their own genitals abject⁵. This understanding was tied to criteria about what made it possible to diagnose "true transsexuals" published in the 1966 book "The Transsexual phenomenon"⁵.

Most studies had no bibliographic support, causing the term to have a nonspecific nature, thus giving rise to descriptions of the phenomenon. Despite its being decades old, the points raised by this book are analogous to those of today, such referrals to attempts to dress as the opposite sex and guilt⁶.

This study aims to identify discourses regarding the depathologization of homosexuality and transexuality in academic production, as well as the technical-scientific positions of many different fields of knowledge.

METHOD

This review used the Integrative method, an approach that allows the inclusion of experimental and non-experimental studies for an understanding of the phenomenon

analyzed⁷. For this purpose the following databases were used: SciELO, Scopus, PePSIC and Google Scholar.

The inclusion criteria for the formation of the corpus to be analyzed used only articles and theses published in the period from 2000 to 2017, sought using the descriptors: pathology, transexuality, and homosexuality, when they were found in the title and in the abstracts. The period material verification began in the second half of 2017, lasting until February 2018.

The choice for articles that were in accordance to the inclusion criteria had two stages. In the first, an analysis of their abstracts was carried out, followed by a review looking for the most relevant information, including recent data and affinity to the subject. After this verification process, the pertinent and relevant data of each article, such as historical issues, legislation, and biological and social issues regarding the subject, were collected for the construction of this article.

Four authors were selected as bibliographic references for this investigation. They were Pierre-Henri Castel¹ and Georges Canguilhem⁸ who started the discussions on the topic around the world and in multiple languages. In addition to them, Berenice Bento^{3,5,9,10}, and Márcia Arán¹¹⁻¹³, from Brazil, were consulted, as their studies use information from the first two.

RESULTS

From the survey of these 30 articles, a brief presentation of the authors, titles, and specific objectives was considered relevant. Table 1 makes possible a broader view of what is discussed within the subject of this article.

Based on Table 1, it is possible to identify similar aspects among the studies, such as the period of the research and of the publication, which is in the last decade. Doing this, it is possible to notice that the theme is current and has social relevance. It can be seen that, from 2009 on, there has been an increase in production on the subject, to a total of 30 productions (between articles, theses and dissertations).

Table 1. Publications on homosexuality and transexuality presented between 2000 and 2017 and analyzed according to authors, year, title, and synthesis of the approach. Joinville, SC, 2018

Authors and Year	Publication type	Title	Homosexuality or transexuality related issue discussed
Moreira MA, Gomes AJM 2017 ¹⁴	Article	Representação social de sexo e gênero entre pessoas trans	It discusses gender and sex beyond biological issues and social concepts.
Santos D, Santos DSSD, Dantas IDS, Amaral AMS, Paes HCDS 2017 ¹⁵	Article	Adolescência, Gênero e Sexualidade: Uma revisão Integrativa.	It discusses adolescence, sexuality, social construction and gender. Addresses what makes men or women, gender vulnerability, understanding sexuality in adolescence, and the role of the school environment in gender identity.
Costa AB, Nardi HC, Koller SH. 2017 ¹⁶	Article	Manutenção de desigualdades na avaliação do gênero na psicologia brasileira	It resents the history before and after the emergence of psychology as a science, connecting this discussion with gender issues.
Venâncio ATA, Belmonte PR. 2017 ¹⁷	Article	Debate legislativo carioca sobre a "mudança da homossexualidade": ciência, política e religião.	Debate about Bill No. 717/03, which aims to create, in Rio de Janeiro, a program that helps those who voluntarily choose to change homosexuality. It also brings a historical clipping of the pathological view taken on the subject of homosexuality.
Rocon PC, Zamboni J, Sodré F, Rodrigues A, Roseiro MCFB. 2017 ¹⁸	Article	(Trans)formações corporais: reflexões sobre saúde e beleza	It discusses health, beauty, and illness in the environment experienced by transsexuals in the process of transformation. It addressed issues within the field of beauty as an ideal for women, the pain associated with the search for this ideal and possible risks. On the issue of Health and disease, it describes the use of hormones and surgeries.
Raimondi GA, Borges PD, Bonsucesso TF. 2016 ¹⁹	Article	O que importa? Brazilian research in the field of Health and the (in)visibility of transvestites and transsexuals.	It contextualizes the LGBT community and the achievements within the single Health System (SUS) and the Federal Council of Medicine. In addition to carrying out a Bibliographic Review, focusing on transvestites and transsexuals and the following themes: body modifications, stigmatization, HIV/AIDS, and pathology.
Borba R. 2016 ²⁰	Article	Receita para se tornar um "Transexual Verdadeiro"	Description of the path a transsexual travels through the SUS, highlighting and raising questions about the need for a diagnosis. It also discusses the pathologization in DSM, CID, and CFM.
Oakley A. 2016 ²¹	Article	A "Sexo e Gênero"	This study defines sex and gender in a socio-cultural discussion. It uses the study carried out by Stoller, a psychologist specialized in gender identity disorders, thus debating the difference between the presented cases, in a cultural and biological way.
Sposito SE. 2015 ²²	Doctoral thesis	Homossexualidades nas pesquisas em Pós-graduação em psicologia: da despatologização à luta por direitos	The study summarizes the productions in psychology on the subject of homosexuality from 1999 to 2010, contextualizing the subject matter. It discusses gender and the depathologization process, with the position taken by the Federal Council of Psychology.
Carneiro AJS 2015 ²³	Dissertation	A morte da clínica: movimento homossexual e luta pela despatologização da homossexualidade no Brasil (1978-1990).	This study brings forth Brazilian history since the 1964 civil-military coup, showing the relation between homosexuality and the pathologization of the subject. It also shows the perspective of WHO, DSM, and CID. In addition, it shows the fight against pathologization of two groups: the group Somos ("We Are") from São Paulo, and the Bahia Gay Group.

Magalhães JC, Ribeiro PRC. 2015 ²⁴	Article	Esquadrinhando corpos abjetos: as homossexualidades nas redes de enunciações científicas	The study begins discussing sexual identities and sexuality throughout history and, later on, homosexuality.
Almeida G, Murta D. 2013 ²⁵	Article	Reflexões sobre a possibilidade da despatologização da transexualidade e a necessidade da assistência integral à saúde de transexuais no Brasil	Discute sobre a transexualidade como um dos campos de estudo dentro das questões de gênero, além de desenvolver a construção da temática dentro do quadro da patologia e a questão social dela oriunda.
Santos DK 2013 ²⁶	Article	As produções discursivas sobre a homossexualidade e a construção da homofobia: problematizações necessárias à psicologia	Raises questions about themes within the field of homosexuality, such as homophobia, pathologization, and medicalization.
Bento B. 2012 ⁵	Article	Despatologização do gênero: a politização das identidades abjetas	It reconstructs the process of gender as a diagnostic category, in addition to the process for abandoning pathologization, and the strategies used in the campaign.
Andreazza TS. 2012 ²⁷	Article	Gêmeos monozigóticos discordantes para transexualidade: diferenças neuroanatômicas e psicológicas.	It gives a definition to the term transsexuality, showing genetic, hormonal, environmental, neuroanatomic, and cognitive factors in transsexuality.
Spizzirri G 2012 ²⁸	Article	Transexualismo neuroimagem	This study brings an overview of transsexuality in CID-10 and DSM IV. It also discusses the issue of gender related to genetics.
Ceccarelli PR. 2012 ²⁹	Article	A invenção da homossexualidade	Debate on the creation of categories of nomenclature, contextualized from phenomenological perspective. It has a psychoanalytic perspective, discussing both Freud and post-Freudian authors concerning homosexuality, and ends with a contemporary perspective.
Balestero GS 2011 ²	Article	O direito à diversidade sexual no Brasil e os efeitos violentos do descaso do poder legislativo federal	It addresses the concept of homosexuality and the social debate about homophobia, including Brazilian statistics and government projects on the subject.
Bento B. 2011 ³	Article	Luta Globalizada pelo fim do diagnóstico de gênero	It discusses the attempts made by organizations whose aim is removing transsexuality from the DSM and the CID. It demonstrates the criteria and perspectives about this gender issue within CID 10 and DSM IV.
Athayde AVL. 2011 ⁶	Article	Transexualismo Masculino	The research compiles the history of transsexuality, the issue of its name, its association with psychiatric diseases, prevalence, diagnosis, etiology, treatment, and surgery and its complications.
Langdon EJ, Wiik FB. 2010 ³⁰	Article	Antropologia, saúde e doença: uma introdução ao conceito de cultura aplicado às ciências da saúde	It brings about the meaning of culture and its related aspects, addressing and discussing health and disease and showing how the three themes intertwine.

Butler J 2009 ⁴	Article	Desdiagnosticando gênero	o It starts showing those who do not agree with the DSM IV diagnosis of gender identity disorder. On the other hand, it shows that some people would like the diagnostic to remain, so that it is easier for medical resources to be directed for sex reassignment surgeries. It also brings a historical context so that the two positions can be understood.
Franco FLFN 2009 ⁸	Article	Georges Canguilhem e a psiquiatria: norma, saúde e patologia mental	Canguilhem carries out his research in psychiatry field thus highlights the relevance of mental pathologies, as well as what is health, normality and disease. For the author, it is necessary to discuss the ideas mentioned.
Arán M, Murta D, Lionço T. 2009 ¹²	Article	Transexualidade e saúde pública no Brasil. Ciência & saúde coletiva	It discusses the Federal Council of Medicine and the authorization and execution process of sex reassignment surgeries, and all the necessary steps for them to be carried out through the unified health system, in addition to the assistance. It also includes a historical context of the perspective of psychiatry on transexuality.
Arán M, Murta D. 2009 ¹³	Article	Do diagnóstico de transtorno de identidade de gênero às redescrições da experiência da transexualidade: uma reflexão sobre gênero, tecnologia e saúde	It analyzes difficulties within public policies, focusing on the need to diagnose gender identity disorder as a gateway to access. It also deals with hormone treatments, available surgeries, and Gender Identity Disorder.
Calçado T. 2009 ³¹	Master's thesis	Doença: sofrimento e vida nas filosofias de Friedrich Nietzsche e Blaise Pascal	It discusses the understanding of what is disease for both Nietzsche and Pascal.
Carneiro AJS 2007 ³²	Article	Homofobia: limites e possibilidades de um conceito em meio a disputas.	It discusses the phenomenon of homophobia, from the concept to the consequences involved.
Matias D. 2007 ³³	Article	Psicologia e orientação sexual: Realidades em transformação	It assesses the position of the American Psychiatric Association on homosexuality, and discusses the issue from contemporary cultura perspectives.
Arán M. 2006 ¹¹	Article	Transexualidade e a gramática normativa do sistema sexo-gênero.	It aims to discuss transexuality within the scope of psychiatry and psychoanalysis, contextualizing the subject, raising the issue of gender identity disorder and its history. It also combines the subject with the current perspectives.
Bento B. 2003 ¹⁰	Article	Transexuais, corpos e próteses	A debate about genders and what is assigned to them. Later, the study discusses sex reassignment surgery and sexuality.

DISCUSSION

The studies surveyed address gender issues, discussing the bias of normality and pathology and the repercussions involved.

Thus, essentialist and/or biologic ideas are no longer sovereign as far as studies on homosexuality are concerned. The socio-constructivist, constructionist, and socio-historical perspectives, together with Foucault's contributions, make it possible for psychology to be predominant in the area.

Therefore, it is possible to contemplate the many different ways a certain position may be defended. Such a task is a challenge

regardless of the theoretical bases chosen for it, since the complexity of the topic discussed cannot be addressed in a simplistic or one-dimensional way, due to how unique humans are.

As a result, during the analysis of the data, such positions were found to be linked to a change of perspective, which used to come from a more biological standpoint, as seen in the first articles^{10,11}.

Starting in 2009^{4,12, 22}, we note a change of perspective, and discussions on the gender issue being, associated with subjective and social issues, which in turn are related to

public health and depathologization.

So far, there is no consensus on what is a pathological or a healthy individual³¹, a concept which is subordinate to elements of a larger order, such as the culture in which an individual is inserted³⁰, or even determinations concerning sexuality. This multiplicity of perspectives can be considered a warning against attempts of classification carried out by the humanities and biological sciences.

One of the discussions raised, with respect to genetic factors²⁷ is that they may be tied to the determination of such identities. However, there is not enough evidence and correlations which would justify such a point of view, because even if preliminary studies had shown genetic variations in specific transsexuals⁵, this is a problem from the point of view of diagnostic criteria, since the biological perspective is one of the pillars of contemporary medicine.

It is possible to say that there is cultural influence on sexual identities, according to which they are incorporated in the social representations that the subjects have of themselves and the meanings that society elaborates in their daily lives¹⁴. This is similar to what happens when discussions on the cultural patterns imposed by society take place; they dictate what is normal and suitable for women and men.

When one talks about the male gender, it is usually linked to physical strength, decision making, rationality, providing food and protection for the family - which in turn involves fatherhood -, virility, and the inability to control sexual desires. Activities linked to the female sex, however, are in the scope of beauty, sensuality, docility, subordination to man, and associated to family, such as maternity¹⁵.

Later, as the social construction of these pre-conceived identities is socially understood as a motor for the misunderstandings that lead to pathological categorizations, one's social environment can be seen as a place for potential practical interventions to change this oppression into something beyond tolerance, in a struggle for the acceptance of the transgender category as

an alternative to the old medical model, an attempt to affirm gender variations as variations of normality. This new perspective on gender unites the struggles of the social movement, broadening its focus so the fight is aimed to create gender equality between women and men, leading to equality between cis and trans people¹⁶.

Reflecting on the subject, one can look from other perspectives, such as that of psychoanalysis, which understands sexuality and especially sexual differences as complex phenomena that define the forms in which subjectivities manifest themselves¹¹. Scholars who study this perspective argue that this disorder occurs due to the constitution of the affected *self*⁶.

The psychoanalytic theorist who contributed the most to this field was Lacan, who argues that the understanding of being in psychiatry takes place through psychosis, that is, is based on the conviction on identity related changes and on the uncontrollable desire for sex change. In this sense, with no Oedipus, repression, and absence as organizational operators, transexualism would be a specific form of psychosis¹¹.

Another way to see the subject, not focused on a single theoretical line of thought, is the path of the Unified Health System (SUS) which offers access to this population, free of charge. This means that the pathologization of transexuality did not actually guarantee any rights, but considered it as an experience that can be catalogued, cured, and normalized³.

Today, at SUS, a system destined to everyone, some transexual women and men have accessibility issues. due to the expression of their gender identity. Thus, the public sphere has not been a good alternative²⁵.

In the book "The reinvention of the body: sexuality and gender in the transexual experience", the subject's own account is presented as the main form of transexualism "diagnosis", emphasizing the relationship with the early stages of its development⁹. This account must be consistent with the individual's current requests, so that it is clear their repulsion by their own genitalia, as opposed to a mere discomfort when they feel

obliged to wear certain garments, according to what society claims to be the correct one.

From this starting point, transexualism, in the decade of 1980, was included in the Manual of statistical diagnosis of Mental Disorders (DSM III) ^{6,23}, which is a document of the American Psychiatric Association (APA), first published in 1952³, and which, a few decades later, included this concept among its diagnoses.

Analogous to the discussion has the issue of the term homosexuality, which, in 1973 was removed from the DSM by the APA, and some years later, in 1990, excluded from the International Code of Diseases (ICD) by the World Health Organization^{32,17,32}.

In addition, since 1999, the Federal Council of Psychology prescribes that no professional can act in a way that establishes and favors any biases favorable to the pathologization of homoerotic behaviors or practices³⁴.

Transexuality and homosexuality are still surrounded by doubts and are considered "taboo", generating prejudice and disinformation.

Among the reasons that led to the current pathological perception of these sexual identities and to their inclusion in diagnostic categories, one can mention the studies conducted to investigate the neurobiology of transsexuals, within which were found some differences of structural character in the brain of people who identify themselves as transgender, when compared with subjects from a heterosexual control group²⁸.

In addition, it is possible to observe positions based on biological essentialism among some transsexual people, such as the idea of incompleteness of a man/woman until the time when the surgery, known as gender reassignment surgery, is done, even when the individual is already socially recognized in his/her identity²⁵. Such a phenomenon can be linked to distinctions that go beyond aspects linked to the psyche, or even pathological criteria.

Since 2003, in Brazil, several studies have been performed in the fields of psychology, social service, and collective

health, with the purpose of knowing how the experiences and specialized care occur during the performance of gender reassignment transgenitalization²⁸⁻³⁶. This diagnosis is of the utmost importance, because with it, in Brazil, the person can have access to hormone treatments, and even gender reassignment surgery, known vulgarly as sex change surgery ²⁹, paid by the government through SUS, which is possible since 2008^{30,31}.

The term homosexuality was coined in 1869 by a medical scholar, described as: "*homo, which means similar, and by the word sexus, meaning, therefore, the term 'similar sexuality'*". In addition, there is another perspective, to which homosexuality indicates the individual who has romantic feelings for someone of their same sex. This interpretation also points out that in this case there is no psychological or gender deviation².

Thus, this definition is understood to include everyone who is attracted to people of the same sex. In turn, the suffix is not used currently, since it indicates a pathological perspective³⁷.

It has been hypothesized that homosexuality, as well as heterosexuality and bisexuality, are products of the society in which one lives. They would be innate, and in modernity, heterosexuality is so predominant and deep-rooted in the imagination as right, that everything that is different is considered as deviant, and as such prejudice ³⁵.

The bodies of the subjects who identify as homosexual are seen as different by the "technologies employed in the observation of the bodies and in the production of knowledge", that is, they differ from what we understand as "normal" development of sexual orientation, here understood heterosexuality, seeing sexual identities as a matter of biological destiny²⁴.

With regard to the identification of transexualism, we can taken as a general concept that which is stated in an article entitled "Some reflections to establish the chronology of the 'transexual phenomenon'" (1910-1995)¹, which establishes that transgenderism "is characterized by an intense feeling of not belonging to the anatomical sex, without the manifestation of

delusional disorders or organic reasons (such as hermaphroditism or any other endocrine anomaly)"¹¹.

In a related historical development, it is interesting to mention that a relationship between "transexualism" and endocrinology has been established. Based on the advances of biological studies of the twentieth century, in particular of genetic studies, it was proposed that there would not be an absolute separation between "male" and "female", and it would be inadequate to divide the sex of the individual purely based on anatomic differences. To these studies, sex is composed of several components, so that the etiology of transexualism and the origin of the desire to change sex go beyond psychological aspects, and may be associated with a biological – genetic or endocrine cause¹².

Genetic predispositions, psychosocial and environmental influences, and exposure to hormones would be connected to this, even if partially, being therefore associated to the process of development of the gender of individuals²⁸.

However, recent studies showed that the allegation that there are associations between hormonal dysfunctions and transexuality cannot be supported, since the number of individuals with these alterations and the transexuality rates among them have a low correlation, revealing a non-determining influence between sexual identity and endocrinous factors²⁷.

The perspectives that pathologize these sexual identities are based on these biologic factors. To this end, it is necessary to understand the concept of pathology. The Aurélio Brazilian Portuguese dictionary states that it is a "*deviation from what is considered normal from the physiological and anatomical point of view and which constitutes or characterizes a disease*"³⁸.

As for the limits of the states of "Normality" or "Pathology", it is appropriate to mention some reflections. Diseases isolate, individualize. For this reason, the individual living being itself (not the living being that is suffering the disease, but the subjective experience that guides the constitution of the clinical gaze) has the responsibility of

distinguishing the point where the disease begins. Therefore, the notion of normal cannot derive from a statistical mean, nor from an ideal type⁸.

Also take into account the considerations made by Thiago Calçado, from a reading of Foucault, where he says that "diagnosis is a power reserved to physician who manifests themselves about the sick and his sickness. The patient who fits into this clinical dynamics is reduced, established by medical knowledge and refrained from the power to analyze himself and his health"³¹.

There are differences from what the medicine understand as transexuality and the body, and what the individuals, who identify as transexual, feel¹⁸.

The biomedical model, guided by anatomic, physiologic, and psycho-pathologic variables based on binary gender norms, pathologizes and medicalizes the bodies and experiences of transexual people. On the other hand, evaluations carried out by transexual people seem to follow distinct guidances, according to which bodily transformations constitute processes of health production, exploring the plasticity of their bodies as potency of life, mediated by beauty ideals.

As a result, it can be said that a perspective according to which terms such as "transexualism" and "identity disorder" are related is tied to a type of thought according to which sex is established by nature, and is organic, genetic, and biological. In addition to the fact that gender is constituted by the culture in which it is inserted. Therefore, this perspective sees sex, male or female, as something natural, while gender would be a historical and social construct^{9,13}.

Therefore, one's gender identity is not necessarily subordinate to innate biological factors. The roles of male and female are connected to the truth or to the subjectivity of this individual, and as such, the gender identity must be plastic, adapt to the identity with which individuals identify themselves^{21,39}.

Therefore, in modernity, this apparent "normality", healthy, non-pathological, would only be true for heterossexual individuals, and would be the only sexual expression accepted

as natural in the many different social contexts. Sexual orientations that are different from this one would be undesirable or abnormal^{22,33}.

Every science that aims to discuss a perspective on human identity must be careful and consider that it is interactive and dynamic, different from that of trees, for instance, which do not mind being classified as such. When people become aware of the way in which they are catalogued, this leads them to change their actions, which requires new classifications that will generate new types of action, in an anular effect that feeds itself throughout the history of knowledge¹⁶.

The pathologizing concepts regarding the different sexual identities are based on pre-established standards of what is "male" or "female", thus presenting a bipolar and unifactorial concept for such standardizations. That is, these are the two poles of a continuum, and do not consider subjective factors, nor the existence of many behaviors that are indifferent to gender, and are thus called *androgynous*.

Each one's private perception of self, their self-designation, is a reflection of the freedom each subject seeks while building their own identity, which is beyond socially sanctioned standards or an external scientific community.

CONCLUSION

Through this integrative review it was possible to find that the theme discussed here is broad and has been serving as a base for discussions in many different fields of knowledge, especially in social, biological, and psychological fields, throughout the years. This shows that homosexual and transsexual people have been classified in many different ways, which are different from one another. Due to this very diversity, it is unlikely that any of these answers is the "correct" one.

Still, even if a precise consensus on the determination of transexuality and homosexuality does not exist, leading to a questionable diagnostic fit, it was possible to reach the objective. Many different positions were found and exposed, regarding the depathologization of homosexuality and

transexuality within a technical-scientific scope.

This study had limitations related to the method used, which did not exhaust the works elaborated in the period studied, since it focused only on certain databases. Also, the languages used (Portuguese and English), and the restrictions on the availability of certain works, are also limiting factors. The theme, however, was found to be broad.

It shows many different perspectives, requiring future researches and further developments. Therefore, new studies with different investigations are recommended, so that the contexts in which homosexual and transsexual individuals are inserted can be better understood.

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CONTRIBUTIONS

Jhonatan Costa Back, Laura Mendes da Silva and Layenne Prado took part in the conception and writing of the study, as well as in its data analysis and writing. **Luiz Arthur Rangel Cyrino** took part in the writing and revision of the article.

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