

**Tapescript of Renata Carvalho's keynote speech at Transgender:
Intersectional/International at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland (29 May 2019).**

Translated by Claudia Ferreira, uploaded by Gina Roberts and Aran Ward Sell.

Hello, good evening everyone, first of all I would like to apologize for not speaking English, which ends up making our communication a bit difficult. It is an honor to be in the land of Jo Clifford and to be able to speak at a university.

My name is Renata Carvalho, I'm 38 years old, I'm Brazilian, an actress, director, playwright and travesti.

Travesti is a Latin American identity, 'typically Brazilian and mostly linked to poverty. The travesti, the transsexual woman, and the cisgender women we belong to the same gender, the feminine. We understand and express ourselves through this phenotype and it is through it that we want to be treated.

However, we are not women, let alone men. We are Travesti. I say this because the gender in language for a travesti is very important. In my country we often go through the discomfort of people insisting on treating us in the male gender. We are SHE.

I am a travesti and being a travesti in Brazil is a political act. We are sons and daughters of violent colonization, born of rape disguised as miscegenation. We are an extremely violent country, covered by the facade of a tropical country, football and carnival.

Brazil is the country that kills the most travesti, trans women and men in the world. Brazil is responsible for 40% of the murders of trans people in the world, the second place, Mexico, kills 4 times less. Deaths are usually hyperbolized, many shootings, stabbings, objects stuffed in the anus, the most attacked place is the face, there are many cases of dismembering, mainly of the genital organs. We have been in the lead [in rates of murder] since 2008, the year data started to be collected. In 2018 there were 162 trans people murdered just because they were trans. Many of us migrate to Europe, because here the police do not kill travesti on the street. The Travesti Diaspora.

In January this year in the city of Campinas, a man killed a travesti, ripped out his heart, put the image of a saint in and took the heart home, keeping it under the wardrobe. In prison he says, "He was a demon."

Our second cause of death is suicide. Now we say we do not commit suicide, we are killed through suicide. The average life of a trans person in Brazil is 35 years, the rest of the population is 75. 90% of travesti are in compulsory prostitution, and 90% are expelled from home between the ages of 12 and 14. Of all the students who are in university in Brazil only 0.02% are travesti, trans women and trans men.

60% of trans people have depression. Every 48 hours a trans person is murdered, and every 19 hours an LGBTQI + person. But 80% of trans people deaths are black trans.

Maybe I'm just alive and speaking here today because in my country I live from the privilege of whiteness.

We are one of the most dangerous countries in the world to fight for human rights and to be a woman. A woman is raped every 11 minutes. At the end of my speech, three women will have been raped. In 2017, 4,254 women were killed the vast majority by their husbands, boyfriends and mainly by their exes. Every 2 hours a woman is murdered in Brazil.

From January 2019 to February 4 of this year 126 women were murdered. We are a mostly black country; I dare say that there are hardly any whites in my country. But Brazilians think they are as white as Americans or Europeans. On April 7, in Rio de Janeiro, the Brazilian Army fired more than 200 shots into a car, hitting 83 shots in the car, in which a black family was on, going to a baby shower. Shooting, laughing and not offering any help, killing the driver, musician and father Evaldo Rosa do Santos and the gatherer of recyclable materials Luciano Macedo who tried to help the family. On May 23th, the 9 murderers were released.

It is underway in Brazil now, a genocide of the black and indigenous population. There are more black deaths per year in Brazil than in countries that are at war.

Brazil voted for [President Jair] Bolsonaro for [his] affinity to the hatred. Our massacre is a project of the government and society. The spectacle of violence is televised. The campaigning

president was gesturing with his hands imitating a gun, including teaching children to do it as well. After being elected, [President Bolsonaro] legalized the possession of weapons and facilitated armed walking in the streets, legalizing and encouraging the hunting of animals and even the purchase of rifles.

Brazilians voted him in with the false [promise] of new policy and anticorruption. In just over 6 months, we have already seen moneylaundering scandals, illicit enrichment, involvement with armed groups (extermination groups) in Rio de Janeiro, where the main suspect in the murder of the councilwoman Marielle Franco was honored by [Bolsonaro's] son (he has three children in politics), defended by the president while he was in parliament and that lives in the same luxury condominium as the president, where they seized the largest number of rifles and guns in the history of Rio de Janeiro. The deforestation of the Amazon grows more and more at alarming numbers, he has cut funds from Education, with that some universities had to stop working. [Bolsonaro's administration also] removed Philosophy and Sociology from the school curriculum. Keeping the people in ignorance ensures their continuity in power. This is the real Brazil.

With this data now I can tell my artistic trajectory in my country. I started in the Theater in 1996. In 2002, no longer receiving invitations to act at the time, due to my femininity, I became a theater director. I have spent 10 years directing. My realization as a travesti body happens during this same period and I make my transition.

In 2007 I became a voluntary prevention agent for STIs HIV / AIDS, Hepatitis and Tuberculosis in my hometown of Santos, working exclusively with travesti and trans women in prostitution. Spending time with my peers, I became an activist and militant, mainly of the Trans cause. And I start studying about trans bodies.

In 2012 I finally return to the stage, and this time as an actress, in a solo show called: 'Inside me lives another,' where I talked about my life as a travesti. It is with this work that I join my identity with my greatest love: the Theater.

So I went after my story, went after my "Transcestry" and to be able to tell it, first I needed to know it. There are no books that tell our story, the books that exist are telling exactly the historical exclusion of these bodies. So I decided to write this book and tell our story. I began to

go after books that talked about trans people, this compendium with more than 100 books I call “TRAVESTECA”, a Trans Library.

I find myself as a Transthopologist and I call this study Transthopology, that is, a Trans person who studies the trans corpus with a focus on the arts. A theoretical, scientific, epistemological and above all empirical study.

I prostituted myself, I was expelled from home. This study points to the social and imaginary construction of common sense, criminalization, pathologisation, mass incarceration, structural transphobia and caricature of our bodies, identities and experiences. I am currently playing in the theater Jesus de Nasaré, with a text by the Scottish transgender woman Jo Clifford called “The Gospel According to Jesus, Queen of Heaven’, where I have been attacked, raped, threatened with beatings and death. The show has been censored five times in Brazil, because censorship has been banned in my country since the re-democratization after a military dictatorship that lasted 21 years. The show asks the following question: “What if Jesus came back today as a travesti?”

It was the spark that was lacking for Brazil to open its rooted transphobia. Jesus is the image and likeness of all but us trans people. Our body is inappropriate, sexualized, fetishized, public and of second-rate.

This show has raised debates in the theater, the news, politics and religion. Never has a show been so persecuted and awoken so much hatred in my country. Cisgender art is transphobic, and not because it does not allow us to exist, we are there in the texts and scripts of theaters, novels, films and series, but because it does not allow bodies like mine to be on the scene.

With difficulties to finding space and work for bodies like mine, due to what I call “TRANS FAKE”, cisgender artists interpret trans characters. In 2017, I fund in Brazil COLETIVO T (first artistic group formed entirely by Trans artists).

Funded by the MONART (National Movement of Trans Artists), I create the “ Trans Representativity Manifest “ that aims at [enabling] trans artists to interpret trans characters.

Trans representativity is the act of these bodies being present in the spaces of power, and art is a space of power and it was and is used for exclusion, it was so with women and then black people. Now it is the turn of dissident bodies to occupy these spaces.

The representativity makes that the cisgender artists coexist with the trans bodies daily, because it is in the socialising, and only with that, that we can end all mystifications around our identity. We trans artists want to make a great international agreement.

We ask that in the next 30 years, the cisgender artists stop representing trans characters, and that they include trans artists in their congresses, forums, artistic collectives, groups, companies, institutions, plays, films and novels.

And I'm sure the statistics I've presented here today will only be in our memory and in history, so that we can always remember, so we are not in danger of returning to it. We need to humanize, naturalize, and calm cisgender eyes with our presence. We are still struggling to be considered human. We need to broaden this concept of humanity that does not contemplate us. We want to stop dying.

Today the travesti without a degree left her country to talk about her studies at a University in Europe. Thank you Jo Clifford, your text changed my life Thank you, Gina, for the invitation.

Thank you University of Edinburgh.

Welcome to Transtriarchy, where all bodies are natural.

Evoé ...Thank you so much.