



## **Young black men: Racism and incarceration**

### **Jovens negros: Racismo e encarceramento**

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Andréa Rocha Pires, who claims to be of African descent, grew up on the outskirts of Bauru/SP, started working at the age of 10 in her family's small business, and until she graduated as a social worker, she worked as a gas station attendant, secretary and computer teacher. What led the author to choose the course to work as a social worker was the massacre at candelária in 1993. She started her social worker course at a private university in Bauru, finishing it at the public university as a scholarship student in 2000.

**Keywords:** Racism, Young, Black.

#### **RESUMO**

Andréa Rocha Pires, se declara afro descendente, cresceu na periferia de Bauru/SP, começou a trabalhar aos 10 anos de idade no pequeno comercio da família, dentre as atividades exercidas até formar-se em assistente social, exerceu o labor como, frentista de posto, auxiliar de secretária e professora de informática. O que levou a autora a escolher o curso para atuar como assistente social foi a chacina da candelária em 1993, iniciou seu curso de assistente social em uma universidade privada em Bauru, finalizando o mesmo na universidade pública como bolsista em 2000.

**Palavras-chave:** Racismo, Jovens, Negros.

#### **1 INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>**

Andréa Rocha Pires, who claims to be of African descent, grew up on the outskirts of Bauru/SP, started working at the age of 10 in her family's small business, and until she graduated as a social worker, she worked as a gas station attendant, secretary and computer teacher. What led the author to choose the course to work as a social worker was the massacre at candelária in 1993. She started her social worker course at a private university in Bauru, finishing it at the public university as a scholarship student in 2000.

A recent graduate in social work, she worked in a halfway house, where she witnessed violence involving a love affair. She then took up a permanent position in 2002, in the city of Maringá/PR, where

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<sup>1</sup> It is no easy task to comment on such complex observations. Especially when you know that the analysis and results of a survey are limited and reflect very small aspects of such a cruel reality. We are talking about prisons. Of wings that capitalism prunes, neoliberalism binds, incarceration cuts and Juvenicide burns. We talk about boys who feel meters. We talk about the young people who verbalize knowing about their future inside the CCCs: jail, wheelchair, coffin. (ROCHA,2020, P.123)



she worked with girls and boys in socio-educational measures, where she had her first contacts with young people involved in drug trafficking. In 2004, she studied for a doctorate at UNESP-Franca, where during her internship she became close to adolescents exploited at the border by the international drug trafficking route, developing her research on the subject of the imprisonment of young people involved in drug trafficking.

ROCHA describes Juvenicide as a destructive form, a construct of state power capable of excluding young black and poor people, who are seen as enemies of society and are not allowed to make mistakes. She emphasizes that they are considered guilty because they are "black residents of peripheral neighborhoods." The author weaves a social panorama of exclusion faced by young people who are outside the bourgeois standard, showing through data, lethal violence as the main factor in Brazilian Juvenicide, and the soil its particularity where it shows two faces faced by young people on the one hand those who are perplexed with admiration and on the other those who suffer repulsion, whether due to "economic, social, ethnic/racial, historical and cultural" factors.

The Brazilian Juvenicide described by (ROCHA 2020), is configured from the social control through incarceration, exclusion and mass prohibition of young people who are involved in drug trafficking, where they are protagonized in the day-to-day in an invisible way with this (ROCHA 2020) brings to light factors related to prohibitionism, racism, drug policy and youth prisons as the master key to the Brazilian Juvenicide. This theme becomes important due to the erroneous way in which poor black young people are interpreted by society, sometimes just because they don't have high purchasing power, sometimes because they are the protagonists and only become visible when they commit offenses and are incarcerated. The work is described in a language that is easy to understand and the data corroborates the theory, making reading more and more enjoyable and corroborating the exclusion of youth as a form of social control.

For a better understanding of the subject, the book presents six (06) chapters in which it unravels factors related to racism, the war on drugs and the imprisonment of young people, which define Brazilian Juvenicide, as the author defines it as a "process that is part of Brazilian social formation" that expresses itself not only in the murders of poor and black young people, but throughout the violence and restrictions on access to social and human rights experienced by these young people". (ROCHA, 2020, p. 13).

The first chapter presents two factors as a form of social control, the school as a positive factor, ideologically exercising the construct of teaching and learning, but young people pass quickly and are subjected to "direct and indirect expulsions" not reaching the majority of young people who have been placed in the condition of criminalization, This chapter presents the two groups of subjects that will be addressed, among them poor young black men and women from the same social context.

When referring to these two groups Rocha (2020) emphasizes that they are more severe and celeristas, in line with the empirical data show that rich white women eminently "suffer from emotional



disorders and poor black women reflect criminality" in view of the above we can observe factors directly linked to racism, homophobic prejudice and machismo, factors which, according to the Juvenile definition, directly exclude and remove from the social context subjects who are ideologically targeted and are considered enemies of the government.

Finally, in the interviewees' reports, Juvenile becomes concrete. When talking about prisons, the young people even agree, but disagree with the way in which the selectivity for such an act is carried out.

The second chapter is more specific as it presents the criminalization of poor black youth, highlighting the first steps towards the realization of Juvenile. In this chapter Rocha categorizes the "poor black" youth and how they are seen in the social context, describing the ways in which they take the lead in order to feel they belong, emphasizing desires, dreams, The author defines that "everyone has the desire to consume, but only those who have access and high purchasing power will be recognized by society, and those who do not have the opportunity will feel excluded and incapable, becoming increasingly invisible in the eyes of society".

In line with the theme addressed, youth in general is seen as a transitional stage of life, according to (ROCHA,2020,p.44) young people should be "an object of reflection, as they are a product of Western modernity, an object of concern as they refer to contexts that involve the way they are and act, and an object of admiration for their vigor, physical beauty and health". This strand categorizes two groups of young people who fit into the author's view of youth, i.e. white young people who meet bourgeois standards are worthy of tolerance, coexistence and encouragement, and are allowed to make mistakes and take new opportunities, in the prejudiced and exclusionary view, young people who are outside the bourgeois standard are left to be controlled by police approaches, to attend decadent schools and precarious and more exploited jobs, in other words, they become the central carnage of social control, they are invisible and their resistance is ignored.

The second chapter also points out the dramas experienced by young people and the reasons that led them to become involved in drug trafficking (ROCHA, 2020, p.50.) states that "the desire for consumption that, if realized, will bring the feeling of (is), and only then do they exist socially", in this assumption contemporary Juvenile is a phenomenon present in Brazilian social relations, whether in a restricted or demonstrative way in massive self-imprisonment and violation of human and social rights that youth is inserted, thus Juvenile materializes with the precariousness of young people's lives and the expansion of their economic and social vulnerability.

In this vein (ROCHA,2020,p.103) highlights the subjective form induced by penal selectivity, inversely reinforcing the form of the verbs used when the state targets black and poor young people who are involved in drug trafficking, highlighting the respective "manufacture, sell, offer, transport" these are used by the selective mass that designate the most severe punishments, to maintain public order",



ideologically makes one believe that this situation remains under control, but if they are not prevented they could reverberate in collective problems.

The third and fourth chapters present the place of racism in Brazilian Juvenicide and the drug wars as a component of Juvenicide, where the author describes and demystifies two precepts directed at poor black youth, showing the racism linked to poor blacks in terms such as "slaves or criminals". The racism described here is categorized as an ideological political social construction practiced by the State in return for the control of social rights, therefore racism comes as an instrument of class domination carried out by the institutional sphere, removing from the social environment those who are considered enemies.

Alluding to the targeted group, another term used to demystify the form of imprisonment of poor black people is "begging and vagrancy", linked to the strengthening of structural racism, the criminalization of freedom, (ROCHA,2020, p.60), emphasizes that "the processes of criminalization of black people... is already epic, and even with the abolition of slavery, racism has been structuring itself and changing the way it attacks and excludes the less favored classes, that is, for a better understanding, the author presents aspects linked to the genocide of the black population", these refer to the "whitening of the race and whitening of the culture". And so the dominant form of the state over this class is added, through control and exclusion, incarceration and prohibition.

The fifth chapter presents Juvenicide through arrests in the name of the war on drugs, where the author states that the idea of prohibitionism only further fuels the number of incarcerations of black and poor people, what is at stake is the racial or bourgeois issue to which the subject belongs that defines the issue of being a user or a dealer, the maintenance of public order described here has to do with the control of bourgeois sociability, arresting young black and poor people represents the maintenance of repulsion.

To demonstrate these characteristics of exclusion and repulsion (ROCHA, 2020), he presents an interview conducted with adolescents where they report that the use of psychoactive substances occurs anywhere but falls more heavily on the poor and blacks who exercise the exploited labor force in the prohibited drug market, in this specific case "poor blacks". In this sense, it is clear that the wars on drugs do not exist to protect people from drugs, but to control those considered to be enemies, (ROCHA, 2020.p121) states that "wars on drugs kill more than drugs".

Finally, the sixth chapter reflects on the barbarity of "Brazilian Juvenicide", showing how it has been worsening in different ways, whether in the fictitious form of state protection or in the direct form of young people who have had to reinvent themselves, (ROCCHA, 2020) provides a significant overview of Brazilian Juvenicide, stating that it is necessary for young people who are within the Juvenicide pattern to have their lives taken, need professionals who work on the front line of this state control, incarcerating these young people, to review the attitudes that determine the future, before determining who should remain in society, and that acts like these must be denounced so that the struggle for human rights is achieved, eradicating



anti-neoliberalism, anti-prohibitionism, anti-racism, anti-capitalism, so that we can end the genocide of black and poor youth.



## REFERENCES

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