

4. Género e sexualidades

OC - (22813) - THE MEDICALIZATION OF FEMALE SEXUAL PAIN

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Female sexual pain is a taboo. Neither people who suffer from it nor health professionals dare to talk about it. However, according to medical literature, painful sexual intercourse affects up to 20% of women, depending on the associated pathology (Collier & Cour, 2013). Why then are we talking about a lack of medical knowledge of female sexual pain? How do health professionals consider sexual pain as a pathology? How are these pathologies ultimately managed? My communication will aim to present the medicalization of female sexual pain by health professionals: how do they envisage the care pathway for a patient who suffers from it and how do they experience sexual pain as a medical pathology to be categorized? To do this, my presentation will be based on interviews conducted since January 2022 with professionals involved in the management of sexual pain in French-speaking Belgium, but also on a corpus of medical articles dealing with the problem of painful sexual intercourse. I therefore wish to move away from a "pure" conception of sexuality (Gardey & Hasdeu, 2015), starting from the principle according to which female sexual pain is not only a "medical problem to be solved" or a simple "clinical category". Above all, it is a phenomenon that must be contextualized in the practices and experiences of people who suffer from it, and whose issues crystallize beyond the medical sphere.

References :

Collier, F., & Cour, F. (2013). En pratique, comment faire devant une femme exprimant une plainte sexuelle ? *Progrès en Urologie*, 23(9), 612-620. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.purol.2012.09.018>

Gardey, D. & Hasdeu, I. (2015). Cet obscur sujet du désir: Médicaliser les troubles de la sexualité féminine en Occident. *Travail, genre et sociétés*, 34, 73-92. <https://doi.org/10.3917/tgs.034.0073>

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